

anything more important than education. Health care for prescription drugs and education so kids have a better chance for their future makes all the sense in the world.

While we are talking about a better future, let me also address the 10 million Americans who got up to go to work and went to work this morning, and who go to work every single morning, not looking for a government check but for a paycheck at the end of the week where they are paid \$5.15 an hour. That is the minimum wage in this country, and it has been stuck there for over 2 years. Why? Because this Congress refuses to give some of the hardest working people in America an increase in the minimum wage. These are people who get up and go to work every day, who are waiting on tables in the restaurants, and who make the beds in the hotels. They are the day-care workers to whom we entrust our children, they are people working in nursing homes watching our parents and grandparents, and we refuse to give them an increase in the minimum wage.

For decades in this Capitol, this was not a partisan issue. From the time Franklin Roosevelt created the minimum wage until the election of Ronald Reagan, it was a bipartisan undertaking. We raise this wage periodically so people can keep up with the cost of living in this country. But, sadly, it has become a partisan issue.

While we fight on the Democratic side to give 10 million Americans an increase in the minimum wage, we are resisted on the other side of the aisle. They don't want to see these increases. Sadly, it means that people who are struggling to get by with \$10,000 or \$11,000 a year—and, frankly, have to turn to the Government for food stamps and look to other sources and more jobs—many of those people are single parents raising their kids, working at jobs with limited pay and limited requirements for skills, trying to do their level best. We have refused time and time again to increase the minimum wage in this country. That is a sad commentary on this Congress.

I also want to comment on the reality that we will be increasing congressional pay this year, as we have with some frequency, to reflect the cost-of-living adjustment. I think that is fair. But doesn't fairness require that we give the same consideration to people who are working for \$5.15 an hour? I hope my colleagues, Senate Democrats and Republicans alike, will share my belief that this is something that absolutely needs to be done.

Whether we are talking about health care or prescription drugs and fairness in paying people for what they work for, there is an agenda that has gone unfilled in this Congress. It is an agenda which has been ignored and about which the American people have a right to ask us to do something.

I can tell you that as we talk about the future of this country and its econ-

omy, we are all applauding the fact that we have had the longest period of economic expansion in our history. We have had 22 million new jobs created during the Clinton-Gore administration. There is more home ownership than anytime in our history. There are more small businesses being created, particularly women-owned small businesses, across America. We have seen our welfare rolls going down. The incidence of violent crime is going down. We have seen an expansion of opportunity in this country that has been unparalleled. But if we sit back and want to rest on our accomplishments and our laurels, the American people have a right to throw all of us out of office. Our responsibility is to look ahead and say we can do better to improve this country and make it better for our children and grandchildren.

This Congress has refused to look ahead. It has refused to say how we can expand health care so that over 40 million Americans without any health insurance will have a chance to get the basic quality health care on which all of us insist for ourselves and our family.

This Congress has refused to address the prescription drug needs of families across America at a time of unparalleled prosperity in these United States.

This Congress has refused to look to the need of education when we know full well that the benefits of our economy can only accrue to those who are prepared to use them and who are prepared to compete in a global economy.

Yesterday, by an overwhelming vote, we voted for permanent normal trade relations with China. I voted for that. It was 83-15. It was a substantially bipartisan rollcall. We said that country, which represents one-fifth of the world's population, is a market we need. I hope when the President signs the bill we will begin to see an opening of that market for our farmers and our businesses. But we will only be as good in the global economy as we are in terms of the skill and education of America's workers.

We know full well that there will always be some country in the world—if not China, some other country—that will pay a worker 5 cents an hour and they will take it. We also know that those workers have limited education and limited skills, perhaps doing a manual labor job. And those jobs are always going to be cheaper overseas; that is a fact of life.

But if we are going to prosper in America from a global economy, we have to bring our workforce beyond manual labor, beyond basic skills, and that means investing in our people. It is important to have the very best technology, but it is even more important to have the very best skilled people working in the workplace. We happen to think if we are going to keep this economy moving forward, we need to make certain we don't do anything that is going to derail the economy.

We have seen some suggestions—for example, Governor Bush and some of

his Republican friends in the Senate who have suggested over a \$1 trillion tax cut that they want to see over the next 10 years. They have suggested we change the Social Security system.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. DURBIN. I yield the floor.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 3068 AND H.R. 5173

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills at the desk due for their second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. CRAIG. I ask unanimous consent that they be read by title at this time.

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

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3068) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to remove certain limitations on the eligibility of aliens residing in the United States to obtain lawful permanent resident status.

A bill (H.R. 5173) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to sections 103(b)(2) and 213(b)(2)(C) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2001 to reduce the public debt and to decrease the statutory limit on the public debt.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I object to further proceedings on the bills at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bills will be placed on the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

JUDGE RONALD DAVIES

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, the legislation we will vote on after lunch contains a provision that will name a Federal courthouse in Grand Forks, ND. A Federal building in Grand Forks, ND, will be named the Judge Ronald N. Davies Federal Building. I want to describe to my colleagues something about Judge Ronald Davies.

Some of my colleagues may have had the opportunity to visit the Norman Rockwell exhibit at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in downtown Washington, DC. Among the many examples of Americana in the Gallery is a famous painting of a little African American girl, hair in pigtails, head held high, being escorted into a school by U.S. marshals. It was the result of a ruling by an unassuming Federal judge, a son of North Dakota, that allowed this Nation to take one large step forward in expanding America's dream for all Americans.

