

Mr. LEAHY. Of course.

Mr. WARNER. I have lived in this area all of my life, northern Virginia and the greater metropolitan area. I do not know that we have ever experienced anything like this, except perhaps the storm of 1979, which I remember very well.

Mr. President I want to say, on a serious note, how in the community here—certainly I can speak to northern Virginia but I am certain it is throughout the metropolitan area—citizens have really rendered help to one another in this crisis, be it shoveling snow or driving. The hospitals have asked for the 4-wheelers, and it is a great credit to the community and those who live in it, how they have reached out a hand to help their fellow citizens who are suffering as a consequence of this very severe storm.

Mr. LEAHY. If the distinguished Senator from Virginia will yield on that point, I absolutely agree with him. I told the distinguished Senator from Virginia I consider him my Senator when I am away from home. Of course, I consider Senator JEFFORDS my Senator when I am at home. But down here I have a home in northern Virginia where I live during the Senate session and I have seen exactly what the Senator from Virginia has said. People working hard, people come by asking elderly neighbors do they need something from the store? They were going to ski to the store, whatever.

When he talks about the hospitals and the 4-wheel drives, I know about that from firsthand experience. My wife is a nurse on a medical surgical floor in this area. She was on the shift that ended Saturday and Sunday and Monday night around midnight. As you know, the snow was coming down pretty hard at that time. Complete strangers were coming into the hospital with 4-wheel drives, people who were working at other jobs, to take nurses and doctors back and forth, pick up medical supplies, to take critically people back and forth. Total strangers were bringing her home. We could not get out at first, out of our street, to go ourselves. But they were doing that. There was that sense of cooperation that, frankly—and I mean this as a great compliment to the Senator from Virginia—it is the kind of cooperation we see in our State where we do get hit with heavy snowfalls like this, I know, whether it is in the little town of Middlesex, VT, where my farm is, or Shrewsbury, VT, the beautiful area where Senator JEFFORDS is from.

I yield to the distinguished colleague from Vermont.

Mr. HEFLIN. I wonder if the Senator will yield to the Senator from Alabama?

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I will be happy to yield to the Senator from Alabama.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNER). The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, I just want to comment on the snow, that it

suits the people in Alabama and it suits the Senator from Alabama, that Vermont have most of this snow with the exception, I see as he leaves the chair, the Senator from Alaska is leaving, relative to his State.

They can have all of this snow. We will take 2 inches in Alabama every 3 years and let that suffice. Otherwise, we just want to leave it to Vermont and to Alaska.

Mr. JEFFORDS. I thank the Senator from Alabama for that generous offer, and I assure him that we will take him up on it. We will use every bit that we can.

THE IMPORTANCE OF AMTRAK

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I also want to make a couple of other comments which I am sure my senior colleague will agree with. One which proved to me the importance of Amtrak was how I got back here on Sunday night. I came all the way down from basically Vermont on through Massachusetts. The efforts which those crews put on, and how packed that train was when it finally got to New York City, and then on to Washington, emphasized how important that means of travel is in times of crisis like this. Without Amtrak passenger service we would be in trouble.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, if the Senator from Vermont will yield, I might comment on that.

The Senator from Vermont and I have joined together in an awful lot of fights for our State and for our area during the past 21 years. And I think it is the one that I am most proud of and join with him in. He and I throughout those years, with our former colleague, Senator Stafford, joined to keep Amtrak going up in our area. He is absolutely right to praise them. I know he uses the train. It is not just a case of saying, "I want it for others." He uses it as I do on occasion. This is something for which Amtrak deserves that credit.

THE VERMONT FLAG

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I also tell my colleague from Vermont that the distinguished senior Senator from Alabama once noticed a Vermont flag flying here. And the distinguished Senator from Vermont and I have both been to Antarctica and have flown Vermont flags. I commented that that is what has been done with it. It has been flown in Antarctica, the South Pole, the coldest spot on Earth.

The distinguished Senator from Alabama looks up and says, "From what I hear from Vermont, the flag probably felt right at home."

THE IMPORTANCE OF DAIRY

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, one other item which I would like to point out relative to Vermont and other

areas of the country is the importance of dairy.

I did not realize it until I struggled home last Sunday night and went to the convenience store. I found they had adequate food. However, the dairy case had but one quart of milk left. When I arrived again the next morning, it had been replenished, and there was only one gallon of milk left.

I point that out as to how important obviously in our lives dairy is; the dairy industry.

So keep that in mind as we go along and take up the dairy program later this year.

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, let me also make a couple of comments about the District of Columbia, being the chairman of the subcommittee on District of Columbia appropriations.

This also points out how hard strapped the District is with respect to meeting emergencies such as we have had recently. I know I personally have not seen a single snowplow in the days that I have been walking back and forth. I do know that we have a fleet of 50 snowplows, 8 of which are out of service because of mechanical failure. Usually in the past they have had funds available to be able to hire plows. In fact, 4 years ago over 200 private plows were hired to clear the streets. However, sufficient funds were not available. Only 55 private plows have been able to help out. In addition to that, we have another 30 trucks that are sitting there idle because of the failure of the mechanical parts.

So I think it is important that we keep in mind that for the District that we have to get their physical matters in shape so that we can handle these kind of problems.

I also point out with respect to the District of Columbia that I will be meeting this afternoon with Congressman GUNDERSON in the House, and we will be communicating with subcommittee Chairman WALSH on trying to bring a reconciliation to our difficulties over the changes that are being recommended with respect to the District of Columbia educational system.

I will be proposing to them a hopeful compromise which will on the one hand allow us really to do something substantial to improve the educational capacity of our schools in the District of Columbia but at the same time will make it unlikely that we will have a filibuster in the Senate on the controversial issue of vouchers.

So I am hopeful that we will be able to take care of that. I anticipate that when we come back on the 22d of January that we will have a budget agreement for the House and Senate to vote on.

THE BUDGET IMPASSE

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I would like to also comment on the budget negotiations.