

will have on the VA budget, even though the bill specifies that it is to be implemented within appropriations. While the VA contends the House proposal is budget neutral and that it would make available as much as \$268 million within 2 years to expand VA outpatient services, CBO estimates that any savings will be offset by over \$3 billion in costs incurred as a result of increased demand for VA outpatient care. A number of VSO's have joined the VA in taking sharp issue with the CBO cost analysis.

Mr. President, it seems that proposals which satisfy so many needs of both patients and their health care providers deserve our deepest commitment and support, but at the same time we need to fully explore the consequences of such reforms. We need to change the way veterans receive their health care. That much is clear from how eager both sides of the equation—patients and providers—are to make the same changes. But we also need to ask ourselves: "What are the costs if any?"; Could these reforms cause other unintended problems in the future?; Will the proposed reforms alleviate problems plaguing the VA health care system?; and Will cuts in Medicare and Medicaid lead to increased demand for VA services so that the need for eligibility reform becomes even more pressing? We need answers to each of these pivotal questions before we can proceed.

I strongly believe that the provisions in the House bill or some variant of these provisions could at the very least provide a vital first step to achieve long-overdue eligibility reform, and to do so in a responsible manner. However, we first need to sit down and get all the facts out on the table so we can come up with clear answers to complex questions.

In anticipation of the possibility that the provisions of the House veterans bill will not be included in the final Senate/House version of the budget reconciliation package, I propose that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs conduct hearings to solicit the views of those who would be affected by such reforms and those who have thoroughly investigated their future effects on veterans' health care and their budgetary impact. I would welcome the chance for the committee to hear from representatives from the VA, VSO's, the Congressional Budget Office, and anyone else who could bring crucial insights to the forum. We need to include all viewpoints, to look critically at all data, and to listen to all voices before we can move forward responsibly. We need to institute eligibility reform but we need to carefully craft reform to ensure that it improves the quality of VA health care, makes it more user friendly, and increases its cost effectiveness.

I have requested that my distinguished colleague Chairman SIMPSON hold hearings on this topic when feasible and, if he concurs, look forward to

working closely with him on preparations for the hearings. ●

ELECTION OF JOHN J. SWEENEY AS PRESIDENT OF THE AFL-CIO

● Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, for the past three months, two of the nation's foremost labor leaders, John J. Sweeney and Thomas R. Donahue, have campaigned for the presidency of the AFL-CIO. This afternoon in New York City at the AFL-CIO's biennial convention, the delegates chose Mr. Sweeney. I rise to congratulate him, and Thomas Donahue as well, for their dedication, service, and not least, their civilities.

Mr. Sweeney and Mr. Donahue remain strong and united in their pledge to lead the labor community into the next century. Both are sons of Irish working class families from the Bronx—home of another great labor leader, the legendary George Meany. As friends and allies in the labor movement for over 35 years, Mr. Sweeney and Mr. Donahue have vied for the presidency with energy, but without bitterness. There is much we in political life can learn from such earnest and talented men. Victory need not mean vanquishing the opponent. Good ideas are not the province of any one faction. These are the lessons John Sweeney and Tom Donahue have taught us all.

There is more to these men than their recent contest. There is much testimony given to the value of work and the dignity that comes from having a job. John Sweeney and Tom Donahue, and the millions they represent, embody those values even as they advance them.

It is prophetic that John Sweeney, born in St. Joseph's parish in the Bronx—named for the patron saint of working men and women—has been chosen to lead the 13 million members of the AFL-CIO. The son of a bus driver, he learned the value of a job and the dignity of hard work from his father. Mr. Sweeney first joined a union as a part-time grave digger while attending Iona College in New Rochelle, New York, and began his trade union career in 1950 with the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union. Later, in 1961, he joined Local 32B of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and eventually rose through the ranks to become the SEIU's President in June of 1980. Today, this union, representing doormen, elevator operators, custodians, all manner of workers, is 1.1 million members strong.

Tom Donahue, another Bronx native, has had an equally long and distinguished career in the labor movement. He has served most recently as the Acting President of the AFL-CIO after Lane Kirkland stepped down in August of 1994. Mr. Donahue began his career at the AFL-CIO as Executive Assistant to George Meany, and was later elected to serve as Secretary-Treasurer, a post he held for many years. I am indebted to him for advice, and counsel through-

out my near two decades on the Senate Finance Committee.

While there could only be one winner today, the election is not so much a victory for John Sweeney, but for the labor movement as a whole. Let there be no question that Mr. Sweeney has his work cut out for him, as they would say in the "ICG", for this is a critical time in labor's history. But his record as an organizer of workers promises great things. And may I say that it is a tribute to New York and to the Bronx especially that in these turbulent times for labor, the membership of the AFL-CIO has once again entrusted its leadership to a New Yorker. I wish my friend John Sweeney great things as he embarks on the newest phase of his remarkable career.

The origins of today's AFL-CIO go back to 1881, or some will argue 1886. Which is to say, in the first century of the American nation. They have sustained their principles and organization into what is now the third century of our nation. It has been a remarkable and eventful journey and it is only begun. I stand with them in solidarity and joy for this fine moment. ●

"AMERICA, I LOVE YOU SO"

● Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the work of a well known, long time resident of Las Vegas. Mike Corda is a very accomplished songwriter, having written songs for such artists as Robert Goulet, Sammy Davis Jr., Nancy Wilson, Wayne Newton, and Lou Rawls. But as successful as he has been as a songwriter, Mike's greatest pride comes from his service to this country as a United States Marine. In the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing, Mike rolled up his sleeves and went back to work to put the finishing touches on a song that would capture the patriotic pride of yesterday. That song, is entitled "America, I Love You So" and I ask that the lyrics of the song be printed in the RECORD.

The lyrics follow:

AMERICA, I LOVE YOU SO

America, I love you,
No place on Earth can match your style.
Your helpin' hand's world famous—
And your heart is in your smile.
No nation rates above you,
Where seeds of freedom proudly grow—
I feel the need to "fall in",
There's something here that's callin',
America, I love you so.
No nation rates above you.
When into outer space you go
I feel the need to "fall in"
There's something here that's callin',
America, I love you so—
America . . . I love you so!

(Words & Music by Mike Carda) ●

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1995

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until the hour of