

That is why many of the provisions in both bills are very similar. I think the provisions on plan information in both bills are similar and there is common ground from which we can work.

We both give Americans expanded new rights to go to an emergency room and get the care they need without worrying about having to fight with their insurer over who will pay for this care.

We both greatly expand access to specialists. Both bills allow direct access to a pediatrician for children, and for women seeking primary and preventative ob/gyn care.

So, we are close on very many of the issues that are important to most Americans. These are major issues that I believe we can come to an agreement on.

Other issues will be difficult to resolve, but I am committed to sitting down with colleagues on the other side of the aisle to discuss these issues, and will promise to negotiate in good faith.

We may not agree yet, but I am hopeful. I think Democrats and Republicans share a goal of wanting to ensure individuals have access to safe and appropriate health coverage. So I am positive about this conference.

#### DEATH OF KAYLA ROLLAND

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise, with sadness and a heavy heart today. On Tuesday, Kayla Rolland, a 6-year-old first grader was shot and killed by a classmate at Theo J. Buell Elementary School in Mount Morris Township, MI.

As Kayla's family mourns their lost, I am certain in my heart that Kayla's spirit is in a better place.

It is my hope that in this difficult time Kayla's family will find comfort in one another, in their community, in their faith and in the knowledge that across America their fellow citizens feel their grief.

Such a violent death is a great tragedy. But for someone so young, to have her hopes and dreams cut short by gunfire—stretches the limits of our power to understand and to accept.

As the father of two daughters, also in the first grade, I can't get out of my mind the pictures of Buell Elementary School, as so many frightened young children facing a terror few of us would want to know firsthand, rushed into the arms of their parents.

I thank God each day that my kids return home safe, away from the dangers of this world and from the senseless violence that haunts our communities.

But, as our Nation tries to address the questions and issues that surrounded this tragic event, I hope that, for the next few days, we focus on Kayla's family.

A family lost a child this week, and that we must not forget.

There is a time and a place to address the circumstances surrounding Kayla's death and the public policy issues in-

volved, and I look forward to those discussions.

But, I hope that we will not allow the policy debates and the media rush to examine this tragic event cause us to forget the immediate needs of a family in mourning.

Above all, I hope that we will keep the Rolland family and Kayla in our thoughts and prayers.

In closing, Mr. President, on behalf of my wife Jane and myself, I would like to express our family's deepest sympathies to the Rolland family.

#### SAVE OUR SURPLUS

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise to speak about a very important bill I introduced yesterday. My Save Our Surplus, or S.O.S. legislation would lock in every penny of the \$23 billion non-Social Security surplus which materialized in FY 2000 and return it to working Americans in the form of debt reduction, tax relief and structural Social Security and Medicare reform.

The reason for this legislation is simple: Last year the Congress adopted my amendment in the budget resolution to set up a reserve fund for any non-Social Security surplus for tax relief.

Unfortunately, this provision in the budget resolution was completely ignored in the appropriation process. As a result, we ended up spending every penny of the project \$14 billion on-budget surplus.

The Congressional Budget Office estimated early this year that, Thanks to our strong economy, we would have an even higher \$23 billion on-budget surplus in the current fiscal year despite that spending spree.

Mr. President, this \$23 billion non-Social Security surplus does not fall from the sky. It is working Americans who generated the surplus—not Congress, not the President, but Americans' hard work.

In fact, hard working Americans have created a strong economy that has turned the ink in Washington's accounting book black for the first time in 40 years. The budget surplus above and beyond Social Security will top \$1.9 trillion over the next 10 years.

Clearly, the reason we have a surplus is the result of the hard work of working men and women of this country. Washington should not be the first in the line to spend this surplus.

Mr. President, the budget surplus above and beyond the Social Security surplus is tax overpayments and should be returned to taxpayers in the form of tax relief, debt reduction and Social Security reform.

If we don't return the tax overcharges to the taxpayers in these ways, Washington will spend it all, leaving nothing for tax relief, debt reduction or the vitally important task of preserving Social Security. Last year's appropriations spending has proven my fears are well founded.

President Clinton has already proposed spending nearly all of this sur-

plus, and both Chambers of the Congress are preparing to add even more to the President's request in this year's supplemental spending bill.

This is not right. Last year's discretionary spending was already increased by over 5 percent, twice the rate of inflation. If Congress spends this additional \$23 billion surplus, discretionary spending will increase by over 9 percent. If there is a Supplemental, it should be fully offset by spending reduction.

President Clinton also proposes to "correct the gimmicks" in the FY 2000 Appropriations bills by shifting payment dates from FY 2001 back to FY 2000, lifting restrictions on obligations, and reversing advance funding.

Mr. President, I was the one that spoke repeatedly on the Senate floor last year in strong opposition to budget gimmickry. However, changing the gimmicks now would have the effect of increasing discretionary and mandatory spending in FY 2000 by \$10 billion while also allowing for spending to increase in FY 2001 by a corresponding amount.

Mr. President, two wrongs don't make a right. Let's leave FY 2000 spending the way it is and pledge to stop the gimmicks this year.

The last thing we should do is to spend tax overpayments to enlarge the government. If we cannot give working Americans a tax refund this year due to President Clinton's veto of our tax relief bill, we at least should dedicate this on-budget surplus to reduction of the national debt.

It is true that our short-term fiscal situation has improved greatly due to the continued growth of our economy. However, our long-term financial imbalance still poses a major threat to the health of our future economic security.

We must also recall that Americans have long been overtaxed, and millions of middle-class families cannot even make ends meet due to the growing tax burden. They still call for major relief. That's why we passed nearly \$800 billion in tax relief for them. But President Clinton denied them the tax refund they deserve.

FY 2000's spending is the worst example of fiscal irresponsibility. Washington spent far more than it should have. But what concerns me is that if we continue this dangerous trend by spending this \$23 billion additional surplus for FY 2000, we will push the spending baseline even higher, leaving an even smaller on-budget surplus for our 5-year or 10-years tax relief or for debt reduction.

I understand that we do have emergency spending needs each year. I support true emergency spending, such as disaster relief or agricultural crisis relief. But I believe we should, and can, meet these challenges by prioritizing and streamlining government programs to offset this new spending while maintaining fiscal discipline.

Again, my point is, Mr. President, that this non-Social Security surplus is