

strongly supported by Members from both sides of the aisle, rechannels existing Federal drug control resources into community, antidrug efforts that are already reducing teenage drug abuse in our towns.

We must act now on this issue, because teenage drug abuse is one of the worst problems in America today. Drug abuse encourages crime and gang violence, as well as higher rates of teenage pregnancy, and other social problems. Many of our schools are under siege from the onslaught of drugs.

What's more, teenage drug abuse is getting worse. After more than a decade of substantial progress in combating the problem, the trends have reversed since 1991. Marijuana use alone has tripled among 8th graders and more than doubled among 10th and 12th graders. Daily use has increased so dramatically during this period that one in 20 of today's high school seniors uses marijuana daily. And, the marijuana of today—because of the chemical THC content—can be 15 times stronger than the marijuana of the 1970's. Cocaine, crack cocaine, amphetamine stimulants, barbiturates, and heroin are increasingly popular among teenagers. The use of LSD has never been higher.

These nationwide statistics are extremely troubling. But, the problems of teenage drug abuse are experienced most vividly in each of our towns and communities. Our sons and daughters face this threat every day in school and on the playground. We need to target our drug reduction efforts to help these teenagers in their own communities. That is why we are introducing the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997.

With little or no Federal funds, many local anti-drug coalitions are already helping some teenagers in their communities. This legislation targets assistance to these coalitions, so that they can reach out to and help more teenagers. In order to receive Federal support, a community must first demonstrate a comprehensive, long-term commitment to addressing teenage drug abuse. This commitment must include a focused mission, the implementation of strategies to reduce drug abuse, and the involvement of all parts of the community—including parents, youth, businesses, media, schools, law enforcement, religious leaders, and others. Moreover, a community must demonstrate that its antidrug effort is an on-going concern that has local support and is self-sustaining.

I also support the Drug-Free Communities Act because it is fiscally responsible. It does not increase Federal spending or the deficit. Instead, it simply rechannels existing funds from the \$16 billion Federal drug control budget. Even more importantly, the bill requires a financial commitment from the communities involved. Under the bill, the Federal Government will not simply grant money to local communities that meet the criteria that I just mentioned. The qualifying communities must match the Government's

funds with resources of their own—to a cap of \$100,000. These matching grants will force the communities to demonstrate an even greater commitment to fighting drug abuse before receiving Federal funds.

Finally, the legislation creates an Advisory Commission to oversee the antidrug program. This commission will consist of local community leaders and national and State experts on substance abuse. This composition ensures that the program draws upon national expertise in fighting drug abuse, while remaining responsive to local needs.

The Drug-Free Communities Act has attracted the support of more than 150 State and local law enforcement groups, churches, and other organizations. On the national level, it has been endorsed by groups as diverse as Mothers Against Drunk Drivers and William Bennett's Empower America. This bill represents a wonderful opportunity to provide meaningful help to community coalitions in South Dakota and nationwide, without expending additional Federal funds.

I strongly encourage my colleagues to support this important legislation.

NO CASH TO CONVICTS ACT

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to cosponsor Senate bill 438, a bill that will help close a costly loophole in the current administration of Social Security benefits. I commend my colleague, Senator GRASSLEY, for introducing this important bill, the No Cash to Convicts Act. The bill will help the Federal Government identify incarcerated prisoners who are receiving Social Security disability benefits to which they are not entitled, and will provide that prisoners who are incarcerated for even short periods of time are not eligible for those cash benefits when they are in prison.

In the landmark welfare reform legislation enacted last Congress, Congress set up a voluntary program between local law enforcement and the Federal Government to assist in the identification of prisoners who are receiving supplemental security income or SSI benefits. While earlier versions of that legislation covered prisoners' receipt of Social Security disability benefits as well, the Social Security provisions had to be dropped from the final conference report because of Senate rules preventing changes to Social Security benefits in a reconciliation bill. We should finish the job this Congress and ensure that prisoners do not get those cash disability benefits, which would be better spent on our law-abiding elderly and disabled.

By precluding any defendant who is convicted of a criminal offense and who is incarcerated from receiving Social Security disability benefits, this bill removes an arbitrary and illogical requirement under current law that a defendant have been sentenced to at least a year in prison to be ineligible for benefits. There is no reason that an incar-

cerated prisoner should receive benefit checks intended to provide for necessities like food, shelter, and clothing when the prisoner is already receiving those at the expense of the Government.

The bill also creates financial incentives for State and local law enforcement authorities to provide timely information concerning prisoners to the Social Security Administration. This will permit the Federal Government to check the benefit rolls to see whether prisoners are receiving benefits. If the Federal Government identifies any instances in which inmates are illegally receiving Social Security disability checks, the local authority that provided the information will receive a cash payment.

I am glad that this provision is structured to provide an incentive system rather than an unfunded mandate, and am pleased to join my distinguished colleague from Iowa in sponsoring this much-needed bill.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, April 16, 1997, the Federal debt stood at \$5,386,017,997,799.85. (Five trillion, three hundred eighty-six billion, seventeen million, nine hundred ninety-seven thousand, seven hundred ninety-nine dollars and eighty-five cents)

One year ago, April 16, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,142,251,000,000. (Five trillion, one hundred forty-two billion, two hundred fifty-one million)

Five years ago, April 16, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$3,882,706,000,000. (Three trillion, eight hundred eighty-two billion, seven hundred six million)

Ten years ago, April 16, 1987, the Federal debt stood at \$2,269,312,000,000. (Two trillion, two hundred sixty-nine billion, three hundred twelve million)

Fifteen years ago, April 16, 1982, the Federal debt stood at \$1,064,889,000,000 (One trillion, sixty-four billion, eight hundred eighty-nine million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion—\$4,321,128,997,799.85 (Four trillion, three hundred twenty-one billion, one hundred twenty-eight million, nine hundred ninety-seven thousand, seven hundred ninety-nine dollars and eighty-five cents) during the past 15 years.

LEADING THE WAY AGAINST CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote on the Chemical and Biological Weapons Threat Reduction Act which will, for the first time in U.S. history, provide criminal and civil penalties against those who produce, stockpile, or transfer chemical weapons in the United States. It will also legislate other practical and realistic reforms to reduce the spread of both chemical and biological weapons and improve the American military's defenses against them.