

access to the internet will connect them to a vast supply of knowledge and power your progress.

The United States wants to help you seize these opportunities in a spirit of cooperation. We are ready to share our experiences . . . to make investments in your economies . . . to welcome you into the international community. We are prepared to build these partnerships because it is in our interest.

It is up to you to take the necessary, important, unavoidable risks. The choice is yours. You can merely survive, with an economy that generates just enough wealth to get by and a society that provides few freedoms and opportunities.

Or you can thrive. I am convinced you can thrive. My conviction follows from your history. At a time when Europeans were barely emerging from the Dark Ages, the light of civilization was shining brightly in the Arab world. Scholars outpaced their European counterparts in math, science and other disciplines of modernity. Philosophers and poets, architects and artists enlightened the world from Cairo to Baghdad to Damascus to Granada.

I believe with all my heart that you can build a future as glorious as your past. And I am convinced that my country has a profound stake in your success.

Let me leave you with the words of a great Arab-American poet, Gibran Khalil Gibran, that speak powerfully to this time and this challenge: "O land veiled to our sight from ages past

Which way to you? Which path? How long? How wide? What wasteland hems you in? What mountain range Enfolds your realm? Which one of us the guide? Are you our hope? Or are you a mirage? In hearts where none but fruitless quests reside . . .

"O source of knowledge where our forbears dwelt, Where truth they worshiped, beauty was their creed; Uncharted source, unknown, unreachable Whether by crested wave or racing steed, Neither in East nor West can you be found, In southern reaches nor in northern field, Not in the skies we find you, nor the seas, Nor pathless deserts which beguile our art; Deep in the soul you burst, like light, like fire, You are within my chest, my pounding heart."

Thank you for listening.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL SAFE PLACE WEEK

Mr. CRAIG. I look forward to the U.S. Senate passing this resolution and designating the week of March 14-20, 2004, as National Safe Place Week. I would like to thank my colleague Senator FEINSTEIN for her work on this issue. I would also like to thank the other cosponsors of this resolution: Senator CAMPBELL, Senator BOXER, Senator FITZGERALD, Senator LANDRIEU, Senator INHOFE, Senator FEINGOLD, Senator COCHRAN, Senator JOHNSON, Senator LIEBERMAN, Senator MIKULSKI, Senator DURBIN, Senator KOHL, Senator LINCOLN, Senator SHELBY, and Senator MURKOWSKI. This action will recognize the importance of Project Safe Place and send a message that we will keep working to protect our children. In countless hours of selfless work, volunteers truly do make a difference every day, and in passing this resolution, the Senate will be applauding the tireless efforts of the thousands of dedicated volunteers across the Nation for their many con-

tributions to the youth of our Nation through Project Safe Place.

Mr. President, events of the day may turn our attention overseas, but it is essential to remember those who are fighting an ongoing battle right here at home. This battle has been raging for generations and consists of fighting to protect this Nation's most valuable resource: our children. Young people are the future of this Nation; they need to be both valued and protected. Sadly, however, as my colleagues know, this precious resource is threatened daily.

I come to the Senate floor today to talk about a tremendous initiative between the public and private sector that has been reaching out to youth for over twenty years. Project Safe Place is a program that was developed to assist our Nation's youth and families in crisis. This partnership creates a network of private businesses trained to refer youth in need to the local service providers who can help them. Those businesses display a Safe Place sign so that people can easily recognize a "safe place" for them to go to receive help.

The goal of National Safe Place Week is to recognize the thousands of individuals who work to make Project Safe Place a reality. From trained volunteers to seasoned professionals, these dedicated individuals are working together with the resources in their local communities and through their ties across the Nation to serve young people. Because of Project Safe Place, this all happens under a well-known symbol of safety for in-crisis youth.

Project Safe Place is a simple program to implement in any local community, and it works. Young people are more likely to seek help in locations that are familiar and non-threatening to them. By creating a network of Safe Places across the Nation, all youth will have access to needed help, counseling, or a safe place to stay. However, though the program has already been established in 42 States, there are still too many communities that don't know about this valuable youth resource.

