

get our forests healthy again. We have seen much of our country just devastated by staggering forest fires.

A key part of that legislation was to authorize \$760 million in hazardous fuels reduction programs. The amendment I have filed—and I will be asking the Senate to vote on it tomorrow—has generated interest among many colleagues of both political parties. It would add \$343 million to last year's \$417 million for hazardous fuels reductions to reach the \$760 million authorization in title I Healthy Forests legislation.

It seems to me what we have seen over the years is essentially a shell game, where various Forest Service programs are robbed in order to fund the hazardous fuels reduction programs and we end up without adequate resources across the board in the forestry area. I am hopeful we will be able to agree with our Republican colleagues on this effort.

Suffice it to say, it was a Herculean task to get Healthy Forest legislation passed last session. I think many thought it was impossible. It seems to me the Senate owes it to the people who are waiting to see improvements in their communities to fully fund this important legislation.

I am going to work with colleagues on both sides of the aisle on this particular piece of legislation. This amendment will ensure we really get some health back into this idea of healthy forests. We are not going to be able to do it if we consistently underfund these programs.

In the past, it seems to me, we played sort of a "rob one fund in order to fund another fund" kind of program. That is not going to do the job responsibly for the long term. We are talking about millions and millions of acres that we are going to have to thin in the days ahead.

After the Senate passes historic legislation, legislation that is going to be good for the environment, good for the economy, promote old growth, involve local communities, protect the rights of citizens—for example, being involved in forestry policy—what we have to do is fund this properly.

There will be interest among colleagues on both sides of the aisle on the legislation. I thank Chairman NICKLES for being willing to work with me on it, and Senator CONRAD as well. On the other side of the aisle, Senators DOMENICI and BURNS are intensely interested in this matter. On our side of the aisle, Senators DASCHLE, FEINSTEIN, BINGAMAN—all of us have cooperated with the ranking member, Senator CONRAD, and the chairman, Senator NICKLES.

My amendment has been filed, and I am hopeful we will be able to pass it without controversy tomorrow.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who seeks recognition?

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. NICKLES. I thank my colleague from Oregon, Senator WYDEN, for his

gracious comments. It is a pleasure working with him on a multitude of issues, this being one, forest fires.

Mr. WYDEN. I thank the Chairman.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### 100 HOURS AS PRESIDING OFFICER

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, on Thursday, March 4, 2004, Senator SAXBY CHAMBLISS reached his 100th hour of presiding over the U.S. Senate. As a presiding officer, his dedication and dependability are to be commended. It is with sincere appreciation that I announce Senator CHAMBLISS as the most recent recipient of the Golden Gavel Award for the 108th Congress.

#### HONORING ROSIE WHITE

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a valued staff member who has recently retired. Rosie White joined my staff in June 1994, shortly after I began my service in the U.S. House of Representatives. She has been vital to the operating of my State offices, by providing stability and organization. She has served as my State scheduler for more than 4 years—ever since I was elected to the Senate, and she has done an outstanding job. She has managed to balance the needs and demands from constituents in the State, other staff members, and my family during that time, and she has my utmost admiration for handling it all so well.

Rosie has been active in local Republican politics for many years, and she was extremely involved in local charities, most particularly the Booth Home in Boise and the Salvation Army. Her contributions to Idaho have been many and varied as well as appreciated. She brought vitality and enthusiasm to nearly every project she tackled, and it was always fun to hear about her experiences. I enjoyed working with her and know that many others join me to extend their best wishes to her as she retires to spend more time with her husband, Cal. She was an asset to my office and I am pleased to call her my friend.

#### PEACE CORPS

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I am pleased to commemorate the 43rd anniversary of the Peace Corps. Peace Corps volunteers have made a tremendous difference in the lives of so many around the world. I salute these volunteers of all backgrounds and ages who have reached out to people in need beyond our borders and who have pre-

sented an image of our country that is compassionate, energetic and approachable. I am especially proud of the 255 people from Wisconsin who are presently volunteering for the Peace Corps in South Africa, Ghana, Nicaragua, Philippines, Turkmenistan, Mongolia and many other countries. Wisconsin is one of the biggest contributors of Peace Corps volunteers in our country, ranked 15 among the 50 States. For the 10th year in a row, University of Wisconsin-Madison has the highest number of alumni serving as Peace Corps volunteers. The selfless service of Wisconsinites must be commended.

In 1960, President Kennedy challenged Americans to serve their country by living and working in developing countries. Americans have been answering this call ever since by joining the Peace Corps. Decades later, I have been struck by the lasting impact that this organization, and the young people who have fueled it, have had around the world.

In 2002 I traveled to visit the sites of the 1998 embassy bombings. Tanzania, a country where about half of the population is Muslim, is no stranger to suspicion and mistrust of the West. Yet as I found myself meeting with a group of Tanzanian legislators, asking for their views about how to strengthen our partnership in combating terrorism and to improve the relationship between our countries, I was overwhelmed by their enthusiasm for the Peace Corps.

These distinguished legislators told me about how their first English language teachers were Peace Corps volunteers, and how those teachers seemed to be opening the whole world to them just by their very presence in the classroom. These legislators said that the best way to strengthen our relations with their country was to foster meaningful people-to-people links by increasing our Peace Corps presence there.

In today's world where our challenges are global in nature, there is an urgent need for Americans to participate in programs like the Peace Corps. Peace Corps volunteers reach across the political and cultural divide, connecting with people as individuals. They treat others with respect by learning about their cultures and their lives, and they put a human face on America, which would otherwise be simply a distant powerful land. They help dissolve resentment against our country that might flourish in their absence.

I congratulate Peace Corps and its volunteers for 43 years of effective service in a mission of world peace and friendship.

#### LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the