

about 10 percent of total Medicare costs.

Many elderly smokers began their habit decades ago, when tobacco companies told us that smoking carried no health risks. But we know better now, and help is available. Since 2005, Medicare has covered the cost of smoking cessation counseling for beneficiaries with diseases caused by tobacco use, such as cardiovascular disease, lung disease, weak bones, blood clots, and cataracts. Medicare also covers counseling for beneficiaries who take medications for diabetes, hypertension, blood clots, and depression because tobacco use can reduce the effectiveness of these medicines. Medicare Part D plans also cover smoking-cessation products such as nicotine patches and gum as long as they are prescribed by a physician.

There has been significant progress in the fight against cancer, and one factor is the decline in overall smoking rates in the U.S. But a recent New York Times article entitled, "The Smoking Scourge Among Urban Blacks," reported dramatic increases in smoking among poor minorities in cities across America and particularly in my home town of Baltimore. On city streets, cigarettes are sold individually as "loosies" for 50 cents each, targeting people who cannot afford the nearly \$5 cost of a full pack. Despite the success of antismoking campaigns among American society as a whole, recent research shows that more than half of poor, Black young adults still smoke. So we must continue to do more to educate minority children and young adults about the health hazards of smoking. We won't be able to attack the problem of health disparities in earnest until we do.

Finally, it is time for the United States to recognize nicotine as a drug and regulate its use. That is why I am a cosponsor of Senator KENNEDY's bill, S. 625, the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act. This bipartisan legislation, sponsored by a majority of this body, would give the Food and Drug Administration broad new authority to regulate the manufacture, distribution, advertising, promotion, sale, and use of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products. Congress cannot in good conscience allow the Federal agency most responsible for protecting the public health to remain powerless to deal with the enormous risks of tobacco.

In closing, I want to recognize the extraordinary efforts of the American Cancer Society in raising awareness of the dangers of tobacco use and in sponsoring the Great American Smokeout. Over the years, ACS has helped millions of Americans live healthier, longer, and fuller lives. With comprehensive tobacco control programs, indoor smoke-free workplace laws, and a multitude of smoking cessation resources available today to help smokers, there has never been a better time to quit. Today's smokeout will give

many more Americans the motivation to put out their last cigarette.

THE FIRES OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA 2007

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, in October, residents of San Bernardino, San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles, Ventura, Riverside, and Santa Barbara counties faced some of the most horrific fires in California's history. At one point, flames driven by fierce Santa Ana winds forced as many as one million Californians to flee their homes and communities.

During these firestorms, 14 people lost their lives. More than 100 people sustained injuries. Almost 3,000 structures, two-thirds of them homes, were destroyed. More than 500,000 acres burned. The impact of these tragic fires will be felt by the people of California for a long time, but we will do everything we can to help rebuild the damaged lives, homes, and communities.

It is often during the very worst of times that we see the very best of humanity. I want to express my deep appreciation to all those at the local, county, State, and Federal levels who worked tirelessly to get the job done, including CalFire, the California National Guard, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Navy, the Marines, the Border Patrol, the National Park Service and, above all, the county and local fire agencies.

I was deeply touched by the thousands of courageous and tireless firefighters who worked around the clock saving the lives of people caught in the fire's path, battling flames, and protecting neighborhoods. Our California firefighters and those who traveled across the country to help risked their own lives to protect the lives and homes of others. We are so grateful to these heroes, and will never forget their bravery and dedication.

Thankfully, no firefighters or public safety officers lost their lives during the fires. But several of our firefighters were injured, some of them seriously, and I send them and their families my best wishes for a full recovery.

As we pay tribute to our firefighters, we must recognize their valor with not just words, but also deeds. That means standing up for their health and welfare, particularly as they face challenges that can last a lifetime. Our firefighters are there for all of us when we need them most and they deserve the same.

RETIREMENT OF DENIS P. O'DONOVAN

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, this is another one of those bittersweet moments for us all as we say goodbye to a member of our extended family, Denis O'Donovan. Denis will soon be retiring and bringing to a close a truly remarkable career in the Senate.