If your State does not already have a Safe Place organization, please consider facilitating this worthwhile resource so that young people who are abused, neglected, or whose futures are jeopardized by physical or emotional trauma will have access to immediate help and safety in your community. To create more Project Safe Place sites in Idaho, the staff in several of my State offices have completed the training to make them Safe Place sites, and now have the skills and ability to assist troubled youth. In the coming years, Project Safe Place hopes that every child in America will have the opportunity to connect with someone who can provide immediate help by easily recognizing the Safe Place sign.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of this resolution be printed at this point in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

(S. RES. 309)

Whereas today's youth are vital to the preservation of our country and will be the future bearers of the bright torch of democracy;

Whereas youth need a safe haven from various negative influences such as child abuse, substance abuse and crime, and they need to have resources readily available to assist them when faced with circumstances that compromise their safety;

Whereas the United States needs increased numbers of community volunteers acting as positive influences on the Nation's youth;

Whereas the Safe Place program is committed to protecting our Nation's most valuable asset, our youth, by offering short term "safe places" at neighborhood locations where trained volunteers are available to counsel and advise youth seeking assistance and guidance;

Whereas the Safe Place program combines the efforts of the private sector and non-profit organizations uniting to reach youth in the early stages of crisis;

Whereas the Safe Place program provides a direct way to assist programs in meeting performance standards relative to outreach and community relations, as set forth in the Federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act guidelines;

Whereas the Safe Place placard displayed at businesses within communities stands as a beacon of safety and refuge to at-risk youth;

Whereas more than 700 communities in 42 states and more than 14,000 locations have established Safe Place programs;

Whereas more than 68,000 young people have gone to Safe Place locations to get help when faced with crisis situations;

Whereas through the efforts of Safe Place coordinators across the country each year more than one-half million students learn that Safe Place is a resource if abusive or neglectful situations exists;

Whereas increased awareness of the program's existence will encourage communities to establish Safe Places for the Nation's youth throughout the country: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) proclaims the week of March 14 through March 20, 2004 as "National Safe Place Week" and

(2) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States and interested groups to promote awareness of and volunteer involvement in the Safe Place programs, and to observe the week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

MEDAL AWARDS FOR JERRY BREWER

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I would like to take the opportunity to honor the service of Mr. Jerry Brewer of Flatwoods, KY. It is wonderful to see him finally receiving the recognition for his service that he has deserved for so long.

On March 6, 2004, Mr. Brewer finally received decorations for his outstanding service in combat that he performed while in the army in Vietnam. A special thanks goes out to his daughter, Ms. Melissa Ashworth, for her hard work in correcting this oversight.

Mr. Brewer served in Vietnam in 1969 and 1970 as a member of the 478th Engineer Battalion of the 11th Infantry Brigade. He did receive a Purple Heart,

but his other medals were unfortunately delayed for over three decades. However, last Saturday Mr. Brewer finally received the medals that he had earned. He was awarded with the Bronze Star, another Purple Heart, the Vietnam Service medal, the National Defense Service medal, the Good Conduct medal, the Republic of Vietnam Campaign medal, the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, and the Combat Infantryman's Badge.

As one of the U.S. Senators from Kentucky, I know that Mr. Jerry Brewer served as a fine example of what it means to be true patriot and an American of the highest caliber. We must remember that the American way of life has been made possible by the bravery of men and women like Mr. Brewer. When freedom has been challenged, many like him have answered the call to arms. We must never forget that.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

NATIONAL EYE DONOR MONTH

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I rise today to bring to the attention of my colleagues and all of our constituents across the Nation that March is National Eye Donor Month. The first eye bank opened in 1944 and since then, over half a million Americans have received the gift of sight. Now, Americans throughout the country have the power to help restore sight to thousands of people in need. Mrs. Jeanne Bross, 65, can return to college in South Carolina with restored sight after receiving a corneal transplant in a Birmingham, AL hospital. This amazing turn in her life would not have been easy without someone giving the precious gift of sight.

The purpose of Eye Donor Month is to educate each and every American family to the opportunity to give the gift of sight and to make a terrific difference in someone's life. This month marks an opportunity to celebrate the gift of sight, to raise public awareness and to honor past donors and their families. The process to become a donor takes just minutes. All a donor needs to do is sign a donor card and most importantly, discuss their donation wishes with their family.

Last year over 46,000 Americans had their sight restored through the miracle of corneal transplantation. This year, thousands of Americans will require a sight restoring cornea transplant due to the continual need for cornea and tissue. Our eye banks across the Nation, along with the Eye Bank Association of America, work to ensure that all of these Americans will receive the tissue they need. It is also important to note that there are ever changing strict standards, screening procedures and accreditation programs in place to ensure that each of the recipients receives safe tissue, achieving a success rate of over 90 percent.

