

and the U.S.). Therefore, at the very least, the increase to \$200.00 tends to give community banks a better chance to maintain their deposit base against a too-big-to-fail competitor.

The increase will reduce the risk that smaller banks and the communities they serve will stagnate due to the banks' inability to obtain funding at a reasonable cost—It could also reduce future FDIC insurance payments if these weak banks fail in the next recession. (Incidentally, an FDIC study shows that if the insurance level had been at \$200,000 during the problems of the '80s and '90s, it would not have materially increased FDIC insurance costs.)

The increase will help to maintain a banking system that is decentralized and diverse—This type of system helps the economy, boosts productively, and promotes entrepreneurship—important factors in our present prosperity.

It provides a savings incentive—As more baby boomers retire with savings in excess of \$100,000, the increased FDIC insurance coverage will provide a convenient and conservative savings option and will encourage savings, which all economists agree would be good for the U.S. economy.

You may have guessed by now that I'm rooting for the corner with little David (Chairman Tanoue) in this important policy showdown—and the battle is far from over. Why? I'll simply use the litmus test that applies to all other proposed reforms: It's good for the country.

RECOGNITION OF SERVICE TO THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, as I leave the service of the Senate, I would like to take a moment and recognize the service of my dedicated staff over these last six years. Pay in a Congressional office is not great, Mr. President, the hours are incredibly long, and often times the work they do goes unheralded. But still these staffers dedicate their time and effort to helping the people of Michigan and advancing their interests.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the people of the State of Michigan, to thank them all for their dedicated and tireless service.

Mr. President, at this point I would like to enter into the RECORD a list of those people that have served on my staff, both here in Washington and back in Michigan, as a way of thanking them.

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

STAFF OF SENATOR SPENCER ABRAHAM, 1994-2000

Mohammed Abouharb, Staff Assistant; Stuart Anderson, Director of Immigration Policy and Research; Gregory Andrews, Regional Director; Anthony Antone, Deputy Chief of Staff; Sandra Baxter, Assistant to the State Chief of Staff; Beverly Betel, Staff Assistant; Rachael Bohlander, Legislative Assistant.

David Borough, Computer Specialist; Michell Brown, Staff Assistant; Katja Bullock, Office Manager; Carrie Cabelka, Staff Assistant; Cheryl Campbell, Regional Director; Robert H. Carey, Jr., Legislative Director; David Carney, Mail Room Manager.

Joseph Cella, Regional Director; Cesar V. Conda, Administrative Assistant/Legislative

Director; Adam Condo, Systems Administrator; Jon Cool, Staff Assistant; Ann H. Coulter, Judiciary Counsel; Majida Dandy, Executive Assistant; Anthony Daunt, Staff Assistant.

Joe Davis, Director of Communications; Nina De Lorenzo, Press Secretary; Larry D. Dickerson, Chief of Staff/Michigan Operations; Joanne Dickow, Legal Advisor; Hope Durant, Executive Assistant to the Chief of Staff; Sharon Eineman, Senior Caseworker.

Paul Erhardt, Special Assistant; Tom Frazier, Regional Director; Bruce Frohnen, Speech Writer; Renee Gauthier, Caseworker; Jessica Gavora, Special Advisor; David Glancy, Staff Assistant; Thomas Glegola, Special Assistant.

Todd Gustafson, Regional Director; Alex Hageli, Staff Assistant; Mary Harden, Staff Assistant; Phil Hendges, Regional Director; Paul Henry, Staff Assistant; Joanna Herman, Special Assistant; Melissa Hess, Staff Assistant.

Stephen Hessler, Deputy Press Secretary; Kate Hinton, Deputy Chief of Staff; David Hoard, Special Assistant; Kevin Holmes, Special Assistant; Kelly Hoskin, Caseworker; Michael J. Hudome, Special Assistant; Randa Fahmy Hudome, Counselor.

F. Chase Hutto, Judiciary Counsel; Michael Ivahnenko, Staff Assistant; Eunice Jeffries, Regional Director; Kaveri Kalia, Press Assistant; Raymond M. Kethledge, Judiciary Counsel; Elizabeth Kessler, General Counsel; Kevin Kolevar, Senior Legislative Assistant.

Jack Koller, Systems Administrator; Kerry Kraklau, Systems Administrator; Peter Kulick, Caseworker; Kristin La Mendola, Staff Assistant; Patricia LaBelle, Regional Director; Brandon L. LaPerriere, Legislative Assistant; Stuart Larkins, Staff Assistant.