Denis has worked in several offices in the Senate during his career, but I

would like to think he saved his best for his last post—as the chief clerk of our committee, a post he has held since 1998.

I remember when I first came to the committee and had the opportunity to observe Denis at work. I don't think I have ever met anyone who had a better eye for detail, or a better sense of making sure everything was in its proper place. He has a great mind for numbers, and anyone who has ever had to work with a budget knows how frustrating it can be to make sure all the columns add up and are balanced—top to bottom—and—left to right.

As the Senate's only accountant, I admire that kind of precision. In fact, I think our love of numbers may be one of the reasons why we got along so well and enjoyed each other so much.

In the years that I have served on the committee, I have had the chance to work with Denis as its chairman and now, as the ranking member. No matter which party had control of the committee, Denis was always there, ready to help in any way he could. That is why he was such a good chief clerk for me, for Senator KENNEDY, and for all of us.

Looking back, Denis has a lot to be proud of. He has been a part of a lot of the good work the committee has done over the years. Senator KENNEDY and I have brought a long list of measures to the Senate floor and then on to the President for his signature and Denis played an important role in every one of them. Thanks in no small part to you, Denis, we have made great progress on a lot of issues that will make life better for all Americans.

Now Denis is about to head off to that thoughtful and reflective world known as retirement. He will finally have the time to finish that book—not the one he was writing—the one he was reading. For now, there will be time to do all those things Denis has been putting off for someday.

I have a family tradition we call the list of 100 things. Simply put, it is the to do list of all time. You put together a list of the 100 things you have always wanted to do someday—and then you start to get them done—one by one. It is a little more complicated than that, but I will get together with you to explain the whole procedure to you later. It will be one of our gifts to you on your retirement.

I know what you are thinking—just what I wanted—more stuff to do!

Trust me, you will enjoy this project. And the next time I see you, we will compare notes so I can see how you are doing in your quest for adventure in your retirement.

I hope Senator KENNEDY will not mind, but I would like to close with a bit of Irish cheer for you—the words of a toast I have often heard, and I am sure you have too.

Denis, as you leave us:

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face.

And rains fall soft upon your fields.
 And until we meet again,
 May God hold you in the hollow of His hand.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING DR. SCOTT D. MILLER

• Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I wish to commend a true leader, someone who has left an indelible impression on thousands of Delaware's college students. Dr. Scott D. Miller, after 10 years at the helm of Wesley College in Dover, is moving on to the next phase in his professional life.

Dr. Miller's tenure at Wesley has been marked by previously unknown success. He took over a quiet school in our State capital and turned it into a nationally recognized institution with a burgeoning and diverse student population.

Evidence of his quick influence is the fact that Wesley was named as one of just four "amazing turnarounds" featured in the book, "The Small College Guide to Financial Health," after only 5 years of Dr. Miller at the helm.

Dr. Miller's accomplishments are too numerous to name in one statement, but I would like to mention a few of the most notable:

Wesley's faculty is stronger in number and diversity, which has improved the retention rate and academic profile of Wesley's student body.

Enrollment has nearly tripled in the 10 years Dr. Miller has been president.

He has presided over the most prolific fundraising era in Wesley's history.

And he has developed community service partnerships for his students with five campus-based affiliates.

In short, Wesley College has been changed permanently—and for the better—by Dr. Miller's leadership and vision. My State's oldest private college will retain its prominence for years to come, thanks to Dr. Miller's guidance in leading that institution into the 21st century.

Dr. Scott Miller is moving on, being rewarded for his excellent work over the last decade, and he will surely be missed. But his efforts will not soon be forgotten in Dover, surely not among all of the lives that he touched.●

RECOGNIZING KITTY ROBERTS

• Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I would like to recognize Kitty L. Roberts, the superintendent of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, who will retire on December 3, 2007, after 28 years with the National Park Service. Currently the superintendent of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area and Rainbow Bridge National Monument, for many years Kitty headed the National Park Service's Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs, where she worked very closely with the Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

A native of Milton, WV, Kitty graduated from the University of Maryland

and attended graduate school at Indiana University. She then worked for the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, where she remained for 9 years.

