

Yesterday, Senator WYDEN and I were asked to be on program after program, and we declined, because it was not a day for pontificating about policy or political posturing. It was a day for grief and mourning. I reach out to my State. I cannot be there physically, but my heart is with you and I am in agony with you. It becomes all of us here and in any place in government not to pick a single issue and say that is why, but to look at the strings that run from Springfield to Jonesboro or in any other community in this State and to find out what is happening with the youth of America whereby they solve their problems by resorting to this kind of violence.

We must have the courage to face all of the possibilities. It isn't just the school. It isn't just the gun. It isn't just the family. It isn't any of these things in isolation, but it is all of them together.

I, for one, reach across to my colleague from Oregon, Senator WYDEN, and every other member of the Oregon delegation in this Congress, and to our Governor, and to school officials and to parents in Oregon and across this country and say, let's figure it out and let's try to prevent it from occurring again. This does not belong in America. The answers start with us.

The answers start in our hearts and in our homes, in our legislatures, in this Capitol building, but it starts with us as individuals to find out how to say no to this in the future and to prevent it. We are doing many things to punish, and those are appropriate things. It is time to do more to prevent.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. WYDEN. I thank the Chair.

As Senator SMITH has said, the people of Oregon are grieving this morning. Our hearts are out to them. This is a time when all of us from Springfield, OR, to Springfield, MA, have to take a few moments out from our daily routine and reflect on what has happened in our home State. This is supposed to be a joyous time of year for kids in high school. They think about summer vacations and plans, time with family. Once again, however, our country has been rocked by unspeakable violence. I think all of us know that young people get upset and they do foolish things. But that is not what this is about.

In times past, when young people got angry, they might throw a rock, they might throw a fist, but there was not this pattern of deadly gun violence. And so now it is critically important as we grieve for the people of our home State—my staff has been trying to help, giving blood, assisting others in the community, but it is especially important now to get beyond the kind of finger pointing and the sort of blame game that inevitably takes place here and look to how these tragedies can be prevented in the future.

I share Senator SMITH's judgment that this is about what is in our heart.

It is about taking every possible step in the schools, in the family, through the education and health programs and through law enforcement programs, to protect our citizens and to reach out to those young people in trouble. That way we have a chance to restore safety in our communities and peace of mind for parents who, right now across this country, because of Springfield and the previous tragedies, are going to get up in the morning saying to themselves: What is going to happen at my child's school today? We cannot have that. No Member of the Senate can abide by that. And that, to me, is our central challenge today.

Oregonians have come together in the last 24 hours to do what we always do best, and that is to help friends and neighbors in a time of great need. We have seen an extraordinary outpouring of concern in Springfield towards families. It is not possible to find any real comfort at a time like this, but if you can feel hopeful—we have got to get up every morning working to make this a better world and a safer world—we can take some comfort in knowing that communities like Springfield do work. They are getting up this morning and saying that they are going to try to reach out to everybody in that community, to try to do everything possible to heal in Springfield and our home State but, even more importantly, to do everything they can to make sure that tragedies like this do not happen again in Oregon or anywhere else.

That is what we need to work for in this Chamber. Government policies can help, and with the government being a better partner, and families and schools and communities rallying, as Springfield has, we can make a difference and we can stop this carnage in our schools.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate have a minute of silence in the Chamber in deference to the remarks of the two Senators from Oregon, and then the Senate would proceed with the hour of morning business beginning at that point.

(There being no objection, the Senate observed a moment of silence.)

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business for not to exceed 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

ISTEA

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, later today, the Senate will vote on the con-

ference report on H.R. 2400, the ISTEA reauthorization legislation. I regret that I am unable to be here to vote on this important piece of legislation, but I must depart momentarily to speak to the 25th Anniversary Reunion of Vietnam-Era Prisoners of War in Dallas, Texas.

If I were able to record my vote, however, I would vote against this conference agreement. This legislation is likely the most pork-laden legislation ever to be considered by Congress in the 20th Century. This conference report should be defeated, despite the inclusion of many important and commendable provisions.

I cannot support this conference report despite the fact that it does include significant motor carrier, highway and boating safety initiatives developed by the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. The Commerce Committee conferees, Senator HOLLINGS, Senator STEVENS, and I, worked diligently and responsibly to ensure that effective truck safety inspection and enforcement activities are continued, that safety initiatives on motor vehicle occupant protection are created, and that recreational boating activities are advanced.

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation portion of the conference report also requires the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) to change existing passenger car air bag standards so that the risks air bags pose to infants, children, and other individuals are minimized. I also want to take this opportunity to express my personal thanks to Senator KEMPTHORNE. Without his involvement, I doubt our efforts to improve passenger car air bags would have succeeded as they did.

