

But the idea we are talking about giving away \$1.25 billion in loan guarantees to some of the most well-off companies in America as a rider on this bill is the kind of outrageous legislative action that has to be stopped. If they think because the underlying bill is so popular that everybody is just going to turn the other way and let this \$1.25 billion giveaway occur, they are wrong. I do not intend to do that. It is not going to pass the Senate unless they take it out.

I yield the floor.

ORGAN DONATION REGULATORY RELIEF ACT

Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I rise today to address a potential crisis in our nation's system of organ donation. Last year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) proposed regulations that would have had devastating effects on community-based transplant programs by prohibiting states from offering organs to their own sickest residents before making them available nationwide. In response to the overwhelming concerns of patients and health care professionals nationwide, Congress delayed the implementation of the regulations and commissioned a study by the Institute of Medicine to examine the impact of the regulations on the nation's current system.

The study drew several conclusions which demonstrate how the current system is effective and why the proposed regulations are misguided. For example, the study found that the current system of organ transplantation is reasonably equitable and effective for the sickest patients. It also found that the proposed regulations would increase the overall cost of transplantation in the U.S. Perhaps most important, the study found that the current system does not discriminate because of race or any other factors and that the waiting list for an organ transplant are treated fairly.

These conclusions support the long-held concerns of the organ transplant community that the regulations, which would direct the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) to develop a system which removes geography as a factor in organ donation, may actually increase waiting times in states, like New Jersey, with efficient systems.

These unintended consequences will be felt most greatly among patients with disadvantaged backgrounds. In New Jersey, we are extremely fortunate to have a system that is fair and efficient. New Jersey's unique system of certificate of need and charity care ensures that the most critical patients get organs first regardless of insurance. A national organ donation system will force the smaller transplant centers that serve the uninsured and underinsured to close as the vast majority of organs go to the handful of the nation's largest transplant centers with the longest waiting lists. Without access to

smaller programs, many patients will be faced with the hardship of registering with out-of-state programs that may turn them away due to lack of insurance. Those who are accepted will be forced to travel out of state at great medical risk and financial hardship.

In light of these concerns, the conferees of the FY 2000 Labor, Health, and Human Services, and Education bill included language extending the moratorium on the regulations for a period of three months. While this is a very positive step, I am concerned that this moratorium would not provide sufficient time for Congress to consider this issue as part of the debate on the reauthorization of the National Organ Transplant Act.

I am pleased to join my colleagues Senators SESSIONS, HUTCHINSON, WARNER, MACK, SHELBY, NICKLES, INHOFE, THURMOND, ASHCROFT, MCCONNELL, ROBERTS, KOHL, FEINGOLD, CLELAND, HOLLINGS, BREAUX, GRAHAM, COLLINS, GRAMS, LAUTENBERG, ENZI, MURSKOWSKI, GORTON, LANDRIEU, ROBB, and LINCOLN to introduce the Organ Donation Regulatory Relief Act of 1999.

This bipartisan legislation will delay the Secretary's ability to issue regulations regarding the nation's organ donation system until Congress considers the complex issues surrounding organ procurement and allocation as part of the reauthorization of the National Organ Transplant Act.

For the past 15 years, the national organ procurement and allocation system has existed without federal regulation. During this time, each State has developed a unique system to meet their individual needs. Many states, such as New Jersey, have focused on serving uninsured and underprivileged populations. Clearly improvements can be made to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of organ donation nationwide. The legislation will ensure Congress has ample time to consider these important issues prior to allowing the implementation of far-reaching regulations that will revamp the system.

FOREST FIRES IN EASTERN MONTANA

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, when a hurricane engulfs the Eastern seaboard or an earthquake shatters the lives of Californians, we reach out with compassion to those people who are affected. America's hearts and minds always turn to those who are adversely impacted by these events.

I bring to your attention a devastating natural disaster that recently struck the Eastern portion of my home State, Montana. On Halloween night, it seems as if Mother Nature played a frightening trick on many rural Montanans. A storm below out of the Rocky Mountains and onto the plains of the short grass prairie with winds in excess of 70 miles per hour.

These violent winds stoked several prairie fires. The wild fires imme-

diately became uncontrolled infernos as they are driven along by the gusts, in some cases the wall of flames spanning many miles.

The tiny town of Outlook, MT, was evacuated in the face of this unmanageable fire. Unfortunately, the town itself was laid to waste in the wake of the flames. Thankfully, due to the early evacuation and quick response of the authorities, no lives were lost.

Two hundred and fifty miles south of Outlook another town was facing the same fate. The rural community of Ekalaka was also under evacuation orders. A different fire of the same magnitude was moving toward town as it was swept ahead of the horrific winds. This fire spared the community but still left ruin in its wake. It is estimated that ten to twenty sections of good winter grazing land has been destroyed along with miles of fences and corrals. That is between 6,400 and 12,800 acres that producers will not be able to use for winter feed. The increased costs of buying hay to feed livestock will put a great burden on ranchers already experiencing financial hardship within their industry.

Not only were these two communities impacted, there were several other communities in Eastern Montana that sustained damage due to fires. I offer my sincere gratitude to all of those who worked so diligently to fight these fires and save property and lives.

We now have Montanans facing the onset of winter, homeless, without the security of their places of business, and agricultural producers, without feed for their livestock. Just as we unite together for those who are struck by other natural disasters, I hope that you will join with me in support of these Montanans, who lost not only their homes but their livelihoods.

Entire communities have been adversely affected by this unforeseen emergency and I will be watching closely to see that these folks receive the aid needed to rebuild their lives. Montanans have suffered great losses no less devastating than the hurricanes on the East Coast and they too deserve a helping hand in their time of need.

My thoughts and prayers go out to each and every individual whose lives are in disarray due to this sudden tragedy.

COST ESTIMATE ON EXPORT ADMINISTRATION ACT

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a cost estimate on the Export Administration Act of 1999, prepared by the Congressional Budget Office, be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

There being no objection, the cover letter and estimate were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows: