

nomination and hearing process two months ago and is strongly supported by Senator GRASSLEY and Senator HARKIN from her home state. She will make an outstanding judge.

Filling these vacancies with qualified nominees is the concern of all Americans. The Senate should treat minority and women and all nominees fairly and proceed to consider them.

To reiterate, I commend and congratulate Judge Johnnie Rawlinson from Nevada who was confirmed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. She is going to do an outstanding job on that circuit. Senator Harry REID of Nevada, who worked so hard, deserves special mention as, of course, does Senator Dick BRYAN for joining in support of her nomination.

I hope this is a mark that maybe we will do better in the Senate and start moving judges, similar to what a Democratic-controlled Senate did in the last year of President George Bush's term in office when we moved judicial nominations right through to practically the last day we were in session.

There has been a lot of talk about what should be done or should not be done, what is being held up or should not be held up. Whether it is an accident or otherwise, it is a fact that women and minorities take a disproportionate amount of time to go through the system. That does not look well for the Senate.

If I could make a recommendation, I would join an unusual ally in that. Gov. George W. Bush of Texas Presidential nominations should be acted upon by the Senate within 60 days. He said:

The Constitution empowers the President to nominate officers of the United States, with the advice and consent of the Senate. That is clear-cut, straightforward language. It does not empower anyone to turn the process into a protracted ordeal of unreasonable delay and unrelenting investigation. Yet somewhere along the way, that is what Senate confirmations became—lengthy, partisan, and unpleasant. It has done enough harm, injured too many good people, and it must not happen again.

Governor Bush is right. President Clinton has said virtually the same thing. I have said the same thing. The fact is, if you do not want somebody to be a judge, then vote them down, but do not do this limbo thing where sometimes they wait for years and years. Marsha Berzon waited 2½ years just to get a vote. They were not going to vote on this woman. When she finally came to a vote, she was confirmed overwhelmingly.

Richard Paez is a distinguished jurist, an outstanding Hispanic American. He waited not 1 year, not 2 years, not 3 years, but he waited 4 years for a vote, and then when his nomination was voted on, it was overwhelming.

Let us do better. Let's move on some of the names that are here, such as Kathleen McCree Lewis, Helene White, Bonnie Campbell, Enrique Moreno, and others who have been held up so long. Let's move on them. It can be done.

Mr. President, I thank my good friend from Kansas for his forbearance. He has now done enough penance for 1 day.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, last evening, the Senate completed action on the Fiscal Year 2001 appropriations bill for Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies. The bill was passed by a vote of 79 to 13. I commend Senator COCHRAN, Chairman of the Subcommittee, and Senator KOHL, the Ranking Member, for crafting this very important legislation.

This bill includes many ongoing programs that are vital to the American people. It also includes a number of items to deal directly with problems that our farmers and rural residents are facing this year as they struggle to recover from natural disasters last year, and are now faced with the reality of continuing drought.

Overall, in Division A, the bill provides a total of \$75.6 billion in non-emergency spending for fiscal year 2001. Of that amount, a little more than \$60 billion is for mandatory programs, such as Food Stamps and reimbursements to the Commodity Credit Corporation which funds a wide array of commodity, conservation, and international trade programs. The balance of the non-emergency appropriations in this bill, \$14.8 billion, is directed toward discretionary programs and represents an increase of nearly \$900 million above last year's level. In addition to the \$75.6 billion in Division A of the bill, Division B, as passed by the Senate, contains approximately \$2.2 billion in emergency agricultural disaster assistance for the nation's farmers and rural communities. I will discuss these vital programs in more detail later in these remarks.

America's farmers have made this nation the breadbasket of the world. Our ability to produce plentiful safe, wholesome, and nutritious food is one of the basic foundations of economic and national security. The term "food security" may be little more than a vague concept to most, unfortunately not all, Americans; but in much of the world, it is an everyday reminder of the struggle to survive. The prosperity and the fate of nations throughout the history of the world are closely tied to their agricultural production capabilities. When the fields of Carthage were sown with salt by the legions of Rome,

that once-great nation of northern Africa soon disappeared into the sands of the Sahara.

