

the Americans with Disabilities Act just over 10 years ago and, during the 106th Congress, the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999. However, as President Roosevelt once said, "the credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena . . . who does actually strive to do the deeds." In this case, that credit belongs to a thirteen-year-old girl, who has pledged herself in an effort to combat discrimination against the disabled, and who has already taken a notable step in that direction. I salute Heather for her dedication and congratulate her on this achievement.

Mr. President, I ask that Heather Eagleston's letter and a short biography be printed in the RECORD.

The material follows:

MOUNTAIN HOME, AR,
January 16, 2001.

Hon. ASA HUTCHINSON,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE ASA HUTCHINSON: Eliminating discrimination against disabled people should be a national priority. Even though legislation has been passed addressing their problems, enforcement of existing laws still leaves the disabled individual without even the most basic resources necessary to pursue a normal life.

Access into public buildings, and equal employment opportunities are essential to every citizen of our country. More than half of the population believes that the disabled are being discriminated against in the workforce.

The Rehabilitation Act, of 1973, requires all federal agencies to take an affirmative action in hiring qualified employees with disabilities. Currently, federal government hires only 209,284 people with disabilities. That is only seven percent of the entire workforce.

In 1993 my brother was paralyzed in a car accident. His medical bills were about one million dollars, and at that time we had no insurance. My mother had to go to the hospital administrative board and beg them to give my brother the spinal surgery he needed to function. Fortunately, after a long tedious process he did qualify for government assistance.

We have come a long way. The government is making progress but only in small parts. Since 1973 we have had about 20 laws passed on disability rights. The current laws are not being enforced. In 1990 the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into a law. This included provisions to access all public accommodations. However in 1994, when my brother went to get his senior portrait taken there was no wheelchair access ramp for him to get in, nor in the school sanction. This is only one example of a minor problem that illustrates a major issue.

Initiate stricter penalties for those who will not abide by the laws. Inform the public concerning the law the consequences of ignoring the law.

I will set a standard in my life that focuses on the fact that no United States citizen, despite whatever limitation they might have, feels that their rights are limited due to public ignorance or support from our government. I will speak out for the right of all individuals.

Sincerely,

HEATHER EAGLESTON.

RESPECTTEEN SPEAK FOR YOURSELF ENTRY
FORM

Judging criteria: Letters will be judged on quality and clarity of thought, quality of ar-

gument, effectiveness of supporting data, quality of expression, sincerity and originality, as well as adherence to rules regarding form and length. Entries must address a national issue that a member of a Congress can take action on. At least one sentence in the letter must describe action the writer can take, has taken, or plans to take to help address the issue on the local level. Please keep in mind that if your letter is a state or district winner, your letter will be released to the media.

You must complete all information below for entry into the contest. Please staple this entry form securely to a copy of the letter that you mailed to your U.S. representative.

Please type clearly or print in black ink:

Today's Date: January 30, 2001
First Name: Heather
Last Name: Eagleston
Sex: Female
Date of Birth: August 8, 1987
Age: 13
Grade: Eighth
Email Address: hmeagleston@yahoo.com
First and Last Name(s) of Parent(s) or Guardian(s) and Daytime Phone Numbers: John Eagleston and Amanda Tait
Daytime Phone: (870) 425-9686
Home Street Address: 500 N. Church St. A-7
City: Mountain Home
State: Arkansas
ZIP: 72653
Home Phone: (870) 424-3253
Teacher's Name: Mrs. Helen Gammill
Full School Name: Mountain Home Junior High
School Street Address: 2301 Rodeo Drive
City: Mountain Home
State: Arkansas
ZIP: 72653
School Phone: (870) 425-1231
U.S. Representative (For Your Home Address): Asa Hutchinson
Congressional District (For Your Home Address): #3
Issue discussed in your letter: Discrimination against disabled
Please sign to the right, verifying that the letter is entirely your own work:
Heather Eagleston
Is the number of words in the body of your letter between 150 and 350?: Yes.
Does your letter have the six standard letter parts (heading, inside address, greeting, body, closing, and signature)?: Yes.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. CRAIG (for himself, Mr. DORGAN, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 836. A bill to amend part C of title XI of the Social Security Act to provide for coordination of implementation of administrative simplification standard for health care information; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BOND:

S. 837. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a safe harbor for determining that certain individuals are not employees; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DODD (for himself and Mr. DEWINE):

S. 838. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve the safety and efficacy of pharmaceuticals for children; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. BAYH, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. BURNS, Mr. KERRY, Mr. CHAFEE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. HELMS, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. BIDEN):

S. 839. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to increase the amount of payment for inpatient hospital services under the medicare program and to freeze the reduction in payments to hospitals for indirect costs of medical education; to the Committee on Finance.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 145

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 145, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to increase to parity with other surviving spouses the basic annuity that is provided under the uniformed services Survivor Benefit Plan for surviving spouses who are at least 62 years of age, and for other purposes.

