

aware of the dangers and causes of heart disease. Through their efforts we are more prepared to fight cardiovascular disease and are armed with more effective treatments that continue to be developed. Based on the demonstrated history of dedication by these organizations and how far we have come in fighting cardiovascular disease, I look to the next fifty years with optimism and anticipation of what science will accomplish in building on the solid foundation begun in 1948.●

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE PAY FAIRNESS ACT

● Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, yesterday, I joined with my colleagues, Senators MIKULSKI, WARNER, and ROBB in introducing S. 1679, the Federal Employee Pay Fairness Act of 1998, legislation that will seek to ensure pay equity for our Nation's civil servants.

In 1990, Congress and then-President Bush approved the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act of 1990 (FEPCA), legislation which governs the pay system for all general schedule Federal employees—nearly 76% of the workforce in the Executive Branch. Recognizing that Federal employees' salaries have trailed those of their private sector counterparts by as much as 30%, this law was enacted in order to bring Federal employees toward comparability with the non-federal rates that prevail in different localities across the country.

The law set in motion a schedule to close 20% of the pay gap in 1994 and an additional 10% each year thereafter through 2002 to bring Federal salaries within 5% of their private sector counterparts. Each year, the President's Pay Agent makes a recommendation to the President as to what the rates should be in order to comply with FEPCA and remain on schedule to reach comparability by 2002. However, the law also grants the President the authority to override this schedule and set the pay adjustments annually. Since 1994, FEPCA has never been fully implemented. In fact, in 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1998, Federal workers received a reduced annual adjustment, and fully locality payments have never been provided. Thus, instead of facing a 30% pay gap in 1999 as FEPCA would have allowed, we actually face a 69.3% gap today.

The President has the authority under FEPCA to deviate from the Pay Agent's recommendation "because of national emergency or serious economic conditions." Although FEPCA cites consideration of pertinent economic measures such as the GNP, unemployment rate, budget deficit, and CIP, it does not define what constitutes a "serious economic condition." In fact, despite the record economic growth, low unemployment, and reduced budget deficits of the past five years, the President continues to cite "serious economic conditions" each

year when he deviates from the FEPCA-recommended pay levels and proposes a lower pay plan.

Our bill, a companion to legislation introduced by Congressman HOYER and others in the House, would change "serious economic conditions" to "severe economic conditions" and define "severe economic conditions" to clearly indicate when the President can exercise his authority over the pay schedule. Simply put, a "severe economic condition" is defined in the bill as "two consecutive quarters of negative growth in the real Gross Domestic Product"; the definition of recession most commonly used by economists. By providing an objective, rather than a subjective standard, this legislation will ensure that our Federal employees receive a fair and adequate pay level, as set out in current law.

Mr. President, over the years, Federal employees have made significant sacrifices in the name of deficit reduction. The Federal government is currently on target to downsize by more than 272,000 employees by 1999, and according to the Office of Personnel Management, has already reduced the number of Federal workers by more than 254,000 as of September, 1997. Additionally, these employees have persevered despite numerous attacks on their pay and earned benefits and the denigration by some in this body during the government shutdowns of 1995 and 1996. Through it all, Federal employees have continued to provide the high quality of service the American public has come to know and expect.

Now, in order to maintain the high quality of service the American people have come to expect, we need to be able to recruit and retain the most qualified and competent employees. Certainly, if we are to expect more from our Federal workforce, if these very dedicated individuals have to do more with less during this time of downsizing, then we should ensure a rate of pay comparable to what they could get in the private sector. Federal employees and the public they serve deserve no less.

Mr. President, as one who firmly believes in value of a first-rate public service, I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important legislation to provide pay equity for America's Federal worker.

Mr. President, I ask that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The text of the bill follows:

S. 1679

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Federal Employee Pay Fairness Act of 1998".

SEC. 2. LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE FOR AN ALTERNATIVE PAY PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 5303(b) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking "If, because of national emergency or serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare," and inserting "If, because of a declared state of war or severe economic conditions,".

(b) SEVERE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS DEFINED.—Section 5303(b) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(4) For purposes of applying this subsection with respect to any pay adjustment that is to take effect in any calendar year, 'severe economic conditions' shall be considered to exist if, during the 12-month period ending 2 calendar quarters before the date as of which such adjustment is scheduled to take effect (as determined under subsection (a)), there occur 2 consecutive quarters of negative growth in the real Gross Domestic Product."

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Paragraph (2) of section 5303(b) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking "an economic condition affecting the general welfare under this subsection," and inserting "economic conditions for purposes of this subsection,".

