

So I know something about Crohn's disease. The letter continues:

Joseph's gastrointestinal problem was quite complex. His disease was complicated by ulcerations, fistulae, bleeding, obstruction, electrolyte disturbances, seizures, and chronic pain, and Joseph required multiple operations. Continuity of care is most important when dealing with an incurable, chronic, debilitating disease. In Joseph's case, the system's failure to provide continuity of care proved tragic and fatal.

I served as Joseph's personal physician for 11 years. As Joseph's condition worsened he was no longer able to live independently, and he moved into his mother's small apartment in Las Vegas. His mother would accompany him to my office for all of Joseph's visits and as a result, I came to know his mother Marion quite well.

For over a decade, I performed needed physician examinations, arranged for appropriate diagnostic studies, wrote Joseph's prescriptions, and attended to him in the hospital whenever he required admission due to complications of his disease. One of Joseph's most pressing needs was for nutritional support. Joseph had become malnourished as a complication of his Crohn's Disease, and required TPN (intravenous nutrition).

I am also familiar with that, Mr. President.

Joseph's weight had fallen to just over 110 pounds, and at 5' 10" tall Joseph needed the TPN to maintain his weight and prevent death due to malnutrition.

In January of 1999, Joseph was told by his HMO that I could no longer treat him. Appeals by both myself and Joseph to have this decision reversed were denied. My offer to see Joseph free of charge was rejected by the HMO, as I still would not have been permitted to write his prescriptions, direct his nutritional support, order any diagnostic testing, or request needed consultations.

While I do not have any of the medical records of Joseph's treatment for the three months after he left my care, Joseph's mother informs me that his TPN had been discontinued, that his malnutrition worsened, his weight dropping to less than 100 pounds. Joseph, malnourished and unable to fight off infection, subsequently developed pneumonia, sepsis, and died.

I have received permission from Mrs. Grouble to share this story. Marion hopes that sharing her son's story will help achieve the needed legislation to prevent this from happening in the future. Holding health plans accountable when they harm patients is not about suing insurance companies and driving up the cost of health care, it is about stopping abuses and bringing compassion back to medicine. Until the health plans are accountable, people like Joseph and his family will continue to suffer.

Again, thank you for all the hard work on this important issue.

Sincerely,

FRANK J. NEMEC, M.D.

Doesn't this say it all? Why are we here? Are we here to talk about people dropped from insurance rolls? Are we here to talk about some lawyer fighting a lawsuit that doesn't exist?

ZELL MILLER was on the floor today. Georgia has a Patients' Bill of Rights. Not one single solitary lawsuit has been filed. In the State of Texas they have a Patients' Bill of Rights that the President of the United States vetoed on two separate occasions. They have a Patients' Bill of Rights there. In over 4 years they have had 17 lawsuits, one

every quarter. It doesn't sound too overwhelming to me. I don't think it is going to drive the HMOs out of business. So let's get real.

This is about money. It is about the Frank Nemec of the world who went to medical school to take care of his patients and he is told he can't take care of his patients. He said: I'll do it for nothing. They said: No, you might write a prescription we don't like.

I don't know, this man might have died soon anyway, but he would not have died as soon as he did. I guess the HMO decided his life wasn't worth anything anyway—he's going to die. He's 5 foot 10, weighs 110 pounds. Let's just terminate it more quickly.

We are going to finish this legislation. We are going to finish this legislation and send it over to the House. They can play whatever games they want with it, but I think the games will end over there because we have very courageous Republicans on that side of this institution, led by CHARLIE NORWOOD from the State of Georgia, who have said they have taken all they can.

I almost cried when I read this letter. Maybe if I were not here in front of the world I might admit when I read it in my office I shed a tear.

This is sad. If you knew Frank Nemec, this gentle, big man, you would know how sincere he is.

So why is this taking place? It is taking place because of money. It is taking place because the HMOs want to hang on as long as they can to keep those stock prices up and make as much money as they can in salaries. They are still going to do just fine after we pass this legislation, but they are not going to do as fine as they have been. They are not going to be able to terminate the care of someone such as Mr. Greuble.

Yesterday I read into the RECORD those organizations with names starting with the letter A that support this legislation. I am going to read for a while tonight. I am not going to read them all. This is a partial list. But I want this spread across the RECORD of this Senate that this legislation is supported by America. It is supported by Minnesota, the people in Minnesota and the people of Nevada.

The B's start with Baker Victory Services in Lackawanna, NY. This is a list of organizations that support the Bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights:

Baptist Children's Home of NC, Barium Springs Home for Children in Barium Springs, NC, Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, Berea Children's Home and Family in OH, Bethany for Children and Families, Bethesda Children's Home/Luthera of Meadville, PA, Board of Child Care in Baltimore, MD, Boys & Girls Country of Houston Inc., TX, Boys & Girls Homes of North Carolina, Boys and Girls Harbor, Inc. in TX, Boys and Girls Home and Family Service, Boy's Village, Inc. of Smithville, OH.