Kitty began her career with the National Park Service in 1979 as a management assistant in the National Capital Region. She went on to become the assistant superintendent at the George Washington Memorial Parkway between 1980 and 1984. From 1984 to 1990, Kitty was the Deputy Associate Regional Director, White House Liaison, in the National Capital Region. During this time, Kitty was the NPS Inaugural coordinator and oversaw the development of East Executive Park that now serves as a visitor entrance to the White House. In 1990, Kitty returned to the George Washington Memorial Parkway, where she served as superintendent. In 1993, former National Park Service Director Roger Kennedy asked Kitty to become the assistant director for Legislative and Congressional Affairs. Kitty served in that position for 8 years, and during that time was extremely helpful to the committee in its consideration of national park-related legislation.

During Kitty's tenure as assistant director, over 230 laws were passed affecting our national parks. Among the notable laws passed during that period were the California Desert Protection Act and the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996, with its creation of 5 new park units, 10 new national heritage areas, 12 park boundary adjustments, and numerous other changes that benefited several units of the National Park System. Kitty also worked on the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, which doubled the amount of funding for national park roads, and the National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998, which reformed the National Park Service's concessions program, created a park research mandate, and supported employee career development and training.

In February 2001, Kitty left Washington to become the superintendent of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area and Rainbow Bridge National Monument. During her time at the park, Kitty has worked on a policy for personal watercraft and off-highway vehicle use. She has found ways to maintain access to Lake Powell even as ongoing drought conditions have led to a 145-foot drop in the lake's water level. Perhaps one of her most important contributions has been a program of public education to prevent needless deaths due to individuals swimming behind boats where exhaust fumes were vented. In early June of this year, Kitty presided with the President of the Navajo Nation at the grand opening of the new floating marina village at Antelope Point, with its architectural elements from the surrounding red rock landscape and its unique cooling system using lake water from 75 feet below the surface.

Kitty has had a distinguished career with the National Park Service and will be greatly missed by those she has worked with over the years, both in the Park Service and in Congress. I want to congratulate Kitty on her retirement and thank her for the many contributions she has made toward making our national parks the pride of our Nation, and I wish her the best in the years ahead.●

TRIBUTE TO JERRY PARKS

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to Jerry Parks of Georgetown, KY, for being recognized on USA Today's 2007 All-USA Teacher Team.

For 10 years USA Today has selected K-12 teachers nationwide for the All-USA Teacher Team. This year the nominees were judged on how well they recognize and respond to the needs of their students as well as the effectiveness of their teaching methods. Each team member demonstrates dedication and enthusiasm for educating the youth and future of this great country.

Mr. Parks, a seventh-grade social studies teacher at Georgetown Middle School, was recognized in the top 8 of 20 teachers on this national team. His creative hands-on teaching techniques produce students who value education and are eager to learn more. Mr. Parks also holds a doctorate in theology and has had several teacher guides published. Because of his commitment to education, Mr. Parks established student scholarships with the profits from these publications. His passion for teaching serves as an inspiration to his peers and to teachers everywhere.

I now ask my fellow colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Parks for his remarkable achievement and his devotion to educating young minds. Our Nation can look forward to a brighter future because of individuals like Jerry Parks.●

COMMENDING JOE FREEMAN

• Mrs. DOLE. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Joe Freeman of Mistletoe Meadows Christmas Tree Farm in Laurel Springs, NC, for winning the National Christmas Tree Association's 2007 National Christmas Tree Contest. As the Grand Champion, Mr. Freeman has the distinguished honor of providing this year's Official White House Christmas Tree. This storied tradition began in 1966, and I applaud Mr. Freeman for producing North Carolina's tenth Official White House Christmas Tree. After winning at the State level, the Mr. Freeman's prized 18½ foot Fraser fir was selected at the national competition. The prized tree was chosen to be the Blue Room Christmas Tree by White House Chief Usher Stephen Rochon, Superintendent of Grounds Irv Williams, Grounds Foreman Mike Lawn and White House Florist Nancy Clarke. Mr. Freeman and Ms. Linda Jones will have the honor of presenting the prized Blue Room Tree