SEC. 3. LIMITATION ON AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE FOR AN ALTERNATIVE LEVEL OF COMPARABILITY PAYMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 5304a of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking "If, because of national emergency or serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare," and inserting "If, because of a declared state of war or severe economic conditions,".

(b) SEVERE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS DEFINED.—Section 5304a of title 5, United States Code, is amended by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c) and by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

"(b) For purposes of applying this section with respect to any comparability payments that are to become payable in any calendar year, 'severe economic conditions' shall be considered to exist if, during the 12-month period ending 2 calendar quarters before the date as of which such payments are scheduled to take effect (as determined under section 5304(d)(2)), there occur 2 consecutive quarters of negative growth in the real Gross Domestic Product."

SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.

(a) NEW STANDARDS APPLY STARTING WITH ANY ALTERNATIVE PAY PROPOSAL SCHEDULED TO TAKE EFFECT AFTER 1998.—The amendments made by this Act shall apply with respect to any alternative pay adjustments under section 5303(b) of title 5, United States Code, and any alternative level of comparability payments under section 5304a of such title 5, scheduled to take effect after 1998.

(b) TRANSITION PROVISIONS.—

(1) REVISED DEADLINE FOR ALTERNATIVE PAY PLAN REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED IN 1998.—For purposes of applying section 5303 of title 5, United States Code, with respect to any adjustment scheduled to take effect in calendar year 1999, subsection (b) of such section (as amended by section 2) shall be applied by substituting "December 1" for "September 1" in paragraph (1)(A) thereof.

(2) EFFECT OF AN ALTERNATIVE PAY PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BASED ON EARLIER STANDARDS.—Any plan or report submitted under the provisions of section 5303(b) or 5304a of title 5, United States Code, as applicable, relating to any alternative pay adjustments or alternative level of comparability payments proposed to take effect after 1998, if based on the standards specified in such provisions as in effect before the date of enactment of this Act—

(A) shall not be implemented; and

(B) shall not preclude the submission of any other plan or report under such provisions as amended by this Act.●

TRIBUTE TO HARRY CARAY

● Mr. BOND. Mr. President. I rise today to pay tribute to the late Harry

Caray. Last week baseball lost one of its legends, but Harry's memory and spirit will live on for many years in the hearts of his fans.

Harry grew up in my home State of Missouri, an orphan in St. Louis. Although he finished with the Chicago Cubs, Harry started his memorable career with the St. Louis Cardinals announcing for the organization for twenty-five years. Harry never left our hearts when he left to go to Chicago. I grew up listening to his undying energy and remember that he was an integral part of my developing a love of the sport.

We will best remember Harry for his rendition of "Take me out to the Ball game," his "Holy Cow!" and of course his pronunciation or perhaps mispronunciation of several players. I hope that people know that he brought a lot more to the game than just those things. He could bring excitement to a dull game and was as unpredictable as he was brash. People of all ages felt as though they were part of the game when Harry was announcing. Fans everywhere, myself included, will miss him.●

1998 PRUDENTIAL SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY AWARDS

● Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today I am proud to congratulate and honor two West Virginia students for their unselfish and outstanding volunteer service in their communities. Mark Jones of North Marion High School in Farmington and Tasha Daft of Mannington Middle School in Mannington have been named State Honorees in the 1998 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program, an honor conferred on only one high school and one middle-level student in each state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

These young volunteers, Mark and Tasha are true inspirations to all of us. They are our future, and they are diligently working to ensure the preservation of their communities as insurance for a better tomorrow.

The program that brought these young role models to our attention, The Prudential Spirit of Communities Awards, was created by The Prudential Insurance Company of America in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals in 1995 to impress upon all youth volunteers that their contributions are critically important and highly valued, and to inspire other young people to follow their example.

Mark is seen throughout his community as Cowboy Dave, his stage persona, sending a drug free message to youngsters. Since 1996, he has reached nearly 1,300 students speaking about drug and tobacco prevention. Tasha is the creator of the "Flower Power," "Trash, Treasure, Recycling," and "Our World is Worth It" projects. Through these she is able to help protect our earth and its inhabitants.

Mark and Tasha should be extremely proud to have been singled out from such a large group of dedicated volunteers. As part of their recognition, they will come to Washington in early May for several days of special events including a Congressional breakfast reception on Capitol Hill.

I highly applaud Mark and Tasha for their act in seeking to make their home communities a better place to live. I would also like to salute four other young students in my state who were named Distinguished Finalists by the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards for their volunteer service. They are: Lisa Taylor of Ansted; Ryan Donovan of Williamson; Stephanie Cooper of Hambleton; and Heather Phillips of Winfield.

