

providers in dental health professional shortage areas—HPSA—by offering incentives in the form of scholarships and loan repayments to primary care dentists and registered dental hygienists to practice in underserved communities. The Corps has awarded more than 1,100 new loan repayment awards to dentists and nearly 300 new loan repayment awards to registered dental hygienists. But this is not nearly enough to erase the shortages. The NHSC has also implemented a part-time service program for providers who did not wish to make a full-time commitment, and I am hopeful that this new option will increase participation in the coming years.

Our Nation has made significant progress in improving children's dental health in the 7 years since Deamonte died, but there is still much work to be done. The access problem in some communities has become so severe that many people are forced to seek treatment for tooth pain in the Nation's emergency rooms, increasing the overall cost of care and receiving uncoordinated care in the least cost-efficient setting. In fact, more people seek treatment in emergency rooms for tooth pain than they do for asthma.

I will continue to work to increase funding for grants to States and expand training opportunities for dentists. We do not have enough professionals who are trained and available to treat children and adults with dental problems, and it is our responsibility to fix that. We must improve public reimbursement to dental providers in offices and clinics so that no one who needs treatment will be turned away.

Soon, Congress will turn again to the Reauthorization of the CHIP program, and I will be once again fighting for the strongest possible language we can get to promote children's oral health. For my colleagues who may not be familiar with CHIP's track record on oral health, I would like to leave you with three facts:

First, tooth decay is the single most common chronic disease of childhood, and it is five times more common than asthma. The complications of dental disease, which we now know can be fatal, are completely and easily preventable if we give children the care they need. Second, because of Congress's passage of the 2009 Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act, in 2013, more than 8 million American children had comprehensive dental coverage through CHIP. Third, CHIP has kept comprehensive coverage affordable. Under CHIP, families cannot pay more than 5 percent of their annual income in out-of-pocket costs for their children's medical and dental care.

What we have been able to achieve for children is due to support in Congress and also to the efforts of the many nonprofit organizations, universities, and providers who are also working across the Nation to make sure

that we will never forget Deamonte and never forget our responsibility to improving oral health care for America's children.

On this sad anniversary, in Maryland and throughout the Nation there are signs of hope for the future of oral health care. I thank my colleagues for the role they have played in this process and look forward to working with them in the months to come to strengthen oral health care access for our Nation's children.

#### TRIBUTE TO ANTONIA FERRIER

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to Antonia Ferrier on my staff. After 4 years of trying to keep this tough old bird in line, she'll be leaving my office in the coming days. She will most certainly be missed.

Antonia first came to Capitol Hill to work for the former distinguished majority leader and my good friend, Bill Frist from Tennessee. After that, she went on to serve on the staff of another one of our former colleagues, Olympia Snowe. Now, Maine is pretty different from Tennessee, but I'm sure it felt like a bit of a homecoming for Antonia, who is from Massachusetts. After more than 3 years with Senator Snowe, Antonia made her way across the Capitol Rotunda to work for Senator ROY BLUNT during his time as the House Republican Whip.

For a Senate purist like Antonia, one House Member probably felt like enough, but she then went on to serve JOHN BOEHNER during his time as the House Republican leader. Finally, we were able to woo her back on this side of the Capitol to come be a member of our team.

As I said, Antonia is a Senate purist. She understands the Senate's role in our system of government, she appreciates the personalities and complexities of those that are honored to serve here, and she knows how much the work we do here impacts the lives of Americans from Tennessee to Maine, and Ohio to Utah. And, given her experience, she understands the House very much as well.

I'll deeply miss having Antonia around, not only for her sage advice and counsel, but also for her wit and sense of humor, and her willingness for straight-talk. I think she would say that the hardest part of her job is protecting me from myself. That's a tough job for anyone. And, I have to say that she's been up to the task, even during those times when I've made it particularly difficult.

I want to thank Antonia for her service to me, to Utah, and to the Senate over these last several years. She has been an amazing asset, and I wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

#### REMEMBERING JOHN S. WILLIAMS

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President. I am grateful for the opportunity to pay tribute to a truly extraordinary public

servant, father, grandfather, and neighbor—Mr. John S. Williams. Sadly, John passed away this week leaving behind a legacy of dedication and service.

John worked for an unprecedented 27½ years as the executive director of the Five County Association of Governments, AOG; only the third person to serve in that position since the association's inception. This association was formed to address the needs and challenges facing the southwest region of Utah—Beaver, Garfield, Iron, Kane, and Washington Counties. As the director, John set a tone of hard work, commitment, and a belief in the greatness of southwest Utah. He was comfortable not only in the director's chair—but rolling up his sleeves and getting the hard work done.

He was a key figure in promoting economic development in southwest Utah, as well as the whole State. He helped formulate policy and address issues facing an increasingly expanding region including: infrastructure, public lands issues, population growth, and quality of life. The Five County AOG has a reputation throughout Utah as an association that makes a difference and helps forge the way, largely in part because of the strength of John's leadership for almost three decades.

While working with John on many occasions throughout my Senate service I have always found him as someone who deeply cared about those he served, and had ideas and solutions to address the challenges facing a very important region of Utah. The example he set will be felt for generations to come; and the five counties he served are better prepared for the future challenges and triumphs they will face in the coming years.

Elaine and I convey our deepest sympathies to John's wife Jamie, his five children, and many grandchildren. May our Heavenly Father bless them with peace and comfort at this time. The contributions and impact John made on his family, his community, and our State will be felt and appreciated for generations to come. Utah is a better State because of the service John rendered throughout his life and his strong advocacy of southwest Utah.

#### FREEDOM FOR BOB LEVINSON

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I rise today on the anniversary of Bob Levinson's disappearance from Kish Island off the coast of Iran.

March 9 will mark 7 excruciating years of waiting and wondering for Bob's family who have desperately sought assistance from the Governments of Iran and the United States in finding him and bringing him home.

Bob, a retired FBI agent, is now one of the longest held Americans in our Nation's history. Bob's safe return is his family's highest priority—as it must remain for the U.S. Government as well.

At the beginning of this year, this body unanimously passed a resolution