



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Jobs and Economic Growth For West Virginia

As Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am committed to investing our nation's scarce federal dollars in infrastructure programs and projects where the need is greatest and the investment will yield the highest dividends.

Since January 1989, during my first term as Chairman of the Committee, I have brought nearly \$1 billion in federal investment to West Virginia, which over the coming years will translate into thousands of new jobs and renewed economic growth.

For example, highways are a lifeline of economic development, and I have gotten more than \$255 million for highway construction in West Virginia, including Appalachian Corridors H, G, and D, and the Weirton Bypass of U.S. Route 22.

In another effort to bring new jobs to West Virginia, and to improve law enforcement nationwide, I got \$185 million for the FBI to relocate its fingerprint identification facility to our state, creating an estimated 2,500 jobs and an annual payroll of \$75 million.

I also got \$50 million to locate a new 750-bed medium security federal prison in Beckley, which will employ 250 persons; and \$17.5 million to locate a new Coast Guard Operations Computer Center in West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle, which will enhance the Coast Guard's marine rescue and drug en-

forcement capabilities.

In the area of research and development, I added \$75 million to replace the collapsed radio telescope at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank, Pocahontas County; \$32 million to build a world-class Occupational Safety and Health Laboratory in Morgantown; and \$30 million for a new state-of-the-art National Education and Training Center in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

To promote West Virginia's growing tourism industry, I have added millions of dollars in federal funds to advance development of the New River Gorge National River and Harpers Ferry National Historical Park; to acquire 21 Ohio River Islands to establish West Virginia's first National Wildlife Refuge; and to improve recreational facilities in the Monongahela National Forest.

It is impossible to predict what the future holds -- the Persian Gulf crisis, the Savings and Loan crisis, and the potential for natural disasters such as Hurricane Hugo or the San Francisco earthquake are among the many unknowns that could affect future federal budgets -- but within the constraints of other budget demands, I will continue my efforts to promote jobs and economic growth in West Virginia and throughout our nation.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Financial Aid for West Virginia College Students

At this time of year, many young West Virginians are laying plans to enter college next fall and are calculating the financial resources available to them.

In recent years, the cost of college tuition and living expenses has soared, discouraging many promising young men and women from pursuing higher education.

In fact, however, much financial assistance is available through a variety of college scholarships, grants, and loans.

Many West Virginia high school vocational and educational counselors can provide information on general resources available to all applicants, as well as funds offered by a specific institution to which a student might be applying.

Another important source of such information is the financial aid office at almost every college or university. Inquiries of these offices should be made as early in advance of deciding on a college or university as possible.

Also, information regarding scholarships can often be found through professional organizations in one's field of interest, as well as through local churches, businesses, and community organizations.

West Virginians can contact the West Virginia Higher Education Central Office regarding assistance available through the West Virginia Higher Education Grant Program. Communications should be ad-

dressed to the Higher Education Central Office, P.O. Box 4007, Charleston, West Virginia 25364, telephone 347-1211.

Information concerning direct assistance through Guaranteed Student Loan programs may be obtained by contacting West Virginia Education Loan Services, P.O. Box 591, Charleston, West Virginia 25322, telephone 345-7211. Included among these programs are Stafford Loans, Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS), and Supplemental Loans for Students.

To foster excellence in education among young West Virginians and young Americans, I won passage of a national honors scholarship program in 1985. Named in my honor by my Senate colleagues, the "Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program" makes available in every state a number of federally underwritten college scholarships. These scholarships, worth \$1,500 each, are based solely on scholastic merit, and are for the first year of study only.

To date, 171 Byrd Scholarships worth \$256,500 have been awarded in West Virginia.

Byrd Scholars in West Virginia are selected by the West Virginia Department of Education and the West Virginia Board of Regents. In our state, the Program is administered through the Higher Education Central Office, listed above.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Grave Decision for Our Country's Future

A few days ago, I cast perhaps the most important vote, up to now, in my political career.

I voted to delay the military option for the time being, and to continue the policy of sanctions against Iraq because of its savage, unprovoked, and cynical invasion of tiny Kuwait.

But let Saddam Hussein make no mistake: Now that the President has been authorized to use military force to drive Iraq from Kuwait, Congress will stand united behind our forces in the Middle East.

Since Iraq's seizure of Kuwait, I have been a strong supporter of the President's actions to defend Saudi Arabia and to punish Iraq's aggression through sanctions.

So far, our actions have achieved those twin goals.

Any intentions by Saddam Hussein to invade Saudi Arabia have been thwarted, and Iraq's economy is being progressively strangled. The sanctions are working. We should stay the course for the time being and give peace a further chance to prevail.

In fact, as I told the President, I would be prepared to vote for a declaration of war if, after another six months of sanctions, Iraq has not

withdrawn from Kuwait.

I hope that the President, now that he has Congressional approval for the use of force, will exercise patience, take his time, and not be provoked prematurely into attacking Iraq.

Time is on our side. Saddam cannot obtain additional spare parts for his war machine. In time, without oil sales, Iraq will face bankruptcy.

Time and again, the lessons of history have shown that patience is the wisest course of action, and that impatience can bring disaster.

As a world superpower, the United States has military claws and teeth and can afford to be patient for a while longer in dealing with a Third World power such as Iraq. This would allow the embargo to further erode the Iraqi military machine and weaken Iraq's economy.

But whatever the future brings, Saddam must understand that, if he chooses war over withdrawal from Kuwait, America will stand united against him. Above all, let Iraq know that we will not let down our men and women--many of them from West Virginia--standing guard in the Middle East.

January 16, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Time for National Unity and Prayer

On January 17, war came to Iraq--the old land of Mesopotamia--a land that has witnessed the carnage of countless battles through the centuries since before the time of Cyrus the Great (559 B.C.) and Alexander the Great (336 B.C.).

Through the ambition and miscalculation of Saddam Hussein, the spotlight of history has once again focused on this fabled land, and the war that we all had hoped to avoid, but feared would come, has come.

For those of us who counseled a more cautious strategy in the weeks before the United Nations deadline, now that our country has opted for military action "sooner rather than later," all Americans should unite in supporting the brave men and women of our Armed Forces who will do the fighting.

Saddam Hussein will exploit deep divisions here in America to his advantage. Saddam is a product of a different culture. He has no concept of the open debate that characterizes our representative democracy.

While early reports on our progress in this conflict have been encouraging, there should be no euphoria over our initial success. Rather, this should be a time for prayer--prayer for our brave men and women in the Gulf, for the allied forces, and for the innocents who unavoidably will be part of this conflict.

War leaves no nation as it found it, and Iraq will never be the same again.

America, too, will pay a price--in all likelihood, a heavy price.

War loves to seek its victims among the young, and my heart goes out to the mothers and fathers and grandparents and wives and children who wait, and watch, and worry over their loved ones.

All Americans hope for a speedy end to hostilities and for the safety of the men and women serving our country in the Persian Gulf. I fear that the end will not come quickly. Meanwhile, for the duration of this war, we must stand together in our support of the men and women on the front line.

January 23, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's VA Hospitals During the Persian Gulf Crisis

West Virginia's four veterans hospitals -- located in Huntington, Martinsburg, Beckley, and Clarksburg -- are participants in a vital network of medical care and treatment standing ready to serve military personnel wounded in the Persian Gulf conflict.

These four hospitals are funded and administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) -- the former Veterans Administration -- and have long served the veterans who have been members of our country's defense forces.

In World War II, West Virginia ranked fifth among the states in the percentage of its eligible male population participating; first among the states in the percentage of eligible male population participating in the Korean War; and second among the states in the percentage of its eligible male population participating in the Vietnam War.

And West Virginia ranked first among the states in the percentage of deaths its eligible male population suffered during both the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

As West Virginians, we can be proud of the sacrifices that West Virginians have made, and are making, for America's national security.

I have always been a

firm supporter of our VA hospitals. In little more than the past decade, I have helped to secure appropriations of roughly \$170 million to expand, modernize, and upgrade West Virginia's four VA hospitals. In the current Persian Gulf crisis, these improvements and expansions will prove valuable.

In this conflict, West Virginia's VA hospitals will serve as support hospitals to treat wounded military personnel after their initial treatment by larger VA hospitals. In addition, the Huntington VA Medical Center has been designated to receive telephone calls nationwide from the relatives of personnel wounded in "Operation Desert Storm," and to provide information on their condition and their hospital assignment.

At the Martinsburg VA Medical Center, an Emergency Facilities Operation Center will be charged with compiling a daily national report on the availability of beds for wounded military personnel at all VA hospitals.

West Virginians should take genuine satisfaction that these four outstanding healing institutions will be assisting America in fulfilling its responsibilities to the men and women who are serving the military efforts in the Persian Gulf.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Special Help for Special Men and Women

As the Persian Gulf war progresses, I think often of West Virginia's men and women serving there. Currently, more than 2,000 West Virginia Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Reservists and members of the West Virginia National Guard have been activated for service in "Operation Desert Storm."

In addition, hundreds more West Virginians are serving in the Persian Gulf theater as members of the regular Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines.

This is not surprising. A strong sense of patriotism is one element of West Virginia's character and our state's history. As in past wars, by overwhelming numbers, West Virginians give their unqualified support to the men and women serving in the Persian Gulf.

But many lives have been disrupted by this crisis. In one small way, some relief is on the way.

On January 24, a bill to provide tax relief for our troops in the Persian Gulf was unanimously passed by the Senate. H.R. 4, which I cosponsored, will permit our troops and their families to defer (1) filing

tax returns; (2) paying estimated taxes; (3) filing a claim for tax credits or refunds; and (4) other actions associated with income tax requirements. These deferrals will be permitted during service or associated hospitalization, and for an additional 180 days.

This bill, unanimously passed by the House of Representatives on January 15, makes the provisions of the President's Executive Order 12744, signed on January 21, retroactive to the date on which service began in the deployment area. (That Executive Order designated the Persian Gulf region a combat zone, thus activating certain current law provisions concerning tax deferrals for those in combat.) H.R. 4 also applies to those hospitalized inside the United States, up to five years from the date of return. H.R. 4 also requires the Internal Revenue Service to pay interest on income tax refunds issued more than forty-five days after April 15, 1991.

Let this act be one measure of our appreciation for the job being done by our men and women in the Persian Gulf region.

February 6, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Funds for West Virginia's Corridor Highways

Recently, the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) released to West Virginia a total of \$137.2 million that I added to an appropriation bill last year for continued work on Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Corridor Highways G, H, and D and the Weirton Bypass of Route 22.

The funding for Corridor G includes \$33.2 million for construction of a 1.3 mile segment of the highway around Williamson, while the funding for Corridor H will underwrite \$51.5 million in construction for an 8.94 mile segment from Buckhannon to a point just west of Elkins, including the Tygart Valley River Bridge. A particularly advantageous feature of the appropriation for these two projects is that it is 100 percent federal funding, with no state matching money required.

Further, the FHA released \$10 million that I added last year for engineering and design of the Parkersburg Bypass of ARC Corridor D.

In addition, \$42.5 million was released by the FHA from funds that I

added last year for construction of the Weirton Bypass of Route 22, a highway needed to complete the approaches to the Veterans Memorial Bridge crossing the Ohio River at Weirton.

This funding will be used for a 2.8 mile segment of Route 22 around Weirton, which will complete the four-laning of this highway in West Virginia.

In the past two years, I have added a total of \$255 million to appropriation bills for highway construction in West Virginia. However, funding the mounting costs of the American effort in the Persian Gulf War, as well as the need to curb the national debt and to allocate scarce Federal resources, will increase the difficulty of continuing to add federal funds for highway construction.

Nevertheless, completing the ARC corridor highways in West Virginia is my top priority and, as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I shall do everything that I can to move these vital West Virginia projects forward.

February 13, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Wanted: A Better Federal Highway Bill For West Virginia

Recently, the Administration unveiled a new national highway construction proposal.

Unfortunately, this proposal appears to give rural and mountainous states like West Virginia short shrift in funding, and, for that reason, I am opposed to the bill as currently drafted.

One of the major drawbacks of this proposal is that it provides no special category for regional highway systems such as the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Corridor Highway System, and it makes no allowance in funding for the difficulties associated with road building in West Virginia, where highways often must be blasted through forbidding mountainous terrain.

In addition to slighting West Virginia's ARC corridor highways and ignoring the difficulties and additional costs of highway construction in states like West Virginia, this highway bill would increase the costs that states must share for federally aided highway construction.

For example, the Federal share for urban and rural roads would decrease from 75 percent to 60 percent. For bridges, the Federal share would drop from 80 percent to 75 percent.

Under provisions of

legislation that I originally co-sponsored authorizing construction of the ARC corridor highway system in our state, 275.5 miles of ARC corridor highways have been finished in West Virginia or are currently under construction.

That leaves another 135.2 miles of ARC corridor highways to be completed in West Virginia.

Over the past two years, as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have added more than \$255 million to appropriations bills to advance the remaining ARC corridor highways in our state--Corridors H, G, and D--and to build the Weirton Bypass of Route 22 in the Northern Panhandle.

All of these added funds were over and above the sums proposed by the Administration for West Virginia highway construction.

Completing the ARC corridor highways in our state is my Number One priority for West Virginia. The Administration's highway proposals notwithstanding, I shall do everything that I can, within current Federal budget constraints and limitations imposed by fiscal demands of our efforts in the Persian Gulf War, to add Federal funds to advance ARC corridor highway construction in West Virginia.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia and the Proposed 1992 Federal Budget

The Administration's proposed 1992 Federal budget has been made public, and although it does not go far enough, it includes several features that will be beneficial for West Virginia.

For example, the budget proposes specific funding that will build up America's vital "infrastructure"--programs and projects essential to our country's and West Virginia's future well-being and progress. Among these are public health, education, and research and development.

The budget also includes funding for a number of projects on which I have been working for some time. These include: \$38 million for continued construction of the Gallipolis Locks and Dam on the Ohio River; \$5 million for the Tug Fork flood control project in Southwestern West Virginia; \$15 million for the Winfield Lock and Dam on the Kanawha River; \$30 million for the Point Marion Lock and Dam below Morgantown on the Monongahela River; and \$34.5 million for the Gray's Landing Lock and Dam No. 7 above Morgantown on the Monongahela.

Additionally, the \$38.6 million proposal for

the Essential Air Service program would assure continued passenger air service to five West Virginia airports--Clarksburg/Fairmont, Elkins, Beckley, Morgantown, and Bluefield/Princeton.

Although this budget proposes \$100 million for the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), extending ARC's economic development programs, this amount is not sufficient to meet the ARC corridor highway system's construction requirements. As I have in the past, I plan to continue doing everything that I can, as Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman, to add funding for ARC corridor highway construction in West Virginia.

Nationally, the United States is undergoing a stressful period. The current economic slowdown and the Persian Gulf War are taking their toll on our Nation's resources.

Nevertheless, I am concerned that we meet vital domestic needs that represent the backbone of future economic development and progress in West Virginia, and that will help to expand job opportunities and growing prosperity in our state in the years ahead.

February 27, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Shoring Up the Nation's Banking System

In his State of the Union message, President Bush announced that his Administration would send to Congress "a banking reform plan to bring America's financial system into the 21st century." As we are all painfully aware, the savings and loan crisis has already cost American taxpayers billions of dollars, and will cost billions more before being fully resolved. Now, the strains which led to the collapse of so many savings and loans have begun to take a toll on our nation's banks.

According to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), more than 1,000 FDIC-insured banks failed during the 1980's. The banks that failed during this period account for over one-half of the total number of insured banks that have failed since the FDIC was created in 1934. In 1989 alone, 206 banks failed, the largest one-year total since the Great Depression. Even though the number of failures slowed to 160 banks last year, more than 1,000 insured banks remained on the FDIC's "problem list" at year's end, and it is expected that about 10 percent of all such banks will eventually fail.

As alarming as these statistics may seem, most of our nation's banks are

financially sound. The banks that failed during the past decade represented fewer than 10 percent of all insured banks in the United States. Although the reserves of the Bank Insurance Fund, which is used by the FDIC to insure accounts in member banks, have been drawn down in recent years, falling from \$18.7 billion at the end of 1987 to \$8.5 billion at the end of 1990, Federal regulators and banking industry officials are working to find a way to shore up the insurance fund without any cost to taxpayers.

The problems facing our banking system are not insurmountable. Although the failures that have occurred in the past 10 years have been disproportionately concentrated in a small number of states (more than one-half of the 1,200 banks that failed between 1980 and 1990 were located in three states -- Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma -- while only three banks failed in West Virginia during the same period of time), addressing the problems confronting our banking system is a matter of national concern. As a result, I am confident that the 102nd Congress will work to restore and revitalize our banking system.

March 6, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

An Education Bargain For West Virginians

According to a recent report, more than half of the new jobs created by the year 2000 will require some education beyond high school, and roughly one-third of all U.S. jobs will require a college degree.

Ironically, however, the tuition costs are soaring out of sight at many of America's most prestigious private colleges and universities.

By comparison, West Virginia offers some genuine bargains in higher education.

For this current academic year, tuition and other costs at Harvard are an estimated \$22,160; at Yale, \$22,520; at Princeton, \$22,400; and at MIT, \$22,994.

And the 1990-91 estimated tuition cost alone at Georgetown University in Washington is \$14,440.

Even at some state-supported universities, prices are climbing, with Maryland's basic in-state tuition this year at \$2,269, while Virginia residents face tuition of \$2,966 at Charlottesville.

In effect, the costs of one year of college at America's premier institutions of higher education are being priced out of the reach of many middle- and moderate-income American families.

Fortunately, within commuting distance of most West Virginians, West Virginia's state-supported universities, four-year colleges, and community colleges offer among the best educational values available anywhere to West Virginians of all

ages.

Annual in-state tuition for the 1990-91 school year at West Virginia and Marshall Universities is under \$1,800; and for the two-year West Virginia University programs at Parkersburg and Potomac State, the annual tuition averages \$1,250 or less. In-state tuition for our State's four-year programs at Bluefield, Concord, Fairmont, Glenville, Shepherd, West Liberty, West Virginia Tech and West Virginia State averages under \$1,500 a year. Annual in-state tuition for two-year programs at Southern West Virginia and West Virginia Northern Community Colleges is under \$1,000.

Likewise, West Virginia boasts several excellent private universities (University of Charleston and Salem-Teikyo University) and colleges that are endeavoring both to keep tuitions reasonable and to offer up-to-date academic and job-oriented programs.

West Virginia's economy is changing, with new business enterprises and job opportunities on the horizon.

But most of those enterprises and jobs will demand increased levels of education, training, and skill.

I hope that West Virginians young and old will avail themselves of the advantages presented by the excellent education possibilities that are open to them, and of the preparation for the coming job market that can be ours in West Virginia.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Battling the Recession

The current recession has hit West Virginia and a number of other states particularly hard.

According to the West Virginia Bureau of Employment Programs, January-February 1991 unemployment claims in our state have increased by 30 percent and unemployment payments by 40 percent when compared with the first two months of last year.

As a result of the increased demand for unemployment assistance, West Virginia has been forced to curtail unemployment services, and, nationwide, the federal unemployment insurance program is reporting increased errors, longer waiting lines, and processing backlogs.

Against that background, I recently won Senate Appropriations Committee approval of a \$150 million emergency appropriation to speed the processing of unemployment claims throughout the nation -- which, of course, will be helpful to West Virginia.

Many economists have predicted that this recession will not be as long or as deep as some past slumps.

Nonetheless, to men and women out of work, or to communities beset by economic slowdowns, that prediction is of little solace.

Historically, West Virginia has been harder hit and slower to recover from depressions, recessions, and other economic slides.

To alleviate such chronic problems, I am

working on a number of long-term projects and initiatives to lay broader economic foundations in West Virginia -- foundations that will create more jobs and opportunities to help our state weather the course of national and international economic downturns.

Among these efforts are: the relocation of the FBI's Identification Division to West Virginia, which will bring with it an estimated annual payroll of \$75 million and employment for approximately 2,500 people, 80 percent of whom will be hired locally; completion of Appalachian Corridor Highways G, H, and D, for which I have added \$212 million to appropriations bills over the past two years as a means of speeding construction, so that more of our state will be linked directly to national markets; rebuilding of several locks and dams along the Ohio, Kanawha, and Monongahela rivers to move West Virginia products more efficiently and competitively to market; and the replacement of the National Radio Telescope at Green Bank in Pocahontas County, for which I added \$75 million in appropriations to help enhance West Virginia's role in science and high-technology research.

The twenty-first century is less than ten years away. My vision is to lay new foundations of enterprise and job opportunities that will free West Virginia from chronic unemployment and recession in the years ahead.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Benefits From the New FBI Identification Division

The relocation to West Virginia of the FBI's Identification Division will be a vital boost to our state's economy.