Matthew Latimer, Special Assistant; Joseph P. McMonigle, Administrative Assistant/General Counsel; Eileen McNulty, West Michigan Director; Meg Mehan, Special Assistant; Rene Myers, Regional Director; Jennifer Millerwise, Staff Assistant; Denise Mills, Staff Assistant.

Maureen Mitchell, Staff Assistant; Sara Moleski, Regional Director; Jessica Morris, Deputy Press Secretary; Margaret Murphy, Press Secretary; Tom Nank, Southeast Michigan Assistant; James Patrick Neill, Director of Scheduling; Shawn Neville, Northern West Michigan Regional Director.

Na-Rae Ohm, Special Assistant; Lee Liberman Otis, Chief Judiciary Counsel; Kathryn Packer, Director of External Affairs; Chris Pavelich, Regional Director; John Petz, Southeast Michigan Director; James L. Pitts, Chief of Staff; Conley Poole, Staff Assistant.

John Potbury, Regional Director; Tosha Pruden, Caseworker; Laurine Bink Purpuro, Deputy Chief of Staff; Lawrence J. Purpuro, Chief of Staff; Brian Reardon, Legislative Assistant; Elroy Sailor, Special Assistant; David Seitz, Mail Room Manager.

Dan Senor, Director of Communications; Mary Shiner, Regional Director; Anthony Shumsky, Regional Director; Alicia Sikkenga, Special Assistant; Lillian Simon, Staff Assistant; Lillian Smith, Director of Scheduling; Anthony Spearman-Leach, Regional Director.

Robert Steiner, Mail Room Manager; Anne Stevens, Special Assistant; Matthew Suhr, Special Assistant; Julie Teer, Press Secretary; Amanda Trivax, Staff Assistant; Meagan Vargas, Special Assistant; Shawn Vasell, Staff Assistant.

Olivia Joyce Visperas, Staff Assistant; Sue Wadel, Legal Advisor; Seth Waxman, Caseworker; Jeffrey Weekly, Special Assistant; Jennifer Wells, Caseworker; La Tonya Wesley, Special Assistant; Tyler White, Special

Assistant; Patricia Wierzbicki, Regional Director; Gregg Willhauck, Legislative Counsel; Billie Kops Wimmer, State Director.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues for this opportunity, and I yield the floor.

BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT AND PROTECTION ACT

Mr. BAUCUS. Among the most pressing issues facing American senior citizens and persons with disabilities is the need for coverage of prescription drugs under Medicare. While we in Congress continue to work to reach consensus on a Medicare prescription drug benefit, I applaud the bipartisan efforts of my colleagues to restore and preserve Medicare coverage for certain injectable drugs and biologicals that are crucial to seniors and persons with debilitating chronic illnesses. To this end the Act contains a tremendously important provision which amends Section 1861(s)(2) of the Social Security Act relating to coverage under Medicare Part B of certain drugs and biologicals administered incident to a physician's professional service. Because it is expected that the Act will be passed without any accompanying Committee Report language, and due to its importance to thousands of citizens, I rise to explain this statutory language.

The Medicare Carrier Manual specifies that a drug or biological is covered under this provision if it is "usually" not self-administered. Under this standard, Medicare for many years covered drugs and biological products administered by physicians in their offices and in other outpatient settings. In August 1997, however, the Health Care Financing Administration issued a memorandum that had the effect of eliminating coverage for certain products that could be self-administered. This changed policy interpretation resulted in thousands of patients who until that time had had coverage for drugs or biologicals for their illnesses, including intramuscular treatments for multiple sclerosis, being denied coverage for these same drugs and biologicals. At a time when the Congress and the Administration are seeking to expand Medicare prescription drug coverage, this HCFA policy has led to a reduction in coverage of many treatments.

The Act's language clarifies the Medicare reimbursement policy to ensure that HCFA and its contractors will reimburse physicians and hospitals for injectable drugs and biologicals for illnesses such as multiple sclerosis and various types of cancer as they had been reimbursed prior to the 1997 memorandum. The new statutory language contained in the Act requires coverage of "drugs and biologicals which are not usually self-administered by the patient," thus restoring the coverage policy that was in effect prior to the August 1997 HCFA memorandum. In carrying out this provision, HCFA