Boysville of Michigan, Inc., Brain Injury Association, Brazoria County Youth Homes in TX, Brighter Horizons Behavioral Health in Edinboro, PA, Buckner Children and Fam-

ily Service in TX, Butterfield Youth Services, Cal Farley's Boys Ranch and Affiliates, California Access to Speciality Care Coalition, Catholic Family Center of Rochester, NY, Catholic Family Counseling in St. Louis, MO, Catholic Social Services of Wayne County in IN, Center for Child and Family Services in VA.

Center for Families and Children in OH, Center for Family Services, Inc. in Camden, NJ, Center for Patient Advocacy, Center on Disability and Health, Chaddock, Charity Works, Inc., Child and Family Guidance Center in TX, Child and Family Service of Hawaii, Child and Family Services in TN, Child and Family Services of Buffalo, NY, Child and Family Services, Inc., in VA, Child Care Association of Illinois.

Child Welfare League of America, Children & Families First, Children & Family Services Association, Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Children's Aid and Family Service in Paramus, NJ, Children's Aid Society of Mercer, PA, Children's Alliance, Children's Board of Hillsborough, Children's Choice, Inc., in Philadelphia PA, Children's Defense Fund, Children's Home & Aid Society of Chicago, Children's Home Association of Illinois.

Children's Home of Cromwell, Children's Home of Easton in Easton, PA, Children's Home of Northern Kentucky, Children's Home of Poughkeepsie, NY, Children's Home of Reading, PA, Children's Home of Wyoming Conference, Children's Village, Inc., ChildServ, Christian Home Association-Child, Clinical Social Work Federation, Colon Cancer Alliance, Colorectal Cancer Network.

Committee of Ten Thousand, Community Agencies Corporation of New Jersey, Community Counseling Center in Portland, ME, Community Service Society of New York, Community Services of Stark County in OH, Community Solutions Association of Warren, OH, Compass of Carolina in SC, Congress of Neurological Surgeons, Connecticut Council of Family Service, Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, Consuelo Foundation, Consumers Union.

Cornerstones of Care in Kansas City, MO, Corporation for the Advancement of Psychiatry, Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies in NY, Counseling and Family Services of Peoria, Court House, Inc., Covenant Children's Home and Families, Crittenton Family Services in Columbus, OH, Crossroads for Youth, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Mr. President, we are through the C's. Before this is all over, there will be a partial list in the RECORD. I haven't been able to get them all. There are over 500. I have read in the RECORD a few hundred and I will continue to do so.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each this evening.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WEST VIRGINIA'S BIRTHDAY

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I am here to wish a happy birthday to a celebrant near and dear to my heart. The thirty-fifth child in the family, grown from a difficult beginning as a child of war

and conflict into a robust 138-year-old, the birthday girl is entering the new century with confidence and strength.

The birthday party in question is, of course, for the wild and wonderful, great and beautiful State of West Virginia, celebrated this Thursday, June 20. In 1863, West Virginia was born by proclamation—the only state so created. Like Caesar Augustus, West Virginia was wrested from her mother, Virginia, at the point of a sword. Also like Caesar, I foresee greatness ahead for West Virginia.

West Virginia is not a large State, ranking 41st at 24,231 square miles. But the stars shone on her birth, blessing her with natural riches, water, and a central location as the northernmost southern State and the southernmost northern State. I might wish for her more flat land, but, on the other hand, I would not trade a level plain for even a single glorious hillside blanketed by lush tangles of wild rhododendron bisected by a clear, cold stream tumbling over rocky drops amid dense stands of oak and maple. Her mountains are her crowning glory, molding her history and her character. They will continue to shape her future. The steep slopes that so complicate development preserve forests and wildlife. Nearly 75 percent of West Virginia is covered with forest. The slopes capture snow for great skiing. They shelter coursing whitewater rivers that attract kayakers, rafters, and fishermen from around the world. In a nation increasingly concerned with urban sprawl, West Virginia remains an oasis of serenity amid the surging tide of advancing humanity, an island of tranquil forest where eagles still soar and the crime rate is the lowest in the Nation.

The mountains have also shaped the character of her people, reinforcing and sustaining the independence of character and the strong work ethic that are necessary in isolated and challenging environments. West Virginians are friendly, caring neighbors, meeting bad weather and hard times with a community spirit that is itself a force to be reckoned with. West Virginians are patriotic as well. The youngest soldier of World War I, Chester Merriman of Romney, enlisted at the tender age of 14. And West Virginians are close to the Creator, reminded daily of His presence by the natural cathedral of sky, wind, water, wood, and stone that is their environment. With a mean altitude of 1,500 feet, the highest average altitude east of the Mississippi, West Virginians are literally nearer to God, as well.

