

So I will be supporting the amendment being offered by Senators SPECTER and HARKIN.

I can tell you that when the American people were asked through a poll conducted by the American Heart Association last November, that 74 percent of the voters supported at least half of the Medicaid dollars to go to tobacco addiction treatment and to efforts to educate teens about the dangers of tobacco.

I am hoping that Members on both sides of the aisle will join us in this bipartisan amendment to the supplemental appropriations bill.

At this point, I yield my time on this issue.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

I believe the Senator from Illinois has a resolution and a discussion that he wants to put forward about St. Patrick, of all things, if you can imagine that. Of course, that is a very worthy cause.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Kansas.

THE GOOD FRIDAY PEACE AGREEMENT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 64, introduced earlier today by myself.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 64) recognizing the historic significance of the first anniversary of the Good Friday Peace Agreement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the immediate consideration of the resolution?

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, as the Senator from Kansas has noted—and, Mr. President, your tie notes—today is St. Patrick's Day, and it is a fitting time to remember not only the Irish heritage, which so many Americans—over 40 million—claim, but also as equally important is the significant progress that has been made in this island nation over the last several months to finally bring peace. Tributes, of course, could be given to so many different people.

Today, we were meeting with Taoiseach Bertie Ahern, as well as President Clinton, and the leaders from Northern Ireland, as well as the Republic of Ireland, celebrating their courage and the fact that they have received the Nobel Peace Prize for their endeavors, and really making certain that we double our resolve so that peace can come to that land.

The Good Friday Peace Agreement that was entered into and initiated about a year ago outlined the political settlement to three decades of political and sectarian violence in Northern Ireland. It also reminds us, too, that there is a lot of hard work to be done to complete this agreement.

Over the last 30 years, more than 3,200 people have died in Northern Ireland and thousands more were injured. In 1997, the British and Irish Governments sponsored peace talks, chaired by our former colleague, Senator George Mitchell, and attended by eight political parties.

Senator Mitchell will be receiving an award this evening at the White House from the President and representatives of Ireland for his amazing role in bringing about this peace process. It is a much-deserved accolade.

An agreement was reached on April 10, 1998, that includes the formation of a Northern Ireland Assembly, a North/South Ministerial Council, and a British-Irish Council. The agreement also contains provisions on human rights, decommissioning of weapons, policing, and prisoners. Voters in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland approved the agreement on May 22. Elections to the new assembly were held on June 25. Enabling legislation has been passed by the Irish and British Parliaments, the necessary international agreements have been signed, and many prisoners have been released.

However, some contentious issues still remain before the agreement is implemented. In addition to former Senator George Mitchell, the Clinton administration and many Members of Congress and Senators have played a positive role in the peace process. Again, the parties have turned to the United States for leadership and mediation. Many party leaders from Northern Ireland will be at the White House this evening. Let me also say I attended last night a special tribute to one of our colleagues, Senator TED KENNEDY. The American-Ireland Fund presented him with their Man of the Year Award for his extraordinary contribution toward this peace process throughout his career in the U.S. Senate.

This resolution which we are considering today is cosponsored by 34 of my colleagues. It recognizes the historic first anniversary of the Good Friday peace agreement, encourages the parties to move forward to implement it, and congratulates the people of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland for their courageous commitment to work together for peace. I appreciate my colleagues' support of this resolution, and I hope it will add another constructive measure of support for the meetings going on at the White House today.

I am glad the Senate, when it enacts this resolution, will be on record this year to not only celebrate the legacy of Ireland and the legacy of St. Patrick, but to look to the future of that great

country, a future in peace, a future as one people.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I strongly support this timely resolution and its tribute to the courage and vision of the political leaders of Northern Ireland who have given that land an extraordinary opportunity for peace.

By signing the historic Good Friday Peace Agreement last April, leaders such as John Hume, David Trimble, Gerry Adams, and others launched a new era of peace and reconciliation for all the people of Northern Ireland. And I commend as well the indispensable contributions to the peace process by President Clinton, our former Senate colleague George Mitchell, Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland and Prime Minister Tony Blair of Great Britain.

The goal of the peace process is to end thirty years of violence and bloodshed in Northern Ireland, reduce divisions between Unionists and Nationalists, and build new bridges of opportunity between the two communities. Through this process, they have committed themselves to finding the needle of peace in the haystack of violence—and they are finding it. When those of lesser vision urged a lesser course, the leaders in Northern Ireland acted boldly. They tirelessly dedicated themselves to the pursuit of peace, and they made difficult political choices to bring their noble vision of a peace agreement to reality.

As we all know, there are still miles to go before the victory of lasting peace is finally won. But because of what they accomplished, there is better hope for the future. They have made an enormous difference, perhaps all the difference, for peace. Their achievement in the Good Friday Peace Agreement has changed the course of history for all the people in Northern Ireland.

The task now facing all of us who care about this process is to build greater momentum for full implementation of the Agreement. There has been welcome recent progress. Last month, the Northern Ireland Assembly approved the designation of the Northern Ireland Departments and the group of cross-border bodies. Last week, Britain and Ireland signed historic treaties for closer ties. Prisoners have been released. The British have reduced their troop levels to the lowest point in twenty years. We are also heartened by the establishment of the Human Rights Commissions.

Full implementation of the Agreement offers the best way forward and the best yardstick to judge the policies and actions of all involved. The goal of peace is best served by prompt action on the Agreement. Those who take risks for peace can be assured of timely support by President Clinton, Congress, and the American people.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, at this point I ask unanimous consent the resolution and preamble be agreed to en bloc, the motion to reconsider be laid