

health care agencies will help to ensure that patients living in rural communities continue to have access to vital home health services. Surveys have shown the delivery of home health services in rural areas can be as much as 12 to 15 percent more costly because of the extra travel time required to cover long distances between patients, higher transportation expenses, and other cost factors.

Rural agencies also experience higher costs relative to productivity. Because of the longer travel distances, rural caregivers are unable to perform as many visits in a single day as their urban counterparts. Sandra Scott-Adams, the Executive Director of Visiting Nurses of Aroostook in northern Maine, tells me her agency covers 6,600 square miles to serve a population of only 73,000. Her costs are understandably much higher and her hard-working nurses are not able to see as many patients in a day as their urban counterparts. The long distances they must drive mean they are able to see fewer patients each day.

Moreover, agencies in rural areas are frequently smaller than their big city counterparts, which means their relative costs are higher due to smaller scale operations and an ability to take advantage of economies of scale. Smaller agencies with fewer patients and fewer visits mean that fixed costs, particularly those associated with meeting regulatory requirements, are spread over a smaller number of patients and visits, increasing overall per-patient and per-visit costs. If the rural add-on payment is eliminated on April 1, it will only put more pressure on our rural home health agencies that are already operating on a very narrow margin, and it could, in fact, force some of these agencies to close.

Some agencies operating in rural areas are the only home health providers for a vast geographic area. If any of these agencies are forced to close, the Medicare patients in that region will completely lose their access to home health care.

Earlier this year, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission voted unanimously to extend the rural add-on payment for home health services for one year. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this important legislation to ensure that all of our seniors, no matter where they live, whether they live in big cities, in suburbs, or the smallest communities, continue to have access to quality home health services.

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

**SENATE RESOLUTION 90—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE SENATE STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE NON-PROLIFERATION PROGRAMS OF THE UNITED STATES**

Mr. BYRD (for himself, and Mr. LUGAR) submitted the following resolu-

tion; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 90

Whereas on March 6, 2003, the Senate gave its advice and consent to the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions, done at Moscow on May 24, 2002 (the Moscow Treaty), which treaty will result in the draw down of thousands of strategic nuclear weapons by December 31, 2012;

Whereas the lack of strict and effective control over and security of all weapons of mass destruction by the governments having jurisdiction over such weapons continues to be of grave concern to all nations that are threatened by terrorism, especially after the catastrophic terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001; and

Whereas despite some recent improvements in cooperation at the highest levels of the Russian Federation, various officials and agencies of the Russian Federation have been counter-productive in barring access and information to the United States with respect to nonproliferation programs and activities, thereby needlessly hindering the progress of such programs and activities: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Senate strongly supports the non-proliferation programs of the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, and the Department of State, which programs are intended to reduce the worldwide threat posed by nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons that remain unsecured in the Russian Federation and elsewhere;

(2) the Russian Federation should continue to improve the access of the United States to key facilities, and the sharing of information with the United States, so as to bring a successful and timely conclusion to various non-proliferation programs and activities; and

(3) the United States should redouble its efforts to achieve full implementation of the nonproliferation programs of the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, and the Department of State under effective management, and make full use of all funds that Congress appropriates or otherwise makes available for such programs.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 91—AFFIRMING THE IMPORTANCE OF A NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING, AND EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT MARCH, 17, 2003, SHOULD BE DESIGNATED AS A NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING.**

Mr. SANTORUM (for himself and Mr. BROWNBACK) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 91

Whereas the President has sought the support of the international community in responding to the threat of terrorism, violent extremist organizations, and states that permit or host organizations that are opposed to democratic ideals;

Whereas a united stance against terrorism and terrorist regimes will likely lead to an increased threat to the armed forces and law enforcement personnel of those states that oppose these regimes of terror, and that take an active role in rooting out these enemy forces;

Whereas Congress has aided and supported a united response to acts of terrorism and violence inflicted upon the United States, our

allies, and peaceful individuals all over the world;

Whereas President Abraham Lincoln, at the outbreak of the Civil War, proclaimed that the last Thursday in September 1861 should be designated as a day of humility, prayer, and fasting for all people of the Nation;

Whereas it is appropriate and fitting to seek guidance, direction, and focus from God in times of conflict and in periods of turmoil;

Whereas it is through prayer, self-reflection, and fasting that we can better examine those elements of our lives that can benefit from God's wisdom and love;

Whereas prayer to God and the admission of human limitations and frailties begins the process of becoming both stronger and closer to God;

Whereas becoming closer to God helps provide direction, purpose, and conviction in those daily actions and decisions we must take;

Whereas our Nation, tested by civil war, military conflicts, and world wars, has always benefited from the grace and benevolence bestowed by God; and

Whereas dangers and threats to our Nation persist, and in this time of peril it is appropriate that the people of the United States, leaders and citizens alike, seek guidance, strength, and resolve through prayer and fasting: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) March 17, 2003, should be designated as a day for humility, prayer, and fasting for all people of the United States; and

(2) all people of the United States should—  
(A) observe this day as a day of prayer and fasting;

(B) seek guidance from God to achieve greater understanding of our own failings;

(C) learn how we can do better in our everyday activities; and

(D) gain resolve in how to confront those challenges which we must confront.

#### AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 262. Mr. HOLLINGS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 23, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Governments for fiscal year 2004 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2003 and for fiscal years 2005 through 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 263. Mr. HOLLINGS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 23, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

#### TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

**SA 262.** Mr. HOLLINGS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 23, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2004 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2003 and for fiscal years 2005 through 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

**SEC. . SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING A VALUE-ADDED TAX TO PAY THE COSTS OF WAR ON IRAQ.**

It is the sense of the Senate that the recommended levels and amounts in section 101 assume a 2 percent value added tax to pay

the costs of the war against Iraq and against terrorism.

**SA 263.** Mr. HOLLINGS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 23, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2004 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2003 and for fiscal years 2005 through 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title III, insert the following:

**SEC. . SENSE OF THE SENATE ON SUSPENDING INCOME TAX CUTS FUNDED BY SOCIAL SECURITY SURPLUSES.**

It is the sense of the Senate that the budgetary totals in this resolution assume that the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 should be amended to suspend future reductions of income tax rates enacted in 2001 if the Social Security surpluses are used to fund such tax rate cuts.

#### NOTICES OF HEARINGS/MEETINGS

##### COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Wednesday, March 19, 2003, at 2:30 p.m. in Room 485 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing on Indian energy legislation, S. 424, the Tribal Energy Self-Sufficiency Act, and S. 522, the Native American Energy Development and Self-Determination Act of 2003.

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at 224-2251.

##### COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Wednesday, March 26, 2003, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 216 of the Hart Senate Office Building to conduct an OVERSIGHT HEARING on the Role and Funding of the Federal National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC).

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at 224-2251.

##### SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS AND FORESTS

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The hearing will be held on Wednesday, March 26, at 10 a.m. in Room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony regarding the issues uncovered as a result of the Blue Ribbon Panel's findings on Aerial Fire Fighting Safety and to learn what the agencies are doing to respond to the recommendation of that report. (Contact: Frank Gladics 202-224-2878 or Jared Stubbs at 202-224-7556).

Because of the limited time available for the hearings, witnesses may testify

by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record should send two copies of their testimony to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510-6150.

#### AFFIRMING IMPORTANCE OF NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 91, which was submitted earlier today by Senators SANTORUM and BROWNBACK.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the title of the resolution.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 91) affirming the importance of a national day of prayer and fasting, and expressing the sense of the Senate that March 17, 2003, should be designated as a national day of prayer and fasting.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to this matter be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 91) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

##### S. RES. 91

Whereas the President has sought the support of the international community in responding to the threat of terrorism, violent extremist organizations, and states that permit or host organizations that are opposed to democratic ideals;

Whereas a united stance against terrorism and terrorist regimes will likely lead to an increased threat to the armed forces and law enforcement personnel of those states that oppose these regimes of terror, and that take an active role in rooting out these enemy forces;

Whereas Congress has aided and supported a united response to acts of terrorism and violence inflicted upon the United States, our allies, and peaceful individuals all over the world;

Whereas President Abraham Lincoln, at the outbreak of the Civil War, proclaimed that the last Thursday in September 1861 should be designated as a day of humility, prayer, and fasting for all people of the Nation;

Whereas it is appropriate and fitting to seek guidance, direction, and focus from God in times of conflict and in periods of turmoil;

Whereas it is through prayer, self-reflection, and fasting that we can better examine those elements of our lives that can benefit from God's wisdom and love;

Whereas prayer to God and the admission of human limitations and frailties begins the process of becoming both stronger and closer to God;

Whereas becoming closer to God helps provide direction, purpose, and conviction in

those daily actions and decisions we must take;

Whereas our Nation, tested by civil war, military conflicts, and world wars, has always benefited from the grace and benevolence bestowed by God; and

Whereas dangers and threats to our Nation persist, and in this time of peril it is appropriate that the people of the United States, leaders and citizens alike, seek guidance, strength, and resolve through prayer and fasting; Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) March 17, 2003, should be designated as a day for humility, prayer, and fasting for all people of the United States; and

(2) all people of the United States should—

(A) observe this day as a day of prayer and fasting;

(B) seek guidance from God to achieve greater understanding of our own failings;

(C) learn how we can do better in our everyday activities; and

(D) gain resolve in how to confront those challenges which we must confront.

#### ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2003

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today it stand in adjournment until 9:30 a.m., Tuesday, March 18; I further ask that following the prayer and the pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 23, the concurrent budget resolution; provided further that there be 20½ hours remaining under the control of the chairman of the Budget Committee and 21½ hours remaining under the control of the ranking member.

I further ask unanimous consent that at 12 noon, the Senate return to executive session and immediately proceed to the cloture vote on the Estrada nomination, provided that, regardless of the outcome, following the vote the Senate return to legislative session and resume consideration of S. Con. Res. 23.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. I say, through the Chair to my friend, the distinguished chairman of the Budget Committee, I appreciate very much the cooperation shown to this point on this very difficult matter. This is going to be an extremely busy week, with the President making his speech tonight in less than an hour and this country engaged in so many different things. This budget is extremely important. It is going to take the cooperation of both sides to come up with something that is not—I do not want to say an embarrassment. I do not mean that. The rules allow the Senate not to look at its best when we have 50, 60 votes at the end of all of this. I have spoken to our leader. I have spoken to the chairman of the Budget Committee. I have spoken to Senator