

## NATIONAL HEALTH CENTER WEEK

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the week of August 9, 2009, as National Health Center Week. National health centers provide care to 18 million people a year throughout the United States, through services at Community, Migrant, Homeless and Public Housing Health Center delivery sites. I wish to take the opportunity in a week dedicated to these sites to promote awareness on the expansive role they play in the health care of some of our Nation's most underserved citizens. It is important to recognize that at a time when health care costs have increased considerably across the country, these health centers have continued to serve an increasing number of patients without compromising the quality of care.

The Community Health Center Program, which operates in communities that are designated as medically underserved, has played a particularly important role as a health safety net provider in my State of South Dakota. Significant barriers limit access to quality health care for thousands of South Dakotans. The successful efforts of our State's community health centers have helped reduce many of these barriers by providing quality care to our State's low-income citizens. These health centers provide onsite dental, pharmaceutical, mental health, and substance abuse services that are often hard to come by in rural communities. In South Dakota, more than 50,000 patients received care in 2007, 40 percent of whom were uninsured and an additional 25 percent were covered under Medicaid.

I strongly support this model of health care delivery and commend the hard work of those in South Dakota and across the Nation in providing accessible, high-quality health care to those most in need.

WIPA AND PABSS  
REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I urge the Senate to pass by unanimous consent the WIPA and PABSS Reauthorization Act of 2009—H.R. 3325—which was passed recently by the House of Representatives. The bill will extend, for 1 year, two programs that provide important assistance for Social Security and supplemental security income, SSI, disability beneficiaries who would like to return to work.

Both of these programs were included in the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, which passed Congress with bipartisan support. Under the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance, WIPA, program, the Social Security Administration, SSA, funds community-based organizations to provide personalized assistance to Social Security and SSI disability beneficiaries who want to work, by helping these beneficiaries understand SSA's complex work incentive policies

and the effect that working will have on their benefits. This program can help to reduce the fears many beneficiaries have about attempting to return to work.

Under the Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security, PABSS, Program, SSA awards grants to protection and advocacy systems to provide legal advocacy services that beneficiaries need to secure, maintain, or regain employment. The PABSS Program also provides beneficiaries with information and advice about obtaining vocational rehabilitation and employment services.

The Finance Committee and other committees in Congress have received testimony from disability advocates and other stakeholders about the importance of these programs to increasing employment among disability beneficiaries.

The Social Security Administration is currently authorized to spend \$23 million annually from its administrative budget to fund the WIPA Program, and \$7 million annually to fund the PABSS Program. However, the authorization for both programs expires on September 30, 2009.

This bill will extend the WIPA and PABSS Programs for 1 year, with no changes, while the relevant committees in Congress consider a longer term reauthorization. This 1-year extension will ensure that these programs can continue to provide disability beneficiaries with the assistance they need to return to work.

I thank my colleagues for their support for temporarily extending these important programs.

SNAKE HEADWATERS WILD AND  
SCENIC DESIGNATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I wish to speak on the Craig Thomas Snake Headwaters Legacy Act of 2008.

Shortly before Craig Thomas passed away, he introduced legislation, S. 1281, to protect the Snake River headwaters. His goal was to designate hundreds of miles of river in northwest Wyoming as wild and scenic. At the time, Senator Thomas stated that this designation would be a "badge of honor" for these rivers.

On May 15, 2007, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks held a hearing on S. 1281. Senator Thomas invited Jack Dennis, a world renowned fly fisherman, to testify in support of the bill.

During his testimony Jack Dennis eloquently made the case for wild and scenic designation stating "Without hesitation, the rivers and streams of the Snake River Headwaters are the most stunningly beautiful in the world." Jack further testified that "To walk these rivers and hear the music of the rivers, to see beavers swimming out of the lodge, to watch an elk come down to the river to drink at sunrise—these rivers touch all our souls."

On Sunday, August 9, 2009, I will be participating in a community event in Jackson Hole, WY, to officially designate the Snake River headwaters as wild and scenic. I will be joining Susan Thomas, Jack Dennis, and hundreds of grassroots organizations and individuals who never gave up.

Like so many others, the river touched Craig's soul. This coming Sunday, we will finish the task Craig Thomas started. It is a remarkable accomplishment—388 miles of river dedicated as wild and scenic, 388 miles of pristine water that will be protected for the enjoyment of future generations.

What an honor indeed.

SENATE EMPLOYEES' CHILD CARE  
CENTER

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Senate Employees' Child Care Center for 25 years of service.

The Senate Employees' Child Care Center opened its doors on February 27, 1984, as the first childcare center on Capitol Hill. Its successful opening is attributed to the dedication and hard work of Senate Members, employees, and their families.

The center has grown, much like the children and Senate families it has served. On opening day, the center had 27 children enrolled from the ages of 18 months to 5 years. By comparison, the center today has grown to a full enrollment of 68 children from the ages of 10 weeks to 5 years.

The center first opened in what was known as the Immigration Building and is now the Capitol Police headquarters. As it outgrew that space, a new facility was constructed nearby. Enrollment and growth continued, necessitating the construction of a new facility in December of 1999.

While many things have changed over the past 25 years, such as the location, number of children served, and the faces of teachers and families, one constant is this: the Senate Employees' Child Care Center remains a first-class facility. Families continue to appreciate the comfort of knowing their children are in a safe and enriching educational environment. In fact, many families refer to the Center as a "school" rather than a daycare facility.

We and our staffs strive for excellence. The Senate Employees' Child Care Center does the same. In 1989, it became the first center in Washington, DC, to achieve accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, NAEYC. This accreditation is the "gold standard" for early childhood education, and the center has maintained it continuously since 1989.

As in the early days, families with children enrolled in the center are encouraged to be involved in its daily operations. Many families spend their lunch hours doing "nap duty," others