

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON YOUTH VIOLENCE

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Youth Violence, of the Senate Judiciary Committee, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, March 25, 1999 at 2:00 P.M. to hold a hearing in room 226, of the Senate Dirksen Office Building on: "The President's FY2000 OJP Budget: Undercutting Local Law Enforcement in the 21st Century."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

DISASTER MITIGATION PILOT PROGRAM

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, for the second time in less than a year, the Senate is considering legislation to establish a pilot disaster mitigation loan program at the Small Business Administration (SBA). Last year, the Committee on Small Business voted unanimously to include a proposal to establish a disaster mitigation pilot program introduced by my colleague from Georgia, Senator CLELAND, as an amendment to H.R. 3412, the "Year 2000 Readiness and Small Business Programs Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998." H.R. 3412 passed the Senate on September 30, 1998; however, the House of Representatives was not able to consider the bill before Congress adjourned last fall.

As the Chairman of Appropriations Subcommittee on VA, HUD and Independent Agencies, I have been concerned about our Nation's disaster relief program. I have worked at length with FEMA Director Witt and other Administration officials over the past several years to address the escalating costs of disaster relief and the need to tighten up this program. Since 1989, we have spent \$25 billion on FEMA disaster relief, and there remains more than \$2.6 billion in anticipated costs associated with open disasters. Much work needs to be accomplished to tighten the criteria for declaring disasters and eligibility for disaster relief funding, as well as stronger insurance requirements, so that we can bring these ever-escalating costs under control.

One way to mitigate against future disaster losses is to undertake preventive measures. Preventive measures to mitigate against future disaster losses, rather than the current strategy of response and recovery, could save as much as 50 percent of projected disaster relief loan costs.

S. 388 would create the Disaster Mitigation Pilot Program, which will permit SBA to establish a pilot program using up to \$15 million of disaster loans annually from FY 2000-2004 to provide small businesses located in disaster prone areas with low interest, long-

term disaster loans to finance preventive measures to mitigate against future disaster losses. The pilot program would operate in disaster prone areas designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA has launched "Project Impact," which emphasizes emergency preparedness, in response to the problem of increased costs and personal devastation caused by repeated natural disasters. I continue to have concerns about the criteria under Project Impact and urge FEMA to work to strengthen the criteria. I expect that SBA will develop the appropriate criteria for this new loan program that is consistent with FEMA's efforts to make improvements in this area. In the end, I do not believe we should have a proliferation of independent mitigation programs housed in numerous Federal agencies, and we should be working to develop a cohesive national strategy to deliver disaster relief assistance.

Under current law, SBA disaster loans may be used for mitigation purposes only to the extent that includes repairing or replacing existing protective devices that are destroyed or damaged in an area that has recently suffered a natural disaster. In addition, up to 20 percent of the disaster loan amount may be used to install new mitigation devices that will prevent future damage. Under S. 388, the Disaster Mitigation Pilot Program, a small business borrower would be allowed to use 100 percent of an SBA disaster loan for disaster mitigation purposes within an area designated by FEMA.

Mr. President, S. 388, the Disaster Mitigation Pilot Program, makes sense. It is a worthy program that needs to be tested, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.●

OPEN-MARKET REORGANIZATION FOR THE BETTERMENT OF INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT

• Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I rise to comment on the issue of international satellite reform. First I want to thank Senator BURNS for holding this important hearing. International satellite reform is critical to consumers across the United States.

Yesterday I agreed to become a cosponsor of this bill—along with Senators BURNS, MCCAIN, BRYAN, BROWNBACK, CLELAND, FRIST and DORGAN. I support Senator BURNS' bill because I believe that it is in the consumer interest to have a private INTELSAT. Such a competitive entity will lead to lower prices, better service, and more efficiency across the globe.