With an estimated annual payroll of \$75 million, and a projected workforce of approximately 2,500, the new Identification Division center is the largest Federal facility ever to be built in West Virginia.

But also important for West Virginia, as well as for the whole United States, are the crime-fighting and personnel-identification advantages that the new facility will afford.

Since its inception, the FBI's Identification Division has earned a legendary reputation for fighting crime. Today, however, the FBI's identification technology is antiquated and inefficient.

For example, the FBI regularly experiences a backlog of up to 500,000 fingerprint requests, and delays up to five or six weeks in responding to state and local police inquiries.

Moreover, tens of thousands of new fingerprint sets are left unfiled every year because the FBI lacks the means to receive them from state and local law-enforcement units.

Currently, more than 62,000 agencies--including police departments, Federal agencies, and licensing

agencies overseeing employment in such businesses as day-care centers, banks, and stock exchanges --use the FBI's Identification Division to run criminal background checks on potential employees.

The new Identification Division will feature a state-of-the-art system for fingerprints and other means of identification that will link the state systems, expand the national fingerprint files, allow the processing of as many as 600,000 inquiries per day, and slash identification time from weeks to hours or even minutes.

FBI authorities have stated that the move of the Identification Division to West Virginia will rejuvenate a national system that is close to collapse. Further, West Virginia's lower cost of living, strong work ethic, low crime rates, scenic beauty, and strong family values promise to provide the FBI with a more cost-effective operation, a more stable workforce, and an improved quality of life for its Identification Division employees.

We are involved in a massive national war against crime, and West Virginia's new FBI Identification Division will be an immense resource toward helping to win that war.

March 27, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Federal Agency Consolidates Operations In West Virginia

Approximately 20 years ago, I helped to obtain Federal funding to enable the Bureau of Public Debt--the agency responsible for the sale and redemption of U.S. Bonds and for administering all regulations pertaining to the public debt--to consolidate its Chicago operations in Parkersburg.

More recently, I have been urging the Bureau of Public Debt to examine the feasibility of taking similar action with regard to its Washington, D.C., operations.

Now, following a meeting I had with Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady in my U.S. Capitol office, I am able to report the good news that the Bureau of Public Debt plans to consolidate most of its Washington operations--including 700 employees--in Parkersburg.

This action stems from language that I, as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, added to reports accompanying appropriations bills, urging the Bureau of Public Debt to review the relationship between the operations of the Parkersburg and Washington facilities with a view toward locating more Washington-based functions in Parkersburg.

This new consolidation will begin next year

and is projected to be complete in 1995.

With 1,187 employees in Parkersburg, the current budget at the Bureau's Parkersburg facility is \$39 million annually.

The added employees will bring the number of the Bureau's full-time Parkersburg employees to nearly 1,900, with a total Parkersburg budget of \$71 million annually, including approximately \$63 million for salaries and benefits, and the remainder for local purchases, utilities, and other overhead costs.

Included among those employees to be relocated to Parkersburg will be data processing specialists, computer analysts and programmers, accountants and accounting technicians, securities examiners and analysts, administrative service personnel, and general managers.

The Bureau of Public Debt has determined that this consolidation of services and operations from Washington to Parkersburg is a sound and cost-effective move, and will provide productivity savings and improved customer service.

The consolidation of further operations of the Bureau of Public Debt in Parkersburg is another step forward in my efforts to open our state to increased high-technology challenges and opportunities.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia: An Attractive Alternative for Federal Agencies

In recent months, I have been working with the FBI to update and relocate its Identification Division to the Clarksburg area; with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to establish a training center in West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle; and with the Treasury Department to consolidate most of its Washington, D.C., operations of the Bureau of Public Debt at that agency's Parkersburg location.

Just a few weeks ago, I participated in swearing-in ceremonies for three new employees of the FBI's Identification Division--the first of the 2,500 workers who will eventually staff that facility.

Only days prior to that event, I announced, following a conversation in my office with Treasury Secretary James Brady, that the Bureau of Public Debt plans to relocate 700 employees from its Washington facility to Parkersburg.

Throughout my negotiations with these various agencies, I have been able to point out that West Virginia enjoys a number of advantages that make our state particularly attractive to Federal agencies looking toward upgrading

or relocating.

For example, West Virginia's lower cost of living, competitive and skilled workforce, low crime rate, low-density traffic, scenic beauty, and strong family values offer agencies such as the FBI a more cost-effective operation, a lower rate of employee turnover, and an improved quality of life for their employees.

A paramount advantage important to Federal agencies is the availability in West Virginia of one of the most comprehensive high-technology fiber optics telecommunications systems anywhere in the nation.

This communications technology means that a Federal agency can maintain headquarters in Washington and communicate instantaneously with so-called "back office" operations in West Virginia--and as easily as if they were next door.

West Virginia offers everything that an employer could want, and is an ideal option for Federal agencies contemplating relocation or diversification of their operations outside the congested Washington, D.C., metropolitan area.

April 10, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

1991 National Teacher of the Year

West Virginia recently shared the national spotlight that fell on Mrs. Rae McKee, a reading disabilities teacher at the Slanesville Elementary School in Hampshire County, who has been named America's 1991 National Teacher of the Year.

Ceremonies at which Mrs. McKee was formally presented her award were held at the Slanesville School, with both President Bush and Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander in attendance.

A graduate of Shepherd College with a master's degree from West Virginia University, Mrs. McKee was at one point accepted to attend law school. Fortunately for West Virginia, however, her love of teaching prevailed over her inclinations toward the law.

I know that I speak for all West Virginians in congratulating Mrs. McKee on this exceptional honor, and in expressing to her an admiration for her accomplishments and an appreciation for the dedication and sacrifice that she has brought to her chosen vocation.

Author and historian Henry Adams wrote, "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."

For generations, thoughtful people have recognized the imperative

role of the teacher to the intellectual, emotional, and moral growth and development of our children and to the progress and prosperity of our country.

In this era of increasing technological and commercial competition among the world's trading and manufacturing powers, the quality of our schools and the teachers who staff them are perhaps more crucial to America's future economic strength and national security than at any previous time in our history.

To compete effectively in the world market and to maintain America's competitive technological edge, our country must have an increasingly skilled, experienced, disciplined, and knowledgeable workforce.

The best means for ensuring such a workforce is to provide our children with good schools and with dedicated, capable teachers equipped to educate and train students in the skills and disciplines demanded by our changing world.

West Virginia can be justly proud that one of its own teachers has earned such a high distinction in her chosen career.

We are grateful to Mrs. McKee and all of her colleagues for the efforts they are making to prepare West Virginia's young people to forge their futures against the challenges that lie ahead.

April 17, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Jobs of the Future

According to a survey conducted by a commission of business leaders and educators, about 1.7 million American manufacturing jobs--so-called "blue-collar jobs"--disappeared between 1979 and 1985.

Economists predict that this trend will continue, with a parallel growth in jobs requiring high-technology and computer-related training even at the entry level.

A Library of Congress study indicates that, by the year 2000, more than half of all U.S. jobs will require some education beyond the secondary level, including completion of college, vocational school, and/or computer school.

Recognizing the changes sweeping our nation's economy, and the implications for job preparation, I have been working to lay foundations to broaden and diversify West Virginia's economy, and to create more opportunities for West Virginians in this changing economic and job world.

For example, to help West Virginia develop computer-related businesses, I was instrumental in launching the Software Valley movement in Morgantown in 1985. Today, Software Valley has grown into a statewide movement with active chapters throughout West Virginia.

More recently, I appropriated monies to bring the FBI's new Identifica-

tion Division to West Virginia. This facility, to be located in Harrison County, will offer high-tech job opportunities to about 2,500 men and women, and will link our state to a nationwide high-technology network of unparalleled scope and sophistication.

The Bureau of Public Debt will also consolidate its Washington activities in Parkersburg, bringing with it approximately 700 employees.

To prepare more West Virginians to take advantage of the opportunities opening in high-technology careers and industries, I have added federal funding to appropriations bills for a variety of initiatives at West Virginia colleges and universities, including NASA's National Technology Transfer Center at Wheeling Jesuit College and the Robert C. Byrd Institute for Flexible Manufacturing at Marshall University.

Sophisticated communications networks have removed the barriers to locating high-tech jobs outside of major metropolitan areas, and West Virginia is ideally positioned to attract such jobs. My efforts are designed to ensure that West Virginians are able to compete in the dawning high-technology industrial world and to share in the new opportunities for jobs and prosperity, which that world will offer.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Proposed Federal Highway Plan Inadequate for West Virginia's Needs

The Administration recently proposed a highway plan that would designate 150,000 miles of U.S. roads as "highways of national significance."

Unfortunately, under this program, only 1,307 miles of West Virginia highways would be covered. By contrast, the West Virginia Division of Highways has recommended that approximately 2,200 miles of West Virginia highways be included in the "highways of national significance" program.

Also under the Administration's plan, West Virginia would face a 48 percent increase in state matching funds to gain only about 2 percent more in federal funds than the current federal-state fund-sharing formula provides.

West Virginia cannot hope to meet its basic road-building needs under the Administration's proposal, which shortchanges our state in mileage and would prohibitively raise West Virginia's matching-fund share.

This program is supposed to be a national highway plan, but by requiring the states to bear such an increased heavy financial burden for fun-

ding road building and repair, the Administration proposal will create a "rich man-poor man" nightmare.

Wealthier states that can afford the increased matching fund requirements will build their roads and bridges; states that cannot afford the match--states like West Virginia--will be forced to watch their roads and bridges deteriorate.

Thus, the United States will end up with a patchwork highway system that flies in the face of our national need to repair and rebuild our vital transportation infrastructure.

Historically, one of West Virginia's most pressing problems has always been the need for better roads.

As Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I intend to do everything that I can to increase the highway mileage under the Administration's proposal, and to improve the federal-state matching fund formula in order that West Virginia will be better able to build the highways that our state needs for increased economic growth and development and the creation of new job opportunities in the years ahead.

May 1, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Space Age Groundbreaking in West Virginia

In November 1988, the National Radio Telescope at Green Bank, Pocahontas County, suddenly collapsed.

One of the largest radio telescopes in the world, that instrument had been used by the scientific community for 26 years to monitor naturally emitted radio signals from outer space -- providing astronomers with information that could not be gleaned from optical astronomy alone -- and was able to detect radio beams from distances as great as 10 billion light years away.

As Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and recognizing the importance of the collapsed radio telescope to our country and to West Virginia, I added \$75 million to the 1989 supplemental appropriations bill to replace the destroyed instrument with a new, state-of-the-art radio telescope. Just recently, I participated in groundbreaking ceremonies at Green Bank for the construction of the replacement telescope.

When finished, this new telescope will be the largest fully steerable radio telescope in the world. The giant dish, which can be pointed anywhere in the sky, will be bigger than two football fields, yet it will be so precise that deviations in shape will average less than the thickness of a piece of

paper anywhere over the telescope's two-and-one-third-acre surface. This capability will allow us to look farther into space than ever before.

The new telescope will have 7,000 individual structural elements, and will stand more than 475 feet high.

Further, this one-of-a-kind radio telescope will be complete with super-accurate laser-aiming capacities, and will ensure America's leadership in this aspect of space research for decades into the twenty-first century.

The telescope will be located in the midst of the National Radio Quiet Zone, an area uniquely protected from the radio emissions that might interfere with the operation of a radio telescope.

Not only will this telescope reaffirm West Virginia's place as one of the world's foremost research centers for radio astronomy, but it will also serve to attract and stimulate the interest of young people in science.

In addition to its benefits for America and the world, I look forward to the stimulus that this telescope can provide in West Virginia for developing science and technology -- fields that promise to create new opportunities for economic growth throughout our state.

May 8, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Memorial Day 1991

Following the Civil War, patriotic citizens North and South began decorating the graves of fallen soldiers.

In 1868, U.S. General John A. Logan, then president of the Grand Army of the Republic, the Union veterans' organization, declared May 30 the Union day of remembrance, a precedent for today's Memorial Day placement.

On May 27 this year, we will again honor the memories of deceased loved ones, but most particularly of those Americans who have made the ultimate sacrifice of their lives in defense of our country's liberties and of our way of life.

In that defense, West Virginia has played a role far outweighing its proportions among the states.

In the recent Persian Gulf conflict, West Virginians again took a significant part in defending our national interests.

Thousands of West Virginia military personnel were active in the Gulf war theater, including approximately 2,500 West Virginia National Guardsmen and reservists from all services.

Appropriate to West

Virginia's defense heritage, in 1867, one of our country's first national cemeteries was opened at Grafton.

Long West Virginia's only national veterans' cemetery, the Grafton National Cemetery was closed to new interments in 1961.

Realizing the inordinate contribution of West Virginia's veterans to our national security and defense, in 1985 I earmarked funding for the establishment of a new national veterans' cemetery at Pruntytown--the West Virginia National Cemetery.

When fully developed, this new cemetery will provide approximately 6,400 gravesites. As part of an improvement of the Pruntytown cemetery, I will dedicate a \$1.1 million administrative/maintenance building and committal service shelter complex in early June.

On this Memorial Day, as we honor our revered dead, I find comfort in knowing that, once again, West Virginia veterans, their spouses, and their dependents can be laid to rest in a national veterans' cemetery in our state.

May 15, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The 1991 Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships

As a result of legislation that I authored in the U.S. Senate in 1985, Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships for 1991 were awarded to 43 graduating West Virginia high school students at a recent ceremony in Charleston.

Based on nominations received from high schools across West Virginia, these "Byrd Scholars" were selected by state education officials to receive \$1,500 first-year college scholarships.

Awarded solely for outstanding academic performance, the 1991 West Virginia Byrd Honors Scholarships are among 5,561 being awarded to high school graduates nationwide.

Under the provisions of the legislation establishing the program, the number of scholarships allotted for each state is based on that state's student population.

Since the inception of the program, \$321,000 worth of Byrd Honors Scholarships have been awarded to a total of 214 West Virginians.

As I conceived this program, these scholarships are intended to encourage excellence in education by giving motivated students assistance in pursuing their college educations.

Believing that educa-

tion can open doors of opportunity to young people that might otherwise be closed to them, I have always been interested in education and scholastic achievement.

For that reason, since 1969, under the Robert C. Byrd Scholastic Recognition Awards program funded from a private trust that I established, I have provided U.S. Savings Bonds to more than 5,730 valedictorians of West Virginia public, parochial, private, and Schools for the Deaf and Blind graduating classes, with approximately 290 more Scholastic Recognition Awards to be presented to this year's valedictorians.

The success of the Robert C. Byrd Scholastic Recognition Awards prompted me to initiate the national Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program.

The young West Virginians and other Americans winning the Byrd Honors Scholarships are exceptional students, and they deserve our admiration and encouragement.

Indeed, these students represent great promise for West Virginia's and America's future, and I hope that my interest in them will help them realize challenging and fulfilling careers in the years ahead.

May 22, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

High-Technology Enterprise Growing in West Virginia

Recently, I participated in dedicating the Robert C. Byrd Technology Center at Alderson-Broaddus College in Philippi, West Virginia.

Launched with a \$432,000 Economic Development Administration grant that I helped secure -- and as a cooperative venture of the statewide Software Valley movement, Alderson-Broaddus College, and private industry -- the new Technology Center will house private firms oriented toward establishing West Virginia as a national center for computerized data conversion.

Currently, the Technology Center hosts one enterprise employing 55 people under contracts with two out-of-state companies.

Some years ago, I realized that the changing global marketplace and the worldwide high-technology revolution would have a drastic impact on West Virginia and that, if we were to provide real job options for young West Virginians, West Virginia's economy would have to diversify.

As a step toward that diversification, I launched the nonprofit Software Valley movement in 1985.

Hundreds of West Virginians from business and industry, academia, and government participating in the Software Valley network statewide have helped to create a

positive environment in West Virginia for high-tech research and development. Across our state, software companies are enjoying successes and creating opportunities that had not been dreamt of even ten years ago.

Just recently, for example, the giant Boeing Company recognized a 27-employee Huntington firm and Software Valley member as one of its outstanding suppliers of 1990.

Another West Virginia software company located in Wheeling has just been awarded a three-month Martin Marietta Corporation defense sub-contract to design computer software for the U.S. Air Force's robotics and flexible manufacturing program.

Private enterprise endeavors such as these are economic engines that can help to power West Virginia's future growth and development and provide increased job opportunities in our state.

The future is an open door for West Virginians willing to pioneer in the advanced high-technology era that we are entering.

Through our state's human and natural resources and through developments already underway or in the planning, West Virginia has the potential to become more prosperous than at any time in its history.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Special Considerations For West Virginia Highways

Currently, several new approaches are being examined toward meeting America's surface transportation construction needs as a prelude to reauthorizing the federal highway program.

In this legislative process, to meet our state's unique terrain and use demands, I have proposed that West Virginia and other mountainous states be given special consideration in the funding of federal highway construction programs.

The combination of West Virginia's rugged mountains, drainage problems, unstable highway-site foundations, and short construction season conditioned by severe weather, makes road building in our state extraordinarily difficult. This difficulty factor needs to be considered in the distribution of federal highway construction funds.

For example, while the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) estimates that corridor construction per mile in the other twelve states of the Appalachian region is about \$11 million, the cost of building corridors in West Virginia averages \$18.5 million per mile.

Another factor that should qualify West Virginia for a higher pro-

portion of federal highway funds is the impact of the Clean Air Act of 1990 on our state's highway system, particularly in southern West Virginia.

While expected to hurt the demand for high-sulfur coal, the Clean Air Act will have a counter effect of increasing the demand for low-sulfur coal, the quality most prevalent in our state's southern counties. The expanded coal truck use in those counties will mean additional heavy truck traffic, new traffic patterns, and greater wear and tear on existing highways, many of which were constructed decades ago for lighter vehicles and a smaller volume of traffic.

One of the keystones to West Virginia's future development and prosperity is an improved, modern highway network, especially the completion of the ARC corridor highway system, of which 135 miles remain to be finished in our state.

The apportionment of funds under any new federal highway program should take into account new factors that reflect the contemporary needs of our national highway system in general, but that particularly recognize the unique circumstances confronting highway needs in West Virginia.

June 5, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Filling the Energy Policy Vacuum

The recent Persian Gulf conflict again underlined America's energy weaknesses.

Though less than eleven percent of our country's oil was coming from the Persian Gulf at the time, Iraq's aggression temporarily forced American gasoline prices up in some cases by twenty-five percent.

At one time, America took energy abundance for granted.

But twice during the 1970's--first, during the Yom Kippur War and, later, during the Iranian Revolution--Americans learned how fragile our energy lifelines are.

When I was Senate Majority Leader in the late 1970's, I spearheaded Congressional efforts to put into place federal programs to promote energy independence by encouraging the full development of our national energy resources, especially emphasizing abundant coal supplies such as we possess in West Virginia.

Unfortunately, the Reagan administration dismantled those programs.

The fruits of the subsequent energy-policy vacuum have become all too clear.

Where, in 1973, America was importing about 35 percent of its annual oil consumption, we are today importing nearly

50 percent of our national oil supplies.

World and domestic energy demands and prices are likely to keep rising, and energy shortages could recur.

Here in America--and particularly in West Virginia--we are sitting on mountains of recoverable coal reserves. The United States is the Saudi Arabia of coal.

Fortunately, I have won broad support for my own Clean Coal Technology Program--an effort to develop technologies to utilize our massive coal reserves in technologically advanced and environmentally compatible ways.

But, as I have urged since the energy crises of the 1970's, America must have a comprehensive national energy policy that fully capitalizes on our coal reserves, as well as our oil, natural gas, and other energy resources. Through both private and public commitments, such an energy policy could free us from our vulnerabilities to the political instabilities inherent in the Middle East.

With visionary leadership, America possesses the scientific and technological expertise to achieve energy self-sufficiency. I urge that we mobilize our energy potential before another energy crisis wreaks its toll in economic distress and hardship on our country.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Funding for Vital West Virginia Projects

I recently added \$68 million in federal funding to a Senate appropriation bill for continued construction of West Virginia's Appalachian Corridor Highways G and H.

Specifically, my funding includes \$47 million for construction of Corridor H, which will link Central West Virginia to western Virginia and to East Coast markets.

Additionally, I earmarked \$21 million for work on Corridor G, a 79-mile route running through Mingo, Logan, Boone, and Kanawha Counties, and connecting Charleston more directly to eastern Kentucky.

A dearth of modern highways has historically been one of the factors most seriously hindering the economic growth and development of our state. In the past, poor transportation in, out of, and across our state has been a major obstacle to our goods' reaching their markets and our state's attaining the prosperity that it deserves.