Over the course of the last 138 years, West Virginia has had her share of firsts. In 1756, the first spa open to the public was established at Bath, VA, now Berkeley Springs. The Golden Delicious apple was first grown in Clay County. The Grimes Golden apple was first grown in Brooke County. In 1787, the first steam-powered motor boat was launched in the Potomac River by James Rumsey at New Mecklenburg,

now known as Shepherdstown. One of the first papers in the nation devoted mainly to the interests of women was published in Harper's Ferry on February 14, 1824. One of the first suspension bridges in the world was completed in Wheeling in November 1849.

The Civil War brought a number of "firsts" to West Virginia history books. The first major land battle fought between Union and Confederate forces in that conflict was the Battle of Philippi, on June 3, 1861. The first Union soldier had been killed a few days earlier, at Fetterman, Taylor County.

West Virginia has had other notable "firsts" since achieving statehood. West Virginia was also the site of the first rural free mail delivery in the nation. It began in Charles Town on October 6, 1896, before spreading throughout the rest of the United States. About 1908, outdoor advertising had its start when the Block Brothers Tobacco Company painted bridges and barns around Wheeling with the words "Treat Yourself To the Best, Chew Mail Pouch." Some people now spend their vacations hunting down and photographing those old barns.

On the political front, in 1928, Mrs. Minnie Buckingham Harper became a member of the House of Delegates by appointment and was, according to the West Virginia Archives, the first black woman to become a member of a legislative body in America. A less popular political first for West Virginia is its place as the first state to enact a state sales tax, which took effect on July 1, 1921. As a final "first," I would be remiss not to note here that Mother's Day was first observed at Andrews Church in Grafton, WV, on May 10, 1908. So West Virginia can claim motherhood and apple pie to offset that more sinister pair—death and taxes. We really do have it all.

West Virginia has experienced great change over the last 138 years. She remains a great resource for the country. Her coal and natural gas will continue to fuel the nation, just as her forests will provide homes and paper that the electronic age still has not supplanted. She has greatness still in store, nurtured in the bright minds of her young people, encouraged by the wisdom and foresight of her elders, carried on the strong shoulders of her workers and innovators, who love the state and want not to leave it for greener economic shores but to carry that tide into the mountains.

It has given me great pleasure over the years to help West Virginia grow. I may not have been born a West Virginian, but this transplant has taken well to the soil there. I have grafted. I hope that my efforts on her behalf have borne fruit that will help sustain her through the next 138 years. That is the best birthday gift that I can think to give her.

West Virginia, how I love you!
Every streamlet, shrub and stone,
Even the clouds that flit above you

Always seem to be my own.

Your steep hillsides clad in grandeur,
Always rugged, bold and free,
Sing with ever swelling chorus:
Montani, Semper, Liberi!

Always free! The little streamlets,
As they glide and race along,
Join their music to the anthem
And the zephyrs swell the song.

Always free! The mountain torrent
In its haste to reach the sea,
Shouts its challenge to the hillsides
And the echo answers "FREE!"

Always free! Repeats the river
In a deeper, fuller tone
And the West wind in the treetops
Adds a chorus all its own.

Always Free! The crashing thunder,
Madly flung from hill to hill,
In a wild reverberation
Makes our hearts with rapture fill.

Always free! The Bob White whistles
And the whippoorwill replies,
Always free! The robin twitters
As the sunset gilds the skies.

Perched upon the tallest timber,
Far above the sheltered lea,
There the eagle screams defiance
To a hostile world: "I'm free!"

And two million happy people,
Hearts attuned in holy glee,
Add the hallelujah chorus:
"Mountaineers are always free!"

SPECIAL AGENT TIMOTHY F. DEERR, FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AIR FORCE OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a dedicated and innovative public servant, Timothy F. Deerr, the former Executive Director of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, who recently retired after more than 26 years of loyal and selfless service.

As any citizen of the United States should know, two major powers emerged from the ashes and ruins of World War II—the United States of America and the now defunct Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The ideologies and interests of these two nations were diametrically opposed and the aspirations of Soviet communists for global control made it imperative that America's foot soldiers and leaders in national security affairs exercise vigilance and sacrifice in defense of freedom. For almost fifty years, these two superpowers engaged in a "cold war," where conflict was waged through proxies, brinkmanship, espionage, and counterespionage. It was in this environment in 1975 that Timothy Deerr joined the battle as a civilian Special Agent of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations.

By the time he completed his career earlier this year, Timothy Deerr had spent most of his professional life as a cold warrior and spy catcher. But, before he entered what has alternately been called the "world's second oldest profession" and the "wilderness of mirrors," he started out as a criminal investigator in Dayton, Ohio. It was here, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, that Special Agent Deerr learned and