This appropriations bill includes many of the tools American farmers need to sustain their historically high levels of production. Research, conservation, credit, and many more items important to agriculture receive much-needed funding in this bill. Programs to promote exports of U.S. agricultural products throughout the world are included in this bill. American producers, and consumers alike, benefit from the work of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, and we should all join in supporting their efforts.

Agriculture exists in every part of the nation, and every Senator knows the important contributions farmers make to his or her state. When one thinks of farming, instant images of broad, flat fields of wheat or corn, spreading from horizon to horizon, easily come to mind. Visions of combines combing the Great Plains and of massive grain elevators reaching to Midwestern skies are a solid part of our national consciousness. But farming does not only exist in the flat plains of Kansas or the rolling hills of Iowa or in many of the other states most familiar to Americans as "Farm Country." Agriculture exists in the tropics of Hawaii and the bogs of Maine. Agriculture exists in the orchards of the Pacific Northwest and in the groves of Florida. Agriculture even extends to the vegetable fields and reindeer herds of my Chairman's state, Alaska.

West Virginia is not famous as an agricultural state, but West Virginia agriculture is changing to meet the new demands of consumers. The future of agriculture includes diversification to meet the changing demands of consumers at home and abroad. Farmers in West Virginia, through the help of the Appalachian Farming Systems Research Center at Beaver, West Virginia, and the National Center for Cool and Cold Water Aquaculture at Leetown, West Virginia, are but two examples of the diversification of agriculture in my state and I am glad this bill provides increased funding for these two facilities.

In addition to the regular programs funded in this bill, I would also like to mention a few of the items included to address special problems farmers and rural residents have to face this year. Last year, Congress provided more than \$8 billion in emergency funding to help farmers and rural areas respond to adverse weather and depressed commodity prices. This year, all indicators point to continuing drought conditions and prices for some commodities have fallen more than ever in history.

While it is important for Congress to respond to emergencies, it is equally, or perhaps more, important to prepare for them. Last year, many livestock producers in West Virginia suffered horrible losses from drought and, in many cases, had to liquidate their herds at depressed prices. Congress finally provided assistance to cover the

costs of feed, but in many cases the assistance was too little and, more tragically, too late.

Accordingly, I met with USDA Secretary Dan Glickman this spring and outlined for him my plan to put in place a program that will help prevent a repeat of some of the losses suffered by West Virginia farmers and farmers all across America last year. The Secretary agreed that action now is proper to provide him the tools necessary to mitigate losses that are likely to occur this summer. While it is beyond the power of the Congress to overcome the awesome powers of nature, it is within our power, and our responsibility, to provide assistance to the American people in the most effective manner possible. Where the likelihood of drought is certain, where acts of prevention are possible, there lies our responsibility and I want to thank my colleagues for supporting an amendment I offered to put these preventive tools in place.

Pursuant to my amendment, this bill provides \$450 million for livestock assistance this year in the event drought conditions continue to worsen. These funds will only be available in counties which receive an emergency designation by the President or the Secretary. In the event no emergencies are designated, none of these funds will be spent. On the other hand, the ounce of prevention we provide in this bill may easily outweigh the costs producers, and possibly taxpayers, will later realize unless we act now to help mitigate losses that are likely to occur.

Drought conditions not only affect production agriculture, they drain water resources necessary for basic community services in rural areas. Currently, drought conditions in part of the nation are so severe that rural water systems are at risk from depleted supplies, wells will not function, and the increased demand for water have compounded this problem to the point of crisis. I am pleased that my amendment also provides \$50 million for rural communities that are at-risk due to natural emergencies or due to threats to public health or the environment. Similar to the livestock provision mentioned above, a portion of these funds would be limited to counties which have received an emergency designation by the President or the Secretary and for applications responding to the specific emergency.

