Recently, one of the children needed to have their tonsils removed. I remember those days with my children. It would not have been able to be done—it could have turned into a much more serious situation for that child—if it was not for the children's health care program. It makes a difference in children's lives every day.

Another mom, Pam, is a full-time preschool teacher and mother. Her monthly premiums of $384 per month, or over $4,500 per year, would have taken up a fifth of her pay if she was trying to pay through a private individual plan.

But through MICild, she was able to get the specialized care she needed for her daughter, who suffers from a rare seizure disorder. She would not have been able to care for her daughter if it were not for the children's health care program.

Like Pam, most working families simply cannot afford traditional health insurance and make ends meet—to be able to pay rent, utilities, a mortgage payment, or purchase food and school clothes, and, on top of that, find an individual policy that is affordable in the private market. According to the Commonwealth Fund, nearly three-quarters of people living below 200 percent of the poverty line found it very difficult or impossible to find affordable coverage in the individual market. Premiums for individual market coverage for families with incomes between 100 percent of poverty and 199 percent of poverty—which is what we are talking about and what we have in Michigan—on average, one-quarter of the family's total income—25 percent—would be premiums for health care in the private market. Faced with these costs, many families just don't have the coverage because they cannot afford to do it and at the same time put food on the table. The situation is even worse for families with chronic conditions, such as asthma or juvenile diabetes. If they were able to purchase coverage in the individual market, costs would be much higher.

The children's health program, it is important to note, is not just for kids in cities, it is not just an urban program. This program helps all children regardless of where they live. In fact, according to the Carsey Institute, they found that there were more children in rural areas who were benefiting from the Children's Health Insurance Program than in urban areas—32 percent of rural children versus 26 percent of urban children. So this really is something that touches every single part of the country, every single part of our States, and families all throughout America who are working hard every day and counting on us to help them to be able to get the children's health care they need.

We are taking a huge step forward for our Nation's uninsured children, the vast majority of whom—78 percent—live in working families. Seventy-eight percent live in a home where mom and/or dad is working, but they are not making enough to be able to afford private premiums in the private individual market. Because the importance of the children's health care program is so critical for so many families, I urge my colleagues not to listen to inaccurate statements or negative attacks but to join together, as we have done, in a wonderful bipartisan effort in the Senate to send a very strong message to this President that we come together on behalf of the children and the working families of America to put our values and priorities in the right place. That is what we are talking about here. This is about choices, about values, about priorities.

This bill is totally in line with what President Bush proposed at the 2004 Republican Convention. He said at that time:

> In a new term, we will lead an aggressive effort to enroll millions of poor children who are eligible but not signed up for Government health insurance programs. We will not allow a lack of attention, or information, to stand between these children and the health care they need.

Well, Mr. President, this bipartisan compromise, this bipartisan victory which has been put together in the Congress is an aggressive effort to enroll millions of poor children into a successful public-private partnership. This bill before us is a chance to make a real difference in the lives of millions of children—millions of children who, without us and the children's health care program, will not have that chance.

We need to do the right thing. Every day, as we wait, children are growing; they don't wait for us. They keep on growing whether we are debating, whether we are in committee meetings. Regardless of what we are doing, the children of America keep on growing. They keep on having needs—dental or broad health care needs or mental health needs. It is time to do the right thing. We have it within our grasp. A tremendous amount of hard work has gone into this. Let's remember the bipartisan spirit that created this great program in 1997. Let's remember that the Children's Health Insurance Program is truly a great American success story for which we can all take credit. We can join together in taking credit for it.

Let's pass this bill and, most importantly, let's together urge the President of the United States to do the right thing on behalf of the children of America.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank Senator STABENOW, my friend from Michigan, for the comments about children's health. She is right-on about that. Look at the choice. We are going to spend $2.5 billion a week in Iraq. Yet we are unwilling per year to spend $7 billion to insure 4 million additional children—some 75,000 in my State and 50,000 or 60,000 in the State of Michigan next door. We are spending $2.5 billion a week in Iraq. Yet the President says he is going to say no and veto this bill on children's health.

