

eligibility levels for CHIP or Medicaid to cover more kids. States have also taken advantage of the enrollment simplification options—making it easier for kids to get enrolled and stay covered.

In health reform, we extended CHIP for an additional 2 years, ensuring that kids will have a stable source of coverage as we expand coverage to other groups. In 2015, Congress will revisit CHIP in a new context. CHIP has been instrumental in providing children with access to care where none existed before, but it may need to take on a different role as health reform is implemented.

Whatever happens in 2015, I am confident that CHIP will continue to be an important part of our health system. CHIP is tried and true, and things just keep getting better and better in the program. As we celebrate CHIP's 13th birthday, we can be proud of everything Congress has done to provide low-income kids with high quality, affordable coverage.

TRIBUTE TO FIRST RESPONDERS

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I wish to discuss a heart wrenching tragedy that occurred in my home State earlier this week and to acknowledge the heroic efforts of our local first responders. On Monday evening, under sweltering temperatures that had surpassed 100 degrees, two Shreveport families gathered on the banks of the Red River, in Shreveport, LA, to enjoy a picnic. What is normally a routine summer outing for millions of people across America quickly turned into a disaster.

Seven teenage children from these two families had wandered off into an unfamiliar part of the river. One of the children stepped off of a sand bar and into deeper, more dangerous water and began to scream for help. The other six children followed in an attempt to rescue the drowning teen. None of the seven children knew how to swim, nor did the adults who were with them. As the seven children struggled for their lives against the treacherous waters of the Red River, witnesses called 911 for help.

Teams of first responders from Shreveport and Bossier City were dispatched and arrived on the scene at 6:30 p.m., roughly 10 minutes after the 911 call was made. Dive teams entered the water four at a time in search of the drowning children. Despite the tremendous efforts of the divers, the river's waters claimed the lives of six of the seven children. The lone survivor was rescued by a bystander named Christopher Partlan, before the dive teams could get to the area.

At 7:51 p.m., the first of the victim's bodies was recovered from the water. This unthinkable task continued for more than 2 hours before the last of the victims was recovered at 10:02 p.m.

At this time, I would like to read the names of the first responders from

Shreveport and Bossier City who were dispatched to this tragic accident:

Captain John Davis; Fire Engineer Craig Bynog; Firefighter Jared Mourad; Firefighter Chad Alexander; Battalion Chief Tim Thames; and Fire Engineer Jimmy Lockey of the Shreveport Fire Department. Officer Phillip Tucker of the Shreveport Police Department; Fire Driver Chad Arnette of the Bossier City Fire Department; and Christopher Partlan, the bystander who rescued 15-year-old DeKendrix Warner.

All these brave men deserve to be recognized for their heroism. First responders in Shreveport and Bossier and in cities and towns across America protect our communities every day. We depend on them during fires, floods and other disasters and they put their lives on the line to save ours. For that, we owe them a debt of honor and gratitude.

I would also like once again to send my condolences to the Warner and Stewart families for their tragic loss. I know the Shreveport community will wrap its arms around them and pray for them, comfort them and support them during this difficult time.

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an important matter involving the future of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

As you may know, TVA is led by a Board of Directors that consists of nine individuals appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. These board members serve for staggered 5-year terms.

For some time, it has been understood that each State within TVA's service area should be represented on the board. This makes sense given TVA's diverse energy production and economic development activities, which affect communities in each State differently as do the Authority's various power plants and dams.

Recognizing this, President Bush, in 2006, nominated to the board a fabulous individual from my State, Howard Thraikill. The Senate confirmed the nomination unanimously.

Mr. Thraikill has undoubtedly served with distinction. He was president of AdTran, a successful technology company in Huntsville, and he brought to TVA a familiarity with the complexities of running a large organization.

Upon his confirmation, Mr. Thraikill immersed himself in the financial records, business plans, and technical data surrounding TVA's many functions. He became an expert on the organization in a way that many board members do not. When he identified a poor performing project or a proposal with downsides, he was not afraid to say so. And he was especially familiar with TVA's activities in North Alabama, where he lived.

Undoubtedly, Mr. Thraikill's willingness to devote his personal time and

energy to the position was of great benefit to both TVA and its Alabama customers.

Unfortunately, Mr. Thraikill's term on the Board is now nearing its end. I was dismayed to learn recently that President Obama apparently failed to recognize the importance of this position to the people of Alabama, and had nominated an individual from another State to fill it.

This is no small matter. Of the seven States that make up TVA, Alabama is the second largest in terms of revenue, the second largest in terms of employees, and the third largest in terms of service area.

Also, Alabama is home to several important TVA facilities, such as Guntersville Hydroelectric Dam, Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant, and the Bellefonte facility—which could become one of the first new nuclear power plants in the country.

Seven States make up the TVA service area. There are nine seats on the board. It is unacceptable that Alabama's long term representation be put in jeopardy.

Accordingly, I have been forced to use my position in the Senate to block the progress of these TVA nominations until this matter could be resolved.

I am pleased to inform the Senate today that after a series of conversations with the White House, we have reached an agreement that the next opening on the board will be filled by a nominee from the State of Alabama.

That vacancy is expected in March of next year, and we have agreed to begin in the next month discussing which individuals should be considered for this important position. I wish to thank the President and his staff for working with me on this compromise.

Senator CARPER, who chairs the Environment and Public Works subcommittee that considers TVA nominations, has also stated his willingness to begin consideration of the Alabama nominee early to ensure he or she is confirmed before the start of the term. I thank him for that offer.

I am pleased we could reach an agreement on this issue, and I look forward to the Senate confirmation of an individual from my State who will offer strong leadership to TVA in the coming years.

Accordingly, I am also pleased today to lift my hold on the nominations to the TVA Board that are currently pending in the Senate. I urge my colleagues to move quickly with the nominations to ensure that the Board of Directors will have a quorum in August so that it may effectively conduct the business before it.

1099 REPORTING REQUIREMENT

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise to express my concerns about a provision in the new health care law that will impose monumental burdens on small businesses, reduce wages and eliminate jobs.