Additionally, removing ownership restrictions on COMSAT will help to bring new services to American consumers. I believe that broadband satellite services will play a very important role in West Virginia's future, and this bill will lead to further deployment of these services by lifting the ownership restriction on COMSAT. I

am excited by the possibility of a new competitor in domestic satellite services, and the resulting advances in these satellite services. Our mountainous terrain and the high cost of providing traditional telecommunications services make satellite services particularly important to West Virginia.

Furthermore, INTELSAT has a history of serving all parts of the world at reasonable prices. We have an interest in making sure that developing nations are part of the global information infrastructure. I will work to make sure that this bill will allow a privatized INTELSAT to continue to serve these areas at reasonable prices.

I must state, however, that while I support this bill, we are still in the middle of the legislative process. I am eager to continue working with Senators HOLLINGS, BREAUX, and other Senators who are working on important ideas with great promise. I want to stress that while I agree that this bill is the right platform for international satellite reform, I intend to keep working hard on this issue.●

NATIONAL INHALANTS AND POISONS AWARENESS WEEK

• Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support for increasing public awareness about the dangers of inhalant abuse. I am proud to be a cosponsor of S. Res. 47, recently passed by the Senate, which designates this week as "National Inhalants and Poisons Awareness Week."

Our nation's drug control policy correctly places emphasis upon finding solutions for combating the illegal sale, manufacture and trafficking of well-known abused substances such as cocaine and methamphetamine. However, I believe Congress and the President should do more to focus attention on an emerging but equally dangerous threat—inhalant abuse.

As my colleagues may know, inhalant abuse is the intentional breathing of gas or vapors for the purpose of reaching a high. Most people are familiar with common household products such as furniture polish, paint thinner, glue, felt tip markers, and deodorants. However, many families are not aware of how misuse of these inhalants by children can result in sickness or death.

Far too often, these inhalants have caused heart, brain, and liver damage in thousands of children across the country. Sadly, many children have died as a result of inhalant abuse, a condition known as Sudden Sniffing Death Syndrome. In 1990, four young people in my home state of Minnesota died in separate incidents after experimenting with inhalants. Continued misuse of these products may also lead to additional illicit drug use.

Additionally, the National Institute on Drug Abuse reported in 1996 that one in five American teenagers have used inhalants to get high. Over the

last few years, our nation has witnessed an increase in new inhalant abusers from 382,000 in 1991 to an estimated 805,000 in 1996. In my view, these troubling trends can be reversed by educating the public about the dangers of this abuse and encouraging communities to develop effective treatment and prevention programs.

In my view, greater awareness of inhalant abuse can best be achieved through passage of S. 609, legislation introduced by Senator FRANK MURKOWSKI that would amend the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994 to include inhalant abuse among the Act's definition of "substance abuse." Passage of this bill will give Minnesota and other states the opportunity to develop federally-funded inhalant abuse prevention and education programs. Importantly, these programs will be based on the active involvement of parents, teachers and local communities. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation which is an important element of our war on drugs.

Mr. President, the federal government should not regulate the sale of these legal and inexpensive products which are found in almost every household. Instead, communities, parents and teachers should be encouraged to develop local solutions to this problem. A united effort toward this epidemic will help the United States make significant progress in our fight against drug abuse.●

SPRINGTIME

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise to salute the Springtime and the birth of Caroline Byrd Fatemi, great-granddaughter of the distinguished Senator from West Virginia.

Last week, Senator BYRD took the floor to bring us glad tidings of spring and of Caroline's birth. Today, before we fly to the four corners of America, I would like to salute our beloved colleague and his progeny.

Time and again, Senator BYRD has graced this chamber with the lessons of history and the sweet music of poetry. Last week he ushered in Springtime with a stanza from Algernon Charles Swinburne. Let me quote the same poet to welcome Caroline to the world:

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her,
Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?
O that man's heart were as fire and could spring to her,
Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring!
For the stars and the winds are unto her
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;
For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,
And the south-west wind and the west-wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins;
And time remember'd is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,

And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the Spring begins.

Mr. President, the link between the elder BYRD and the younger symbolizes for me what our job here is all about: Looking forward every day, every month, every year to the eternal Spring that is America—and keeping faith with every generation of American.