In addition to addressing problems related to drought, my amendment, as contained in this bill includes a number of other provisions. Included is \$443 million to help dairy farmers recover from the current collapse in market prices. Also, \$58 million is provided for compensation to producers from losses due to pests and disease such as Plum Pox, the Mexican Fruit Fly, Pierce's Disease, and Citrus Canker.

During floor consideration of the bill, a manager's package of some fifteen amendments was adopted to provide additional emergency agricultural as-

sistance to farmers across the nation. That package of manager's amendments total approximately \$1 billion, the largest portion of which, \$450 million, will provide emergency assistance to producers who have suffered losses from recent natural disasters. This assistance will help offset losses from the heavy rains that recently affected more than one million acres of farmland in North Dakota, as well as losses in other parts of the country affected by drought. Additionally, \$175 million was included to assist apple producers who have suffered from a combination of both market and quality losses; \$40 million was provided to help compensate for losses due to citrus canker; \$70 million was provided to fund emergency watershed operations in a number of states; an additional \$50 million was included for community facility needs associated with losses from Hurricane Floyd and related storms; and the balance of items in this package will assist producers and rural communities across the nation in a variety of ways.

Overall, this bill strikes a good balance for providing funds to meet regular, ongoing needs and to prepare for problems that we are likely to experience later this year. I especially thank Senator STEVENS and Senator COCHRAN, Chairmen of the Appropriations Committee and the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, respectively, and all members of the Appropriations Committee for their support of provisions which I authored that will provide the Secretary of Agriculture the ability to meet the developing drought conditions this summer. By meeting this challenge head on, we will be helping producers avoid a repeat of some of the terrible losses incurred last year. I support this bill, and I urge all Senators to support this bill.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

OYSTER INDUSTRY IN CONNECTICUT

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to describe a distressing situation that 23 Connecticut oyster farmers found themselves in earlier this summer, and to offer my thanks to Mr. COCHRAN and Mr. KOHL for helping Mr. DODD and myself correct an injustice to these hardworking individuals. In early June, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) informed twenty-three Connecticut oyster farmers by letter that they must repay approximately \$1.5 million total in federal disaster aid payments that were granted due to a federal error. I am pleased to say that Mr. DODD's and my amendment to forgive that repayment was included in the Agriculture Appropriations bill.

The oyster industry is important to Connecticut's economy—prior to 1997, Connecticut's annual oyster crop was second only to Louisiana's. However, between 1997 and 1999, our oyster industry was devastated by a disease known as MSX, resulting in massive losses. The market value plummeted from a 1995 high of \$60 million to just \$10 million.

In the face of this severe loss to the oyster industry, the Connecticut Farm Service Agency (FSA) approved and distributed modest disaster payments to the oyster farmers in 1999. The payments were made pursuant to the 1998 Crop Loss Disaster Assistance Program (CLDAP), which is administered by the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). With this critically needed assistance, the oyster farmers began to rebuild their livelihoods.

Earlier this year, long after the funds had been invested and for purely technical reasons, USDA determined that the payments were made in error because most Connecticut oyster farmers grow their oysters in open beds rather than controlled environments. On June 2, 2000, USDA sent each of the 23 farmers a letter stating that they must repay the disaster assistance that they received the previous year. The oyster farmers were understandably frustrated and distressed by the message. I note, Mr. President, that only a small portion of oyster farming nationwide is done within controlled environments, and that production in a controlled environment was not a prerequisite for disaster assistance following damage to Florida and Louisiana oyster farms by Hurricane Andrew.

USDA has acknowledged that it bears responsibility for the error in disaster aid payments. However, USDA strongly believes that it would have "no legislative authority to waive ineligible disaster aid payments" without specific Congressional direction. Consequently, the Connecticut delegation has worked closely with USDA legal counsel to draft legislation exempting the oyster farmers from repaying the ineligible disaster aid. Earlier this month, the House of Representatives included such an amendment in the House Agriculture Appropriations bill; the Congressional Budget Office scored the amendment as neutral.