Yet despite these notable achievements, I regret I cannot support the ISTEA reauthorization conference report. I object for several key reasons: the budgetary offsets, donor state inequity, and pork barrel spending.

On April 2nd, I reluctantly voted for an amendment sponsored by Senators DOMENICI, LOTT, and CRAIG on the Balanced Budget Act which proposed to transfer approximately \$10.5 billion over five years from the Department of Veterans Affairs for veterans' tobacco-related diseases to pay for the transportation reauthorization legislation. In part, I did this because I believe that the tobacco companies, rather than the taxpayers, should bear the burden for veterans' tobacco-related diseases caused partially by smoking and using other tobacco products while they were in military service.

Military service did not force servicemembers to smoke, but I do acknowledge that for morale reasons, the services made cigarettes available for free or at inexpensive prices. The services also give servicemembers condoms and birth control pills at no cost to military personnel, but that does not mean that they want our men and women in uniform to be promiscuous.

As a conferee on this multi-year highway funding reauthorization bill, I have refused to support or sign the ISTEA conference report. As I mentioned earlier, of the three reasons for my opposition, the shifting of critical veterans funding to perpetuate donor state inequity and support the pork barrel spending in this massive highway bill is egregious.

Additionally, I will seek to ensure that any tobacco bill that passes the Senate includes money for the veterans health care system to help reimburse the costs of treating veterans with tobacco-related diseases. Our nation's veterans should not be excluded from payments by tobacco companies for health care costs associated with tobacco-related diseases. The failure to address the tobacco-related health care needs of our men and women who faithfully served their country in uniform would be wrong.

Congress cannot continue to rob from veterans, whose programs have been seriously underfunded for years, to pay for a bill that ranks as the largest pork-barrel spending bill ever written.

Two months ago during the debate on the McCain/Mack/Graham/Thurmond/Coats/Brownback/Kyl amendment, I discussed the history of highway bill demonstration projects. Those remarks are as relevant today as they were two months ago, because if we adopt this conference report as presently written, we will shatter all pork-barrel spending records.

In 1982, the highway bill had 10 demonstration projects, costing a total of \$362 million. In 1987, 152 demonstration projects were created, costing a total of \$1.4 billion. In 1991, what was then felt to be the mother lode of all demo project bills, the Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act (ISTEA), 538 location-specific projects totaling \$6.23 billion were created.

Where are we today? H.R. 2400 doesn't just double the number of location-specific project, but it more than triples the number of earmarked projects. The bill individually targets more than 1,850 projects. The costs have risen as well. H.R. 2400 sets aside more than \$9 billion to pay for these 1,850 specified highway projects. That is \$9 billion of highway funding that Congress is mandating the states allocate to carry out whimsical projects. That is \$9 billion that states cannot allocate to those infrastructure projects they deem most appropriate. Scores of other projects are listed in other sections of the legislation.

A new name has even been created. We used to hear about "demonstration" projects and "innovative" projects. Under H.R. 2400, we now have "high priority projects." Just what is a "high priority" project? Let me mention just a few examples of the type of project that the conferees believe are definitive projects.

Funds are included to initiate "traffic calming projects" in West Palm Beach, Florida and Fauquier County,

Virginia. Money is included to build a coal heritage trail in West Virginia. Millions of dollars are set aside in selected towns throughout the country to construct location-specific bike paths. If traffic calming activities and constructing boardwalks fail in some minds to qualify as a "high priority" project, there's always the funding set aside to produce a documentary film on infrastructure.

I fail to see how items like these can seriously be considered "high" transportation priorities.

Priorities are traditionally established after thorough review and discussion. While our colleagues in the other body maintain that their projects were selected after a review process, I do know that the process in the Senate was not.

At 5:30 last night, Senate transportation aides received an e-mail message announcing that a limited number of Senate high priority projects were about to be added to the conference report. Transportation aides were advised to inform the Environment and Public Works Committee if their members wanted any projects earmarked. Staff was advised that no more than half of the proposed State allocation amount should be earmarked. Explicit direction was provided on how a Member might make such a request, including that it must be in writing and the description of the project must not exceed 216 characters. In addition, a name and phone number was provided where staff could call to find out just how much extra money had been set aside for their state.

Mr. President, this borders on the absurd. What ever happened to funding projects based on legitimate needs?

Mr. President, this reauthorization would be comical if it weren't such an abrogation of our responsibilities to the American taxpayer.