TRADE POLICY

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, our Nation's haphazard trade policy has done plenty of damage to Ohio's economy, to our workers, to our manufacturers, and to our small businesses. Recent news reports of tainted foods and toxic toys reveal another hazard of ill-conceived and unenforced trade rules. They subject American families and children to products that can harm them, that in some cases have even killed them.

From pet food to toothpaste, from tires to toys, news stories almost every day highlight the consequences of our Nation's failed trade policy. Countries such as China lack basic protections we have come to take for granted. Given the well-known dangers of lead, particularly for young children, our Government banned it from products such as gasoline and paint in the 1970s. Yet our trade policy is turning back the clock on the hard-fought safety standards that keep our families and our children safe.

What happens should come as no surprise. When we trade the way we do, when we bought $288 billion of products from the People's Republic of China last year and $288 billion this year—it will probably exceed $300 billion—and we are trading with a country that doesn't have close to the same safety standards for its own workers or safe air or drinking water standards for its own water, why would we expect them to sell safe products to our country?

It is compounded by the fact that companies, such as Mattel say to the Chinese contractors: We want you to cut costs. Lead paint? Use it; it is cheaper. Cut corners so we can save money.

It is no surprise because American corporations have pushed the Chinese to cut costs, and at the same time China doesn't have fair labor standards, clean air, and safe drinking water standards for their own people. Of course they are going to sell products back to our country such as contaminated toothpaste and pet food and dangerous toys with lead-based paint on those products.

Our trade policy should prevent these problems, not invite them. Despite the real and present danger from Chinese imports, we must not focus solely on consumer threats from China. The real threat is our failed trade policy that allows recall after recall. The real threat is our failure to change course and craft a new, very different trade policy. The real threat is this administration's insistence on more of the same—more trade pacts that send U.S. jobs overseas, more trade pacts that allow companies and countries to ignore the rules of fair trade, more trade

pacts that will mean more tainted products in our homes, more dangerous toys for our children, and more recalls for our businesses.

The administration and its free-trade supporters in Congress are gearing up for another trade fight. They want to force on our Nation—a nation that in November, in Montana, Ohio, and across the country, demanded change—more job-killing trade agreements with unreliable standards. Free-trade agreements with Peru, Panama, Colombia, and South Korea currently being debated in Congress are based on the same failed trade model.

This week, the Peru trade agreement is at the forefront of the debate between fundamentally flawed trade models—more of the same—and the fight for fair trade. We want more trade, plenty of trade; we just want fair trade, different rules.

The Peru free-trade agreement, like NAFTA, while it has some improvements over that, puts limits on the safety standards we can require for imports. FDA inspectors have rejected seafood imports from Peru and Panama—major seafood suppliers to the United States. Yet the current trade agreement, as proposed—the Bush administration's Peru and Panama agreements—limits food safety standards and border inspections. What has happened already is where, frankly, we have bought too many contaminated products, contaminated seafood imports, and whatever problems we have, this trade agreement will make it worse because this agreement will limit our own food safety standards and border inspections. Adding insult to injury, the agreements would force the United States to rely on foreign inspectors to ensure our safety. We have seen how well that worked with China.

It is time for a new direction in trade policy. It is time for a trade policy that ensures the safety of food on our kitchen tables and toys in our children's bedrooms. It is time for a trade policy that creates new businesses and good-paying jobs at home instead of a trade policy that encourages companies to outsource and move overseas. It is time for a trade policy that puts an end to the global exploitation of cheap labor.

The voters in November shouted from the ballot box, demanding a new trade policy. Their resounding call for a new trade policy put Members of Congress on notice that their trade votes in Washington matter to voters back home.

With Peru, Panama, Colombia, and South Korea, voters in my State of Ohio and across the Nation are watching these trade debates. Everyone agrees on one thing: We want more trade with countries around the world, but first we must protect the safety and the health of our families and our children.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kansas is recognized.