Today, I am pleased that the Senate has also recognized the injustice of holding hardworking oyster farmers responsible for federal error by including an amendment to forgive these payments in the Senate Agriculture Appropriations bill. Again, I thank Mr. COCHRAN and Mr. KOHL and their staffs for assisting Mr. DODD, myself, and especially the Connecticut oyster farmers in correcting an unfortunate situation.

DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I want to today offer my support and cosponsorship of the Dorgan amendment providing additional disaster assistance to producers hit hard by floods, drought, and other severe storms that have resulted in crop destruction and disease. In Minnesota, floods in the northwest and southern portions of the state have devastated many farmers causing some crops to rot in the field.

This is yet another hit for the struggling Minnesota farm economy. Portions of my state have faced heavy

rains and flooding for several years now, and things aren't getting any easier for these hardworking farmers also hit with low prices. In northwest Minnesota, FSA estimates that nearly 50 percent of the acreage has been affected by floods. In nine counties in Minnesota, there have been nearly 1.2 million acres affected. In Mahnomen county, 100 percent of the acreage has been impacted by floods.

FEMA funding and disaster assistance under the Small Business Administration and other programs do not provide these farmers the help they need. If we are willing to help farmers who are suffering from falling prices, as we have already done this year through supplemental spending, we should also come to the aid of those suffering from natural disaster, as we do on a routine basis each year as we experience such disasters.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important amendment.

EMERGENCY METH LAB CLEANUP FUNDS
AMENDMENT

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wanted to thank the managers of the FY 2001 Agriculture Appropriations bill for their cooperation in including the amendment for emergency methamphetamine lab cleanup funds that Senator HUTCHINSON and I had offered as part of the bill's FY 2000 supplemental package.

This amendment, also cosponsored by Senator BINGAMAN, Senator BROWNBACK, Senator NICKLES and Senator THOMAS—provides \$5 million in emergency lab cleanup funds for state and local law enforcement.

A similar provision I had offered was included in the emergency package from June but it was dropped before it was attached to the Military Construction Appropriations conference, which gained final passage with a voice vote. There was strong support for this provision from both Democrats and Republicans. And it was included in both the House and Senate supplemental packages.

So, it didn't make sense why it was suddenly dropped—especially when we're talking about dangerous chemical sites that are left exposed in our local communities.

Senator HUTCHINSON from Arkansas and I last week sent a letter to the Appropriations leadership that was signed by 30 Senators, calling for this emergency funding. Our states desperately need this money or they will be forced to take money out of their own tight law enforcement budgets to cover the high cost of meth lab cleanup.

Over the years, Iowa and many states in the Midwest, West and Southwest have been working hard to reduce the supply and demand of the methamphetamine epidemic. But meth has brought another unique problem to our states—highly toxic labs that are often abandoned and exposed to our communities.

The Drug Enforcement Agency has provided in recent years critical financial assistance to help clean up these

dangerous sites, which can cost thousands of dollars each.

Unfortunately and to everyone's surprise, the DEA in March ran out of funds to provide methamphetamine lab cleanup assistance to state and local law enforcement. That's because last year, this funding was cut in half while the number of meth labs found and confiscated has been growing.

Last month, the Administration shifted \$5 million in funds from other Department of Justice Accounts to pay for emergency meth lab cleanup. And I believe that will help reimburse these states for the costs they have incurred since the DEA ran out of money. My state of Iowa has already paid some \$400,000 out of its own pocket in cleanup costs since March.

But, this is not enough to get our states through the rest of the fiscal year.

This \$5 million provision will ensure that there will be enough money to pay for costly meth lab cleanup without forcing states to take money out of their other tight law enforcement budgets to cover these unexpected costs.

If we can find the money to fight drugs in Colombia, we should be able to find the money to fight drugs in our own backyard. We cannot risk exposing these dangerous meth labs to our communities.