Completion of Corridors G and H is essential to the realization of West Virginia's economic potential, and as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I will continue doing all that I can to ac-

celerate the further construction of these highways.

Over the past three years, I have added \$255 million in federal funds for construction of Corridors G, H, and D and the Weirton Bypass, and the additional \$68 million that I put into the 1992 Energy and Water Appropriation bill will be another significant boost to West Virginia highway construction.

Additionally, the Energy and Water bill includes an extra \$22.6 million that I added to further the work on the Tug Fork flood control project in southwestern West Virginia.

The Energy and Water bill also provides funding for a number of other flood control and navigation projects in West Virginia, including the following: \$38 million for the Gallipolis Locks and Dam on the Ohio River; \$15 million for the Winfield Lock and Dam on the Kanawha River; \$34.5 million for Monongahela Lock and Dam No. 7, and \$30 million for Monongahela Lock and Dam No. 8; \$550,000 for the Petersburg flood protection project in Grant County; and \$950,000 for the Moorefield flood protection project in Hardy County.

June 19, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Federal Highway Bonus For West Virginia

Recently, I won U.S. Senate approval of my amendment to the new federal highway bill that would provide West Virginia with approximately \$222 million in additional federal highway funds over a four-year period.

This funding is money over and above the total five-year funding of \$915 million that West Virginia is due to receive under the regular provisions of the federal highway bill as approved by the Senate.

With the Byrd Amendment, West Virginia stands to receive a total of \$1.137 billion in federal highway funds over five years.

Specifically, my amendment provides bonus highway funds to all states that impose a state gasoline tax that is above the national average.

In addition, if states that impose a gasoline tax above the national average also have a per capita disposable income below the national average--as in West Virginia--those states would be eligible for an additional bonus.

The purpose of my amendment is to encourage and reward states like West Virginia that are doing all that they can to come up with the tax revenues necessary to make vital infrastructure improvements and repairs within their own boundaries.

My amendment infuses an extra \$8.2 billion into our nation's transportation system--an invest-

ment in America's infrastructure that is essential if we are to strengthen our national economy and become more competitive and productive against our trade rivals.

This money will not be taken from education or other compelling domestic programs, but from funds already collected from American taxpayers specifically for the Highway Trust Fund. Indeed, unless we build up our national infrastructure, we are not going to be able to compete internationally, to accelerate our national growth, to improve our productivity, or to afford to upgrade our educational system or solve other domestic problems facing us.

West Virginia has a great need for improved roads and bridges. As Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have been able to add \$323 million to federal funding bills over the past three years to accelerate construction on Appalachian Corridors G, H, and D, and the Weirton Bypass of Route 22. This funding has been in addition to West Virginia's allocations under the Highway Trust Fund.

My amendment to the highway bill, earmarking bonus Highway Trust Fund monies for West Virginia, is another way that I am working to bring new roads, and new economic vitality, to our state.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Two More Federal Agencies Plan Relocations to West Virginia

Recently, I have been successful in persuading two more federal agencies -- the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms -- to relocate facilities and employees to West Virginia.

At my urging, the CIA proposes to move between 2,000 and 3,000 employees -- involved primarily in a variety of light-industrial functions, such as printing, storage, and possibly data-processing activities -- to a new office compound to be built in Jefferson County.

This action would be a partial consolidation of facilities currently located at 21 different sites in the suburban Washington, D.C., area, and would result in a net savings of millions in taxpayers' dollars by the early part of the next century.

This projected action must now be reviewed by the Intelligence Oversight Committees and the Appropriations Committees of both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Further, when the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms learned that it would be forced to relinquish its computer operations quarters in Washington because of planned renovations to the building, I added a pro-

vision to a Senate appropriations report authorizing the Bureau to study the feasibility of relocating its computer center outside of Washington, and I encouraged the agency to look at West Virginia.

As a result, the Bureau has announced plans to relocate a number of its computer operations and as many as 90 employees to West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle, with an annual estimated impact of \$5 million to \$6 million on the area's economy.

In the past two years, I have brought a number of federal agencies to West Virginia, including the FBI's new Identification Division, which will bring 2,500 jobs to the Clarksburg area, and an expansion of the Bureau of Public Debt's Parkersburg facility, which will result in 700 additional employees at that site.

As the CIA; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; the FBI; and the Bureau of Public Debt have discovered, West Virginia -- which has lower land and construction costs, a competitive workforce, and attractive working and living conditions -- is an ideal location for many federal agency operations.

July 3, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Senate, 1789-1989, Volume II

In early 1989, the first volume of my comprehensive history of the United States Senate, The Senate, 1789-1989, was published.

Just recently, the second volume of this work was published.

When I was sworn in as a new Senator in January 1959, I gradually became aware that the Senate is more than just four walls of brick and marble, handsome mahogany desks, luxurious draperies and carpets, an ornate chamber in which elevated rhetoric is rendered and laws are made.

It became something far more majestic; something that had a life of its own, larger than the totality of all its members. There was something about the Senate that was far nobler than these mundane and tangible things -- something imperishable. It had a soul!

Therefore, composing these volumes of history has been a labor of love.

Volume I of my Senate history was received positively by the public as a work of both popular history and serious scholarship. I appreciate that reception, and have been touched by such a response.

Volume II takes a closer look at the Senate as an institution than does Volume I.

From my standpoint, the primary purpose of this new volume is to instill into current and future members of the Senate a greater sense of institutional memory.

Similarly, I hope that general readers of my latest volume will gain a greater insight into the unique role that the Senate fulfills in our constitutional system of government.

Volume II will be available to the public after mid-July through the Government Printing Office. I receive no royalties, or any other income, from the sale of this book or the previous volume.

July 10, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Appropriations for High Technology Development in West Virginia

To advance high-technology frontiers in West Virginia, and to help broaden our state's economic base, I recently added \$29.5 million to a Senate appropriation bill.

The purpose of these funds is to build three facilities in West Virginia sponsored by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), including \$10 million to establish a center in Fairmont, Marion County, to test computer software used by NASA aerospace programs.

This center, to be built for NASA by West Virginia University, would be used by contractors to consolidate testing and verification of vital software used by NASA.

The work to be conducted at this new facility, called an Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) center, would help to ensure that the software produced for NASA by contractors will function accurately on the ground and in flight, with the goal of improving the efficiency of the national aerospace program.

When completed, the proposed 41,000-square-foot NASA facility would house up to 200 contractor employees.

In addition, I have

added \$19.5 million for two ongoing NASA projects at Wheeling Jesuit College.

This sum includes \$13.5 million to construct and equip the National Technology Transfer Center and \$6 million to construct, equip, and link students at Wheeling Jesuit College to the NASA Classroom of the Future.

These two projects are designed "to bring NASA technology down to earth."

The Technology Transfer Center is intended to improve the competitive capabilities of U.S. and West Virginia businesses by affording them access to the latest developments in high technology, while the purpose of the Classroom of the Future is to use NASA technology and development to promote and teach mathematics, science, and engineering.

These three NASA-related programs advance my goal of promoting high-technology opportunities in West Virginia—opportunities that can put our state on the cutting edge of twenty-first century economic growth and create broad new job and career possibilities for young West Virginians in the years ahead.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

More Funds for West Virginia FBI Identification Division Facility

Recently, I added \$48 million to a Senate appropriation bill to develop a prototype automation system for the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Fingerprint Identification Division to be located in West Virginia.

I also added \$12.5 million to that bill to enable the FBI to hire additional employees to reduce backlogs in the FBI's current fingerprint identification records. Some of those jobs will be in West Virginia, where the FBI expects to hire 200 employees by the end of this year, and another 200 or more employees next year.

These appropriations follow up the \$185 million that I added to an appropriation bill last year to finance the automation and relocation to West Virginia of the FBI's Fingerprint Identification Division, which will bring approximately 2,500 jobs to the Clarksburg area.

My \$48 million appropriation, with \$40 million provided to develop an Automated Fingerprint Identification System and \$8 million to develop a pilot Image Transmission Network System, will keep

the Fingerprint Identification Division's relocation to West Virginia on schedule.

This is essential because, according to the FBI, each one-year delay in the automation and relocation project would increase costs by \$12 million due to inflation and other factors, add to the existing backlog of fingerprint files, and push back the implementation of the automated system beyond the target date of June 1995.

Particularly against the background of the drug-related crime crisis facing our country, this new automated fingerprint identification system will provide law enforcement officers nationwide with a powerful and effective new tool in their struggle against crime, and as such, we need to get this high-technology system into operation without delay.

The FBI's automated fingerprint identification system is urgently needed for America's war against crime. Therefore, the new Fingerprint Identification Division's headquarters in West Virginia must be completed and made operational as quickly as possible.

July 24, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Math Scores: A Chilling Portent for America's Future

Recently, the results of a national study of the mathematics skills of American students were made public, carrying chilling portents for America's future technological superiority.

According to the congressionally mandated National Assessment of Educational Progress tests, most American students in those grades tested have not mastered more than basic mathematics in this age of computers and expanding high technology.

Worse, this study indicates that, on average, no state's students met the levels of performance expected of their grade levels.

Out of a possible top score of 500, 54 percent of the twelfth graders scored below 300--the acceptable level for eighth graders--and only 5 percent scored 350 or better.

For eighth graders, the average nationwide score was 265, while fourth graders nationwide scored 216.

For more than a century, Americans have prided themselves on this nation's technological superiority and achievement.

But without qualified future engineers, scientists, and technicians, how do we maintain our space pro-

gram, our innovations in industry and manufacturing, our complex defense systems, or our vast technology-dependent health-care sector?

Among my continuing efforts is enhancement of mathematics and science education in our state so that young West Virginians will be better able to compete for twenty-first century jobs.

To promote that goal, I have added \$10 million in federal appropriations to funding bills over the past two years to construct and equip, in cooperation with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, a 'Classroom of the Future' at Wheeling Jesuit College. This model program will provide on-campus training opportunities for teachers and students from throughout West Virginia and surrounding areas to study space-age mathematics and science, and to enhance technological education across our state.

Adequate education in mathematics and science is vital to West Virginia's economic development and America's national security. We cannot afford to skimp in providing our young people with these invaluable keys to their futures.

July 31, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Strengthening the Hand of an Important Environmental Ally

In the effort to protect some of America's most precious natural resources, one of our strongest allies is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

This federal agency has broad responsibilities to protect and conserve an array of fish and wildlife and their habitats, including migratory birds, endangered species, inland sport fish, and wild animals.

As growth and development have exerted more and more pressure over the years on America's fish and wildlife resources, the mission of the Fish and Wildlife Service has likewise increased in importance.

For this reason, I have been working with the Fish and Wildlife Service over the past several years to establish a new, state-of-the-art National Education and Training Center in West Virginia.

Recently, as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I added \$15.7 million to the 1992 Interior Appropriation Bill to keep this important project on track. This is in addition to monies that I have added to appropriation bills over the past three years for planning, design, initial construction, and related expenses for the training center.

This facility, to be located at Harpers Ferry, will be a national asset that will provide com-

prehensive environmental education and training for employees of the Fish and Wildlife Service as well as fish and wildlife professionals from a number of other federal agencies, including the Armed Services, the Forest Service, the National Park Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Currently, the Fish and Wildlife Service has no up-to-date central training facility. Yet, the agency, through internal management studies, has documented the need for such a facility time and again over the past decade. The Service currently conducts its training activities in a piecemeal fashion at locations scattered throughout the country, and the result is a training program that is too fragmented and too limited in scope to meet the agency's growing responsibilities.

The Education and Training Center is needed by the federal government to better protect our environment and our natural resources. And West Virginia, with its proximity to the nation's capital, its abundance of fish and wildlife species and habitats, and its cost-saving advantages for the American taxpayers, is the ideal location for such a facility.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

1991 Update on Free Federal Information Hotlines

The following list of toll-free Federal hotlines can help West Virginians obtain information about Federal programs and services, and about regulations and opportunities that may affect them directly.

Retired Army Pay Problems	1-800-428-2290
Cancer Hotline, Department of Health and Human Services	1-800-4-CANCER
National Runaway Switchboard	1-800-621-4000
(For parents and runaways to leave messages)	
Parents Anonymous (child abuse)	1-800-421-0353
Consumer Product Safety Commission	1-800-638-CPSC
(Product recall, complaints, fact sheets)	
Financial Aid for College Students (National) Department of Education	1-800-638-0824
AIDS Hotline (National)	1-800-342-AIDS
(HIV and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome)	
Pesticide Emergency Information Clearinghouse	1-800-858-PEST
Federal Emergency Management Agency	1-800-638-6620
(Flood-insurance information)	
National Health Information Center	1-800-336-4797
Hill-Burton Free Hospital Care Hotline	1-800-638-0742
Small Business Administration	1-800-827-5722
Social Security Administration	1-800-848-0106
(Medicare questions)	
West Virginia Veterans Affairs Office	1-800-827-2052
Transportation Department	1-800-424-9393
(Auto-safety information and complaints)	
Washington, D.C., Central Reservation Center	1-800-554-2220
(Information on lodging in the Nation's Capital)	

August 14, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Strengthening West Virginia's Guard and Reserve Resources

West Virginians are known for their patriotism and dedication to America's national security. Consequently, West Virginians are strong supporters of, and participants in, the National Guard and Reserves.

In an effort to strengthen Guard and Reserve facilities in West Virginia, I recently won authorization of several new military construction projects in West Virginia, including \$25.1 million for construction of a new Navy Reserve facility in the Eastern Panhandle.

The Navy Reserve facility, which is to be located in Martinsburg, is a major new defense initiative for West Virginia where the Navy could house C-130 aircraft, the workhorse aircraft of the military capable of transporting large numbers of troop and oversize cargo.

Other new military construction projects for which I won authorization include \$9.6 million for a Combined Armed Forces Reserve Center and Organizational Maintenance Shop in Huntington to serve five Guard and Reserve units; \$4 million for new facilities for the Air National Guard in Martinsburg; and \$650,000 for an Air National Guard security police facility in Charleston.

These projects are among my on-going efforts to increase the presence of

the military in West Virginia.

Of equal importance to the military construction projects is the Senate's approval of language that I added to the Defense Authorization Bill to prevent the Pentagon-sponsored wholesale reduction of Army National Guard personnel.

I have repeatedly urged the Administration not to cut National Guard forces in West Virginia and elsewhere because of the increased importance of the Guard and Reserves at a time when proposals are being made for significant reductions in the active duty military forces.

My provision calls for maintaining Army National Guard forces at an end-strength of 425,450 nationwide for Fiscal Year 1993, instead of the Administration-recommended target of 366,300. The figures I have recommended would force the Pentagon to revise its blueprint for cutting Army National Guard forces, and, I hope, would convince the Defense Department to abandon its plans to eliminate certain West Virginia units.

The Guard and Reserves are important to America's national security, and they are a vital part of West Virginia's heritage. They deserve our continued support and encouragement.

August 21, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Expanding Tourism Opportunities In West Virginia

To capitalize more aggressively on West Virginia's developing tourism potential, I have added more than \$15 million to a 1992 appropriation bill for an array of Fish and Wildlife Service, national parks, and forest-related projects in our state.

West Virginia's long-time motto, "Wild, Wonderful West Virginia," has struck a chord among an increasing number of vacationing Americans who have visited our state in recent years.

My amendments to the 1992 Interior Appropriation Bill will enhance West Virginia's tourism potential by building on the National Park Service presence in the state, by financing the expansion of the West Virginia Wildlife Refuge, and by providing better facilities for visitors to the Monongahela National Forest, one of West Virginia's premier natural assets.

As Chairman of the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, I added \$5.6 million for planning and construction projects at the New River Gorge National River; \$5.6 million for planning and construction at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, including a conservation laboratory for park service artifacts; and nearly \$2 million for planning and design of the Wheeling National Heritage Area,

which will be the newest National Park unit in West Virginia, launched in the past two years through my initiative.

Also, my amendments included \$1.24 million for construction of tourist-related improvements in the Monongahela National Forest. Further, I added \$1 million to this bill to purchase additional Ohio River Islands to expand West Virginia's only National Wildlife Refuge. This is in addition to the \$2.1 million in federal funds that I have secured over the past two years to establish the Wildlife Refuge and acquire approximately 21 islands.

In a separate appropriation bill, which has already been approved by Congress and signed into law by the President, I added \$400,000 to the Appalachian Regional Commission budget to continue operations of the Appalachian Tourism Development Center at Concord College in Mercer County.

West Virginia is America's sleeping tourism giant. I believe that the improvements and projects contemplated by my amendments and related efforts that I am working on to make our state more appealing for tourism, will go far toward creating more jobs for West Virginians and developing a more viable and prosperous tourism industry in scenic West Virginia.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

FBI Identification Division Groundbreaking

Recently, I participated in formal groundbreaking ceremonies for construction of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) new Fingerprint Identification Division facility at Clarksburg.

Scheduled to be completed by late 1994, the initial construction includes the first phase of a facility that will eventually accommodate approximately 2,500 employees -- of whom 80 percent are expected to be West Virginians hired locally -- with an annual payroll of approximately \$75 million.

The relocation of the FBI's Fingerprint Identification Division to West Virginia is a major development for our state's economy and for West Virginia's future participation in the expanding high-technology revolution.

More importantly, the new automated fingerprint identification system to be headquartered at this facility will offer a quantum leap forward in law enforcement nationwide by slashing criminal identification time from the current three to five weeks down to hours or even minutes.

When completed, the new Identification Division will feature a state-of-the-art system for fingerprint and other types of iden-

tification. Through high-technology electronics and equipment, this system will link state criminal-records systems nationwide, expand the FBI's national fingerprint files, allow the processing of as many as 600,000 inquiries per day, and permit a positive fingerprint identification within a matter of hours.

Recognizing the urgency of this initiative, I have added a total of \$245.5 million to federal funding bills over the past two years to revitalize the FBI's antiquated fingerprint identification system and relocate the Fingerprint Identification Division to West Virginia.

Earlier this year, I took part in a swearing-in ceremony for the first of 200 new employees the FBI plans to hire this year for its Clarksburg facility. These employees will begin work to process a backlog of nearly 2.9 million arrest dispositions and to convert 8.8 million manual criminal history records to an automated data base.

With all West Virginians, I welcome the FBI's Fingerprint Identification Division to our state. I look forward to the benefits that this new facility will bring to West Virginia, and to our entire country in the war against crime.

September 4, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Latest Report Card on American Schools

Recently, American education received more bad news.

Results of the Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT) for the Class of 1991 were issued by the College Board in Princeton, New Jersey.

The SAT exam is the primary yardstick used by more than 2,800 colleges and universities to measure the academic promise of applicants for admission.

Unfortunately, according to the SAT scores, the English language skills of the 1991 high school seniors tested sank to an all-time low, while math scores took their first dip since 1980.

Nationally, on the verbal portion of the test, the students averaged only 419 out of a possible 800 points, 7 points lower than the 1990 average.

The 1991 math average was 473, compared with 476 last year.

To their credit, West Virginia students outperformed the national averages on both sections, but dropped below the scores of last year's West Virginia examinees.

With 17 percent of its high school graduates taking the 1991 SAT examination, West Virginia's average verbal score was 441 versus 443 last year, with a 1991 math score of 485 against 490 for the 1990 average.

Significantly, College Board officials attributed the lower scores to the in-

creasingly widespread use of television and video tapes in the classroom, tools that have reduced the amount of time students spend reading and analyzing and solving problems.

In addition, the College Board found that schools are demanding less homework of their students.

Other education analysts also attribute declining academic performance to too much home television viewing.

Over the past decade, more and more attention has been focused on the need for solid improvements in our schools. Ad hoc commissions have been convened to study the problems of primary and secondary education in our country, and impressive reports and recommendations have been published.

In spite of those efforts, as the 1991 SAT scores demonstrate, the math and verbal skills of our high school graduates are still a disappointment.

Our youth are the future of our state and our country.

Learning is not easy, and few shortcuts have ever been found to achieving genuine knowledge and mastery of the basic skills that classical schooling should provide.

Let us hope that the 1991 SAT scores will spur a greater commitment to solid and disciplined learning in the years ahead.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Vital Highway Appropriations For West Virginia

In accordance with my commitment to advance completion of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) corridor highway system in West Virginia, I recently added \$165 million to a transportation appropriation bill to construct a crucial stretch of ARC Corridor G.

This funding will finance the northern 9.1 miles of Corridor G from Chapmanville to Holden, in Logan County.

One of the most congested strips of highway in West Virginia, this heavily traveled segment of the Corridor G route is narrow, twisting, and treacherous, as well as being an important transportation link in the highway network in the southwestern part of our state.

