

the school day—a minimum of 5 hours or as long as a typical day in the K–12 system.

Never before, not even in No Child Left Behind, has the Federal Government told school districts in Maryville or Murfreesboro or Memphis how to run their schools in such detail.

The bill also includes requirements that sound a lot like what hasn't worked so well under No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, and waivers, such as: that States must ensure that preschool teachers have a bachelor's degree in early childhood education—sounds a lot like the Highly Qualified Teacher provision; that States must establish early learning and development standards and age appropriate standardized tests aligned to the State's academic standards under No Child Left Behind, which for more than 40 States now means Common Core.

Furthermore, that these standards, curriculum, and tests must be: developmentally appropriate; culturally and linguistically appropriate; address all domains of school readiness, including physical well-being, et cetera.

Then there are an assortment of vague requirements on States, which will depend on the Department of Education issuing hundreds of pages of regulations and guidance of histories to define and implement, such things as: vision, dental, and health services; mandatory family engagement such as parent conferences; nutritious meals and snack options—what they consist of; physical activity programs that are evidence-based according to guidelines; evidence-based health and safety standards; regular classroom observations and coaching for teachers.

Finally, the bill also includes new maintenance of effort standards. We know what happened with those in Medicaid, during the last 5 or 6 years.

As State economies tumbled, States were forced to continue to spend more on Medicaid by maintenance of effort requirements. And that resulted in less money for higher education and driving up tuition rates.

Washington would pay 90 percent of the program's cost for the first year for the Democratic proposal, but the required share of State spending will increase each year, eventually half the bill to Governors after 8 years. And that also has a familiar ring.

Sounds a lot like Medicaid, where the State average is about 43 percent and most of the rules are Federal, even though the States pay nearly half.

What has happened with that model? Well, when I was Governor in the 1980s in Tennessee, Medicaid was 8 percent of the State budget. Today it's 30 percent of the State budget.

Americans don't want a national school board. We'd like to move in a different direction. I'd like to take, as an example of why we should, the testimony of a witness at a HELP Committee hearing on this issue.

Superintendent John White of Louisiana testified that the "greatest bar-

rier to achieving these conditions that we want in early childhood education—no less than financial resources themselves—is the fragmentation of our country's early childhood education system."

He went on to say: "You can't claim to be providing full access and full choice when you have separate centers, separate funding streams, separate sets of regulations that literally require no coordination in the offering of seats, even within the same neighborhood."

That's the situation in Louisiana, and the Government Accountability Office says it's true around the country.

Forty-five different programs support early education and child care. Thirty-three of those permit the use of funds to provide support or related services to children from birth through 5. Twelve programs have the explicit purpose to provide childhood and preschool or child care services.

Then there are 5 tax provisions that subsidize private expenditures in the area of early childhood and preschool programs.

This year, Congress appropriated roughly \$15 billion for the 12 programs explicitly focused on early childhood, Head Start, Race to the Top, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

And then there's another \$3 billion in tax credits.

An earlier witness before our committee estimated that when you add up the 33 programs, the total Federal spending in this area is now about \$22 billion.

So, we believe a better way to give all children the best early learning experience is to provide States with the flexibility to use some or all of the more than \$22 billion in Federal money that we already spend and allow States to use it in the way that best suits their needs.

Under my proposal, Superintendent White would be able to take Louisiana's share of the \$22 billion that the Federal Government spends on early childhood and preschool programs—about \$300 million—and do just that. In Tennessee, we'd have about \$440 million a year.

If we were given this kind of flexibility, we could increase the vouchers for child care from 39,000 to 139,000; or the State-funded voluntary preschool program, from 18,000 4-year-olds to 109,000. Or we could expand Head Start, from 17,000 children to 56,000 or some combination of that. We could create Centers of Excellence and otherwise leave to Tennessee to figure out what works best for Tennesseans.

So, the question is not whether, but how best to make early childhood education available to the largest possible number of children. The answer to that question is to not create a national school board for 3- and 4-year-olds to go along with the one we've effectively established for K–12 education.

That is why I opposed the Democratic proposal and instead offered a proposal to enable States to take responsibility for developing the early learning systems that best meet their needs and to use up to \$22 billion of existing federal dollars to help fund that.

BELARUS

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, the 2014 Ice Hockey World Championship began on May 9 in Minsk, Belarus, one of the last vestiges of authoritarianism in Europe. By hosting a global sports competition that promotes integrity and observes uniform regulations, Belarus should take this opportunity to show the international community that it will follow suit and support the fundamental rights and freedoms of its citizens.

This year also marks the 20th year of President Lukashenka's iron-fisted Presidency whose elections have been marred by the detention of political opponents and civil society actors, as well as the lack of an open and free press. During his rule, he has eliminated all political opposition, eroded the rule of law, and curtailed the freedoms of expression, assembly, and association.

President Lukashenka, the international community calls on you to support the right of every Belarusian citizen to be free. We call on you to take decisive steps towards making Belarus an open and democratic country where the rules of politics, as well as those of sports, are governed by free and fair standards.

NATIONAL TOURETTE SYNDROME AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I wish to recognize National Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month, which runs from May 15, 2014, through June 15, 2014. This annual observance is an opportunity for us to help the many Americans affected by Tourette syndrome by raising awareness and encouraging expanded investments in research.

Tourette syndrome, or TS, is a neurological disorder that typically develops during childhood. TS is characterized by repetitive, stereotyped, involuntary movements and vocalizations called tics, which can range from mild to severe and disabling. The National Institutes of Health, NIH, estimates that 200,000 Americans have the most severe form of TS and as many as 1 in 100 Americans exhibit milder symptoms such as chronic motor or vocal tics. Additionally, people with TS often have other co-occurring mental or behavior health conditions. A child diagnosed with TS has a 79-percent chance of being diagnosed with another condition such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, ADHD, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, OCD, anxiety or depression.