Again, I appreciate the managers of this bill, Senator COCHRAN and Senator KOHL for their cooperation on this important provision and I look forward to working with them to making sure it is maintained in conference.

EMERGENCY SUGARCANE RELIEF

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise today to express my gratitude to Chairman THAD COCHRAN, Ranking Member HERB KOHL, and Minority Whip HARRY REID for their efforts yesterday in passing Amendment 3976 to H.R. 4461, the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2001. This amendment, which was offered by my colleague, the Senior Senator from Hawaii, Mr. INOUE, and myself will provide emergency relief to the Hawaii sugarcane industry.

Since 1990, the Hawaii sugarcane industry has experienced a dramatic decline in its sugar production, from 55 sugarcane farms operating on approximately 162,000 acres to three sugarcane farms operating on 60,000 acres.

Compared to other sugarcane growers in the United States, Hawaii growers are at a disadvantage due to higher transportation costs incurred in shipping raw sugar to California for refining. In addition, Hawaii growers are precluded from participating in certain relief provisions of the 1996 Farm bill, such as the United States Department of Agriculture's sugar loan program, which are available to other U.S. sugar growers. Hawaii sugar growers have demonstrated a strong commitment to remain in sugar production.

They continue to be on the forefront of sugarcane production and are working to diversify its capabilities by venturing into other agricultural commodities such as fiberboard products, energy products, seed corn, and low caloric sweeteners. Without emergency funds to help Hawaii's sugar industry compensate for extraordinary low prices and high transportation costs, this distressed sector of Hawaii's agricultural industry will cease to exist.

This amendment will designate \$7.2 million as emergency funding for a grant from the Commodity Credit Corporation to the State of Hawaii. It will provide the necessary relief to this distressed sector of Hawaii's agriculture industry. This provision will provide compensation for extraordinary low prices and high transportation costs incurred by this industry.

Again, I wish to thank my colleagues for their support of this important amendment.

BISON MEAT AND MORE NUTRITIOUS INDIAN
RESERVATION FOOD SUPPLIES

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, last night the Senate passed the Fiscal Year 2001 appropriations bill for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Related Agencies with my support. Today I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Manager of the bill, Senator COCHRAN, for his willingness to accept my amendment to require that funds available in the Food Stamp Program be used for the purchase of bison meat for use in the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR). This amendment was cosponsored by Senators DORGAN, CONRAD and DOMENICI.

The buffalo has always played an important role in Native American culture, religion and history, providing Indian people with clothing, tools, and food. Bison meat is extremely healthy, low fat, and high protein meat source that in the past was a staple of nutrition for Indian people. However, when our own government decided it was best for tribes to be placed on reservations, often far away from their traditional lands, tribes lost this nutritious food source and from this, we are seeing some severe and devastating effects on the health of our Native communities.

Today, Native Americans suffer from diabetes and heart disease at five times the rate of any other group in the United States. Diabetes is a killer and the cure for it is elusive. One of the things we can do is to encourage a better diet for Native people. This is awfully hard to do when the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations is the main source of food for nearly 125,000 Native Americans and most of the meat that they do receive is canned and high in fat and sodium.

Two years ago USDA purchase \$2 million in bison, and then another \$6 million in 1999 through a bonus buy purchase and had enormous success

with it. My office has received numerous requests from Tribal Food Distribution Program Directors, tribal recipients and buffalo producers to help secure additional of bison. I sent a letter to Secretary Glickman requesting such purchases and his response is not encouraging.

Mr. President, the amendment I offered will direct USDA to use \$7.3 million of the Food Stamp Program to purchase bison meat.

The Food Stamp Program, funded at around \$21 billion, is expected to have a substantial surplus from lower participation given our healthy economy and low unemployment rate. It only seems reasonable that we could use a very small portion of those funds to help provide a healthier and culturally preferred choice of food for Native Americans.

I yield the floor.

EXPLANATION ON VOTES

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I regret that I was ill and unable to vote on the Senate floor yesterday during consideration of H.R. 4461, the FY01 Agriculture Appropriations Act.