Whether we are working to improve education or save Social Security, we who are privileged to serve in the United States Senate can, by our actions, strengthen the bonds that unite our nation from generation to generation.

As we strive to make the world a better place for Caroline and every child of her generation, let us follow the advice in Laurence Binyon's poem "O World, be Nobler"—

O World, be nobler, for her sake!
If she but knew thee what thou art,
What wrongs are borne, what deeds are done
In thee, beneath thy daily sun,
Know'st thou not that her tender heart
For pain and very shame would break?
O world, be nobler, for her sake!●

"BEST GRADUATE SCHOOLS" IN THE NATION

● Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, when East Tennessee State University opened its doors in 1911, it had 29 students and one primary mission: the education of future teachers. A lot has changed in 85 years.

While teacher preparation is still a crucial part of its mission, ETSU today consists of nine schools and colleges that offer over 125 different programs of study to more than 12,000 students every year—including some fairly unique offerings such as its one-of-a-kind master's degree in reading and storytelling, and the only bluegrass and country music program offered at a four-year institution.

Over the last two decades, there has been an increasing emphasis on the health sciences at ETSU—an emphasis that began in 1974 with the establishment of the James H. Quillen College of Medicine which was created to help alleviate a critical shortage of primary care physicians in East Tennessee.

Mr. President, this year the Quillen College of Medicine celebrates its 25th anniversary. But that proud accomplishment, although noteworthy, is not the basis for my remarks this morning. Rather, I rise to commend its recent listing in U.S. News and World Report as one of the "Best Graduate Schools" in the Nation—a ranking well-deserved and well-earned.

According to the magazine, Quillen College earned the distinction of placing third among all the schools in the Nation for its programs in rural medicine. Last year, it placed sixth in the same category.

I also rise, Mr. President, to commend the ETSU College of Nursing—which was also ranked among the Nation's best. And, like Quillen College,

this is also the second year in a row it was so honored.

Both these schools, Mr. President, embrace the values of the people of Tennessee. Both are community oriented, both provide a valuable resource to local citizens and businesses, and both are making valuable and needed contributions to the practice and the quality of medicine.

My heartiest congratulations to the entire staff, faculty, students and alumni of both East Tennessee State University School of Nursing and the James H. Quillen College of Medicine for their splendid accomplishment.●

ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

● Mr. REED. Mr. President, today we celebrate the 178th Anniversary of the revolution that won Greece's independence from the Ottoman Empire. I am proud to join with forty-nine of my colleagues in sponsoring Senate Resolution 20 which designates today "Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy."

The Greeks have been members of the community in Rhode Island for over one hundred years. Over 6,000 residents of the state claimed Greek heritage in the last Census. When the Greeks first came to the New England, they worked in factories and on the waterfront. The descendants of these first immigrants continue to prosper and enrich the Northeast and the rest of the country through their contributions to banking, medicine, the tourism industry, and the arts.

Edith Hamilton praised Greeks in this quote, "to rejoice in life, to find the world beautiful and delightful to live in, was a mark of the Greek spirit which distinguished it from all that had gone before. It is a vital distinction."

I have been grateful for this spirit, energy, and support in the Rhode Island Greek community, and, for a very long time, I wished to visit Greece and Cyprus. This summer, I finally had that opportunity. On my trip, I had the pleasure of meeting Ambassador Burns and the U.S. Ambassador to Cyprus, Kenneth Brill. I also met and had candid conversations with Greece's Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Greek Defense Minister. In addition, I had the chance to tour the Green Line in Cyprus and speak with Dame Ann Hercus, the newly appointed Chief of the United Nations mission and General De Vagera, the force commander.

During my visit, I was impressed by the beauty of these countries and the hospitality of the people of Cyprus and Greece. However, I was also overwhelmed by the consequences of Turkey's 1974 invasion of Cyprus. The division of the island saps the economic vitality of a region rich in resources. The inability to move goods, people, or services between the two parts of the island stymies growth.