I am not alone in my disdain for this raid on the highway trust fund. Public interest groups have strongly criticized projects like these. The Heritage Foundation recently called on Congress to eliminate the House earmarks and to "instead allow each state to use its share of the highway trust fund for projects that meet locally and state determined needs and priorities." Citizens Against Government Waste states that the House-passed legislation "guarantees that federal highway dollars will continue to be doled out to regions with political muscle, rather than to areas that truly need it."

Two of the originally-stated goals in ISTEA's reauthorization were to promote state highway funding flexibility and to utilize limited resources responsibly. Rather than perpetuate Congressional earmarks, we should place our confidence in our elected Governors' and Mayors' decision-making capabilities. Local- and state-elected officials should make the final decisions on local and state roads.

Lastly, I remain concerned over donor state equity. Currently, tax-

payers living in donor states are forced to subsidize transportation projects in donee states. Arizona, for example, receives only about 85 cents for every gas-tax dollar it contributes to the highway trust fund. The 85-cent return ratio is reality despite the fact that the original ISTEA legislation "guaranteed," and I stress the word guaranteed, donor states a 90-cent return by 1997. The 1991 "guarantee" simply was never fulfilled.

Now donor states are being told the new funding formula will guarantee they'll receive 90.5 cents back for every gas tax dollar sent to Washington. That's a mere half-penny increase over the 1991 guarantee that was never realized.

Today, many of our colleagues will announce that the conference report provides critical funding to meet the transportation needs "for the 21st Century." The conferees have gone so far as to entitle the bill "the Transportation Equity Act" yet nothing could be further from the truth. We will be told the dramatic increase in highway spending—a portion of which I remind my colleagues comes at the expense of veterans programs and other domestic activities—will fill a critical gap in transportation spending. Yet I ask my colleagues, how can anyone realistically believe that a half-penny hike will meet the transportation needs for the fastest growing states in the nation. States like Arizona and Nevada are not being treated fairly or reasonably.

Mr. President, the only guarantee that donor states should expect from this legislation is that they will continue to subsidize road projects in other states for the next six years.

Mr. President, I also want to mention a purely procedural matter which deeply concerns me. When staff of the Senate conferees first met on the legislation, the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation was told specifically that several projects designated in the House-passed bill were squarely within our jurisdiction. The Environment and Public Works Committee in essence gave those projects over to the Commerce Committee. The Commerce Committee never resolved those issues, so I was quite surprised to see that the projects that EPW specifically gave over to Commerce Committee to handle quietly found their way into the conference report we debate today.

I also formally protest the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and Environment and Public Works Committee conferees' inclusion of a provision which is squarely within the Commerce Committee's jurisdiction. Those conferees included language to exempt winter home heating oil delivery drivers from hours of service regulations for the next two years.

Let me be very clear. The Environment and Public Works Committee has no jurisdiction over federal motor carrier safety regulations governing hours

of service. Federal hours of service regulations are the primary protection for the traveling public against truck drivers being forced to drive excessive hours in a fatigued condition. The Senate Commerce Committee has sole jurisdiction over hours of service and the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee not only didn't ask for our input in the issue, but surreptitiously snuck it into the bill.

As a conferee on the legislation I find this action reprehensible. As the Chairman of the Commerce Committee I find action inexcusable. And I assure my colleagues that this Senator will not let this action stand and I pledge that I will do all that I can to have this provision stripped from the legislation.

Mr. President, this conference report is a sham. The so-called Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century is a fraud. We should not fool taxpayers into believing that this legislation is anything more than a raid on gasoline tax dollars at the expense of veterans benefits. I urge my colleagues to vote against the conference report.

DRUG ABUSE AND ADDICTION

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, when we return a week from Monday, from the Memorial Day recess, we will revisit the tobacco debate, and at that point I, along with my colleague from Idaho, Mr. CRAIG, and my colleague from Michigan, Mr. ABRAHAM, will offer an amendment to the tobacco bill that would create a new section. The section we will be offering as suggested additional legislation for the tobacco bill will be a section on drug abuse and addiction.

Mr. President, to me it is illogical—and I have been puzzled throughout the debate—that we would be talking about teenage addiction in the context of tobacco only. It is not good policy to talk about teenage addiction and leave out the single, most important crisis that teenagers face today, which is drug addiction, drug abuse, and the swirling epidemic that has engulfed our Nation. If we are going to talk about addiction, we must include a component that deals with the Nation's No. 1 teenage problem.

Mr. President, in the last 7 years teenage drug abuse has increased by 135 percent—135 percent. Tobacco usage has increased as well—40 percent. That is significant, and we must attack that but not by being silent on a new drug epidemic in the United States. In 1979, 14.1 percent of the population age 12 to 17 were involved in drug use—that is 3.3 million. The Nation got serious and it said we cannot accept this. And by the year 1992, drug use had been driven down by two-thirds, from 14.1 percent down to 5.3 percent. This is important on a couple of points. First, it demonstrates to the Nation that you can do something about this. There are many in our community who would argue, well, we have just been fighting this forever and it doesn't do any good. That is totally wrong.