Had I been here yesterday, I would have voted in the following manner.

On Rollcall Vote Number 218, the Harkin Amendment, I would have vote "Aye" on the motion to table.

On Rollcall Vote Number 219, the McCain Amendment, I would have vote "Aye" on the motion to table.

On Rollcall Vote Number 220, the Wellstone Amendment, I would have vote "Aye" on the motion to table.

On Rollcall Vote Number 221, the Harkin Amendment, I would have vote "No" on the amendment.

On Rollcall Vote Number 222, the Wellstone Amendment, I would have vote "Aye" on the amendment.

On Rollcall Vote Number 223, the Specter Amendment, I would have vote "No" on the amendment.

On Rollcall Vote Number 224, on the question of germaneness of the Amendment, Number 3980, I would have voted "no".

On Rollcall Vote Number 225, final passage of the H.R. 4461, the FY01 Agriculture Appropriations Act, I would have voted "Aye".

I yield the floor.

TELEWORK

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I rise today to offer an amendment that is designed to make information technology—IT—jobs a part of diverse, sustainable rural economies while helping IT employers find skilled workers. The goal of this bill is to link unemployed and underemployed individuals in rural areas and on Indian reservations with jobs in the IT industry through telework.

We are in the midst of an information revolution which has the potential to be every bit as significant to our society and economy as the industrial revolution two hundred years ago. But in recent months there has been much discussion of the "digital divide," the idea that one America is not able to

take advantage of the promise of new technologies to change the way we learn, live, and work while the other America speeds forward into the 21st Century. As advanced telecommunications and information technology become the new engines of our economy, it is critical that no communities are left behind.

Many rural communities and Indian reservations are already facing severe unemployment, underemployment, and population loss due to a lack of economic opportunities. A study last year by the Center for Rural Affairs reports that widespread poverty exists in agriculturally based counties in a six-state region including Minnesota. Over one-third of households in farm counties have annual income less than \$15,000 and, in every year from 1988 to 1997, earnings in farm counties significantly trailed other counties. Unemployment on many Indian reservations exceeds 50 percent and remote locations make traditional industries uncertain agents for economic development.

There are troubles ahead for the new economy as well: the information technology industry reports that it faces a dramatic shortage of skilled workers. The Minnesota Department of Economic Security projects that over the next decade, almost 8,800 workers will be needed each year to fill position openings in specific IT occupations. Approximately 1,000 students graduate each year from IT-related post-secondary programs in Minnesota, not anywhere near enough to fill the demand, according to this same state agency. This shortage is reflected nationwide, with industry projecting shortfalls of several hundred of thousand IT workers per year in coming years.

Rural workers need jobs. High tech employers need workers. This legislation would create models of how to bring these communities together to find a common solution to these separate challenges.

My amendment is very straightforward. It would simply add \$3 million to the very popular and successful Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program operated by USDA's Rural Utility Service for the purpose of promoting employment of rural residents through telework.

Mr. President, telework is a new term that may be unfamiliar to colleagues so I want to take a moment to explain what it is. According to the International Telework Association and Council, telework is defined as using information and communications technologies to perform work away from the traditional work site typically used by the employer. For example, a person who works at home and transmits his or her work product back to the office via a modem is a teleworker, also known as a telecommuter; as is someone who works from a telework center, which is a place where many teleworkers work from—often for different companies.

The nature of IT jobs allow them to be performed away from a traditional work site. As long as workers have the required training, and a means of performing work activities over a distance—through the use of advanced telecommunications—there is no reason that skilled IT jobs cannot be filled from rural communities.

Because it essentially allows distance to be erased, telework is a promising tool for rural development and for making rural and reservation economies sustainable. Very soon, a firm located in another city, another state or even another country need not be viewed as a distant opportunity for rural residents, but as a potential employer only as far away as a home computer or telework center. Likewise, telework arrangements allow employers to draw from a national labor pool without the hassles and cost associated with relocation.

