

think of the reasons for it. When a smoker of several decades finally receives the help that he needs to quit so that he can watch his grandchildren grow up, he most likely does not pause to reflect on why he received free cessation services. But none of these things happened accidentally. They came to pass because of the heroic and humble efforts of a dedicated public servant, Jenelle Krishnamoorthy. For 10 years now, Jenelle has shown up for work in my office with the singular goal of improving the health of Americans. She has succeeded beyond measure. For that, I owe her my thanks, and so too do tens of millions of Americans.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, today I express my opposition to the President's plan to grant executive amnesty to 4 million to 5 million illegal immigrants residing in the United States.

By circumventing Congress on immigration and instituting his will through executive actions, President Obama is eroding the very foundation of our country and form of government. This sets a dangerous precedent where future Presidents can flout any law they happen to disagree with and alter the law without going through Congress. Each branch of government is to act as a check against the others and not sit idly by as one exercises authority it does not have. A constitutional law professor should know that.

I believe we all agree that our immigration system is broken—both the legal system which allows individuals to visit and work in our country and the failures which continue to allow others to reside illegally within our borders. The first step we need to take to fix our system is to secure our borders and bolster interior enforcement. We cannot reduce illegal immigration without better border security and entry/exit enforcement measures. We also need to ensure that we have a strong, workable employment verification system in place, because if Congress can ensure that only authorized job seekers gain employment in this country, then we remove the incentive for illegal immigration—and we cannot grant those who are here illegally amnesty.

Yet this week the President intends to circumvent the will of Congress by illegally granting amnesty to 4 million to 5 million illegal immigrants. This cannot stand. The American people do not want it, some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have advocated against it, and the President himself has said more than 20 times that he does not have the authority to take this action. I am certain that the Republicans in the Senate will take action next year when we become the majority, and I look forward to being a part of that cause.

But I must be clear: this is part of a much larger fight. I know all of my colleagues remember the unconstitutional

NLRB recess appointments the President made in 2012. In that case, the Supreme Court rejected his move, but it hasn't stopped the President from pushing forward. He has proposed a cap and tax proposal through regulation that Congress has already rejected, and I know my colleagues from coal-producing States intend to fight that EPA rule with me. I know my colleagues from Western States also intend to join me in fighting the EPA's proposed rule that could allow the administration to regulate all bodies of water, no matter how small, and regardless of whether the water is on public or private property.

This week's action is the latest step too far by the President, and I will continue to fight executive overreach—including amnesty by executive order—whether by targeting rampant, unaccountable Federal spending, working to reverse illegal executive orders with legitimate Federal laws or using the Congressional Review Act to reject the President's actions. I will be looking closely at every option.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2013

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I would like to thank Chairman HARKIN, Ranking Member ALEXANDER, and sponsors Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR for their tremendous work to bring the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 to passage. I thank all of my colleagues in the House and Senate who helped get us to this point.

As many of my colleagues have commented, it is well past time that we take up a reauthorization of this important legislation. The Child Care and Development Block Grant, CCDBG, has not been reauthorized since 1996. In the nearly two decades since, our understanding of early childhood development, and the importance of high-quality child care and early learning, has expanded dramatically.

Investing in high-quality early learning opportunities such as child care and pre-K sets children on the path to success. This bill updates Federal standards to ensure that the Federal Government is supporting high-quality child care for low-income children. The legislation we have passed sets a new standard for child care in America, making sure that Federal dollars are going to providers who are committed to providing child care that meets certain criteria, such as health and safety standards.

Many of these changes reflect proposals I have put forth in previous Congresses to improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant, such as the Starting Early, Starting Right Act. I am encouraged that we were able to reach consensus on many of the provisions I have supported in the past, and that they are represented in this bill.

I would have liked to go further. I believe we need to increase our investment in high-quality child care, and

make it easier for child care providers to access training and education opportunities that will help them become better at caring for children and helping them learn. I would like to increase the incentives for States to invest in quality ratings and improvement systems, QRIS, which encourage child care providers to make continuous improvements in the quality of the care they provide and the facilities they use, often through financial incentives such as higher reimbursement rates when a certain quality level is reached.

While the authorized appropriations levels in this bill represent a 16% increase over the next 6 years—we still have a long way to go. Nationwide, the number of children served with CCDBG funding from 2012 to 2013 fell by 47,500 children. In Pennsylvania, nearly 2,800 fewer children were served. The important provisions for health, safety, and quality in this bill are not without their cost, and Congress must fully fund them. No family, child care provider, or State should have to make a choice between serving more children or providing quality care. We owe our most vulnerable children no less.

Even with the continued need for more funding, I still believe this legislation represents a significant improvement over current law and major progress for families. For the first time, we are requiring all States to develop robust health and safety standards, and to institute a consistent background check system for child care providers.

We are requiring States to formally coordinate their early learning programs, to improve service coordination and delivery. We are allowing children who qualify for a subsidy to receive a year of care before their eligibility is re-determined, promoting stability and continuity for the entire family and encouraging the child to develop strong relationships with his or her teachers and peers in child care.

We are increasing the investment in quality, from the 4 percent per year currently required in law to 9 percent within 5 years, and including a separate set-aside for infants and toddlers. Quality is a continuum, and a continual investment; it is not a one-time purchase, it is something we need to support and sustain.

I thank Chairman HARKIN, Ranking Member ALEXANDER, and Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR again for all of the work that they and their staff have done to get us to this point. When Congress works together children and family in this Nation all benefit. With the President's signature, parents can rest a little easier knowing that when they leave their child at child care, they will receive great care.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

VIRGINIA'S COMMITMENT TO ECONOMIC PROSPERITY THROUGH EDUCATION INNOVATION

• Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, the key to America's continued success lies in improving our Nation's educational system. With the changing needs of our workforce, it is imperative that we utilize research in STEM fields and the humanities to improve our country's economic prosperity. Even in lean times, Virginia focused on the link between research and the creative new innovations that are leading this Nation's economic recovery; the Commonwealth's continued commitment to bridging these undertakings is commendable.