The funding in this bill will be particularly helpful to West Virginia because it is 100 percent federal funding, requiring no state matching funds.

Construction of this stretch of highway will bring Corridor G within 2.89 miles of final completion.

In addition to the \$165 million appropriation for Corridor G, I added \$12.9 million for design and environmental studies and for

construction of a new interchange and access road on Interstate 79 at Clarksburg to serve the new FBI Identification Division complex.

Further, I also added funding for location and design studies, and environmental assessments, for several major highway projects in West Virginia, including \$1.3 million for West Virginia Route 9 in the Eastern Panhandle; \$2.6 million for Route 2 in the Huntington area; and \$1 million for U.S. Route 52 in southern West Virginia.

In an appropriation bill already signed into law earlier this year, I added \$58 million to provide the 80-percent federal share of funding for construction of the Logan Connector on Corridor G and the Elkins Bypass of Corridor H.

These and other highway construction projects for the funding of which I am working are vital to West Virginia's future economic development and progress. As Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I shall continue doing all that I can, within federal budget constraints, to make their completion possible.

September 18, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Maintaining and Improving Air Transportation in West Virginia

Particularly in a largely rural state like West Virginia, modern, safe, and reliable air transportation is a vital component of future economic growth and progress.

For that reason, I supported funding in a recent transportation appropriation bill to assure continued service at a number of airports in our state under the Essential Air Service (EAS) program. This bill contains \$38.6 million for the nationwide EAS program, which ensures continued air service to the Beckley, Bluefield/Princeton, Clarksburg/Fairmont, Elkins, and Morgantown areas.

I also added \$14 million to complete the installation of a new regional radar system at the Eastern West Virginia Regional Airport at Martinsburg, making a total of \$21 million for the system. I included initial funding of \$7 million in an appropriation bill last year.

In addition, I included language in the report accompanying this bill urging the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to give priority consideration in the allocation of airport improvement grant funds to several other West Virginia airports, including paving and lights at the Logan County Airport; funding initial costs related to

the establishment of a new Pocahontas County airport at Marlinton; and funds for a proposed new airport in Roane County at Spencer to stimulate economic development in the area.

Further, I added report language urging the FAA to work with the National Guard and Reserve to facilitate an airport runway extension project at Benedum Airport in Harrison County, and directing the FAA to give priority to the application of Benedum Airport for discretionary airport improvement program funds.

West Virginia enterprises and industries are seeking trade opportunities in distant markets and around the world. Finding new domestic and foreign customers and clients, as well as attracting new businesses, industries, and jobs to our state, requires that we continue to ensure and improve air transportation into and out of West Virginia's cities and communities.

My amendments to this recent transportation appropriation bill will help to provide continued and improved air service to West Virginians seeking to find new opportunities abroad and to non-West Virginians contemplating launching new economic projects in West Virginia.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Perspective on Christopher Columbus

"In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue."

For generations, that epigram has been used to assist American school children to remember one of the watershed events in human history, and to help them celebrate an adventure that opened for untold millions an abundance of freedom and plenty unparalleled in mankind's prior experience.

Once again this year, October 12 will be observed as Columbus Day.

Interestingly, however, some self-styled historians are currently attempting to rewrite long chapters of American history, and to them, Christopher Columbus has become a target of vilification.

The historical revisionism to which Columbus and much more in American history are being subjected is not an attempt at greater truth or factuality, but an effort to denigrate and besmirch the American saga itself.

These current attacks on Christopher Columbus illustrate a dangerous and irresponsible effort by some historians to rewrite history to suit their own personal ideological and sociological biases.

How ironic that, while the Soviet Union is currently attempting to render their history books more

accurate and to cleanse historical accounts of that nation to eradicate the warpings introduced by Communist ideologists, some historical revisionists in the United States are attempting to make American history texts serve the cause of narrow and eccentric sociological viewpoints.

Whatever failings Columbus may have suffered, his feats in 1492 and later were the achievements of a brave, even heroic man. His stumbling onto the New World, moreover, opened vast, underpopulated territories to settlement and development by many people burdened by centuries of feudal privilege, serfdom, and tyranny.

In turn, the freedoms and opportunities that those liberty-seeking pioneers established in this hemisphere released the most creative, energetic, and idealistic forces for good and progress in recorded history.

As Americans, we are partners in the legacy that Christopher Columbus bequeathed to history.

With the 500th anniversary of Columbus' 1492 expedition approaching next year, I salute Christopher Columbus as one of history's indisputable heroes.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Congress Acts to Extend Unemployment Benefits

Recently, the United States Senate passed legislation, which I cosponsored, to extend emergency benefits to long-term unemployed workers in West Virginia and other high-unemployment states by an additional 20 weeks.

As a result of the current recession, unemployment in our country has climbed to the highest levels in the past five years. And yet, West Virginia, which has the highest unemployment rate in the nation, has not been eligible for extended unemployment benefits.

Consequently, three out of four jobless workers in our state are not receiving any unemployment benefits, and are being left to fend for themselves and their families on the brink of impending winter weather.

In spite of optimistic predictions of an early end to the current recession, millions of Americans are today suffering, and will continue to suffer, hardships brought on by lost jobs, reduced market demands, foreign competition, layoffs, and production cutbacks.

In West Virginia and across the country, these jobless workers and their families are living from day

to day in an ongoing, seemingly endless crisis and nightmare, with their homes and very health often at stake.

Traditionally, wherever in the world a disaster has struck, our country has extended its aid and resources to the victims.

For example, in recent months, Congress was called on by the Bush administration to pass emergency legislation to provide economic assistance to Kurdish refugees in Iraq and Turkey, and to needy people in such disparate locations as the Sudan, Angola, Bangladesh, and Ethiopia.

I believe that our jobless neighbors in West Virginia and unemployed fellow Americans throughout the nation deserve at least the same helping hand as people living halfway around the world.

Despite the President's pledge to veto this legislation, I believe that Congress acted responsibly, wisely, and compassionately in voting to extend emergency unemployment benefits to the long-term jobless in West Virginia, and in providing assistance to Americans grappling with economic setbacks and job losses.

October 9, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Clean Up Television Programs!

Television is today probably the single most pervasive and powerful influence affecting our children.

Experts estimate that, by the time children reach age 18, they have individually watched, on average, 15,000 hours of television programming.

For many children, the television screen has displaced the authority of mothers and fathers, ministers and priests, school teachers, and other positive authority figures on whom our society has long depended to impart values and create conscientious attitudes in the young.

Alarming, a study issued last year by the Universities of Pennsylvania and Delaware revealed that the average hour of children's programming -- cartoons, adventure shows, and such -- contains 26 acts of violence. That is up from 18 acts of violence per hour in 1980.

One particularly troubling television influence on increasing numbers of children is "music video" programming.

Currently occupying as many as three exclusive channels on some cable systems, music videos are

aimed directly at teenagers and pre-teens, but are watched by children as young as four and five.

In such videos, schools, jobs, home life, traditional families, marriage, patriotism, religion, fathers and mothers, self-discipline, policemen, and other conventional figures -- most of the people, values, and institutions on whom we depend daily for the smooth, just, and orderly conduct of affairs -- are portrayed as oppressive, square, boring, fascist, hypocritical, outdated, and "uncool."

The central message of these music videos is clear: Human happiness and fulfillment are experienced by rejecting responsibility and authority.

As the poet William Blake wrote, "Degrade first the arts if you'd mankind degrade."

The quality and content of television programming being aimed at children and young people are too important to be ignored by parents, teachers, clergymen, and others concerned about the values and future of our society.

The time has come to clean up television programming!

October 16, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Continuing U.S. Education Crisis

In spite of a growing concern nationally in recent years, achievement test scores, graduation statistics, and America's comparative international ratings continue to underscore our country's crisis in education.

For example, according to the U.S. Department of Education, as much as 13 percent of our country's population is functionally illiterate, with even 8 percent of those who graduate from high school falling into that category.

The Department of Education notes further that an average of up to 30 percent of those entering high school nationally do not graduate with their entering class, with dropout rates in some urban areas running as high as 50 percent.

Additionally, while more than half of U.S. high school graduates do not go on to college immediately after graduation, and significant numbers of college entrants drop out before graduation, little effort is focused on equipping these students for jobs that do not require college degrees.

Even in this high-technology era, fewer than one-quarter of one percent of American high school students go on to earn degrees in advanced science or engineering.

Sadly, U.S. students at all grade levels continue to score well below their counterparts in Europe and Japan in math and science proficiency, a recognized key to future research and development dominance in

world technology and product development.

For example, the Department of Education asserts that the average Japanese high school senior scores higher on college preparatory mathematics examinations than do the top 5 percent of U.S. high school seniors.

This may be explained in part by the fact that the average Japanese high school senior has, during his or her school experience, spent as many hours in class as has an American college graduate.

Education is an indivisible element of our country's economic and security infrastructure.

Around the world, millions are working to elevate their nations to higher statuses of economic prosperity and international importance. Never before has world market competition been so fierce -- or promised to become more fierce.

In West Virginia and across America, our schools are the training grounds in which our children and grandchildren must prepare themselves for that competition, or be brushed aside as inadequate or unproductive.

Education is the key to the futures of West Virginia and America. We owe to our children and grandchildren a renewed commitment to excellence in education that will solve many of the problems that I have noted and that will give our country the educational quality needed to compete effectively in the world marketplace.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Technology to Advance West Virginia's Steel Industry

In an effort to strengthen our domestic steel industry, I recently added \$3 million to an appropriation bill to assist Weirton Steel in developing a model computerized management information system.

The Weirton Integrated Management Information System program -- also known as IMIS -- is being developed to tackle the day-to-day challenges of steel production, by using an automated system to monitor the steelmaking process and manage inventory.

The IMIS program, which is to be jointly financed by the public and private sectors, is being designed to be transferable upon successful development to other domestic steel manufacturers. IMIS is expected to enhance efficiency, cut costs, and save energy, rendering steel produced by Weirton and other companies more competitive in the world steel market.

Indeed, Weirton Steel estimates that IMIS will save its company \$15 million annually, and could ultimately generate industry-wide savings of approximately \$400 million per year.

In the past decade, foreign competition has

severely impacted the steel industry in West Virginia and other heavy-industrial states. Such competition has cost jobs, not only in the steel industry, but also in related industries such as metallurgical coal.

According to Weirton Steel, since 1982, more than 200,000 jobs have been lost as U.S. steel production fell by 40 million tons of steelmaking capacity per year.

Through the development and application of new steelmaking technologies and wise management-worker decisions, companies like Weirton Steel have been able to survive and prosper.

Technology, however, is not static, and even the most progressive manufacturers cannot rest on current success if they are to remain competitive in the years ahead.

The long-range goal of the IMIS initiative, for which I have won a total of \$6 million in federal funds over the past two years, is to further enhance the production capabilities of West Virginia's and America's steel industry, helping this vital part of our economy to meet foreign competition and to save jobs in our steel and coal industries.

October 30, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Disturbing Trend In School Textbooks

Americans are increasingly concerned about the quality of education in our country, and are searching for explanations for poor student performance in some of our schools.

One problem might be some of the schoolbooks that are used today.

In an earlier time, for example, reading textbooks taught a love of literature as well as reading.

Thus, the famous McGuffey's Eclectic Readers offered selections from the best classic literature and poetry to tantalize children into mastering basic reading skills and wanting to read more.

According to a noted historian of education, the McGuffey readers were the most popular series ever used in America, introducing students to the best authors and poets, and challenging them with high ideals and patriotic values.

Some years ago, however, certain experts decided that reading speed and easiness should be the goal of the schools, not teaching appreciation of good literature, inculcating values and patriotism, or preparing young people for citizenship.

In attempts to make textbooks easier, "readability" displaced quality, with the result that -- according to The Washington Post -- one popular history book of-

ferred in the early 1980's carried six pages on Marilyn Monroe but only three brief references to George Washington. Current literature anthologies regularly feature vapid tales of contemporary teenagers wrestling with problems concerning dating, their parents, or their automobiles, in preference to the Gettysburg Address, Irving's Rip Van Winkle, or Robert Frost's poems. Too often, when classic stories are used, they are rewritten in dull vocabulary and choppy, childish sentences.

In defense of these practices, textbook editors claim that serious literature is too difficult for many children and teenagers, that students might lose interest in school or sink in their own self-esteem if the books are too advanced, and that various special interest groups might be offended by classic writings.

Growing up in southern West Virginia, I was fortunate to have dedicated teachers and challenging textbooks that awakened in me a love of learning that has never been quenched.

I cherish the hope of that same experience for the children of West Virginia today. Perhaps the McGuffey readers and other classic anthologies and textbooks are models by which we can promote excellence in education even today.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Third Deficit

In recent years, in addition to Federal budget deficits and America's growing trade deficit, another deficit has been developing that is potentially more dangerous than either of the other deficits.

This is the "infrastructure deficit" -- an increasing failure to invest in those assets and resources on which our future national wealth, security, and competitiveness will depend -- highways, bridges, rail systems, schools and education, and health care, to name a few examples.

At the same time that such investments were not being made, Americans were borrowing from foreign countries and running up massive debts to pay for short-term consumption.

As just one example, at the beginning of 1980, the Federal government had an outstanding debt of \$852 billion.

Ten years later, the Federal debt had more than tripled, to \$2.97 trillion, an increase of more than \$2.1 trillion.

Prior to World War I, America was a debtor nation, but that debt had been mounted to finance an infrastructure that eventually made our economy the world's envy.

Unfortunately, neither on the public nor private levels were such long-term investments made in the 1980's. Instead, they were drastically reduced.

According to a recent government report, of 41 major airports in our country, 23 are suffering ground congestion and 16 are operating at or near airspace capacity. The Federal Aviation Administration reports that each of 21 airports already experiences 20,000 hours or more of delay annually, and that the number of airports experiencing such delays is expected to climb to 33 by 1997.

The Federal Highway Administration reports that 238,000 of the 578,000 bridges in the country eligible for Federal assistance are either structurally deficient or functionally obsolete, and that 40 percent of the total pavement in the Federal highway system is in "fair" to "poor" condition.

The budgetary policies of the 1980's have left us with a mountain of debt and a molehill of productive investment.

West Virginia and her sister states are facing international competition in the marketplace unknown in prior eras.

The vital challenge for our entire nation in the 1990's will be to restore fiscal responsibility across the board, while at the same time generating a new surge of public and private investment in the infrastructure necessary for renewed economic growth and prosperity in our country and state.

November 13, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

An Independent Endorsement of the Clarksburg FBI Project

Recently, an independent report was issued, confirming my original reasons for urging the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to consider West Virginia as a location for its planned high-technology Fingerprint Identification Division.

A study undertaken by the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) underscores the urgent need for a nationwide automated fingerprint identification system, and endorses the soundness of the FBI's plan to automate its Fingerprint Identification Division and to locate the division in West Virginia.

According to the OTA, the new system is a top priority among the nation's law enforcement personnel, and is vitally needed for a successful national crackdown on crime.

With specific reference to the Identification Division's move to Clarksburg, the OTA cites the advantages of a stable, high-quality workforce in West Virginia, the state's lower cost of living, and the shorter commutes that will be possible in the area of the Identification Division's headquarters.

The OTA also contrasts the advantages of locating the fingerprint identification operation in West Virginia with the disadvantages of the FBI's

current location in Washington, D.C., including the inadequacy of space for the needed updating of technology and services at the J. Edgar Hoover Building, the high employee turnover rate in Washington, the inability of the FBI to match competitive salaries in the national capital area, and the long commutes and increasing traffic into and out of the District of Columbia.

Since early September, more than 7,000 persons have applied for the initial 200 positions to be filled at the FBI Identification Division's satellite office opening in Clarksburg. Based on FBI projections, by the year 2000 as many as 3,000 or more employees may be needed at the new facility.

Ground has already been broken for the FBI's new Clarksburg Identification Division facility, and the Bureau recently awarded the first of six construction contracts -- an \$18 million award for site preparation and utilities construction -- for the new complex. The remaining construction contracts are expected to be awarded next year.

With all West Virginians, I look forward to the completion and full staffing of the FBI's Fingerprint Identification Division, and to the wider benefits that it will mean for our state and for the nation.

November 20, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Balancing Economic Development and Conservation

As West Virginians, we are particularly blessed with some of our country's most beautiful terrain, abundant wildlife and forests, and free-flowing streams and rivers. West Virginia is indeed a natural wonderland worthy of conserving.

At the same time, West Virginia needs development and growth that will produce income and job opportunities.

According to some, economic development and the conservation of natural assets are mutually exclusive; they believe that the promotion of development necessarily means the destruction and loss of the beauties and riches of nature.

Throughout my career in Washington, I have supported programs and policies that endeavor to strike a balance between the requirements of economic development and the goals of conservation.

I believe that mankind and nature can and must live in harmony, and that intelligent people can properly husband nature's resources wisely, responsibly, and prudently, for the benefit of this and future generations.

For those reasons, I am working to improve the economy of West Virginia and to open up for development increased areas of our state through the completion of the Appalachian Regional Commission corridor highway system.

At the same time, I am working to establish facilities in West Virginia that

will promote sound conservation of our natural resources, not only in our state but also across the nation.

As Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have added a total of \$44.5 million for the planning, designing, and initial construction of the proposed \$125 million U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Education and Training Center, which is to be located at Harpers Ferry. The Center will provide our country with a state-of-the-art facility in which federal and state agencies, as well as private groups on a reimbursement basis, can meet environmental-training needs for their personnel.

Similarly, over the past three years, I have obtained \$3.1 million to acquire approximately 25 Ohio River islands to establish West Virginia's first National Wildlife Refuge, a promising boon both for wildlife and tourism in our state.

Too often, economic development and environmental stewardship are presented as an either/or dilemma.

However, there is an alternative path.

I am convinced that in West Virginia we can serve as a model to our sister states, charting a middle course that, at the same time, wisely uses and intelligently conserves our natural resources.

That course bodes well for both West Virginia's natural heritage and the future economic progress of our state.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

CIA Consolidation Proposal Advances Through Congress

Recently, Congress approved funds that I had added to a defense appropriation bill to implement the consolidation of 21 scattered offices of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) into two locations, one of which is in Jefferson County, West Virginia.

This appropriation bill provides an initial \$10 million -- and up to a total of \$30 million -- to acquire land for the consolidation of 21 CIA leased offices into two sites, once the CIA has satisfied requirements for land acquisition and other procedures prescribed in the bill at my request.

I am confident that the required certifications will be met, that the consolidation will go forward, and that the selection of the West Virginia site for one of the office complexes will be confirmed.

In 1987, the CIA recognized the economic and security drawbacks to having leased office space scattered across the Washington area. In an attempt to address concerns about costs, security, and greater efficiency, the CIA initiated efforts to consolidate these offices and to meet future Agency needs.

As a result of those efforts, a site in Jefferson

County was identified as being suitable for consolidation and relocation.

According to current plans, the CIA estimates that approximately 2,200 employees would ultimately be consolidated into the proposed West Virginia facility.

In addition to the benefits that this move of employees to West Virginia will afford the CIA, including improved security, greater operating efficiency, and enhanced intelligence-gathering abilities, the consolidation will provide significant savings to American taxpayers.

Moreover, West Virginia offers a great deal to CIA employees who choose to move with their jobs, such as a lower cost of living, one of the lowest crime rates in the nation, affordable housing, and attractive real estate prices.

Further, West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle is a rapidly growing area of our state that offers significant opportunities of education, employment, and recreation for its residents.

Above all, West Virginians are renowned for their friendliness and solid values, and those qualities make West Virginia an ideal location for living and for rearing a family.

December 4, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Welcome Tonic For Highways and Jobs in West Virginia

West Virginia recently received a much-needed economic boost in the form of a federal allocation of \$1.323 billion over six years for highway construction in the state.

This funding, which was provided for in the national transportation authorization bill, will help to expand the growing network of modern highways in West Virginia, as well as create more jobs in the construction industry.

At my request, this bill provides \$160 million for two projects in West Virginia -- \$110 million for upgrading and four-laning Route 9 between Martinsburg and Charles Town and to the Virginia state line in the Eastern Panhandle; and \$50 million to begin work on the proposed Coalfields Expressway from Beckley southwest to the Virginia line.

Of equal importance, I was able to win authorization for the first time for funding needed to complete construction of the Appalachian corridor highways and for upgrading and four-laning U.S. Route 52 between Bluefield and Huntington.

The transportation bill brings a double dose of good news to West Virginia regarding highway construction because, earlier in the year, as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations

Committee, I was able to add \$221 million in appropriation bills for highway projects in West Virginia.