All of these young people have demonstrated a level of commitment that is extraordinary and deserve our sincere admiration and respect. Their actions show how important young people are to our community and the valued asset they are to our world and future.●

EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

● Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate a group of young Indiana students who have shown great educative achievement. I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues the winners of the 1997-1998 Eighth Grade Youth Essay Contest which I sponsored in association with the Indiana Farm Bureau and Bank One of Indianapolis. These students have displayed strong writing abilities and have proven themselves to be outstanding young Hoosier scholars. I submit their names for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD because they demonstrate the capabilities of today's students and are fine representatives of our Nation.

This year, Hoosier students wrote on the theme, "Hoosier Farmers—Feeding the World, Protecting the Land." Students were encouraged to consider and creatively express the role Hoosier farmers play in feeding the world's population. I ask to have printed in the RECORD the winning essays of Jamie Ann Boone of Hamilton County and Ben Wicker of Rush County. As state winners of the Youth Essay Contest, these two outstanding students are being recognized on Friday, February 27, 1998 during a visit to our Nation's Capitol.

The essays follow:

HOOSIER FARMERS—FEEDING THE WORLD,
PROTECTING THE LAND

(By Jamie Boone, Hamilton County)

The Time: Oct. 10, 2025

The Place: Wayne Township, Hamilton County, Indiana, Planet Earth

The Farmer: Jamie Ann Boone, Age 41

All of my crops are being planted and harvested by the use of robotics engineering. Using the latest updated global positioning technology, yield monitors, and variable rate technology I am able to plant, fertilize, water, and harvest my crops from inside my computer control room.

This type of precision farming has provided farmers of the 21st century with an abundant amount of information. We are now able to predict yields and verify soil types, balance nutrient levels, and control weed pressures without even leaving our home.

Today each farmer feeds himself and 198 other people. Farmers of my parents' day in the 1990's fed 116 people. There are fewer farmers and less farm ground, but due to conservation and technology we are still able to feed the world. No-till practices, resistant seed varieties, lower chemical and insecticide rates that were begun in the 1980's and 1990's have led to the use of all organochemicals and new super resistant varieties of 2025.

Action taken in the 1990's by my parents and their farm neighbors to protect what little agriculture land that was left has provided for me and two other young farmers to farm Hamilton County's ground. This farm group lobbied to protectively zone all remaining tillable acres in 1998 for farm use only. This was necessary because urban sprawl from Indianapolis was rapidly and uncontrollably eating up farm land. In order to provide for the future food and feed needs of the world, something had to be done. My parents got farmers in our area and then across the nation to take similar action to preserve the land.

Today, in 2025, we ship high oil corn, soybeans, oil and meal, tofu beans, canola for oil, and white and yellow corn in large quantities from less ground than ever before. Our Hoosier products go to China, Russia, Japan, India, Europe, Mexico, Egypt and many other countries. Global communication advances make it possible for me to market many of my products directly to global end users.

Encouragement from school, teachers, and farm parents kept me involved in agriculture. The reason I'm a farmer today is because of the clubs, 4-H, and FFA activities I got involved in when I was younger. Watching and them helping my parents take care of their ground made me proud to assume their role in feeding the world into the 21st century.

HOOSIER FARMERS—FEEDING THE WORLD,
PROTECTING THE FUTURE

(By Ben Wicker, Rush County)

Corn and Soybeans growing side by side in the fields, cattle grazing in green pastures with hog bards in the distance . . . Welcome to Indiana!

Indiana farmers have been feeding the world for hundreds of years. Early settlers grew only what they needed for their survival. Hoosier farmers have expanded their acres and markets through the years to include domestic and world markets, primarily corn and soybeans.

The markets of tomorrow demand specialization. Already, many Hoosier farmers are adapting to this change. In 1997, ten percent of all corn acres had a special trait, like resistance to European corn borer or certain herbicides. It is estimated that those numbers will rise to twenty-five percent in 1998, and fifty percent in 2000. Some of these special traits include high oil or white corn for specific food markets. This technology is linked to high yielding hybrids for more food producing ability.

One of the greatest technological advances for agricultural has been Global Positioning Systems (GPS). GPS ensures proper placement of fertilizers, chemicals, and other crop inputs. Farmers have used this technology in conjunction with a combination of no-till, minimum till, and conventional tillage to provide the best protection for Indiana topsoil. Other conservation practices such as grassed waterways and buffer strips along