S. 247

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. CORZINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 247, a bill to provide for the protection of children from tobacco.

S. 281

At the request of Mr. HAGEL, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN) were added as cosponsors of S. 281, a bill to authorize the design and construction of a temporary education center at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

S. 312

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. FITZGERALD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 312, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax relief for farmers and fishermen, and for other purposes.

S. 503

At the request of Mr. REID, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 503, a bill to amend the Safe Water Act to provide grants to small public drinking water system.

S. 548

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. CORZINE) and the Senator from

Minnesota (Mr. WELLSTONE) were added as a cosponsors of S. 548, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide enhanced reimbursement for, and expanded capacity to, mammography services under the medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 581

At the request of Mr. FITZGERALD, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 581, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to authorize Army arsenals to undertake to fulfill orders or contracts for articles or services in advance of the receipt of payment under certain circumstances.

S. 587

At the request of Mr. CONRAD, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. DAYTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 587, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act and title XVIII of the Social Security Act to sustain access to vital emergency medical services in rural areas.

S. 611

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. CORZINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 611, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to provide that the reduction in Social Security benefits which are required in the case of spouses and surviving spouses who are also receiving certain Government pensions shall be equal to the amount by which two-thirds of the total amount of the combined monthly benefit (before reduction) and monthly pension exceeds \$1,200, adjusted for inflation.

S. 632

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 632, a bill to reinstate a final rule promulgated by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and for other purposes.

S. 718

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 718, a bill to direct the National Institute of Standards and Technology to establish a program to support research and training in methods of detecting the use of performance-enhancing drugs by athletes, and for other purposes.

S. 721

At the request of Mr. HUTCHINSON, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 721, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a Nurse Corps and recruitment and retention strategies to address the nursing shortage, and for other purposes.

S. 742

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. SANTORUM), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. DORGAN), the Sen-

ator from New Jersey (Mr. CORZINE), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) were added as a cosponsors of S. 742, a bill to provide for pension reform, and for other purposes.

S. 749

At the request of Mr. FITZGERALD, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. CORZINE) were added as a cosponsors of S. 749, a bill to provide that no Federal income tax shall be imposed on amounts received by victims of the Nazi regime or their heirs or estates, and for other purposes.

S. 828

At the request of Mr. LIEBERMAN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 828, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax for certain energy-efficient property.

S.J. RES. 13

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 13, a joint resolution conferring honorary citizenship of the United States on Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, also known as the Marquis de Lafayette.

S. RES. 16

At the request of Mr. THURMOND, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), and the Senator from Florida (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as a cosponsors of S. Res. 16, a resolution designating August 16, 2001, as "National Airborne Day."

S. RES. 74

At the request of Mr. DAYTON, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 74, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding consideration of legislation providing Medicare beneficiaries with outpatient prescription drug coverage.

S. RES. 80

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 80, a resolution honoring the "Whidbey 24" for their professionalism, bravery, and courage.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CRAIG (for himself, Mr. DORGAN, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 836. A bill to amend part C of title XI of the Social Security Act to provide for coordination of implementation of administrative simplification standards for health care information; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce a bill to amend the Administrative Simplification provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. I am

pleased that Senator BYRON DORGAN and Senator MIKE CRAPO are joining with me in this effort today.

I understand the benefits of administrative simplification and support the goal of getting healthcare providers to use uniform codes to reduce overall costs through increased efficiencies. However, it was originally intended for the entire package of administrative simplification regulations to be released at one time. This would have allowed for system changes to be included in a comprehensive upgrade. These final provisions are now expected to be released over time, which will drive up the cost substantially for providers and health plans as they will be forced to adapt their systems with every new regulation. For example, identifiers for providers, plans and employers have yet to be finalized, making it impossible to incorporate this information into new computer systems.

In addition to the costs of repeatedly updating systems to be incurred by providers, the overall cost of compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act is expected to exceed the costs of Y2K readiness. Small providers, like those in my state of Idaho, cannot afford the high cost in such a short time frame. A longer timeframe will allow these small providers to pay incrementally for systems upgrades.

In addition, if health plans and providers hurry implementation of these provisions, there is the serious possibility that service problems will arise for consumers, including inaccurate payments and customer service issues. A longer implementation timeframe will also allow providers and plans to address any unanticipated consequences as they arise.

For these reasons, with my colleagues Senators DORGAN and CRAPO, I am introducing this legislation to delay implementation of the administrative provisions until the later date of either October 16, 2004 or two years after the final adoption of all regulations. The regulations that would be impacted by this legislation include electronic transactions, code sets, security standards for the electronic standards, and identifiers for health plans and providers. To avoid confusion, let me be clear that this legislation does not affect implementation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act medical privacy issues and does not deal with unique health identifiers for individuals.

To ensure that providers, plans and the Department of Health and Human Services are working towards compliance to these provisions, this legislation calls for the General Accounting Office to evaluate the progress of implementation no later than October 31, 2003.

I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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