As National Eye Donor Month proceeds, I encourage my colleagues to

work with their local eye banks to increase public awareness of corneal transplantation and the continuous need for donors. I appreciate the opportunity to highlight Eye Donor Month and again, encourage all Americans to sign a donor card and speak with their families about their wishes.●

IN MEMORY OF MARC MIRINGOFF

• Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. President, every so often, someone comes along and changes the way we look at things. Marc Miringoff was such a person. We note his passing last week in New York at the age of 58.

Marc was a gifted social scientist who had the crucial insight that progress ought not be measured in economic terms alone. Gross national product, gross domestic product, net foreign investment, balance of payments, net savings rates—all of these thrown together, properly weighted and critically analyzed could certainly tell us much about the state of our economy. But Marc asked whether they would give us the true measure of our society. He concluded they did not.

In the 1980s, Marc sought to change that. He founded the Fordham Institute for Innovation in Social Policy in 1985, where he worked to develop an index to measure the Nation's social health. The index consisted of a number of measures that reflected the worlds of public health, education, the justice system, and violence. Marc burrowed beneath the numbers to find the underlying, often invisible, structures of poverty that undermined economic progress.

I was privileged to know Marc. I benefited from his counsel and was challenged by his insights. I know that Marc was no dry-as-dust academic. He relished the political arena as much as he enriched the academic forum. He was an evangelist for the concept of social health. His eyes sparkled when an elected official got hooked on his ideas. He worked hard, bringing others along, encouraging them to look more deeply at the fabric of American society and to work harder to make it a richer, stronger fabric.

I will miss Marc. We all will miss him. Right now, the country needs more people like him. I offer my condolences to his wife, Marque, and to his family.●

VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA OF FLORIDA

• Mr. GRAHAM of Florida. Mr. President, as ranking member on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I rise to acknowledge an extraordinary charitable organization, which serves some of this country's most troubled and disadvantaged veterans. This organization is the Volunteers of America of Florida.

The Volunteers of America of Florida provides essential services to veterans such as supported employment, mental

health care, job placement, basic living skills training, housing programs, and social support groups. One of the unique outreach tools owned and operated by Volunteers of America of Florida is their Florida Veterans Mobile Service Center. This is a specially designed 40-foot-long vehicle from which medical, dental, mental health, substance use and benefits counseling services are provided. It is also used to distribute food and clothing to the homeless wherever they are located. The Mobile Service Center is on the road 200 days per year and has traveled more than 30,000 miles, serving over 40 counties in Florida to reach over 3,000 homeless veterans per year. This includes outreach to rural encampments in areas such as the Florida Everglades, Ocala National Forest, and the Barrier Islands off of the Keys.

The Mobile Service Center is funded through a unique partnership of Government, corporate and not-for-profit organizations which includes the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, Eli Lilly and Company, USAA, many veterans service organizations—including: DAV, VVA, AMVETS, VFW, PVA, American Legion, NCOA, Korean War Veterans, Jewish War Veterans, VietNow, Marine Corps League—and Volunteers of America of Florida.

In Florida alone, there are between 17,000 and 23,000 homeless veterans who are living on the streets on any given night. Nationally, there are about 300,000 homeless veterans on any given night. In a year, that number jumps to over half a million veterans who will experience homelessness.

As a new generation of veterans begin to return home, it has become increasingly important to cultivate safety net programs for our Nation's veterans. Volunteers of America of Florida is battling to break the cycle of homelessness and reintegrate these brave veterans back into society. It gives me great pleasure to honor the paid and volunteer staff that makes these programs possible throughout the great State of Florida.●

(At the request of Mr. DASCHLE, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

SBA EMERGENCY AUTHORIZATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2004

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, earlier this week I introduced a bill, S. 2186, to keep the SBA, its two largest lending programs, the 504 and 7(a) Loan Guarantee Programs, and the Women's Business Centers up and running through the remainder of this year, September 30, 2004. I ask that these letters of support be printed in the RECORD. One letter is from Mary Kay Hamm of Linden International based in Wayne, Pennsylvania, and the other is from Tjuana C. Byrd, an attorney in Little Rock, Arkansas, who is a member of the National Association of Women Business Owners. I thank them