My amendments to the appropriation bills include \$206.5 million for construction on Appalachian corridor highways G and H in West Virginia; \$10.32 million for construction of a new Interstate-79 interchange to accommodate the FBI Fingerprint Identification Division facility at Clarksburg; \$1.04 million for location and design studies for Route 9; \$2.08 million for similar studies for Route 2 in the Huntington area; and \$800,000 for environmental studies on Route 52.

The six-year transportation authorization bill not only emphasizes the importance of investing in our nation's roads, bridges, and transportation network, but it also creates needed jobs. In fact, this legislation may be just the tonic needed to begin to pull our economy out of the nosedive it has taken.

A modern, efficient highway network is one of West Virginia's most pressing needs for promoting economic development and job creation in our state, and the funds that I have added to transportation appropriation and authorization bills this year will go far toward achieving that goal.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Improving Health Care in West Virginia

The cost and availability of health care are becoming major concerns for increasing numbers of West Virginians.

According to a recent insurance company study, West Virginia ranks 49th among the states in access to health care. The American Cancer Society estimates that cancer deaths in West Virginia run roughly 6 percent higher than the national average.

To the extent that the federal government provides health care services and resources to the states, I have succeeded in obtaining funding for a number of health care programs to give West Virginians readier access to important health care services. My efforts include the establishment and upgrading of Veterans Medical Centers in Beckley, Clarksburg, Huntington, and Martinsburg; funding for black lung clinics and community health centers in West Virginia; and enhanced federal funding for rural health care grants.

In addition, to provide West Virginians with state-of-the-art cancer treatment, I obtained a total of \$13.3 million a few years ago to establish West Virginia's first statewide cancer research and treatment center, located in Morgantown. Prior to the establishment of this center, many seriously ill cancer patients were forced to go out of state to seek treatment.

Further, I have se-

cured approximately \$4 million annually to fund a statewide program in West Virginia for screening, education, and early detection of cervical and breast cancer.

In addition, I added \$14.2 million to appropriations bills last year for Alzheimer's disease research and services in West Virginia to be conducted by the West Virginia University and Marshall University medical schools. This year, I added \$700,000 for an Alzheimer's disease center in Parkersburg and \$500,000 for a rural health care clinic in McDowell County.

Moreover, I added report language to an appropriation bill requesting up to \$1 million annually for five years to establish a trauma treatment demonstration program at WVU, and \$800,000 to establish a statewide telecommunications system linking the WVU Health Sciences Center and rural hospitals across West Virginia. In the area of occupational health, I have obtained a total of \$49.6 million to establish a national occupational safety and health laboratory in Morgantown that is intended to research ways to improve health and safety in the workplace.

Rural states like West Virginia deserve the best health care possible, and I shall continue working to improve health care in our state in every way that I can.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Preserving West Virginia Values

One of my top priorities in the U.S. Senate is to bring improvements and opportunities to West Virginia that will create jobs and promote new businesses and industries in the years ahead.

For example, I have succeeded in attracting a number of federal operations and thousands of new jobs to West Virginia, including the FBI Fingerprint Identification Division and approximately 2,500 jobs to Clarksburg, the Bureau of Public Debt expansion in Parkersburg with 700 new jobs, and the proposed CIA facility that will bring 2,200 jobs to Jefferson County.

My goal is to lay the foundations for an era of economic expansion in which our state's standard of living will rise, and that will offer West Virginia's young people job opportunities and the promise of rewarding, fulfilling futures that will enable them to stay in our state and rear their families here.

As this new era takes shape, however, I hope that West Virginians will maintain and promote the values and the heritage that make our state unique.

West Virginia continues to enjoy one of the lowest crime rates in the country. Incidents of drug trafficking and AIDS cases are well below national averages. The work ethic, family life, religious faith, patriotism, a personal sense of responsibility, and neighborhood and community pride are inherent in the West Virginia way of life.

In sharp contrast to West Virginia's lifestyle are the murder rates, drug addictions, conflicts, and breakdowns in personal and public life that characterize so many of our large metropolitan centers.

In the years ahead, I hope that concerned West Virginians, their families, churches, civic and fraternal organizations, and educators will reflect on the challenges that may be presented by numbers of new residents moving into our state.

Our goal should be to preserve our values and heritage, and to celebrate and promote the qualities that make West Virginia the finest place in the country in which to live, work, and rear children.

December 25, 1991



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Term Limits: An Infringement Of Voters' Rights

Recently, discussion has mounted concerning limiting the terms of members of Congress.

However, a close look at Congressional term limits raises a number of serious reservations.

Experience and skill are prerequisites for effective and judicious government. I am concerned that with term limits, long-staying bureaucrats in the Executive Branch would have an advantage over the people's elected representatives in Congress. Members of the bureaucracy are necessary to our system of government, but under mandated term limits, these bureaucrats -- who never have to answer to the voters at the polls for their actions or decisions -- would become the most powerful and influential group in Washington.

By forcing seasoned lawmakers out of office, term limits would also result in a shift of power and influence to unelected Congressional staff people, whose expertise and institutional memory would be in high demand due to the constant turnover of novice officeholders.

As in the Federal bureaucracy, these staff people -- who would be unaccountable to the voters of any state or district -- would then have a much greater opportunity and ability to influence the

legislative agenda, mold the laws, and guide inexperienced and unwary new members of Congress toward priorities that the staff most favored.

One of the most frequently heard arguments for limiting Congressional terms is that the current members of Congress have become entrenched in office. However, the fact is that over half the current members of the U.S. Senate have served less than two full terms, and over one-fourth of these have served less than one full term. Instead of advocating Congressional term limits, thoughtful citizens should remember that Americans already have the most effective possible means of limiting Congressional terms, simply by exercising their right to vote on election day.

It is a sad commentary on the American political system that the national voter turnout in the 1990 Congressional elections was only 36 percent.

An informed American public can be trusted to make the right judgment if citizens will only go to the polls on election day and exercise their privilege to vote. As Pericles said, in his eulogy to the Athenians who had fallen in the Peloponnesian War, "Our ordinary citizens, though occupied with the pursuits of industry, are still fair judges of public matters."

January 8, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Investing in America's Future

Since the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, America has been in an almost continuous state of defense and military alert.

The collapse of communism and the sweeping changes taking place in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have, however, drastically altered the conditions that made America's massive defense posture necessary.

While recognizing the continuing need to maintain an adequate national defense in a changed world, the time has come for America to adjust to the new challenges to our national security and standard of living posed by our trade competitors overseas.

Above all, we must begin shifting our limited financial resources from the defense budget to the domestic budget so that we can restore, repair, reconstruct, and modernize our long-neglected and crumbling national infrastructure -- our highways, bridges, rail networks, manufacturing plants, water and sewer systems, airports, and other civic facilities, as well as our schools, research and technology programs, and health care services -- on which America's productivity and competitive ability depend.

One reason that some of our foreign trade competitors have enjoyed so much economic success has been their ability to invest more money in research,

technological development, transportation improvements, modernization, and domestic public services while depending on the U.S. defense shield to protect them against foreign attack.

By contrast, American investments in our own vital infrastructure have dwindled in recent years to less than 1 percent per year of our gross national product, compared to 3 percent for Germany and 5 percent for Japan.

In part, that explains the lost jobs, closed factories, and declining populations that have beset so many West Virginia communities, and that have forced so many of West Virginia's young people to leave our state to look for opportunities elsewhere.

Good transportation and highways, technological development, product research, a well-trained workforce, updated plants and machinery, a good educational system, and adequate health care boost productivity, cut costs, and make countries more competitive in world markets.

America met and faced down the threat of foreign military aggression.

The time has come to meet the challenge of foreign economic aggression by shifting our spending priorities, strengthening our own country, and investing more in our own future and the future of our children.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Directions for Television

In the 1950's, television became America's mass media of choice, with viewers transfixed by every image that crossed the screen, no matter how inconsequential or banal. But, in the main, the mass of television programming has become, as commentators often reflect, "bubble gum for the mind." Hour after hour,

Notwithstanding, a few optimists predicted a television-spawned cultural renaissance, with the best of our culture flooding millions of living rooms nightly, and a revolution in education as school children nationwide daily audited the nation's best teachers and scholars. one of the marvels of human invention has been reduced to a purveyor of violence, bad taste, and locker-room humor.

Certainly, some of those rosier predictions have been borne out. For those interested, public television and certain cable channels provide for millions some of the world's best drama, musical performances, documentaries, and public affairs programming. Last year's Public Broadcasting System's (PBS) monumental *Civil War* series drew record PBS audiences and quickly earned plaudits as an example of the quality programming to which all television should aspire. I am particularly concerned about the impact of this continuing diet of inanties and violence on the minds and imaginations of children and young people. Unfortunately, prime opportunities are being lost for introducing our youth to exciting and challenging dramatizations of the best of our cultural and national classics -- classics that convey our highest values and ideals.

No one can contest that television at its best -- the American astronauts' walk on the Moon, the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, and the coverage of the Persian Gulf War, to name a few instances -- can be compelling, vital, and life-and history-

As it has so often proved, television's potential for broadening human understanding and for showcasing the best of our cultural heritage is nearly limitless. Quality programming does not have to be boring, elitist, or stuffy. I hope that concerned viewers will challenge the television industry to explore positive new directions in programming and content, and that responsible television producers will help their medium to live up to its promise in our culture and society.

January 15, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Gun Violence in Our Schools

Last year, homicides accounted for roughly 487 deaths in Washington, D.C.; 1,006 in Los Angeles; and more than 2,080 in New York City -- most of these gun-related.

Unfortunately, such violence is not limited to the streets.

Increasingly, thoughtful Americans are alarmed by the rising rate of violence in our schools, and the growing number of gun-related incidents being reported there.

A recent report from the federal Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, entitled *1990 Youth Risk Behavior Study*, revealed that, at some time during the preceding year, one in 20 of today's youth in grades 9-12 carried a firearm, usually a handgun, for self-protection or use in a fight.

This same study reported that nearly 24 percent of West Virginia students, grades 9-12, carried a gun, knife, or other weapon on some occasion for the same reasons.

During the 1990-91 school year, the Kanawha County School Board expelled 14 students in gun-related incidents -- brandishing, displaying, selling, passing, or possessing guns -- on school property. In just the first two months of the 1991-92 school year, the Kanawha Board expelled 10 students in gun-

related incidents on school property.

Fortunately, Kanawha County school officials acted expeditiously in these cases. Unfortunately, throughout the country, news reports of disturbed youngsters who use guns at school to take out their grievances against others are becoming more common.

Violence at school reflects violence and unhappiness at home, in the workplace, and in the streets -- and certainly, television murders that desensitize children to the value of human life.

Schools are no place for guns. Teachers and students should not have to fear for their lives and safety.

Schools officials can, of course, confiscate guns brought onto school premises.

But a surer approach might begin at home, with parents keeping firearms and ammunition locked away from children, emphasizing to children the potential consequences of gun-carrying, and imbuing our children with a respect for law and the rights of other people, and a sense of responsibility and duty as American citizens.

Our schools are vital and precious institutions. Let us keep them safe for our children and those who teach them.

January 22, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Keeping the FBI and CIA On Track for West Virginia

To keep on schedule the relocation of the FBI's Fingerprint Identification Division to Harrison County and a number of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) offices to Jefferson County, I have urged the President to earmark \$117 million in the 1993 Federal budget.

The relocation of these facilities to West Virginia is important to the future of our state and nation, and must be kept on schedule to save money for American taxpayers and to increase the efficiency of both the FBI and the CIA.

As Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have added a total of \$245.5 million in appropriations over the past two years to initiate the relocation to West Virginia, and the automation, of the FBI's Fingerprint Division.

The Automated Fingerprint Identification System being planned and developed for the Harrison County facility is a major step forward in our national war against crime and drugs, and is urgently needed to permit the FBI to provide law enforcement personnel throughout the nation with state-of-the-art technology.

To keep this automation project on course, the

FBI needs \$100 million in Fiscal Year 1993 -- \$50 million to acquire the computer hardware and software needed to start production of this advanced system, and another \$50 million to convert the FBI's existing fingerprint cards from the current manual format to an electronic image format. Any delay in this process -- by even as little as one year -- could mean higher costs to the taxpayer.

Last year, to acquire land for the CIA's plan to consolidate 21 leased offices in the Washington, D.C., area into two new compounds, including one in Jefferson County, I added \$30 million to a defense appropriation bill.

The \$17 million for the CIA project that I am now urging for the new Federal budget includes second-year funding for architectural and engineering studies, and for community and environmental impact assessments.

Together, the FBI and CIA facilities being relocated to West Virginia are projected to bring an estimated 4,700 jobs to our state. Maintaining their planned construction schedules will benefit our country as well as the economy of West Virginia.

January 29, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Excellence: The Key To America's Competitiveness

Recently, a ranking Japanese government official raised hackles in this country by criticizing American workers as lazy and illiterate.

Conversely, on our shores a lament has risen nationwide that, by taking advantage of America's freer trade policies without allowing American products to compete fairly in their own markets, Japan and some other countries have stolen American jobs and markets and have reduced our standard of living.

These examples underline the tension that the chronic trade deficit has caused between the U.S. and some of her trading partners.

Though accusing American workers of laziness and illiteracy is unfair and simplistic, and though there is much truth in the charge of unfair practices on the part of Japan, there is another factor behind the popularity of some foreign-made products.

At one time, "Made in America" meant the highest quality possible. Around the world, American exports to other countries, including numerous products manufactured or mined in West Virginia, outstripped our imports from overseas by billions of dollars.

But, in time, a number of foreign companies learned that consistent quality is a potent weapon

in trade competition, while some American companies became complacent about our success and prosperity.

Somewhere along the line, America's priorities seem to have gotten turned upside down. For example, last year, 34 major league baseball players were paid salaries of \$1 million or more. Some American rock and movie stars are estimated to have amassed fortunes ranging up to \$100 million or more.

Compare those figures with the salaries paid to teachers, scientists, shop foremen, miners, steelworkers, chemists, engineers, or inventors.

Historically, American greatness has rested on American excellence. West Virginians, for example, are still noted for their "work ethic," pride of workmanship, ingenuity, inventiveness, and spirit of achievement.

Some critics have recommended that, to regain competitive power, Americans should imitate Japanese labor and management policies.

Instead, perhaps America needs to reorder its priorities and recapture the values embodied by West Virginia workers, whose pride of craft and dedication represent standards that helped to make America the greatest nation in the world.

Excellence -- not imitation -- is the key to success in the marketplace or in life.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

America's Survival as a World Economic Power

Having won the Cold War, America currently finds itself embroiled in a struggle to maintain its position as a world economic power.

Across our country and throughout West Virginia, one sees the casualties in this new struggle, struck down in the longest recession since the 1930's: 8.9 million unemployed, 6.3 million working only part-time for economic reasons, and 1.1 million so discouraged that they have simply dropped out of the labor force -- 16.3 million in all -- 13 percent of the national work force.

Other marks of this recession are closed mines, factories, and mills in West Virginia and elsewhere; nearly 1 in 10 Americans now enrolled in the Food Stamp Program; more than 73,000 business bankruptcies and nearly 919,000 personal bankruptcies filed in Fiscal Year 1991; and massive layoffs, including 74,000 announced by General Motors and 29,000 by IBM.

For many of our neighbors and fellow citizens, the American Dream is fading out of reach.

Although the inflexibility of some of our trading partners is partially to blame for the current economic crisis, much of that blame lies here at home.

Over the past decade, deliberate political decisions by White House policymakers starved our national infrastructure -- those projects and programs, physical and human, that are

the backbone and foundation of economic growth and expansion: highways, bridges, airports, water and sewer facilities, education and vocational training, health care, nonmilitary research and development, ports and waterways, anti-crime and antidrug programs, and environmental cleanup. Such investments were cut \$395 billion below inflation for the decade.

At the same time, \$624 billion above inflation was pumped into the defense budget, and mandatory and entitlement programs were increased \$776 billion above inflation.

But as we are so painfully learning today, a nation that does not invest adequately in its human and physical infrastructure will lose its ability to compete economically. In addition, its standard of living will drop in comparison to those more competitive nations that have kept their transportation systems, production facilities, schools and training programs, health-care systems, and research and development up to date and relevant to world market challenges.

Starting immediately, we need to invest more in our neglected infrastructure to make us more competitive in the long run, and to create new jobs for millions of unemployed and underemployed Americans and for the young Americans who will want to enjoy the American Dream for themselves in the years ahead.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The President's Budget: Mixed News for West Virginia

The President's recently proposed 1993 Federal budget contains a mixture of good and bad news for West Virginia.

On the plus side, the budget proposes funding of a number of important West Virginia projects, including several that I initiated and for which I requested funding.

For example, the budget contains \$100 million that I requested to continue work on the FBI's Fingerprint Identification Division facility in Harrison County, and \$17 million in second-year funding for the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) consolidation, which includes a proposed facility in Jefferson County.

Inclusion of these funds in the budget signifies important Presidential endorsement of my initiatives.

Other funds in this proposed budget for ongoing West Virginia projects and programs on which I am working are: \$25 million for the Gallipolis Locks and Dam on the Ohio River; \$23.6 million for West Virginia segments of the Tug Fork flood-control project; \$38.5 million for the Winfield Lock and Dam on the Kanawha River; \$26 million for the Point Marion Lock and Dam below Morgantown on the Monongahela River; \$30 million for the Grays Landing Lock and Dam on the Monongahela; \$900,000 for the Petersburg local flood protection project along the South Branch of the Potomac River in Grant

County; \$32 million for Environmental Protection Agency sewerage treatment programs in our state; and \$38.6 million for continuation of the Essential Air Service program in West Virginia, which provides air transportation to the Clarksburg/Fairmont, Elkins, Beckley, Morgantown, and Bluefield/Princeton areas.

On the negative side, however, the President proposes cutting funding for the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) from the \$190 million appropriated in the current fiscal year to \$100 million next year; reducing funding for the Community Development Block Grant program from \$3.4 billion to \$2.9 billion; and slashing funding for Amtrak from \$651 million to \$243 million.

Worse yet, the proposed budget calls for completely eliminating the Economic Development Administration, an essential tool for economic progress in financially strapped rural states such as West Virginia.

All of these projects and programs promise to create new job opportunities and expand West Virginia's economic base, and they deserve strong Federal support. For my part, as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I shall continue doing all that I can, within Federal budget constraints, to safeguard these programs and to protect the jobs and investments that I am bringing into our state.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Confronting the New Threats To America's National Security

Throughout the course of roughly four decades of the Cold War, I have been a "national defense superhawk" -- a supporter of the strongest military forces that America could afford against the threat of world communism.

However, since 1990, the world has changed drastically. The Soviet Union is no more. America won the Cold War. The Soviet threat is gone.

Unfortunately, current Administration policy makers seem to be behind the times, continuing to push Cold War military budgets to protect against a U.S.S.R. threat that no longer exists and ignoring the economic threats to our security that exist now.

I believe that we should be using this opportunity to boost the confidence of the American people by proposing substantial cuts in defense spending and using the savings to increase spending in those domestic areas in which it is most needed -- for physical infrastructure such as bridges, highways, rail systems, airports, public water and sewerage systems, and river and harbor improvements, as well as for human infrastructure, such as education, job training, child and health care, and nutrition.

In past decades, against the threat of Soviet might and fanaticism, we

were correct to invest substantially in sophisticated weapons systems as a deterrent to communist aggression.

But now, the Soviet military threat has collapsed, while millions of Americans, including thousands of West Virginians, are jobless as a result of our faltering domestic economy.

Instead of new superweapons and megabombs to blast open military bunkers, we need "economic smartbombs" to open new world markets. Instead of sustaining a massive standing army of Cold War proportions, we should reduce our active duty forces to a size that is sufficient to effectively function in a post-Cold War environment, while at the same time strengthening and upgrading our National Guard and Reserve units for flexibility in future crises. We also need to pour additional resources into training brigades of skilled, disciplined working men and women for new industries and enterprises.

Now is the time to renew our investments in our nation's physical and human infrastructure and to regain our stature as the world's mightiest economic and industrial power. We cannot afford to remain a military superpower at the price of becoming an economic superpauper.

February 26, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Latest International Report Card In Science and Mathematics

In a clear portent of continued difficulty in competing in future world markets and high-technology development, the Educational Testing Service (ETS) of Princeton, New Jersey -- the nation's premier standardized testing organization -- recently released the results of an international mathematics and science test.

Despite several years of growing concern about the relative ability of American school children to compete against their foreign counterparts, the ETS examination results demonstrate that U.S. students are still performing below the international average in mathematics and science.