PRESIDENTIAL VISIT

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I want to talk on two issues with my colleagues. One is about Iran. The President of Iran is now in the United States. Mahmud Ahmadi-Nejad is in the United States enjoying liberties here that are not enjoyed in his home country by his fellow citizens. I want to make a point of that. I want to talk about what he has said and what he has done. I think there is a substantial difference. I want to point out that we should pass the Lieberman-Kyl amendment regarding the designation of terrorist organization by—that the IRGC be designated as a terrorist organization. Finally, I will wrap up with a discussion about the Biden-Brownback amendment on federalism in Iraq, which I think would be very important.

President Ahmadi-Nejad took advantage of the freedoms we enjoy to spread lies in the United States. I believe his appearance was disgraceful. I think the things he is saying are outright lies—what he is saying versus what he has done. He looked his audience in the eye and he lied. He knew he was telling lies, and the audience knew it.

Let's talk about the real truth inside Iran. I want to speak about what is taking place there.

I have chaired the Middle East subcommittee in the past. I have worked on issues regarding Iran. We have worked to secure and have secured funding for civil society development inside Iran. I worked with a number of Iranian dissidents who have been forced out of that country. We have seen it taking place on the news.

President Ahmadi-Nejad is enjoying liberties now in this country that are not available to his people. It would be easier to spend time in his own country developing these same civil liberties for individuals and renouncing terrorism rather than trying to go to the World Trade Center site where terrorists killed so many of our citizens.

President Ahmadi-Nejad and Ayatollah Khamenei are not trustworthy leaders. The Iranian people do not enjoy freedom of speech. Their people do not have a free press. The Iranian Government represses women and minorities. They do not tolerate religions other than their own extreme version of Shia Islam.

For example, consider the Baha'is of Iran. Since 1979, the Islamic Republic of Iran has blocked the Baha'is' access to higher education, refused them entry into universities and expelled them when they are discovered to be Baha'is.

Recently, a 70-year-old man was sentenced to 70 lashes and a year in prison for ''propagating and spreading Bahaism and the defamation of the pure Imams''—a 70-year-old man, 70 lashes, a year in prison.

We must stand with the teachers who are getting purged from academic institutions in Iran for speaking their minds, with the Iranian-American scholars who are being arrested on trumped-up charges, and with newspaper editors who refuse to censor according to Government demands.

Isn't it amazing that President Ahmadi-Nejad would see that taking place in his country and yet come here to enjoy our civil liberties of freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, to speak his mind when he cannot do it in his country? We should be reaching out to the students, the labor activists, and the brave leaders of Iran's fledgling civil society and offer our support for their views and for an open society in Iran. It is not only a moral imperative, but I believe it is also in the strategic interest of the United States and of people of civil societies in the West and throughout the world.

This context is important as we consider the amendment offered by Senator LIEBERMAN and Senator KYL. Yesterday Ahmadi-Nejad claimed that Iran is a free country, where women are respected and life is good for the Iranian people. We know this is not true.

Yesterday, we also heard from Ahmadi-Nejad that Iran does not want to attack Israel, that it is not meddling in Iraq and Afghanistan, and it does not want a nuclear weapon. We know this is not true. They are meddling in Iraq, attacking our troops with weapons developed in Iran. They have held conferences stating a world without Israel, a world without the United States.

Iran's leaders would say the IRGC is not a threat, but we have no reason to believe them. In fact, we know the IRGC is killing our soldiers in Iraq. It is working with Hezbollah in Lebanon and it is present in other countries around the world advancing the agenda of the Supreme Leader in Iran.

The IRGC is the very definition of a terrorist organization, and Iran as a nation is the lead sponsor of terrorism around the world. The IRGC should be designated formally as a terrorist organization so that the full power of the American Government can be applied to combating its activities. The IRGC is not a normal military arm of a sovereign government. It is the operational division of the world's most dangerous state sponsor of terrorism. If we think of terrorism as a threat, we must designate the IRGC as a terrorist organization.

I hope the President of Iran will renounce terrorism and the support for terrorism today, although I know he will not.

POLITICAL SURGE IN IRAQ

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, on another matter on which we are going to be voting shortly, the Biden-Brownback amendment, I wish to show this map of Iraq. I note to my colleagues in the time I have, when President Bush saw the military situation was devolving on the ground and was moving toward civil war, he called for a military surge. He said: It is not working; we are not getting control; we