

against assisted suicide. I voted against the Oregon law twice. I voted against Federal funding for assisted suicide. But I oppose the legislation being advanced here to overturn Oregon's law for the same reasons that the American Cancer Society does. It will hurt patients in pain.

I felt compelled to come to the floor of the Senate and express my concern. I think it is not in the public interest to link desperately needed legislation such as the bill to protect the victims of domestic violence to the assisted suicide law. It is not appropriate to hold hostage the victims of sex trafficking to the Oregon assisted suicide law. I hope we will not see what has been raised as a possibility in the last few minutes, and that is to hold up the county payments legislation—which has been agreed to by the House and the Senate negotiators and those at the White House—that would provide a lifeline to 700 rural school districts all across the country.

I hope that bill and the other vitally needed legislation will not be held up because a Senator decides he or she wants to throw the assisted suicide override into unrelated legislation that this country needs so greatly. I made it clear last August I was open to being fair to both sides. That is why we entered into an agreement for a fair fight. I said I would respect the will of the Senate on a cloture vote if it came to that. I think we ought to adhere to that August agreement and not link this matter of throwing Oregon's law into the trash can by tucking it into unrelated legislation.

Frankly, those who are trying to tuck this override of Oregon's assisted suicide law into other legislation—such as the bill that would protect the victims of domestic violence—are doing a tremendous disservice to the women victimized by domestic violence, to the victims of sex trafficking, to the schoolchildren who desperately need that county payments legislation. These bills ought to be considered on their merits. That was agreed to back in August with respect to the assisted suicide legislation. I will do everything in my power to insist the Senate adhere to what was agreed on last August.

I thank my colleague and friend from Illinois for his thoughtfulness.

INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCES

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, for the information of the affected Members of the Senate, I would like to state for the record that if a Member who is precluded from travel by the provisions of rule 39 is appointed as a delegate to an official conference to be attended by Members of the Senate, then the appointment of that individual constitutes an authorization by the Senate and the Member will not be deemed in violation of rule 39.

FINAL PASSAGE OF S. 1198, THE TRUTH IN REGULATING ACT

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I rise today to applaud the efforts of everyone who worked to pass S. 1198, the Truth in Regulating Act. Last evening, the House passed this important legislation, following the Senate's passage of the bill on May 9th of this year. I was pleased to learn of the final passage of this bill in the House, as this event marks the culmination of the hard work of many Senators, Representatives, and members of their staffs in achieving another milestone in our journey towards comprehensive regulatory reform.

This legislation establishes a process for Congress to obtain reviews of economically significant rules. These reviews, to be performed by the General Accounting Office, will help Congress to better assess the impact of federal agency regulations. I am confident that the information which will be provided in these reports will enable Congress and the public to have a better understanding of the potential costs and benefits of these regulations, and I believe that these independent analyses will help federal agencies to develop the most efficient and beneficial regulations for all concerned.

Mr. President, passage of this legislation would not have been possible without the hard work of several Senators on both sides of the aisle. Both Senator SHELBY and Senator THOMPSON have been active in addressing this issue for quite some time, and the efforts of Senator BOND and the input of Senator LEVIN were also helpful to the process. Similarly, I know that Representatives KELLY and MCINTOSH worked hard on the House side to get the Truth in Regulating Act passed. The details of this legislation were worked out by countless hours of work by a number of staff members, both former and current, for these Senate and House members. In addition to members of my staff, these staff members include Paul Noe, Mark Oesterle, Suey Howe, Linda Gustitus, Meredith Matty, Barry Pineles, Larry McCredy, Barbara Kahlow, and Marlo Lewis.

Mr. President, I look forward to the President signing this legislation.

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. President, I am pleased that last night the House passed on suspension the "Truth in Regulating Act," S. 1198, and that this legislation will now be sent to the President. S. 1198 will support Congressional oversight to ensure that important regulatory decisions are cost-effective, well-reasoned, and fair.

The foundation of the "Truth in Regulating Act" is the right of Congress and the people we serve to know about important regulatory decisions. Through the General Accounting Office, which serves as Congress' eyes and ears, this legislation will help us get access to the cost-benefit analysis, risk assessment, federalism assessment, and other key information underlying any important regulatory proposal. So, in a

real sense, this legislation not only gives people the right to know; it gives them the right to see—to see how the government works, or doesn't. GAO will be responsible for providing an evaluation of the analysis underlying a proposed regulation, which will enable us to communicate better with the agency up-front. It will help us to ensure that the proposed regulation is sensible and consistent with Congress' intent before the horse gets out of the barn. It will help improve the quality of important regulations. This will contribute to the success of programs that the public values and improve public confidence in the Federal Government, which is a real concern today.

Under the 3-year pilot project established by this legislation, a chairman or ranking member of a committee with legislative or general oversight jurisdiction, such as Governmental Affairs, may request the GAO to review a proposed economically significant rule and provide an independent evaluation of the agency regulatory analysis underlying the rule. The Comptroller General shall submit a report no later than 180 days after a committee request is received. A requester may ask for the report sooner when needed, as may be the case where there is a short comment period or hearing schedule. The Comptroller General's report shall include an evaluation of the benefits of the rule, the costs of the rule, alternative regulatory approaches, and any cost-benefit analysis, risk assessment, and federalism assessment, as well as a summary of the results of the evaluation and the implications of those results for the rulemaking.

It is my hope that the "Truth in Regulating Act" will encourage Federal agencies to make better use of modern decisionmaking tools, such as cost-benefit analysis and risk assessment. Currently, these important tools often are viewed simply as options—options that aren't used as much or as well as they should be. Over the years, the Governmental Affairs Committee has reviewed and developed a voluminous record showing that our regulatory process is not working as well as intended and is missing important opportunities to achieve more cost-effective regulation. In April 1999, I chaired a hearing in which we heard testimony on the need for this proposal. The General Accounting Office has done important studies for Governmental Affairs and other committees showing that agency practices—in cost-benefit analysis, risk assessment, federalism assessments, and in meeting transparency and disclosure requirements of laws and executive orders—need significant improvement. Many other authorities support these findings. All of us benefit when government performs well and meets the needs of the people it serves.

A lot of effort and collaboration went into this legislation, which I think is why the Senate and now the House could approve it with broad bipartisan