On the examinations administered internationally to roughly 175,000 students aged 9 years and 13 years, American students averaged well behind students in such countries as Korea, Taiwan, Switzerland, the former Soviet Union, Hungary, Canada, and even Slovenia. Japan and Germany declined to participate in this effort.

The American students tested were a cross section of their age groups, representing middle-class and suburban children as well as inner-city and lower-income examinees.

Throughout my career, I have strongly supported programs and efforts to improve and expand educational opportunities for our young

people. Investments in developing the minds and intellects of future generations are among the wisest, most farseeing that we can make. Indeed, affording our children the best education possible is one of the most important contributions that we can make to the future security, strength, and prosperity of West Virginia and the nation, and I shall continue my efforts to promote better schools and improved education.

Interestingly, ETS officials emphasized that those students watching the most television daily on average performed worse than those who watched only moderately or not at all.

Also, while most competing countries abroad honor bright students and celebrate academic achievement, ETS officials said that a national American attitude that holds bright students in popular contempt as "nerds" or "dweebs," while lionizing athletic prowess and winning beauty contests, discourages better scholastic achievement by many American students.

The destiny of our state and nation rests on the quality of our schools and the education that they offer. Our schools are our front line in the ongoing battle for future success in the world economy, and the struggle for continued American economic power and international political influence begins at the door of our schoolhouses.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships Expanded to Four-Year Awards

Recently, as part of the passage of the 1992 Higher Education Act, I won approval by the United States Senate of my request to expand awards conferred under the national Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships Program from the current one year to four years.

In 1991, Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships were awarded to 43 graduating West Virginia high school students. That brought to 214 the total number of graduating, college-bound West Virginia high school students who have been awarded these one-year, \$1,500 first-year college scholarships, for a total value of \$321,000, since the beginning of this national program in 1987.

Awarded by state education officials solely for outstanding academic performance, the 43 West Virginia Byrd Honors Scholarships were among 5,561 awarded in 1991 to high school graduates across the country, bringing to more than 25,000 the number of these scholarships granted nationally since this program's inception.

Unfortunately, the soaring cost of a college education is straining the finances of increasing numbers of families.

If our country is to retain its position as a world leader in science, engineering, marketing, economic, and research and develop-

ment, we must encourage our best young minds to make the sacrifices necessary to achieve that goal.

My aim in expanding the Byrd Honors Scholarships from one-year to four-year awards is to provide added incentives for advancement for academically promising, hard-working young men and women to pursue college and university degrees.

The expansion of the Byrd Honors Scholarships will provide scholarship payments of \$1,500 annually for four years per student, or a total of \$6,000, applicable only toward costs associated with attendance at a college or university.

Believing that education can open doors of opportunity to young people that might otherwise be closed to them, I have always been a strong advocate of education and scholastic achievement.

The young West Virginians and other Americans who have won the Byrd Honors Scholarships are exceptional students, and they deserve our admiration and encouragement.

Indeed, these students represent great promise for West Virginia's and America's future, and I hope that the Byrd Honors Scholarships will help them to realize fulfilling, rewarding careers in the years ahead.

March 11, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Television: A New Medium for Child Abuse?

Since the early 1950's, our society has treated television as a friendly, electronic baby sitter that can be depended upon to benignly amuse and even educate the millions of children who watch it daily.

Current findings suggest, however, that the television industry has betrayed the trust once placed in it.

A recent report released by the American Psychological Association (APA) calls into question television's benign influence on children, suggesting even that television may be a malignant force in the development of young children, exposing them to a gratuitous violence, while teaching them antisocial attitudes toward others.

In particular, the APA charges, television is bombarding children with images of death, injury, and human destruction at rates unparalleled in previous generations.

For instance, by the time an American child watching the average of three hours of commercial television programming per day has attained the seventh-grade level, he or she has already witnessed on average 8,000 television murders and been exposed to more than 100,000 other assorted acts of violence.

Any parent or teacher

feeding children a similar intellectual diet should be found guilty of child abuse.

Worse than such abuse, the nine professional psychologists who conducted the study concluded that the average child's viewing menu influences children to use violence to resolve conflicts in real life and to be more acceptive of sexual violence and rape.

Our society is enduring a plague of violence.

Last year, seventeen major U.S. cities set new homicide records. Between them, New York and Los Angeles alone -- our two largest metropolitan centers -- chalked up more than 3,000 murders.

Though West Virginia still enjoys crime rates generally lower than most other states, one wonders how long such a luxury can continue even in West Virginia when examples of violence as a resolution to conflicts are being imported from beyond our borders, day after day, by television.

Television is now a major factor in shaping the values of children growing up in this culture.

The time has come for the television industry to take seriously its responsibility to our country and to cease poisoning the minds and consciences of our children.

March 18, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Line-Item Veto Is No Solution For the National Deficit

Reducing the national debt and cutting federal deficits are among my major concerns.

Unfortunately, one remedy suggested most often -- a **Presidential line-item veto** -- would do little or nothing to solve either problem.

For example, in 1988, President Reagan published a list of federal spending items whose termination by a line-item veto, he claimed, would have allowed him to cut the deficit and reduce the national debt, which, by then, was nearly \$2.68 trillion.

However, the sum of those vetoed items would have amounted only to two-tenths of 1 percent of 1988's total discretionary federal appropriations.

If the White House were given a line-item veto over **domestic discretionary appropriations**, the President could, for example, threaten to veto programs or projects for West Virginia unless I and other members of the West Virginia delegation would agree to vote as the White House wanted on some other piece of legislation (or nomination or treaty), regardless of the merits of the legislation in question. Therefore, West Virginia projects for which I have been able to secure appropriations -- such as Appalachian Corridors G, H, and D; Route 9 in the Eastern Panhandle; the Coalfields Expressway; the FBI Identification Division; the New River Gorge National River project, etc. -- would be vulnerable targets for Presidential line-item vetoes.

In fact, the budget items most often mentioned by line-item veto proponents -- domestic discretionary items, such as highways, bridges, water and sewer projects, health services, etc. -- are not themselves the cause of the national debt

(currently standing at \$3.694 trillion) or of the federal budget deficits.

In reality, most disbursements of federal funds are made through mandatory spending allocations or "entitlements" -- i.e., backdoor spending. These programs, created in years gone by, and their funding -- which do not require action by the Appropriations Committees of Congress -- are determined by formulas established in the laws that created them. Such mandatory and entitlement programs have become the main cause contributing to the deficits and the debt.

The entitlement and mandatory programs which have been put into place in years past must still continue annually to be automatically funded, and no Presidential line-item veto can touch them. They can only be ended or reduced by repealing or amending the original laws that created them.

Achieving those ends would require the unified will of Congress, the President, and the millions of citizens who benefit most from those backdoor spending programs. It would require national courage to reduce the rate of growth of such entitlements and mandatory programs for the sake of the country's economic health.

Certainly, the national debt must be reduced and budget deficits cut. But the line-item veto argument should come under the heading of political gimmickry. A line-item veto would destroy the Separation of Powers doctrine enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, thus resulting in an all-powerful Chief Executive. Moreover, its impact on reducing the debt and cutting deficits would be infinitesimal.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Need for Maintaining A Strong National Guard and Reserves

Against the background of the collapse of the old Soviet Union and lessened threats to America's national security, I favor many of the efforts suggested by the Department of Defense to shift our military priorities and to cut defense costs.

However, at a time when we are making significant reductions in our active-duty forces, the policy of cutting deeply the numbers of our National Guardsmen and Reservists seems shortsighted.

I am opposed to these massive cuts, particularly to National Guard and Reserve units in West Virginia, where we have a strong tradition of service in our nation's Armed Forces. Moreover, I have repeatedly called upon Defense Secretary Richard Cheney to reconsider these ill-advised proposals.

In West Virginia and across the country, our National Guard and Reserve units fulfill an important mission in our national defense efforts, as the efficient and effective participation of many of these units in Operation Desert Storm proved.

Instead of disbanding Guard and Reserve units, a more enlightened and realistic approach might be to concentrate more specialized training at the local level to

create even more capable and expert military forces ready to convert from civilian life to active military service with even greater speed and dispatch.

Moreover, the National Guard also has vital state missions, particularly in response to domestic emergencies, that must not be ignored.

For example, in the past six years, the West Virginia National Guard has served 26 times during periods of state disasters or emergencies. Most recently, last year the West Virginia National Guard was called out to suppress the devastating forest fires that, between October and December, burned more than 350,000 acres of West Virginia timberland.

I am concerned about the cost to public and national safety that could result from severe cuts in Guard and Reserve forces and closures of armories.

I have urged the Department of Defense to take a better look at the impacts such cuts will have on the National Guard and the Reserves, and the effect that these cuts might have in reducing the ability of these vital military resources to fulfill their duties to our domestic safety and national security.

April 1, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

More New Rural Bridges For West Virginia

Nearly four years ago, I initiated a national program to use one of West Virginia's most abundant natural resources -- hardwood timber -- to replace rapidly deteriorating bridges on important but less-travelled highways and roads.

Highway engineers have discovered that treated hardwood timber bridges have a life span of roughly 70 years, which is more than that of conventional concrete and steel structures, whose exposure to salt, freezing, and wear renders them extremely susceptible to deterioration and costly to maintain.

Specifically for this program, I added \$2.6 million in federal funds over the past four years for timber bridge construction in West Virginia, on a shared federal-state funding agreement.

Recently, I succeeded in earmarking an additional \$190,000 in an appropriations bill to build four more of these unique timber bridges in West Virginia, bringing to 56 the number of bridges in our state being built under this program.

The four bridges to be built under this funding will be located in rural areas of Harrison, Lewis, Pleasants, and Webster Counties.

Of particular interest is the Webster County bridge,

in the Town of Addison, which will serve pedestrian and light truck traffic, and which suggests an entirely new market for West Virginia hardwoods in building such durable, attractive bridges in cities, suburbs, and parks.

As with the previous 52 West Virginia bridges selected for timber bridge replacement, the construction of these four bridges will improve commercial, school bus, and emergency vehicle service available to the communities dependent on these bridges for their transportation needs.

I am gratified to report that officials of the Timber Bridge Program maintain that national enthusiasm for this effort is spreading, and that West Virginia's leadership role in providing demonstration examples and technology is widely recognized.

The benefits of the Timber Bridge Initiative promise to be multiple for West Virginia. In addition to obvious advantages for rural transportation in our state, a growing new industry is rising on West Virginia's economic horizon, with the promise of expanding markets, a renewable resource as its raw material, and new job opportunities for young West Virginians in the years ahead.

April 8, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Congress-Bashing

Recently, newspapers and news broadcasts nationwide have overflowed with complaints against Congress, with special emphasis on the sensationalizing of "perks," while ignoring the real problems facing our country.

From my experience, I know of few institutions that are beyond criticism or that cannot benefit from sincere reform efforts.

Throughout my career in the United States Senate, I have worked continuously for reform to streamline the committee system, to open the Senate to public scrutiny through radio and television broadcasts, and to bring about greater public accountability.

Insofar as perks may stand between the members of Congress and the people they are elected to represent, such perks should be done away with. White House perks should go, too.

But simply doing away with perks is a far cry from addressing the serious challenges that face this nation.

Currently, we are faced with a \$3.8 trillion national debt, continuing federal deficits, the foreign trade gap, the decline of our schools, the crumbling of our highways and transpor-

tation systems, the prodigious cost of health care, and chronic unemployment.

In the next few weeks, the Senate will again be considering, for final passage, campaign finance reform legislation.

I have long advocated the need for campaign finance reform, and I have repeatedly cosponsored legislation to address needed changes in the campaign financing system. Members of Congress devote too much attention to the "money chase" -- the raising of funds to conduct political campaigns. There is too much pandering to the special interest groups that pour money into political campaigns. Members of Congress spend too much time away from Capitol Hill and out on the fundraising circuit.

I hope that sincere efforts will be made by both the White House and Congress to institute this and other substantive reforms so that needed attention can be turned to finding ways to reduce the deficit and the national debt, rebuild the nation's crumbling infrastructure, educate our children, and put our unemployed people to work.

April 15, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Dawning Economic Light in West Virginia

My top priorities are creating new job opportunities in West Virginia and laying lasting economic foundations that will produce greater prosperity throughout our state.

By continuing to add funds to federal appropriations bills for construction of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) corridor highway system, I hope to open more areas to economic development.

By locating vital new federal facilities and agencies such as the FBI's Fingerprint Identification Division's headquarters in Harrison County and the consolidation of the Bureau of Public Debt in Parkersburg, and by developing an expanding high-technology base statewide, and helping to lay foundations for new hardwood products enterprises, I am working to make our state more attractive to outside investors and to set the stage for increased economic and manufacturing growth in West Virginia.

In addition, I am seeking to create new jobs by enhancing and promoting West Virginia's tourism potential, assisting West Virginia companies to learn how to take greater advantage of federal contracting opportunities, and upgrading our airports

as the twenty first century approaches.

Statistics released on April 6 by a leading business publisher indicate that these efforts are apparently paying off.

According to Harris Publishing Company, a key business and economic monitor of ten Midwestern states including West Virginia, more than 500 new business enterprises have been launched in West Virginia in just the past two years, an increase of more than 17 percent when compared with previous years. Conversely, during that same period, with the exception of only one state, all other states in the group surveyed showed significant declines in business startups.

This is, indeed, good and encouraging news for West Virginians -- particularly for young West Virginians hoping to cast their futures at home.

The word is getting around that West Virginia is a good place to live and work, and a state with an increasingly promising economic future.

I shall continue to do all that I can to attract new facilities and enterprises to our state, and to create a brighter economic future for West Virginia.

April 22, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Tourism Industry Developments In West Virginia

I have long believed that West Virginia is a prime site for the development of a viable and productive tourism industry.

In that conviction, I have worked consistently to lay foundations for a growth-oriented tourism industry in West Virginia by adding funds toward completing the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) corridor highway system, for the development of the New River Gorge National River and the Harpers Ferry Historical Park, for tourism-related improvements in the Monogahela National Forest, and for purchase of the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

According to recent statistics published by the West Virginia Division of Tourism and Parks, these efforts are paying dividends, and increasing numbers of American vacationers are taking advantage of West Virginia as a tourism mecca.

In March, the Division's hotline registered nearly 106,000 telephone calls from people inquiring about tourism and vacation opportunities in West Virginia, up 139 percent compared to last year.

Incidentally, in 1991, 57 percent of those who called the hotline eventually made reservations at one or more of our state's tourist facilities.

These statistics are encouraging endorsements of West Virginia's tourism-industry potential.

But to take fuller advantage of that potential, and to expand the tourism industry in West Virginia, I added funds to appropriation bills to establish and operate the Appalachian Tourism Research and Development Center (ATRDC) at Concord College in Mercer County, in cooperation with West Virginia University.

Since success in the tourism and hospitality industries is not automatic, ATRDC offers a range of services to communities and entrepreneurs interested in developing area or individual tourism facilities throughout West Virginia and the other Appalachian states. These services include training workshops for those hoping to launch tourism in their own communities. Persons seeking more information on the scope of ATRDC's services can contact the Center at telephone number (304) 384-6032.

West Virginia is a sleeping tourism industry giant. I shall continue promoting our state's tourism potential as a means of creating new job opportunities and greater prosperity throughout West Virginia.

April 29, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Let Congressional Reform Begin Here!

The Senate, with my support, has just passed a very important piece of legislation -- a Campaign-Finance Reform Bill -- and has sent it to the President for his signature. Unfortunately, the President has repeatedly indicated his intention to veto this bill.

The American people deserve better than such a rejection out of hand. This landmark legislation would begin to address the corrupting influence that the current election process, with its constant pressure to raise political campaign funds, is having on our system of government and political institutions.

As a long-standing leader in the effort to enact meaningful campaign financing reform, I am encouraged that Congress has passed this bill. Escalating campaign costs, special interest group influence, and negative political advertising -- which are all fueled by our current system of financing political campaigns -- are tearing at the heart of the political process. This legislation, I believe, is the most important action that Congress can take to restore leadership, decency, and integrity to the democratic process.

Our democratic system of government is based on public trust.

Nothing alienates that trust faster and more completely than the taint -- or

the suggestion of taint -- connected with big money. Where once, individual election campaigns for the Senate cost a few thousands of dollars, such campaigns currently cost millions.

In 1958, I ran for the first time for a full term as a U.S. Senator from West Virginia, together with now-retired Senator Jennings Randolph, who was running for the Senate to fill the unexpired term of the late Senator M.M. Neely of West Virginia.

The combined costs of that campaign for two U.S. Senate seats amounted to, roughly, \$50,000.

By contrast, winning a Senate seat costs an average of \$4 million today -- and sometimes much more.

The legislation just passed would, among other things, place voluntary caps on campaigns for election to the House of Representatives and U.S. Senate, further limit contributions by political action committees (PAC's) and special interest groups, and curb personal spending by wealthy candidates.

The bill passed by Congress is not perfect, but its enactment into law would set our feet on the path of vital Congressional reform and would keep political office open to more than just the wealthiest candidates, thus encouraging more talented men and women to seek public service.

May 6, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's 1992 Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Winners

Benjamin Disraeli, Prime Minister of Great Britain in the latter part of the 19th century, in a speech to the British House of Commons, said, "Upon the education of the people of this country, the fate of this country depends."

I firmly believe that Disraeli's statement is as applicable to our own country in the late 20th century as it was to Great Britain in the 19th century.

There is no question but that educational achievement is a key factor in lifetime and career success.

Therefore, to encourage talented young West Virginia high school graduates, as well as those across our country, to further their formal education beyond high school, I authored legislation several years ago to establish \$1,500 first-year college scholarships to academically outstanding college-bound high school graduates.

Subsequently, the United States Senate voted to name these scholarships in my honor: the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships. These scholarships are awarded solely on the basis of scholastic achievement to students nationwide, with the number of scholarships awarded in each state based on student population.

This year, Robert C.

Byrd Honors Scholarships are being awarded to 42 graduating West Virginia high school students, bringing to 256 the total number of West Virginians who have been awarded these scholarships since 1987, for a total value of \$384,000.

Also, to assist with the soaring costs of a college education, I recently won approval by the full Senate of my request to expand the program to offer four-year scholarships, in place of the one-year stipends currently awarded.

My legislation, which is now pending in a Senate-House conference committee, would provide scholarship payments of \$1,500 annually for four years per student, or a total of \$6,000, applicable only toward costs associated with attendance at a college or university.

I congratulate all of this year's Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship winners in West Virginia, and I wish them every success in the pursuit of their destinies in the years ahead.

I hope also that these young college-bound students will cast their futures in our state, joining in making West Virginia an ever more prosperous, dynamic place in which to work, rear families, and live in the century ahead

May 13, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Support for the Congressional Pay Raise Amendment

Recently, the 27th Article of Amendment to the U.S. Constitution -- called "the Madison amendment" for its author, James Madison -- was ratified by the requisite number of states to become official.

This amendment, originally submitted more than 200 years ago, would solve the chronic dilemma of requiring Members of Congress to vote on their own salaries by prohibiting a Congressional pay raise from taking effect until after an intervening election for the House of Representatives.

Thus, a pay increase enacted in one Congress could not become effective until the next Congress, thereby giving the American voters a chance to register their opinions on the raise during the intervening national election.

A total of 40 states have ratified the amendment since 1789, including West Virginia in 1988.

Though more than two centuries have elapsed since this Congressional pay raise amendment was introduced, I believe that the amendment itself is sound.

Certain Constitutional experts have, however, questioned the validity of the ratification process when such a lengthy period

of time has elapsed between the proposal of the amendment and the ratification thereof by the requisite number of states.

Indeed, the Supreme Court has stated that, under Article V of the Constitution, ratification of a proposed constitutional amendment should be sufficiently contemporaneous with the proposal of the amendment so as to reflect the will of the people in all sections of the country and in relatively the same time period.

All prior amendments have been ratified in less than four years from the time of proposal. Moreover, in this century, the Congress has seen fit to require amendments to be ratified within a short period, generally of no more than seven years.

But I believe that the 27th Amendment responds to a concern, wisely identified by James Madison, about potential conflict of interest and the appearance of conflict of interest, that remains as valid today as it was the day that Madison drafted it.

Therefore, I authored a resolution -- which was adopted by a 99 to 0 vote of the Senate -- declaring this amendment to be a valid part of the Constitution.

May 20, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Revitalizing America's Cities: Violence is Not the Answer

The Senate recently approved a wide-ranging package of emergency assistance to deal with the problems of poverty, unemployment, and economic deterioration in this nation's urban areas.

There is no question that America's big cities are suffering from economic blight and lack of opportunity, but it is unfortunate that the legislation acted on by the Senate was, in large measure, precipitated by the recent riots in Los Angeles.

