

responsibility across the globe. We can't emphasize how important it is for you to continue to work to improve corporate disclosure, make corporate officers more accountable and develop a stronger, more independent audit system. American businesses must be trustworthy, transparent and able to withstand the light of any audit.

We look forward to working with you and the Securities and Exchange Commission as you fully investigate the companies and individuals who abuse the system and prosecute them to the full extent of the law. Your role is crucial as we work to restore confidence in American business and restore integrity and trust in our stock market.

Sincerely,

GORDON H. SMITH,
JOHN BREAUX,
U.S. Senate.

COMMUNITY HERO

• Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, I rise to salute a community leader in my home State of Oregon. Today, I want to recognize the efforts of Susan Abravanel, Education Coordinator at SOLV, a non-profit organization in Oregon, in advocating for service-learning, one of the most exciting educational initiatives taking hold in our Nation today.

Service-learning gives students the opportunity to learn through community service, but it is important to note that it is much more than just community service. It is a method of classroom instruction that engages a student's intellect through hands-on work outside the classroom that benefits the community at large. Research shows that students participating in service-learning make gains on achievement tests, complete their homework more often, and increase their grade point averages.

In addition to producing academic gains, service-learning is also associated with both increased attendance and reduced dropout rates. It is clear to educators across the country that service-learning helps students feel more connected to their own education while strengthening their connection to their community as well. It is for all of these reasons that Susan Abravanel is working so hard to advocate for service-learning in classrooms in Oregon and across the nation.

Ms. Abravanel is working closely with my office and with education leaders in Oregon to ensure that my home State remains a national leader in service-learning. Just 2 months ago, I introduced a bill with my colleague, Senator EDWARDS, to strengthen our Nation's commitment to service-learning. I feel confident that this bill will soon become law and that with Ms. Abravanel's continued efforts both here in Washington, DC, and at home in Oregon, students will continue to benefit from an education tied to civic engagement.

Ms. Abravanel exemplifies the type of engaged citizen our schools must endeavor to produce, and her persistence will ensure that future generations of Americans will give back to their com-

munities just as she has. I would also like to note that Susan isn't just concerned about education, her interests and efforts in Portland's Jewish community are well known and highly appreciated, she is the new President of the Oregon chapter of the American Jewish Committee. I look forward to working with Susan in her new role at the AJC and thank her for her continuing devotion to service-learning. •

COMMUNITY HEROES

• Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President I rise today to recognize some community heroes in my home State of Oregon. The Agape House, which has been serving needy families in the Hermiston area for 15 years, is one of those rare organizations that dedicates its efforts entirely to the service of others.

Founded in 1987, Agape House began as a small group of volunteers providing food and clothing to approximately 100 families a month. Over the years, Agape House has been able to expand its reach, and last month was able to help 644 families in need. Food and clothing still constitute the majority of the assistance provided by Agape House's volunteers, but they are often able to help local residents with energy bills, prescription drug bills, emergency shelter, and any number of other unmet daily needs.

Perhaps the most encouraging aspect of Agape House's work is that it is done by a large number of area volunteers who take turns staffing the Agape House. On any given day, six to eight volunteers work at Agape House, but they are seldom the same six to eight people who were there the day before. Not only do its many volunteers come from the community, but Agape House relies primarily on food, clothing, and financial donations from local citizens. Agape House is truly a community effort, and, for that reason, has been uniquely successful in providing assistance to the needy families of western Umatilla County.

One recent and extraordinary example of Agape House's effectiveness involves a young single mother in the Hermiston area. As a young single mother with three mouths to feed, this jobless Hermiston woman relied on Agape House for many of her family's daily needs. When she was finally able to find work, she struggled to get to and from her job because she could not afford a car, and was at risk of finding herself jobless once again. Seeing her problems, Agape House stepped in and gave her a car. A car is not a typical charitable gift to a young woman in need. With her new car, this young woman flourished at her job, and Agape House, which once served this woman nearly every day, has not had a visit from her since the day she received her car. This is just one example of how Agape House goes the extra mile to help people truly become self-sufficient, which takes much more dedica-

tion than simply providing temporary relief.

I think it is important to recognize organizations like Agape House here on the Senate floor. The staff and volunteers associated with Agape House are heroes to their community, and are shining examples of what can be accomplished by a generous group of civic-minded citizens. I appreciate the important work they do each and every day, and want them to know that their efforts do not go unnoticed by those outside Umatilla County. •

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting a withdrawal and sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 9:34 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 2578. An act to amend title 31 of the United States Code to increase the public debt limit.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 125. Concurrent resolution providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate and a conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives.

At 11:31 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 2594. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to purchase silver on the open market when the silver stockpile is depleted, to be used to mint coins.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3034. An act to redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 89 River Street in Hoboken, New Jersey, as the "Frank Sinatra Post Office Building."

H.R. 5010. An act making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2003, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5011. An act making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2003, and for other purposes.