Many businesses and organizations are already using telework or telecommuting as a tool to reduce travel and commuting times and to accommodate the needs and schedules of employees. Many metropolitan communities with high concentrations of IT industries are already looking to telework as a means of addressing urban and suburban ills such as housing shortages, traffic congestion, and pollution.

However, the IT industry does not currently view rural America as a potential source of skilled employees. Nor do many rural communities know how to turn IT industries into a viable source of good jobs to revitalize local economies. Moreover, many rural community leaders fear that providing IT job skills to rural residents—when there are no opportunities for using those skills in the community—will lead to further population losses as retrained workers seek opportunities in metropolitan areas. At the same time, management of off-site employees requires new practices to be developed by employers and in some cases, dramatic paradigm shifts. Rural areas and Indian reservations are in danger of being left behind by a revolution which actually holds the most promise for those communities which are the most distant. IT employers risk missing a pool of potential employees with a strong work ethic.

Receiving one of the teleworking grants provided for by my amendment will give rural communities access to federal resources to implement a locally designed proposal to employ rural residents in IT jobs through telework relationships, linking prospective employers with rural residents. This amendment will allow these communities to create locally developed and implemented national models for how telework can be used as a tool for rural development.

The necessary vision to of how to make telework a reality already exists in some employers and in some rural communities. In Sebeka, Minnesota—a town with a population of little more

than 600 people—a small firm called Cross Consulting was founded. That company employs over 20 people through a contract with Northwest Airlines to provide programming on Northwest's mainframe computers. These people are rural teleworkers. The new economy is not leaving Sebeka behind and we need to incubate that kind of innovation in rural areas and Indian reservations across this country.

On April 13 along with Senators BAUCUS and DASCHLE I introduced the Rural Telework Act of 2000. That legislation is a more comprehensive means to the same ends as this amendment I am offering today. I mention this legislation because it is broadly supported by private industry, rural communities, educational institutions and tribal governments.

For many jobs, in many industries, telework may be the future of work. It may also be the future of diverse, sustainable rural economies. This amendment offers an early opportunity to invest in local innovation to harness this potential and I urge its adoption.

RESALE OF ARMOR PIERCING BULLETS TO CIVILIANS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, last week the Senate passed the Department of Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 which included an amendment I sponsored to outlaw the resale of military surplus armor piercing ammunition, including .50 caliber ammunition, to civilians.

This amendment requires the Department of Defense to ensure that military surplus armor-piercing ammunition is not sold or transferred to anyone except foreign militaries or law enforcement or other government agencies. Armor piercing ammunition is extremely lethal and is powerful enough to pierce an armored limousine or helicopter. It has no legitimate civilian use.

Last year, Congress approved legislation which instituted a one-year restriction on the civilian sale of military surplus armor piercing ammunition; the amendment approved by the Senate last week would put that temporary restriction into permanent law. Before the one-year restriction was enacted, under the Conventional Demilitarization Program, a contractor working with the Department of Defense was paid \$1 per ton to take possession of its excess armor-piercing ammunition, which it was free to refurbish and resell to the general public.

The Department of Defense should not be a party to making this extraordinarily destructive ammunition available to the general public. Once available on the market, this powerful ammunition is subject to virtually no restriction, making it easier for someone to purchase armor piercing ammunition capable of piercing an armored car, than it is to buy a handgun. These loose restrictions make armor piercing

ammunition highly popular among terrorists, drug traffickers and violent criminals.

An investigation by the General Accounting Office (GAO) found that armor piercing .50 caliber ammunition is "among the most destructive and powerful ammunition available in the United States" and the "widespread availability" of the bullets "poses a threat to public safety." In the year ending in March, 1999, more than 113,000 rounds of military surplus armor piercing .50 caliber ammunition were sold in the United States.

The amendment to prohibit the resale of military surplus armor piercing ammunition is a small but important step in keeping our streets safe.