Forty-three years ago this month, on September 7, 1957, a Federal judge from North Dakota was asked to go to Arkansas to sit as a Federal judge and render a decision on a case involving civil rights. Surrounded by security guards because of threats on his life, Judge Ronald Davies carefully weighed the facts and the law and then issued an order that the New York Times

later said was a landmark decision in civil rights, ordering the integration of the Little Rock public schools.

Most people will not know the name of Ron Davies, but Judge Davies is one of North Dakota's proudest sons. He was made a Federal judge by the appointment of President Eisenhower in 1955. While on temporary assignment in Arkansas, he issued the decision that would become one of the landmark decisions on the issue of civil rights. He required the integration of the schools in Little Rock.

Judge Davies was not a tall man. In fact, he was just over 5 feet—about 5 foot 1, 5 foot 2—but he will certainly be remembered as a giant in the history of civil rights and integration. Despite threats on his life and National Guardsmen guarding the doors, this man sat in a courthouse and rendered the pivotal decision that will echo throughout this Nation's history. He replied, "I was only doing my job," when asked about that decision. He was unassuming and unwilling to be in the national spotlight. In fact one news program called him an "obscure judge." He agreed. He said, "We judges are obscure and should be."

Back then, he was also called "the stranger in Little Rock." But he was no stranger to justice and no stranger to decency and no stranger to common sense. Men such as Judge Davies should be remembered. I think it is appropriate that we recognize this Federal judge with the fiery spirit, a man with an unerring sense of duty who went to Little Rock in a very difficult circumstance and did his job.

When schoolchildren and citizens and visitors pass through the door of the Federal building in Grand Forks, ND, they will be reminded of the courage Judge Davies showed America as he sat and did his job in those difficult times in Little Rock. It was a turning point in our Nation's history.

I can think of no better way to celebrate the life of Judge Davies, and also the important achievements his decision 43 years ago this month have rendered this country, than to put his name on the Federal building in Grand Forks, ND. So when this legislation becomes law later this year, that Federal building will be named the "Ronald N. Davies Federal Building and United States Courthouse."

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 4516, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the

amendments of the Senate to the bill H.R. 4516 making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses this report, signed by a majority of the conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I understand that under this conference report that is now on the floor, the Senator from Wyoming has an hour reserved.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. CRAIG. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to use up to 10 minutes of that hour.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, for the course of the last hour and a half, I have been both in committee and in my office. While in my office, I watched a good deal of the discussion going on here on the floor by some of my colleagues on the other side—Senator GRAHAM from Florida, Senator BOXER from California, Senator DURBIN from Illinois, and Senator DORGAN from North Dakota—talking about the issue of prescription drugs.

There isn't a Senator here who does not recognize the importance of this issue primarily with the senior community in America today—primarily with the poorer of that community who cannot afford some of the new drugs that are on the market that are clearly improving their lifestyle, extending their health, and allowing many of our citizens to live better and longer.

That is why some of us, if not all of us, for the last couple of years have recognized the need to respond to the prescription drug issue within Medicare as a primary health provider in this country for our seniors. When that belief first came about, it came about in the context of the reform of Medicare. I think it is important to give a little history.

With a health care program in this country that is 30 years old, we began to recognize that it was in trouble; that it was continuing to pay for health care needs that were sometimes no longer needed and costs continued to go up. We were constantly working to adjust it.

In the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, we made adjustments. Some of those were right; some of those were wrong. Some of those were interpreted by the Federal health care administrators in a way that Congress didn't intend, and we are going to make some of those corrections this year for nursing homes and hospitals. The fundamental question is and should be, Was Medicare providing the necessary health care needs of our seniors?

Out of that grew the prescription drug issue. No question about it, as the President knows, these new designer

drugs that are out on the market that are a result of our science, our technology, are doing wonderful things. They are not included. They are not a part of the old Medicare model that we created 30-plus years ago. That is why in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 this Congress and this Senate said: Let's create the National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare. Let's reform it to fit the 21st century and the needs of the seniors of America in the 21st century, and let's do that in the context of shaping it differently, making sure prescription drugs are a piece of it. That will be the new health care paradigm.

The President appointed people. We appointed people. We worked. They studied. We brought in the best health care experts in the country and they brought about a report. Something happened along the way. We were getting closer and closer to an election cycle, and it appeared tragically enough that the other side saw this much more as a political issue than a need for substantive reform. As a result, that commission reported it lacked the one vote necessary for a majority to report back to Congress its findings and its proposal for the Congress to act.

Interestingly enough, the two Democrats from the Senate, Senator BREAU and Senator KERREY, who served on that committee, voted for the report. They saw it as a major step in the right direction and, of course, the President's appointees were advised to vote against the report, or so we understand. They voted against it. Eleven votes were needed to approve the commission's recommendation; 10 of the 17 commissioners voted yes. We needed one more and we simply did not get it.

Before the vote ever took place, President Clinton announced the commission had failed and that his own advisers would draft a plan to serve the Medicare program. I think what he was saying was that his own advisors would draft a political plan to serve the next Presidential election.

The politics of Medicare and prescription drugs moves now into the political arena. That announcement occurred in March of 1999. It literally was the sounding of a trumpet, the sounding of the fact that prescription drugs and Medicare without reform would become a part of the political mantra of the day; every Senator, Democrat and Republican, recognizing that we had to deal with prescription drugs. In fact, it was interesting to me that Senator BREAU said: We are not going to fix Medicare; we are going to be looking for issues to beat each other over the head with once again.

That is what he said in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of March of 1999—a Democrat, referring to the commission and a failure of the commission and a failure of this President to stand up and be counted for at a time when we had a chance, a window of opportunity to make major national reform in