Many cities and towns in West Virginia and across this nation have serious economic problems, and yet the people of those communities have not resorted to violence and riots to solve their problems.

Los Angeles needs economic assistance to begin the task of rebuilding after the riots, but there should be no misunderstanding about the intention of Congress: We are addressing a long-standing nationwide problem; we are not attempting to reward criminal behavior. Rioting and violence solve nothing and must not be tolerated.

Like most Americans,

I was shocked and dismayed by the verdict in the Rodney King trial, and like most Americans, I was stunned by the violence that followed that verdict. Just as we as a nation must not tolerate police brutality, we also must not tolerate looting, rioting, murder, and other acts of violence.

In reality, the end result of the violence in Los Angeles has been the deepening of that city's problems. Lives and livelihoods were lost, and homes and businesses were destroyed.

If there is a lesson to be learned from the Los Angeles riots, it is that violence is not the answer. Instead of tearing down our cities, we must work together to build them up.

The goal of the legislation passed by the Senate is to help communities throughout the country by creating jobs and opportunities, combating crime and drug abuse, and providing economic incentives to businesses. These are the measures that we must take if this nation is ever to revitalize its economy, re-energize its cities, and regain its competitive edge.

May 27, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A New Facility and More Jobs For the FBI in West Virginia

Recently, I announced that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) selected a location in Marion County as the site of the second West Virginia satellite office for the Bureau's Fingerprint Identification Division.

This is another milestone in the establishment of the FBI project, for which I have added a total of \$245.5 million in federal funds to appropriation bills since becoming Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

When completed in 1995, the fingerprint identification facility being constructed in Harrison County will employ approximately 2,500 people -- 80 percent of whom are expected to be West Virginians -- with an annual payroll estimated at \$75 million.

In the meantime, the two satellite offices are bringing immediate employment opportunities to West Virginia, as well as allowing the FBI to move quickly on the vitally important task of updating the nation's fingerprint files.

The FBI expects to have 300 employees on board at the original satellite facility in Clarksburg by year's end. Those jobs, combined with the 1,000 positions to be filled within the next two years at the

second satellite office, will fuel continued economic growth in West Virginia.

These employees will form the core of the workforce that will be consolidated at the developing \$211 million Fingerprint Identification facility.

In addition to the \$30 million annual economic impact to West Virginia from the 1,300 salaries, the increase in staff will enable the FBI to more quickly transfer backlogged criminal history records and fingerprint cards onto computer files for the state-of-the-art automated system expected to be among the nation's most effective pieces of crime-fighting weaponry.

Although law enforcement offices in many states currently have computerized record keeping, for the most part, they are incompatible and, thus, incapable of adequately communicating with each other and with the federal government.

This West Virginia FBI complex and the automated identification system it is intended to house will link all levels of law enforcement with quick, efficient communication and a sharper tool to identify, track, and prosecute criminals.

June 3, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Progress Update on Rebuilding the Green Bank Telescope

In late 1988, the National Radio Telescope, located at Green Bank, Pocahontas County, collapsed.

The loss of this instrument, which was used to study the universe and explore deep reaches of outer space, dealt a severe blow to the international scientific community.

Recognizing the scientific importance of the National Radio Telescope to our country and the overall significance of this Space Age tool to West Virginia, I added \$75 million to a 1989 appropriation bill to replace the destroyed telescope. This was one of the first actions that I took when I became Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Last year, I participated in groundbreaking ceremonies at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank for the construction of the replacement telescope. Work on the new telescope -- which will be the world's largest steerable radio telescope -- is well underway.

The project construction contractor, Radiation Systems, Inc., has completed the foundation for the telescope and has completed the final design for a number of the major components from which the telescope is to be built. Further, the Ob-

servatory staff has completed the design of, and ordered the component parts for, the actual surface of the telescope dish.

In addition, the contractor reports that shipment to Green Bank of vital segments of the telescope reflector are scheduled to begin soon.

The target date for completion and resumption of radio telescope operations at Green Bank is 1995.

To be 330 feet in diameter, the new telescope will have a reflecting surface of 100,000 square feet -- two-and-one-third acres -- which is larger than two football fields. Standing more than 475 feet high, this state-of-the-art instrument will ensure America's leadership in this aspect of space research for decades into the twenty-first century.

In recent years, I have been working to bring new high-technology, computer-oriented industrial and educational initiatives to West Virginia, and to establish new, more competitive enterprises and create jobs. The radio telescope currently under construction at Green Bank is a promising complement to those efforts, and a symbol of a new era in our state's economic development.

West Virginia can be proud to be the home of this vital national resource.

June 10, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's First National Wildlife Refuge

Recently, I participated in dedication ceremonies for West Virginia's first National Wildlife Refuge, a project I initiated in 1989 and for which I have added nearly \$3.4 million over the past three years.

The Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge is planned to encompass the chain of 38 islands stretching from north of Hancock County south to beyond Mason County where the Ohio River turns westward.

Since their formation, these islands, scattered along a river that has been a magnet for industrial activity and urban growth, have remained a relatively undisturbed haven for dozens of species of birds, plants, and wildlife, including many considered to be endangered.

Over 50 species of fish have been found in waters surrounding the islands. The shallow water areas against the islands, especially the back channels, are important nursery areas for game fish such as freshwater drum, channel catfish, bluegill, largemouth bass and spotted bass.

Beaver, cottontail rabbit, mink, muskrat, opossum, raccoon, woodchuck, and whitetail deer are com-

mon inhabitants. Transient bald eagles and peregrine falcons also can be spotted on and around these islands. In addition to lush foliage, trees, and shrubs common to West Virginia and Ohio, several varieties of more unusual plant life appear on the islands.

The preservation of these plants and animals for the enjoyment and education of future generations requires the protection of the unique habitat provided by these islands.

In order that the public may realize the full benefit of the refuge, a delicate balance between human activity and conservation must be maintained. The Fish and Wildlife Service expects to be able to provide opportunities for boating, hiking, fishing, hunting, and other tourism and educational activities for West Virginians and other visitors, while ensuring the protection of the islands and the creatures to which they are home.

The Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge will preserve a part of our natural, biological, environmental, and historical heritages that will enrich the lives of our children and grandchildren.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

1992 Robert C. Byrd Scholastic Recognition Awards

Each year since 1969, through the Robert C. Byrd Scholastic Recognition Awards program funded from a private trust that I established, I have provided U.S. Savings Bonds to the valedictorians of the graduating classes of West Virginia's public, parochial, and private high schools, and the Schools for the Deaf and Blind at Romney.

This year, another 284 valedictorians from 205 West Virginia high schools have been named Robert C. Byrd Scholastic Recognition Award winners, bringing to 6,303 the total number of valedictorians so honored since 1969.

The Scholastic Recognition Award -- currently, a \$50 U.S. Savings Bond -- is a way that I have chosen to emphasize to our state's valedictorians the pride that we have in their academic achievements.

In our society, too much emphasis is often placed on, and recognition given to, less noble accomplishments than good and responsible performance in

school.

For example, many rock musicians and others in the entertainment field are paid individually millions of dollars annually. Unfortunately, society receives little in return for this generosity in terms of diseases cured, real problems solved, new inventions developed, or jobs created.

West Virginia's high school valedictorians are among our state's most valuable assets and finest potential human resources. Through the Robert C. Byrd Scholastic Recognition Awards, I hope that these bright young men and women will realize how much we appreciate the records that they carved out in school, that they will be encouraged to go on to higher levels of education and training, and that they will cast their futures in West Virginia.

I congratulate this year's Award winners, and I wish them every success in decades to come.

June 24, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Is America Entering a New Dark Age?

The historical period in Western Europe following the fall of the Roman Empire -- a time in which barbarians overran and destroyed cities and morality seemed to collapse everywhere -- is popularly called the "Dark Ages."

Across this country today, we witness mounting rates of murders and violence in America's major cities; rampant drug abuse; deterioration of educational achievement and civility in our schools; the rise of pornography, obscenity, and vulgarity on television and radio and in music and the movies; and a decline of real patriotism and civic-mindedness among increasing numbers of people.

In this disturbing scenario, we are verging dangerously close to a cultural twilight in our own civilization -- to a New Dark Age.

From the letters written to me by West Virginians, I know that many in our state share my concern.

Though in most West Virginia communities the majority of people are still living by the old values that made this nation strong, in many other places in this country, we are facing a spiritual problem -- a prob-

lem of lost faith in the eternal values on which this country was built; of family life disrupted by an unwillingness of parents to rear their children for self-disciplined, constructive lives, and of children more interested in being "cool" and "hip" than in growing up to become responsible adults; and of too many people of too little moral courage to care about reversing the decline of neighborhoods and whole communities.

Unfortunately, many people seem to have forgotten God.

The time is long past for concerned, decent Americans to take back our streets, our schools, our culture, and our country from those forces and interests bent only on self-promotion and personal fortune with no regard to public well-being and the future.

I hope that conscientious, patriotic men and women will enter the lists of local government and organizations dedicated to building our country up instead of allowing it to decay from neglect or to be destroyed by selfish, irresponsible people.

We owe this to our children and to the future.

July 1, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Nation's Report Card: Reading and Television

More than 30 years ago, Congress mandated a periodic National Assessment of Educational Progress report -- subsequently dubbed "The Nation's Report Card" -- on academic achievement among our nation's school children.

Recently, the reading-achievement portion of the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress, which covers 1990, was published, and showed an intriguing relationship between reading, academic achievement, and television viewing among students.

Interestingly, those 4th-, 8th-, and 12th-grade students who watched less than two hours of television daily earned higher marks in their studies than did those who watched more television daily.

In 1990, 62 percent of 4th graders surveyed admitted that they spent three hours or more daily watching television, down from the 69 percent of this same age group owning up to such viewing times in 1988.

Similarly, 64 percent of 8th graders reported watching three hours or more of television daily compared with 71 percent from this group in 1988. Of the 12th graders, 40 percent watched three hours or more of television daily in 1990, versus 49 percent in 1988.

Alarmingly, however, of the 4th graders surveyed, one-quarter -- 25 percent --

reported watching six or more hours of television daily.

On another front, 63 percent of the 8th graders and 59 percent of the 12th graders said that they read 10 or fewer pages each day for their school work, while one-third of the 8th and 12th graders confessed to reading fewer than five pages per day in preparation for their school work in 1990.

Significantly, this report found that students from homes in which reading material is readily available -- where children see their parents reading, and where parents read to their children and even listen to their children's reading -- performed measurably better at reading than did students from homes in which those activities were not encouraged.

Reading is a key to a good education, and a good education is the key to a more successful economic future for our children in West Virginia and across the country.

Television offers a number of worthwhile programs, but television viewing, per se, is no substitute for reading good literature. Above all, television should never be allowed to interfere with schoolwork, because a good education is a proven key to success in a child's future.

July 8, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Another Revolution on College Campuses

Not long ago, I participated in commencement ceremonies at the University of Charleston.

Of a *graduating* class of approximately 270 students, nearly 200 degree recipients were "nontraditional" or "returning" students — that is, students more than 25 years old, many employed full- or part-time, and many parents or grandparents.

This trend of older men and women going to college to complete their undergraduate degrees, or to pursue degrees for the first time, is not limited to the University of Charleston.

According to West Virginia University officials, 1,068 of the undergraduate students on the University's Morgantown campuses during the 1991-92 academic year — roughly 7 percent of total undergraduate enrollment — were age 25 or more.

Marshall University officials report that of 1,900 undergraduate degrees awarded this spring, nearly one half went to older or returning students.

These West Virginia statistics reflect national trends.

The U.S. Department of Education reports that in 1986 — the latest year fully measured — of 11 million undergraduates registered in U.S. colleges and universities, only 4.8 million, or 43 percent, were "traditional" students — that is, 24 years of age or younger, dependent on their parents for

support, attending class full-time, unmarried, and holders of high school diplomas or equivalents.

The Department of Education projects that the trend toward nontraditional college populations will increase as the year 2000 approaches.

This "graying" of college students suggests that more people are taking advantage of higher education options available to them to upgrade their skills, seek degrees for career advancement, launch later or mid-life careers, finish educations once left uncompleted, or meet increasing competition from others in the work place.

Whatever their motives, I commend these nontraditional college students. As America's and West Virginia's economies continue to change, we will need the best-educated, most skilled work force that we can achieve. Indeed, new enterprises looking at our state for expansion should be impressed by the numbers of older adults pursuing college degrees.

Men and women contemplating such a course for themselves will find significant and vital advice awaiting them on nearby campuses, including information on available financial assistance for loans and grants.

Learning is a lifelong necessity, and it is never too late to take on the challenge of education.

July 15, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Is America Becoming an Atheist Nation?

With millions of other concerned Americans, I was disturbed by a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling that nonsectarian invocations and benedictions at public school graduations are unconstitutional.

Since Colonial days, religion has been a vital element in our society, and an important dimension of school life.

The First Amendment states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...."

That passage was explicitly written into our Bill of Rights at the insistence of James Madison, based on direct appeals to Madison by Baptist ministers in Virginia who had been forced to support the official Anglican state church during the Colonial Era.

But from that understandable safeguard in the Bill of Rights, opponents of all religion seem determined today to drive any expression of religious faith out of American public life.

How ironic that, as re-

ligion makes a public resurgence in the long atheistic former Soviet Union, the Supreme Court has succeeded in erecting another pillar of state atheism in the United States!

How ironic, also, that after declaring obscenity, pornography, flag-burning, and the public funding of anti-religious art to be constitutionally protected, the Supreme Court rules that public prayer in schools is harmful and unconstitutional.

Perhaps the Supreme Court should examine its own biases and determine whether or not it is guilty, by its lopsided rulings, of oppressing the free exercise of religion, even in the least offensive cases to come before it.

I hope that the Supreme Court's twisted logic on state-church questions will cease before the United States of America, once founded on principles of religion and by largely religious immigrants, evolves by court order into the world's most intolerant officially atheistic state.

July 22, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Curbing Indecency On Television and Radio

For many years, I have been concerned about the corrupting effect, particularly on children and young people, of profanity, vulgarity, violence, obscenity, and crudeness on much television and radio programming.

Consequently, I recently succeeded in winning adoption by the Senate of an amendment to expand the already existing power of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to ban the airing of television and radio programs that meet the definition of indecency until after midnight, unless a station goes off the air at that time, in which case it could not broadcast such programs before 10 p.m.

Television has been called "bubble gum for the mind." Unfortunately, too much television programming today is nothing but packaged corruption for the soul. If our television programs are a mirror of our society, we are in serious trouble.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, a majority of children and teenagers watch between three to six hours of television per day, and the portability of so many radios allows young people to monitor programs nearly everywhere they go.

Unfortunately, too many examples of adult and children's behavior alike and the lyrics of music and themes of many stories presented on these media too often teach children that sophistication is a matter of being foulmouthed, disrespectful of the rights of others, drug-wise, and cynical. Similarly, exposed to thousands of individual portrayals of murder, rape, robbery, and other violent behaviors, children are vulnerable to becoming insensitive to such heinous conduct.

Personally, I would prefer that the FCC ban indecent programming around the clock. However, in a declared defense of First Amendment freedom of speech and expression, the courts have already overturned a law passed by Congress that had directed the Federal Communications Commission to prohibit indecent broadcasts 24 hours a day.

Nevertheless, my amendment is a small step toward getting corrupting, unfit, mental "junk food" off the air when many of our children are likely to be listening or watching. I hope that this move will inspire entertainment producers to use better judgment in the future in deciding the content of their programming.

July 29, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Update of Free Federal Information Hotlines

The following list of toll-free Federal hotlines can help West Virginians obtain information about Federal programs and services, and about regulations and opportunities that may affect them directly.

- Retired Army Pay Problems 1-800-428-2290
- Cancer Hotline, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) . 1-800-4-CANCER
- National Runaway Switchboard 1-800-621-4000
(For parents and runaways to leave messages)
- Consumer Product Safety Commission .. 1-800-638-CPSC
(Product recall, complaints, fact sheets)
- Financial Aid for College Students (National)
Department of Education 1-800-333-4636
- AIDS Hotline (National) 1-800-342-AIDS
(HIV and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome Information)
- Pesticide Emergency Information
Clearinghouse 1-800-858-PEST
- National Health Information Center 1-800-336-4797
- Hill-Burton Free Hospital Care Hotline ... 1-800-638-0742
- Small Business Administration 1-800-827-5722
- Social Security Administration 1-800-848-0106
(Medicare questions)
- West Virginia Veterans Affairs Office 1-800-827-2052
- Partnership for a Drug-Free America 1-800-662-HELP
(Drug-abuse help and information)
- Safe Drinking Water Hotline 1-800-426-4791
- Hazardous Waste and
Superfund Information 1-800-424-9346
- Transportation Department 1-800-424-9393
(Auto-safety information and complaints)
- Washington, D.C., Central Reservation
Center 1-800-554-2220
(Information on lodging in the Nation's Capital)

August 5, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Highway Construction Progress in West Virginia

Recently, I added another \$185 million to Senate appropriation bills for continued construction of vital Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) corridor highways in West Virginia.

With this funding, since becoming *Chairman* of the Senate Appropriations Committee in 1989, I have added a total of \$825 million to federal funding bills for construction of ARC corridor routes and other highway projects in West Virginia.

Of the most recent appropriations, \$80 million will go toward the completion of Corridor G, which runs from Charleston southwest to the Kentucky border at Williamson, bringing to \$328.7 million the funding that I have added for Corridor G.

The remaining \$105 million that I added will be used to accelerate the four-laning of ARC Corridor L -- U.S. Route 19 -- a vital connector between Interstates 79 and 77 from near Sutton in Braxton County to Beckley.

In addition, last month I participated in a ceremony near Buckhannon to announce the awarding of a \$10.7 million contract for construction of another 2.43-mile segment of ARC Corridor H, which is planned to run from the Buckhannon area to Elkins and east into Virginia, a route for which I have added federal funds to-

talling \$160.7 million since 1989.

Transportation has always presented special and costly challenges in West Virginia, and a first-rate, modern highway system has been the dream of West Virginians for generations.

The ARC corridor highways represent a fulfillment of that dream. Indeed, coupled with West Virginia's Interstate routes, the ARC corridor highways comprise the framework on which much of our state's future economic development will depend. The establishment of new businesses and industries and creation of new job opportunities in West Virginia require safe, efficient, and accessible highways.

Completing West Virginia's ARC corridor highways is critically important to our state's future and to the future possibilities available to West Virginia's young people -- men and women who hope to live and work in their home state and to provide richer, fuller lives for their own children.

Against the constraints of increasingly limited federal funding, I am committed to doing all that I can to ensure continued progress toward completing West Virginia's ARC corridor highway system.

August 12, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Encouraging Moral Responsibility in The Entertainment Industry

Recently, I co-authored a Senate resolution urging corporations to be more aware of their responsibilities to the public.

This effort was in response to the release by Time-Warner, Inc., of an inflammatory and obscene "rap" music album.

Indeed, last month, during the annual stockholders' meeting of Time-Warner, one of the world's largest and wealthiest media conglomerates, certain stockholders charged the management with releasing the album before weighing the negative influence that it would have, thus placing profits above moral and social responsibility.

Included on the album was one song that encouraged the killing of police officers and other songs with lyrics so obscene and vicious that they could not be printed in reputable publications or uttered in polite company.

In spite of such tastelessness, this album and thousands like it are being sold across the counter and listened to by millions of American children and teenagers.

Under notable pressure, Time-Warner agreed to remove the copkiller song from the album and to recall copies of the album still in stores.

But much of the potential damage of this album has already been done and cannot be undone.

Equally to be deplored, other elements of the record and entertainment industry are daily bombarding young Americans with pornography, vulgarity, violence, promiscuity, drug propaganda, profanity, and barbarism, without any apparent sense of guilt or responsibility.

In this age of instant and all-pervading communication, cultural influences outside the home have largely supplanted the traditional family and church influences for many children, insidiously infecting their consciences and corrupting their values.

When I think about the lyrics I read from this rap album, and when I reflect on the contents of so many television programs and movies, I fear for the quality of life that we are going to bequeath to our children and grandchildren.

The executives and management of the entertainment media have a responsibility to stop degrading our culture and to critically assess the impact of their products on American society, particularly on children and teenagers.

But the flood of filth and garbage polluting our society will only cease when more outraged Americans call the entertainment industry to task by not buying trashy records and books or watching vulgar shows and movies.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Military Construction For West Virginia

With the collapse of the old Soviet Union and the worldwide retreat of communism, the United States should be able to meet its defense and security requirements with a reduced national defense and military budget.