The Virginia Longitudinal System was created by a partnership between the Virginia Department of Education, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, the Virginia Community College System, and the Virginia Employment Commission. This vital research tool, the first of its kind in the Nation, provides policymakers, researchers, and citizens with information that will prepare and connect Virginians with employment opportunities. Funded with a grant awarded under the stimulus bill—the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009—the data system allows State agencies and researchers to study the behaviors and transitions of students through the public school systems, into college, and on to the workforce so Virginia leaders can make informed decisions and create education and workforce policy based on consistent and relevant data.

Earlier this year, several education organizations, including the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, Center for Excellence in Education, Center for Innovative Technology, Virginia Chamber of Commerce, Virginia Business Higher Education Council, and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, held the Virginia Higher Education Research Summit. The summit focused on the importance of increasing funding for academic research at Virginia's colleges and universities, showcased the strengths of private/public partnerships between Virginia's universities and the private sector, provided a forum for discussing best practices related to intellectual property issues, and strengthened the public's understanding of where Virginia's research dollars come from, including from Federal, State, and private sources.

If we are to win the race for talent, we need a long-term plan that produces the best workforce in the world. I am encouraged by these institutions' open discussion of one of our Nation's most pressing problems—investing in innovative research ideas that will drive our economy and the middle class into the future. I recognize the efforts of these stakeholders and the Common-

wealth as they build on the substantial successes already achieved by Virginia's colleges and universities.●

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL MARK A. SCHRAMEK

• Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to congratulate Lt. Col. Mark A. Schramek on the occasion of his retirement from the U.S. Air Force after more than 20 years of service. A native of Duluth, MN, he has served our country with distinction both at home and abroad.

An intelligence officer by training, Lieutenant Colonel Schramek has held a number of important operational and headquarters assignments. In 2009, he became a Congressional liaison officer for the U.S. Air Force, a demanding and important position within the Department of Defense. As a Congressional liaison officer, he developed and implemented effective legislative strategies and supported some of the most important programs to the Department of Defense.

Having worked with Lieutenant Colonel Schramek over the past few years, I am pleased to commend him for his distinguished service to our country. I wish him and his family the very best as they begin the next chapter of their lives.●

CONGRATULATING BILL DEIST

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I wish today to congratulate Bill Deist, of Winnemucca, NV, on his retirement. After serving the community of Humboldt County for over 15 years, Bill will be retiring in December 2014. It gives me great pleasure to congratulate him on his retirement after many years of hard work and dedication to Humboldt County and the Silver State.

Bill stands as a shining example of someone who has devoted their life to the betterment of their community. He started serving the Silver State in 1997 when he moved to Carlin, NV. His experience of over 19 years as the city manager in John Day, OR, made him an extremely qualified candidate to become the Carlin city manager—a position that he held for 2 years. After his years as the city manager, Bill became the Humboldt County administrator, a position that he has held with integrity for the past 15 years.

Upon becoming the Humboldt County administrator, Bill became a person known for getting things done. He always worked well with all city, county, and State governments throughout his career. His consistent priority was to create initiatives geared toward the betterment and improvement of the lives of the Humboldt County citizens. Among his many accomplishments, Bill has been credited with the creation of a strong county budget and upon his retirement, he will be leaving the county debt free and fiscally strong.

While representing Humboldt County for 4 years in the U.S. House of Rep-

resentatives, and now as its U.S. Senator, I have had the distinct pleasure of working closely with Bill on important Northern Nevada priorities. Bill was an integral part of the Pine Forest review and assessment working group that worked for years to develop recommendations that were ultimately included in the Pine Forest Range Recreation Enhancement Act, legislation I have fought to enact as a member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. This bill, which would greatly benefit Humboldt County once enacted, has near unanimous support among residents because of the in-depth work done prior to introduction. In fact, it is frequently looked to in Congress as a national model for how public lands bills should be developed at the grassroots level. Public input and local support is critical to all my public lands work in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee on behalf of the State, and Bill's input has been vital in nearly every effort I have been involved in benefiting the county.

Bill exemplifies the highest standards of leadership and community service and should be proud of his long and meaningful career. I am grateful for his dedication and commitment to the people of Humboldt County and to the State of Nevada. Today, I ask that all of my colleagues join me in congratulating Bill on his retirement, and I offer my deepest appreciation for all that he has done to make the Silver State an even better place. I offer my best wishes for many successful and fulfilling years to come.●

RECOGNIZING DR. NORMAN CHRISTOPHER FRANCIS

• Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I wish to recognize and honor Dr. Norman Christopher Francis, who has devoted much of his life to increasing access to, quality of, and affordability of postsecondary education for students. Dr. Francis recently retired from his remarkable tenure as president of Xavier University, a renowned Historically Black University and one of Louisiana's most cherished institutions of higher education. He has left behind an indelible mark of impressive leadership and results. On behalf of the U.S. Senate and the State of Louisiana, I applaud Dr. Francis for his devotion to Louisiana's higher education system and thank him for his many years of service.

Dr. Francis began his journey in the field of higher education country more than 60 years ago as a student at Xavier University and grew into a cherished leader who later served as the university's president for 46 years. This makes him the longest tenured leader of any university in America—quite a remarkable achievement. He is one of the most admired and respected leaders not only in New Orleans and Louisiana but in our Nation today. In an extraordinary career, he took an active and vital leadership role during the tumultuous decades of civil rights battles in