We have demonstrated as a Nation if we get focused on this problem, pay attention to it, and if we do the right things, we will keep people from being entrapped by drug use. We went from 14.1 percent down to 5.3 percent. In other words, instead of 3.3 million children getting caught up in this, we have taken it down to 1 million—a two-thirds reduction. And then we got lazy. We quit talking about it. We made light of it. The interdiction was reduced. The drug czar's office was closed, for all practical purposes. We mothballed Coast Guard ships in the Caribbean. We turned our back on this problem. And what happened? Well, we should not be surprised. We are moving right back to 1979. You quit talking about it, you reduce the effort on the border, you shrink up the resources, and our youngsters get the idea that it is not dangerous. In the meantime, the cartels have become ever more sophisticated, generating ever more resources. They have as good a distribution system in this country as some of our most famous brands.

At a hearing recently, we had representation from Customs, from the Justice Department, and from the FBI. I asked them at the end of the hearing, "How recently have you been to a school?" Well, none of them had been recently. I said, "You ought to do it." Mr. President, if you want to know what is going on, go into any school and 12-years-olds can tell you the whole story. They can tell you how few minutes it takes to buy them. They can tell you that they are prevalent everywhere. They can tell you the name brands of all of them. And when you ask them what the most serious problem is, a few will hold up their hands on various issues—alcohol, cigarettes—but they all hold up their hands in unison when you say, "Are drugs the most serious problem you face?" All the hands go up. I challenge anybody to do it. They will get the same answer.

Those kids, I think, are wondering what we are doing about it, what is this Nation doing about it? It is time for a bold response. And throughout this entire debate, there has been silence on this massive problem. One in four students in high school today in the United States is using drugs regularly. One in nine in junior high is using drugs regularly. Eight out of ten prisoners in any jail in America, anywhere in America, are there on a drug-related charge—direct or indirect. This is fueling crime in our country, with enormous cost consequences, and we are taking millions of casualties. If this evil force wore a uniform, we would have declared war on it.

What else would take down a million kids—a million, and it is increasing—that would produce 100,000 crack babies every year and thousands of deaths—14,000 a year?

The silence has been deafening, just deafening. We have been in a struggle with the administration over this, asking them to step forward. We are fi-

nally just moving on our own. The plan that they have given us says we are going to have an accountability period in the year 2006. The first measurement would occur in 2002. That is 2 years into the next Presidency. We need to be aggressive now. My colleague, in a moment, will describe in his 10-minute period the bold response.

I yield the floor to my colleague from Idaho.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho is recognized.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, why have we spent the last 3 days on the floor talking about tobacco? Nearly everyone who has come to the floor to talk about tobacco has said we have to get it out of the hands of teenagers. There are two reasons we are on the floor talking about tobacco. First of all, it is darn good politics, and, secondly, we are mad at the tobacco companies and we are going to act in a very punitive fashion because they lied to us. They withheld information as to the addictiveness of nicotine, and we are angry as a public, angry as a governing body. We are going to inflict upon them a very punitive action, and we are going to do it in the name of teenagers—thousands of young people every day picking up a cigarette.

I am not belittling it, I am recognizing it. We need to try to get tobacco and the substance within it, nicotine, out of the hands of our teenagers. But thousands of teenagers today who start smoking today will not die tomorrow. Let me repeat that. The thousands of teenagers that we are all talking about—and, boy, have we heard it on the floor in the last few days—who pick up a cigarette today will not die tomorrow.

Mr. President, young people who engage in the use of drugs can die tomorrow. As my colleague from Georgia said, thousands are dying each year in violent actions and crimes related to drug use and drug associations. Yet, we stand silently by. The administration dropped the ball and walked away, and, finally, my colleague from Georgia rose up and said, wait a moment here, what in the heck are we doing as a country and as a policymaking body? If we are going to do all these great things for kids to get the cigarette out of their hand, why in the heck don't we get crack cocaine, marijuana, and amphetamines out of their hands because it kills them—not 30 years down the road.

By the way, if you start smoking today, you have a chance to live, because you can quit down the road. But if you start crack cocaine today, you will probably die on the street in a month or two for one reason or another, because you are stealing the money to get the crap that is called crack, or you are shot in some transaction that went bad.

That is how teenagers in America are dying today. The statistics that were just given by my colleague from Georgia about seventh graders and eighth