

hold only about 3 percent of the Earth's known reserves. We can not create more oil under the ground, and drilling in a pristine area like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would do very little to boost total production.

There is a solution, however: We can do a better job of conserving oil, with stricter fuel standards for all vehicles, including popular SUVs. By reducing our dependence on foreign oil, conservation will make us more secure; it will also help consumers and the environment.

Some people suggest that fuel cell technology will allow us to convert our vehicles from petroleum to hydrogen, but that will not happen overnight. In the meantime we need a clean way to produce hydrogen fuel. Burning fossil fuels to make hydrogen will still pollute our air and increase global warming. Clean, renewable energy should be part of the hydrogen solution.

As we move into the 21st century, we face tremendous energy challenges, but we also have great opportunities.

We must reduce our dependence on foreign oil and make a bold commitment to clean, renewable energy.

I hope the members of the conference committee will keep these principles in mind as they work to prepare a bill for our consideration. Anything less would be a failure of vision and leadership.

#### STRENGTHENING CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, the Senate has a special bipartisan tradition of support for child nutrition, and I am pleased to promote that tradition by joining with Senators ELIZABETH DOLE and PAT ROBERTS in cosponsoring S. 1549, which would expand children's access to the free school lunch and breakfast programs.

This idea was first suggested to me by Senators Bob Dole and George McGovern at a conference last year at Dakota Wesleyan College in Mitchell, SD. Since our conversation, I have heard from a number of schools in South Dakota that many families whose children qualify for a reduced price lunch find it difficult to pay even the reduced fee. For some families, the fee can actually be an insurmountable barrier to participation.

The main purpose of the school lunch program is to make sure that children have a reliable, nutritious lunch every day. If a lower income family can't afford to pay for a reduced price lunch, it follows that they will also struggle to afford to provide a bag lunch for their child.

S. 1549 has strong support within my State. The South Dakota State Board of Education and more than two dozen local school boards have passed resolutions urging Congress to eliminate the reduced price school meal program.

Expanding children's access to the free school lunch and breakfast programs would unquestionably help promote better child nutrition in America.

I have cosponsored S. 1529 because I support that goal.

I also support other equally important child nutrition and food program improvements. For example, lowering the area eligibility guideline in the summer and child care food programs from the current 50 percent to 40 percent would provide services to more children in low-income communities. Increasing children's access to fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and lean meats are important steps in improving overall health and reducing obesity. Reducing the paperwork burden for participants in the Summer Food Program would help make sure more children have access to healthy food when school is not in session. Making for-profit child care centers that serve low-income children eligible to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food program, and additional improvements to other nutrition programs, including food stamps, are long overdue.

Strengthening food support for low-income families is a sound investment in the long-term health and well-being of our children, and each of these initiatives is a worthy goal. Collectively, they are goals, I believe, a nation as great as the United States should strive to achieve. However, the current budgetary climate makes any of these investments extremely difficult.

Just 2 years ago, record budget surpluses were projected that could have been used to fund this priority. Today, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, CBO, projects massive deficits for many years to come, nearly 40 percent of which CBO attributes to the Bush tax cuts.

The President chose to make tax cuts his economic priority, effectively at the expense of investments in our children. The Republican budget resolution, adopted earlier this year, made the same choice. It prioritized additional tax cuts, while providing no additional resources to the Senate Agriculture Committee for child nutrition or other improvements to food programs.

Unless we can take steps to reorder the priorities in the federal budget, this means any costs resulting from improvements we might make in nutrition programs must be paid for by cutting the same programs or by increasing the deficit.

The administration has proposed to require schools to increase their efforts to verify participating families' incomes which would have the result of generating budget savings. Sound reasonable? But the Department of Agriculture just released results from several new studies that show increasing income verification does virtually nothing to reduce errors but will significantly diminish participation by eligible children. The burden would be particularly acute for small, rural schools, like many in my state, that do not have the personnel to handle the increased paperwork. We clearly should

not attempt to feed one group of children by forcing another group of eligible children out of the program.

I support harmonizing the school meal income guidelines with the WIC income guidelines, as S. 1549 proposes. Under current circumstances, this may take some time to achieve. I will continue to work with my colleagues on a bipartisan basis to explore how we might make improvements in our nutrition programs, including advancing the goal of S. 1549. I encourage my colleagues to take a serious look at S. 1549 and consider promoting this legislation as part of a comprehensive, long-term strategy to invest in important national nutritional priorities.

#### LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred in Islip Terrace, NY. On September 23, 2003, two brothers from Colombia were attacked by white students at East Islip High School. The incident, in which anti-Hispanic epithets were spoken, occurred in a hallway of the school. The victims, a junior and a senior, were treated at Southside Hospital for undisclosed injuries.

I believe that government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

#### DIABETES PREVENTION & TREATMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, it is a privilege to be a sponsor with Senator COCHRAN of S. 1666, the Diabetes Prevention & Treatment Act of 2003.

Today, our health care system spends 1 out of every 4 Medicare dollars on diabetes. Almost 200,000 Americans die because of diabetes each year, and almost one-third of Americans alive today are not aware that they have the disease.

The tragedy is that with the simple preventive and treatment measures available today, we can dramatically improve the likelihood that patients will never develop type 2 diabetes, and we can give good care to those who have type 1 diabetes. With only 30 minutes of walking a day and a healthy diet, people can reduce their chance of developing type 2 diabetes by 58 percent.

Despite these innovations far too many citizens do not realize they are