COUNTERING THE THREAT TO MONTENEGRO

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the threat to Montenegro, the sole remaining free part of the Yugoslav federation.

In the decade of the 1990s, there were four mornings on which my colleagues and I awoke to a recurring headline: new war in the former Yugoslavia, started by Slobodan Milosevic.

First, in Slovenia. Next, in Croatia. Then, in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Finally, in Kosovo.

I do not want to ever read that headline again. I never want to read the headline that says: Milosevic starts new war in Montenegro.

So let's say it loud and clear: hands off Montenegro, Mr. Milosevic!

What is going on today in the so-called Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, specifically, in the relationship between Serbia and Montenegro?

Why is it important for us to pay attention?

And what should be our stance toward developments there?

These are the questions I aim to answer in my remarks today.

Most of my colleagues are aware that "Yugoslavia" is an invented term. It was not the name with which that nation was born after the First World War. Rather, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes officially changed its name in 1929 to the "Kingdom of Yugoslavia," meaning the kingdom of the South Slavs.

That was the first Yugoslavia, the one which perished in the course of the Second World War. Out of the ashes of World War II, the second Yugoslavia arose. That was Tito's Yugoslavia. Tito had been dead for a less than a decade when his Yugoslavia began to unravel at the start of the 1990s. And now, today, all that remains of Yugoslavia is an increasingly quarrelsome couple: Serbia and Montenegro.

Once Yugoslavia was a state of 20 million inhabitants, with five constituent republics plus two semi-autonomous provinces. And today? Slovenia, gone. Croatia, gone. Bosnia and Herzegovina, gone. Macedonia, gone. Kosovo, for all intents and purposes, gone.

The two republics of Serbia and Montenegro are what is left of Yugoslavia, Mr. President. And the undeniable fact is that many people in Montenegro want no more to do with that Yugoslav federation with Serbia as it is today.

Will Montenegro someday split off to become an independent nation-state, like Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina? Maybe.

Will Montenegro someday become a partner with Serbia in a revitalized and restructured Yugoslavia? Maybe.

Will Montenegro wind up as a Serbian puppet-state, ruled from Belgrade by the likes of Slobodan Milosevic or some other Serbian authoritarian jingoist? Not if I have anything to say about it, and I hope my colleagues and the U.S. Government agree with me.

We simply must not take our eye off the ball, Mr. President. There is still a very serious risk that Milosevic will undermine and then overthrow the elected government of the Republic of Montenegro.

What would be the result of such a development? At a minimum—Montenegrins executed or thrown in jail, others forced to flee abroad as refugees, Milosevic in charge of new borders with Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, and Kosovo. At a maximum—war with a capital "W", in the Balkans, once again.

What is the seriousness of the threat today to Montenegro?

Earlier this month Milosevic made his latest move from Belgrade. He got the obedient legislature to approve changes to Yugoslavia's constitution.

The first major change was that henceforth the President of Yugoslavia will be directly elected. Guess who gets to run? Yes, Milosevic himself—who otherwise would have been obliged by the constitution to step down next year at his term's end. This means that Mr. Milosevic has, in effect, extended his legal "shelf-life" by as many as eight years.

The second major constitutional change was that the upper house of Yugoslavia's parliament henceforth will be elected proportionally. Mr. President, that's easy for us to understand. It means that, by comparison, in this Chamber, there would be a heck of a lot more Senators from California than from Delaware. In the case of Yugoslavia, it isn't hard to figure out the significance: Montenegro has 650,000 inhabitants; Serbia has 10 million.

This constitutional re-jiggering has fooled absolutely no one.

That it was immediately condemned, on July 8, both by Montenegrin President Milo Djukanovic and by the legislature of the Republic of Montenegro. The vote in the Montenegrin legislature was 36 to 18 in favor of a vigorous condemnation of the constitutional changes as "illegal and illegitimate."

The changes have also been condemned by the political opposition within Serbia.

The changes have even been condemned by the Russians, who joined in