

Kazakhstan are directly or indirectly controlled by his family," said Miklos Marschall, the group's regional director. "But on the other hand, unlike other Central Asian countries, he is willing to initiate some step-by-step reforms. From our perspective, he's not the worst."

Nazarbayev visited the Bush White House in 2001—before the Justice Department filed a case in 2003 alleging that he had taken bribes and before the president issued a 2004 proclamation banning corrupt foreign officials from visiting the United States. A State Department official said hundreds of foreign officials have been denied visas under Bush's proclamation but could not explain how it would not apply in Nazarbayev's case.

U.S. prosecutors have charged businessman James H. Giffen with steering \$78 million in bribes to Nazarbayev and one of his former prime ministers in the 1990s in exchange for influence in oil transactions. In addition to cash transferred to secret Swiss bank accounts, Nazarbayev, originally identified in court papers simply as "KO-2," allegedly received two snowmobiles, an \$80,000 speedboat, fur coats for his wife and daughter, and tuition for his daughter at a Swiss boarding school and later George Washington University.

Giffen's attorneys have argued that he is not guilty because his actions were sanctioned by the U.S. government. Giffen says he disclosed his activities to agencies including the CIA and was encouraged to continue for national security reasons. The Justice Department is appealing a court decision allowing the defense. The case is scheduled to go to trial Jan. 16.

MEDICARE

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, during the August recess, I heard from many physicians in Nebraska who are concerned about the looming cut in their Medicare payments. If Congress does not act soon, Nebraska's doctors will face a \$17 million loss next year. In addition, the cuts are scheduled to continue for the following 8 years if they are not reversed. During this time period, each Nebraska physician will lose \$27,000 annually.

Physicians want to serve Nebraska's seniors, but they simply cannot afford to accept an unlimited number of new Medicare patients into their practices if Medicare payments do not keep up with the cost of providing care.

In addition to listening to my constituents, I also think it is helpful to listen to experts when making policy decisions. Medicare payment policy can be quite complicated, so Congress established the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, MedPAC, to make recommendations to us. MedPAC consists of a group of health experts that annually makes Medicare policy recommendations to Congress. For next year, MedPAC recommended that Congress eliminate the scheduled payment cut and instead raise physician payments by 2.7 percent.

I think we should listen to Nebraska's doctors and policy experts and stop the Medicare cut. We are running out of time. Congress must act now to stop the impending cuts. America's seniors and our health professionals deserve no less.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO ARTHUR SAUVIGNE, MD

• Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure today to pay tribute to Dr. Arthur Sauvigne, a doctor who has made it his life's work to care for veterans. Dr. Sauvigne, known to most everyone as Art, has decided to retire from the Veterans' Administration after 33 years of remarkable service. His most recent role has been as chief of staff at the VA Medical Center in White River Junction, VT. Although we have been assured that he will continue to treat veterans in a part-time capacity at the VA, I take this moment to honor him for his years of dedicated service.

Art began his VA career as a resident in internal medicine at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. I like to think that Art's commitment to caring for veterans began with this residency because he has stayed with the VA in many different capacities ever since. Over the past 33 years he has held the following positions at the White River Junction VA: staff physician, associate chief of staff for ambulatory care, director of the emergency room, acting primary care service line manager, and acting specialty and acute care service line manager. Art became chief of staff in 1997.

In the time that my staff and I have known Art, we have been amazed at his breadth of medical and administrative knowledge and impressed by his vision. It seems that his ideas on improving service to veterans—especially veterans in rural areas—have, once implemented, served as national models. One needs only spend 10 minutes with Art to get the true sense of his passion for delivering service to veterans in their community. In fact, the White River Junction VA was a pioneer in his arena. Long before the Congressional mandate and establishment of the Community Based Outpatient Clinic, CBOC, a mobile clinic housed in a motor coach began seeing patients in 1989. In 1991, a small one-room clinic housed in the Burlington, VT, Vet Center became the predecessor of future CBOC's.

Art also has a firm belief that the VA, as a Government-run health care system, has a greater calling and higher need to provide excellence in care to its customers. He has long been involved in designing and implementing systems to improve customer services. Over the years, Art has actively endorsed and in many cases taken the lead in establishing standards of clinical practice, improving access, advancing types of services, and promoting the education of future health care providers.

Art's hard work was recognized when the White River Junction VA Medical Center was awarded the Veterans Health Administration's Robert W. Carey Organizational Excellence

Award in 2002 and 2003 at the "Achievement level." The White River Junction VA was awarded the Carey Award at the "Trophy level" in 2004 and was the "Circle of Excellence" winner in 2005. Art would tell you this recognition had little to do with him and everything to do with the incredible staff at the White River Junction VA, but I think his leadership made it a much easier journey.

Art's departure as chief of staff will leave a huge void. His indomitable spirit and limitless energy, even when faced by mind-numbing bureaucratic inertia, are irreplaceable. He will be hugely missed. However, we are grateful that he will still be caring for Vermont and New Hampshire veterans on a part-time basis in a role he still relishes—as a VA doctor.

My staff and I wish Art the very best in his well-deserved retirement. We also want to thank Art's wife Shirley and his family for sharing Art's time and energy with us through the years. I believe I can speak for all Vermont veterans when I say that we are deeply grateful to Art for making the VA health care system a more caring and professional place for veterans.●

TRIBUTE TO CAMERON MCKINLEY

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would like to make some remarks today about Alabama's 2006–2007 Teacher of the Year, Ms. Cameron McKinley. Ms. McKinley has been a technology specialist for the Hoover City School System since she left her successful career as a businesswoman in the marketing field over 10 years ago to pursue her dream of teaching. Within the Hoover City School System, Ms. McKinley has taught computer education, instructional technology, and summer technology camps.

Ms. McKinley, a magna cum laude graduate of the University of Alabama with a bachelor's degree in corporate finance/investment management and marketing, is a national board certified teacher.

I would like to commend Ms. McKinley's efforts on behalf of her students, and sincerely congratulate her for this very high honor. I appreciate her dedication to educate our children, as we know that an investment in our children is one of the most important investments that we can make as a nation.

Ms. McKinley's decision to change careers to give her life to our children is a wonderful act and it is made all the more remarkable for being selected as Teacher of the Year. This is, indeed, a heartwarming story. With Ms. McKinley's help, and the aid of other teachers like her, we will continue to raise up quality leaders that will serve our country and our children in the years to come.●