

And I remind my colleagues that we will revisit the Higher Education Act next year, and I will fight to close this loophole fully and permanently. From coast to coast, the price of college education is soaring and parents and students are struggling. I will continue to fight for policies that put students above special interests and that protect taxpayers from these wasteful subsidies.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 5186) was read the third time and passed.

EXTENDING THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 5185, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the title of the bill.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 5185) to temporarily extend programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965.

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

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 5185) was read the third time and passed.

MAMMOGRAPHY QUALITY STANDARDS REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2004

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 4555, which was received from the House and is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4555) to amend the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend provisions relating to mammography quality standards.

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

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I am pleased that today the Senate will pass the Mammography Quality Standards Reauthorization Act of 2004, H.R. 4555. It is fitting that Congress is reauthorizing the Mammography Quality Standards Act, MQSA, during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This important bill is about saving lives. That is what the MQSA does. Accurate mam-

mograms detect breast cancer early, so women can get treatment and be survivors.

Mammography is not perfect, but it is the best screening tool we have now. I authored MQSA 12 years ago to improve the quality of mammograms so that they are safe and accurate. Before MQSA became law, there was an uneven and conflicting patchwork of standards for mammography in this country. There were no national quality standards for personnel or equipment. Image quality of mammograms and patient exposure to radiation levels varied widely. The quality of mammography equipment was poor. Physicians and technologists were poorly trained. Inspections were lacking.

MQSA set Federal safety and quality assurance standards for mammography facilities for: personnel, including doctors who interpret mammograms; equipment; and operating procedures. By creating national standards, Congress helped make mammograms a more reliable tool for detecting breast cancer. In 1998, Congress improved MQSA by giving information on test results directly to the women being tested, so no woman falls through the cracks because she never learns about a suspicious finding on her mammogram.

Now Congress is renewing MQSA through 2007 and laying the foundation to improve it even more in the future. Next year, the Institute of Medicine, IOM, and the General Accountability Office, GAO, will release studies examining a number of issues relating to MQSA and mammography. These issues include ways to improve physicians' interpretations of mammograms, ways to ensure that sufficient numbers of adequately trained personnel are recruited and retained at all levels, and access to mammography. I look forward to receiving these IOM and GAO recommendations and considering them in the next MQSA reauthorization.

This legislation that the Senate passed today was passed by the House of Representatives earlier this week and now heads to the President for his signature. I acknowledge and thank Congressman Dingell for his long-standing leadership and work on MQSA, and appreciate the work of the House Energy and Commerce Committee on this issue. I thank Senators Gregg and Kennedy for working with me to make sure that the Senate made MQSA a priority in this Congress and that we reauthorized it this year. I also want to acknowledge Senator Ensign for his important work on MQSA. Senator Ensign joined me in introducing our MQSA reauthorization bill, S. 1879, that passed the Senate earlier this year.

I thank the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, American Cancer Society, National Alliance of Breast Cancer Organizations, American College of Radiology Association, Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization,

and the National Breast Cancer Coalition for their input and advice during this reauthorization of MQSA.

This year about 216,000 cases of breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed and over 40,000 women are expected to die of breast cancer in this country. MQSA saves lives. That is why it is so important that Congress is renewing and working to strengthen MQSA.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD without intervening action or debate.

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

The bill (H.R. 4555) was read the third time and passed.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, just to clarify, the bills we just passed are fairly significant pieces of legislation, the most significant of which is a bill which Senator KENNEDY and I and many people in this body have been working on.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from New Hampshire. He is right, we have just passed very important legislation, one of which is to reauthorize our mammogram quality standards. We have worked very hard on a bipartisan basis. I would like to thank him for his collegiality and cooperation. I see him smiling. Did I interrupt?

Mr. GREGG. I am happy to yield the floor to the Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. It was a little chaotic. I wanted to be quickly complimentary.

Mr. GREGG. I appreciate that.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Literally, we are going to ensure the safety and security of our mammograms. I just finished the Race for the Cure in Baltimore. I did more of a "walk for the cure" this morning. But when you look at the survivors and you know what early detection from mammograms has meant, we really have done a good job.

I thank the Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, let me thank the Senator from Maryland for her generous comments and her hard work, especially on the mammogram bill which we just passed. I was trying to highlight one of these pieces of legislation which essentially saves the taxpayers from paying out a \$100 million windfall to people who give loans to students. Those individuals were getting paid mostly by banks at 9.5 percent. This will roll that back to a reasonable interest rate of 4 percent. We will take those additional monies that have been saved and use them to waive the repayment requirements for teachers on their student loans for teachers who go into underserved areas and teach special needs kids. This is a