

they can't afford to take their medicine. Their doctor tells them to take three pills. They don't do that. They start taking two. They start taking one. Eventually they get much sicker.

The Snowe-Wyden legislation is bipartisan. It uses marketplace forces. We don't have a Federal price control regime. We don't have a one-size-fits-all health care policy. We have the kind of approach that works for Members of Congress and their families.

Our bill, called SPICE, the Senior Prescription Insurance Coverage Equity Act, is a senior citizens version of the kind of health plan that Members of Congress have. We incorporated recommendations from consumer groups. Families USA, for example, has made some excellent recommendations on consumer protections that older people need.

We have also listened to the insurance sector and the pharmaceutical sector, making sure there would be adequate incentives for research and the initiatives that are underway to help us find a cure for Alzheimer's and all of the illnesses that are so tragic, for which every Member of the Senate wants to see a cure.

I will keep coming to the floor. I want to cite a couple more examples before we wrap up. I know other colleagues want to speak.

I heard recently from a senior citizen in Forest Grove that in recent months she spent almost \$1,500 on her prescription drugs. Another older person from the Portland metropolitan area reported that in a few months, she spent over \$600 for her medications. She is now taking more than seven medications on an ongoing basis.

Very often the families have to go out and try to find free samples to compensate for some of the drugs the older people can't afford. Families have to chip in when it is hard for them to afford medicine. They are all asking, is the Senate going to just bicker about this issue or is the Senate going to come together in a bipartisan way and actually do something about these problems? We have more than 20 percent of the Nation's older people spending over \$1,000 a year out of pocket on their medicine.

I am very often asked: Can this Nation afford to cover prescription drugs? My response is, we cannot afford not to cover these prescriptions. As I have cited several times during these presentations, a lot of these drugs help us to hold down costs. They help us to deal with blood pressure and cholesterol. The anticoagulant drugs are absolutely key to preventing strokes. I cited an example of one important anticoagulant drug where for \$1,000 a year, in terms of the cost to the senior, they are able to save \$100,000 in expenses that they would incur if they suffered a debilitating stroke when they couldn't get these medicines.

It is absolutely essential that we secure this coverage for the Nation's older people. It seems to me now a

question of political will. Can we set aside some of the partisanship on this health care issue, some of the bickering that has gone on back and forth? I believe the Snowe-Wyden legislation—a majority of the Senate has already voted for in terms of its funding plan—is the way to go. But I know colleagues have other ideas.

What we ought to do is resolve to deal with this issue in a bipartisan way. I hope seniors will continue to send us copies of their prescription drug bills, as the poster says, to their Senator in Washington, DC.

I hope in the days ahead we won't see a whole lot more of these tragedies such as the one I have cited today. It is one thing for a senior to send in their bills and say, I am having difficulty paying for this; I hope you will cover it. But it is quite another for a senior citizen to send me, as this older person did from Beaverton, a copy of his prescriptions saying—it says it right down in the margin—"can't afford to get filled." Prescriptions his doctor ordered, in effect the prescriptions go unfilled. These are important medicines. If you don't take Glucophage and you have diabetes, you can have some very serious health problems.

I am hopeful the Senate will look to get beyond the dueling press conferences, look beyond some of the issues that have surrounded this discussion in a partisan way and say: We are going to come together and go to bat for seniors and their families. It is time to do it.

I intend to keep coming back to the floor until we secure this coverage. It was important for seniors back in the days when I was director of the Gray Panthers. It is even more important now because these drugs can help us to save bigger health care bills down the road. I will be back on the floor continually calling for a bipartisan approach to this issue, one that uses marketplace forces to deal with the challenge of health care costs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes as in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Mr. GRAMS pertaining to the introduction of S. 1860 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

REMARKS BY U.S. TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY RODNEY SLATER ON THE PASSING OF SENATOR JOHN CHAFEE

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, today, as we gather together to witness LINCOLN CHAFEE take the oath of office to serve as the Senator from Rhode Island, I am reminded of my conversation last week with Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater.

We shared fond memories of our friend and spoke of his many contributions to transportation safety. Secretary Slater worked closely with Chairman Chafee on transportation issues that came before the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

I ask unanimous consent to print in the RECORD the remarks made last week by Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater on the passing of our colleagues, Senator John Chafee.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATEMENT OF U.S. TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY RODNEY E. SLATER ON THE PASSING OF SENATOR JOHN CHAFEE

We are deeply saddened by the death of Senator John Chafee. He served the people of Rhode Island and of this nation long and well, and leaves a legacy of accomplishment that will endure for generations.

As chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, Sen. Chafee realized that the highway system is more than concrete, asphalt and steel, and was an early champion of a safer, more balanced, environmentally sensitive transportation system. As a key author of the groundbreaking Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, he possessed a vision of how much better and stronger our surface transportation system could be. He then worked tirelessly to preserve and build on those gains in the 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century. He cared deeply about health care, and fought hard for critical highway safety improvements and against drunk and drugged driving.

Sen. Chafee was responsible for the creation of the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program and transportation enhancement activities. He insisted that the highway system not be looked at alone, but rather as a comprehensive network which includes trains, planes, buses, ferries, bicycles and pedestrian paths.

Sen. Chafee also was a protector of our marine environment, playing a major role in the passage of legislation to prevent oil spills and prohibit ocean dumping. He also was instrumental in the passage of the 1990 Clean Air Act. He always worked in a bipartisan manner with President Clinton and this administration in order to get things done.

Here at the U.S. Department of Transportation, we will work to carry forward his legacy as we continue to build the transportation system of the next century.

OMBUDSMAN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1999

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, in the Summer of 1998, I met with a group of concerned citizens from the Overland Park neighborhood, which is located in southwest Denver. The dozen or so residents had requested a meeting with me to discuss an issue that had taken up more than six years of their lives and had driven them to distrust anything the Environmental Protection Agency had told them about a Superfund site located in their neighborhood called Shattuck.

The story surrounding the Shattuck Superfund site and what the EPA did to this community will have a lasting impact not only on the residents of the