However, we must guard against reducing our defenses so drastically that we render the country vulnerable to unforeseen threats, or tempt tyrants like Iraq's Saddam Hussein to mistake reduced defense spending for weakness or a failure of national will.

Particularly, I believe that, with current cutbacks in our active-duty and reserve military forces, the role of remaining National Guard and Reserve units has become even more crucial to our national security than in the past.

We must ensure that these units have adequate facilities and maintain their defense readiness.

For those reasons, I recently added \$36.3 million to a Senate appropriation bill to fund several Army Reserve and National Guard construction and planning projects across West Virginia.

I also added \$930,000 to the Military Construction Appropriation Bill to build new military housing at West Virginia's only active duty military base, the U.S. Naval Radio Station at Sugar Grove, Pendleton County.

Included in my amendment for funding for Army Reserve Centers are:

- * \$5.4 million for Clarksburg, Harrison County;
- * \$3.5 million for Weirton, Hancock County;
- * \$6.8 million for Wheeling, Ohio County;
- * \$1.6 million for Jane Lew, Lewis County;
- * \$2.8 million for Grantsville, Calhoun County;
- * \$1.9 million for Bluefield, Mercer County; and
- * \$1.6 million for Lewisburg, Greenbrier County.

In addition, I added \$5.3 million to the bill for site development costs associated with planning Army Reserve Centers at Beckley, Elkins, Morgantown, Rainelle, and Kingwood.

Also, I included \$5.5 million to build a hangar facility at Benedum Airport in Harrison County to accommodate the new Army National Guard Fixed Wing Training Detachment locating there, and \$2 million in planning funds for the possible establishment in West Virginia of a proposed National Guard regional maintenance depot and data center.

These military construction projects for which I am working will help our reservists and National Guard personnel to maintain their training edge and contribute to the national security challenges that America might confront in the years ahead.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Update on West Virginia's FBI Fingerprint Identification Facility

Recently, the Senate approved \$103.4 million in funding that I had sought for the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Fingerprint Identification Division headquarters in West Virginia.

This funding brings to nearly \$350 million the total amount of money that my Appropriation Committee has appropriated for this project since I put in the first \$185 million in 1990 to automate and relocate the Fingerprint Identification Division from Washington, D.C., to West Virginia.

The latest round of funding includes \$50 million for a prototype system for transmitting fingerprints electronically between the FBI and local law enforcement agencies nationwide, \$50 million to convert from a manual to an electronic fingerprint file, and \$3.4 million to upgrade the FBI's Interstate Identification Index.

This funding is necessary to keep the automation and relocation of the Fingerprint Identification Division to Harrison County on schedule and to avoid needless delays and cost increases.

The automation of the Fingerprint Identification Division is of immense importance to bringing state-of-the-art technology to law enforcement nationally, and keeping this project on track is essential to our country and state in fighting crime throughout the United States.

Last year, a Congressional Office of Technology Assessment study cited the advantages of moving the Fingerprint Identification Division to West Virginia because of the state's stable, high-quality workforce, as well as the lower cost of living, and the shorter commutes that will be possible in North Central West Virginia.

The new Fingerprint Identification facility is projected to be in full operation in 1995 and will bring an estimated 2,500 new jobs to our state.

Most significantly, the Fingerprint Identification Division's new technology will vastly increase the resources available for local law enforcement across America as well as in West Virginia, and will be a revolutionary asset in the battle against crime.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Assisting Tourism and Natural Resource Development In West Virginia

With its splendid scenic beauty and wide range of outdoor activities and resources, West Virginia holds the promise of being a tourist mecca.

As part of my ongoing efforts to spur economic development and create more jobs for West Virginians, I recently added \$48 million to a federal appropriation bill for tourism and natural resources initiatives in our state.

For example, I added \$20 million to initiate construction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) National Education and Training Center at Shepherdstown, Jefferson County.

This brings to \$64.5 million the sum that I have added to appropriation bills for this facility, which the FWS will use to provide training for its workers nationwide, as well as for the staffs of other federal agencies that conduct land management activities.

I also added \$8.4 million to the bill for projects at the New River Gorge National River, one of West Virginia's leading tourist attractions. Included among these projects are additional river access for whitewater rafters, planning and design of the Kaymoor mine site, and trails throughout the park for hikers and campers.

For construction and improvements in the

Monongahela National Forest, I added \$1.3 million, including \$325,000 to design a new visitors center at Seneca Rocks to replace the one destroyed by fire earlier this year.

I also included in this bill \$7.5 million for planning, design, and construction at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, and \$2.3 million for further development of the Wheeling Heritage area.

Besides funding for tourism industry initiatives, I added an extra \$2.3 million to continue my Timber Bridge Initiative in West Virginia and to promote the use of hardwoods, such as those found in abundance in West Virginia, in the replacement of deteriorating rural bridges across the country.

I also added \$4.6 million to continue a model automation project at Weirton Steel, which will use computerization to track the entire steelmaking process, including managing the inventory. This system is expected to save the company \$15 million annually, and to save as much as \$400 million annually industry-wide.

In addition, I added \$1.5 million to continue two ongoing alternative fuel programs at West Virginia University.

The funding that I added to this bill will help to strengthen and diversify West Virginia's economy.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Another Forward Step In Coal Mine Safety

Coal remains America's most abundant fuel source and, based on affordability, supply, source stability, and improved technologies for more efficient and environmentally safe consumption, some coal experts predict rising coal consumption for the foreseeable future.

For example, since 1970, coal-generated electric power has increased from 46 percent to 55 percent of total U.S. electricity production, with Department of Energy projections of further rises in coal-generated electricity production in coming years.

Though such statistics brighten West Virginia's economic future, they similarly underline the need for heightened safety education in the coal industry.

Paralleling firefighting, coal mining continues to be one of the most hazardous occupations in our country.

Throughout my career in public office, mine safety and health have been among my top priorities.

In 1969, I secured the initial funding to establish the National Mine Health and Safety Academy at Beckley in Raleigh County, and in subsequent years, I have added more than \$23.4 million in federal funds to build, equip, and expand the facilities, services, and programs of the Academy.

In early September, I

participated in the dedication of a new mine disaster simulation laboratory at the Academy, an advanced facility for which I had added approximately \$1.5 million to an appropriation bill.

This new disaster simulation laboratory will enable miners and rescue workers to train in realistic conditions simulating actual mine disasters. Mining personnel will be able to practice safety reactions, escapes, and rescue techniques that can save lives in the event of real mine accidents in the field.

In 1968, the year before my initial appropriation establishing the Academy, the United States recorded 311 coal mine deaths.

By 1980 -- just twelve years later -- U.S. coal mine deaths had been cut to 133.

Last year, we suffered 62 coal mine deaths in this country.

So far this year, 27 U.S. coal mine deaths have been reported.

In no small measure, those declining figures are a tribute to the work of the National Mine Health and Safety Academy.

But even one miner's death is one death too many.

I shall not relent in my commitment to work for increased safety and improved health for the miners of America and West Virginia.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Election Day 1992

Throughout West Virginia and across America, Tuesday, November 3, is Election Day 1992.

In a republic like the United States, every election is vitally important. In a representative democracy, voters help to decide issues of great significance for our nation, state, and local communities through the quality of the individual men and women whom we choose at the polls on election days.

Nationally, this year's election will determine whom we want to lead us for the next four years as our president and, indeed, the man who will guide this nation as we prepare to enter the twenty-first century.

In West Virginia, we will be electing a governor and three Congressmen, as well as hundreds of state and local officials.

Voting is one of the most important responsibilities that our citizenship in this country regularly requires of us.

Unfortunately, among the industrial democracies, the United States suffers a shameful voting record.

Among Presidential election years, for example, in 1960, 62.77 percent of age-eligible Americans voted; in 1964, 61.92 per-

cent; in 1972, 55.21 percent; in 1980, 52.56 percent; and in 1988, only 50.11 percent.

Recent West Virginia turnouts of age-eligible voters provide even more fuel for concern.

In 1982, the number of West Virginians going to the polls represented 39.8 percent of the age-eligible voters in our state; in 1984, 51.7 percent; in 1986, 27.6 percent; in 1988, 46.7 percent; and in 1990, 31.9 percent.

How ironic that, as millions in foreign countries struggled and won the right to choose their own leaders and form of government in stated imitation of America's example, fewer and fewer Americans have counted their right to vote as worthy of being exercised.

West Virginians have until October 4 to register to vote in the upcoming general election.

I hope that all West Virginians of voting age will avail themselves of the opportunity to register for this year's election, and that all registered West Virginians of whatever party or persuasion will take advantage of the blood-bought and sacrifice-paid right to vote in the 1992 elections.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Still One of the Safest Places In Which to Live

Recently, a young suburban Washington, D.C., mother was dragged for nearly two miles along a highway to her death when her automobile was "carjacked" by a couple of young hoodlums.

That brutal murder graphically brings home the alarming rise in, and nature of, crime in our country.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has reported that 1991 was the bloodiest year in U.S. crime history, with nearly 25,000 people murdered nationwide last year. Similarly, more than 100,000 rapes were recorded in 1991.

Conversely, for the nineteenth consecutive year, West Virginia registered one of the lowest crime rates in the nation.

Though West Virginia's crime rate rose slightly last year, our state's crime rate remains less than half the national average.

While being concerned about even a small rise in our state's crime statistics, West Virginians can be justly proud of our state's low-crime tradition.

Indeed, ingrained personal and community values -- long characteristic among West Virginians -- largely explain the law-abiding nature of most of

our state's people.

Those values represent intangible assets that increasing numbers of people and enterprises are weighing in their decisions to live and locate in West Virginia.

My top priority in the Senate has been, and will continue to be, to help to create a favorable economic climate and other circumstances that will attract new industries, businesses, and job opportunities to West Virginia.

As improved transportation and economic momentum produce growth in our state, I hope that native West Virginians will hold firmly to the values and conduct that make West Virginia such an outstanding place in which to live and work.

West Virginia's institutions -- churches, schools, civic clubs, professional groups, fraternal organizations, and, not least, strong family structure -- are the source of the most admirable way of life on earth -- a way of life in which we can take genuine pride, and which is worthy of continued respect and support.

And that may explain why West Virginia deserves a reputation as one of the safest places in America in which to live.

September 30, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Outrageous!

I am outraged that an Administration agency is using taxpayers' money to encourage U.S. companies to close domestic plants and to move their facilities to foreign countries.

This policy is costing jobs in West Virginia and throughout our country, and to help put a stop to this practice, I recently cosponsored an amendment to that effect in Senate legislation.

Laudably, in recent decades, U.S. foreign policy has aimed to bolster the economies of underdeveloped countries as a means to raise the standards of living of the citizens of those countries, and eradicate those economic conditions that have led to instability and communist subversion.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) has been actively pushing investment incentives -- tax write-offs, tariff advantages, lending benefits, and plant construction and worker-training deductions -- to induce American companies to close U.S. factories and operations and to set up new facilities overseas.

The amendment that I cosponsored would prohibit federal agencies from spending any funds to lure U.S.

manufacturers into moving their operations to any foreign country if that move might result in the loss of U.S. jobs.

In too many instances, such operations have proved to be sweatshops that pay as little as 70 cents an hour, observe few if any worker-safety standards, and violate the simplest environmental regulations.

Manufacturing out of such facilities and under such working and pay conditions, the induced companies are able to undercut their own domestic operations in world and American markets, thus costing countless jobs in our state and country.

I find absolutely absurd a policy of spending U.S. tax dollars and using tax incentives to siphon off American investments to improve foreign economies while refusing to offer similar advantages to build or improve factories in this country and to preserve or create jobs for West Virginians and other Americans.

We must put a stop to exporting West Virginia and U.S. jobs and, instead, create policies that will promote American products and produce new jobs for our own people.

October 7, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Building Highways for West Virginia's Future

My top priority is -- and will continue to be -- laying foundations for West Virginia's economic renewal and the creation of job opportunities for the people of our state.

Toward that end, I added \$151 million to two federal appropriations bills this year for vital West Virginia highway projects. Those bills have now been signed into law.

The monies I added include \$80 million to complete Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Corridor Highway G from Charleston to Logan and Williamson. Completion of the route is expected in 1995.

In addition, I added a total of \$71 million to the two bills for improvements to ARC Corridor L, including \$47 million for the four-laning of an 11-mile segment of the route between Hico, Fayette County, and Mount Nebo, Nicholas County, and \$24 million to begin upgrading a 25-mile segment of Corridor L between Summersville, Nicholas County, and I-79, near Sutton, Braxton County.

I also added \$400,000 this year to launch a study of the highway and bridge needs of a 10-county area of Central West Virginia -- the area comprising Wirt, Wood, Gilmer, Roane, Clay, Calhoun, Ritchie, Lewis, Braxton, and Jackson counties.

Since becoming Chairman of the Senate Approp-

riations Committee in 1989, I have added millions of dollars to federal appropriation bills to build a safer, more modern highway system in our state.

Included in the funds I have obtained in the past four years are \$160 million to build ARC Corridor H, a route that will run from I-79 near Weston, Lewis County, eastward toward Interstate 81, the Washington metropolitan area, and East Coast markets.

Last year, I secured authorization for the funding of all remaining miles of ARC Corridors in West Virginia and for the four-lane construction of U.S. 52 between Huntington and Bluefield.

Also last year, I added funding to four-lane State Route 9 in the Eastern Panhandle from Martinsburg through Charles Town and to the Virginia line. In addition, I added \$50 million to launch construction of the Coalfields Expressway between Beckley and Grundy, Virginia, and I provided funding for location and design studies to upgrade State Route 2 in the Ohio River Valley. Two years ago, I added \$42.5 million to a federal bill for the four-laning of the Weirton Bypass.

I intend to continue doing all that I can to bring federal dollars to our state for construction of a modern highway system that will serve as a foundation for West Virginia's future economic vitality.

October 14, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Prescription for Better Health

West Virginians deserve a first-rate health care system.

In a state like ours, with cancer rates well above the national average, the need for readily available, top-notch health care is paramount.

For that reason, I have worked to enhance West Virginia's health-care system and to expand the reach of that system so that people in all areas of our state, both urban and rural, can have access to the best possible hospitals, doctors, and care.

My vision for a better health-care system in West Virginia is bearing fruit.

Recently, researchers at the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center located at West Virginia University (WVU) -- West Virginia's first statewide cancer research and treatment facility, which was established in part with \$13.3 million I was able to obtain in federal funding -- were selected to be part of a nationwide study of a promising new drug that may prevent breast cancer.

Researchers from the Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC) will also join in that study, which will be conducted over the next five years with 16,000 participants nationwide, including West Virginians.

Another statewide program in which the Cancer Center will participate -- a program for which I have obtained approximately \$8 million in federal funding

since fiscal 1990 -- is West Virginia's breast and cervical cancer prevention, education, and screening project. This project offers breast and cervical cancer screening to West Virginians who otherwise might not have access to such tests.

The importance of early cancer detection and screening cannot be overstated. This year in West Virginia, 1,400 new cases of breast cancer will be detected. Add to that another sobering fact: West Virginia has the fourth highest rate of cervical cancer in the country.

My efforts on behalf of better West Virginia health care have not been focused on cancer alone, however. This year, for instance, I gained funding for a number of initiatives, including continuation of an Alzheimer's outreach program; a satellite network that will link specialists at WVU with rural hospitals throughout the state; a new rural health care clinic in Huntington, which will serve West Virginians in a twelve-county area; and a demonstration project at Wheeling Hospital to promote community health services across West Virginia.

The prescription for better health in West Virginia is a quality health-care system that is available to all West Virginians, and developing such a system will continue to be one of my top goals.

October 21, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Spotlighting West Virginia

West Virginia is gaining a reputation as a haven for "back-office operations."

This type of operation --which includes data processors, computer software and systems developers, researchers, telemarketers, claims processors, customer service representatives, and people who make various types of reservations--means jobs for West Virginians, expansion of the state's economy, and new opportunities for the future.

For some time now, I have promoted West Virginia as the ideal location for companies to establish these telecommunications and computer operations.

A recent study, entitled "West Virginia: The Location for Your Office of the Future," underscores my contention that West Virginia has a great deal to offer the nation's businesses.

The study showcases the many qualities that have made our state a prime location for back-office operations: an able workforce known for high productivity; our low cost of living; and our outstanding quality of life, including a low crime rate, good schools, and the kind of values upon which this country was founded.

What has this meant for West Virginia?

C&P Telephone estimates that in the past two years, almost 5,000 tele-

communications jobs have been attracted to West Virginia.

The growth of this industry in West Virginia has gone hand-in-hand with my efforts to acquaint federal agencies with West Virginia's vast potential.

I have had success in this area.

For instance, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is now in the process of locating its Fingerprint Identification Division headquarters in Harrison County, bringing with it an estimated 2,500 jobs. A new center under construction in Fairmont will serve as a test-site for NASA computer software. The Bureau of Public Debt is expanding by 700 employees its operations in Parkersburg. Through my initiative, Martinsburg is the new home of the U.S. Coast Guard's operations systems center.

I am proud that I was able not only to match West Virginia's attributes with the needs of these operations, but also that I was able to obtain the federal funding to help locate these facilities in our state.

I will keep working to spotlight West Virginia and to make certain that our state's many advantages are well known to federal agencies and private industries that are looking for new locations for their operations and for able employees to run them.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

On the Cutting-Edge of Workplace Safety

Maximizing productivity is key to strengthening U.S. industrial standings in the ever-broadening international economic competition.

Recognizing that maximum productivity depends on a strong, healthy workforce -- industry's most precious resource -- I have worked to steer federal investment to programs for protecting the health and safety of U.S. workers.

From the earliest years of my political career, I have worked for improved working conditions for West Virginia's coal miners. My efforts have brought about programs that have led to fewer coal mine accidents and have lessened miners' risk of developing lung diseases.

Recently, I participated in groundbreaking ceremonies for a new facility in West Virginia, being established with nearly \$60 million I have added to federal appropriations bills, that will house research programs aimed at giving American workers safer, healthier workplaces.

This new National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) facility, to be administered by the Centers for Disease Control in conjunction with

the Appalachian Laboratory on Occupational Safety and Health, will be a world-class laboratory for the study of workplace environments with the goal of reducing the number of work-related injuries and diseases.

In recent years, exposure to cancer-causing agents has become one of the more prevalent concerns of workers. Identifying ways to reduce the risk of exposure that could lead to lung cancer is one of the goals of this laboratory.

The chemists, radiologists, microbiologists, engineers, toxicologists and other specialists who will staff this facility will also study, among other fields, the prevention of diseases and injury in agriculture and construction, methods of respiratory protection, and prevention of chronic occupational diseases.

Location of this laboratory in Morgantown, which is adding 300 jobs to the economy, will make the state the international headquarters for this area of study.

When completed in 1994, this lab will be a one-of-a-kind center for research into improving the health of U.S. workers and, in turn, the health of the U.S. economy.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Laying Twenty-First Century Foundations in West Virginia

My eyes are on West Virginia's future, and my top priority is laying foundations to help West Virginia take advantage of new business, industrial, and job opportunities in the twenty-first century.

We are living in an era of accelerated change.

New world trade patterns, new technologies, revolutionary political changes worldwide, and heated industrial competition from former Third World countries have wrought unimaginable transformations in our economy.

By helping to modernize West Virginia's physical and human infrastructure -- pushing the completion of the Appalachian Regional Commission corridor highway system; promoting high-technology research, development, and education in our state in both the private sector and in West Virginia's colleges and universities; developing new tourism possibilities; and persuading more federal agencies to take advantage of our state's benefits by moving support facilities into West Virginia -- I am seeking to make West Virginia more attractive to new industries and enterprises and create new jobs in the years ahead for West Virginians.

Recently, for example, I participated in the dedication of a new replacement lock in the Gallipolis locks and dam system on the Ohio River at Hogsett, Mason County.

Last year, the Gallipolis locks and dam system handled 42.7 million tons of commodities.

While coal accounted for the largest segment of that traffic, large quantities of petroleum fuels, stone, chemicals, and iron and steel also were counted in the Gallipolis traffic.

Significantly, roughly one quarter of West Virginia's annual coal production is barged through the Gallipolis system.

Made possible through \$277 million in federal funds that I helped to secure, the modernized Gallipolis Locks and Dam will save shippers millions of dollars in annual shipping delays, contributing to the overall competitive strength of the United States in the emerging global economy.

From West Virginia's perspective, those savings can translate into lower costs and increased demands for goods produced, mined, or manufactured in West Virginia, meaning more jobs and greater economic prosperity for our state.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Flood Control: Protection For West Virginia's Investments

Recently, I participated in several West Virginia groundbreaking and dedications for a number of projects that will pay big dividends in years ahead.

These projects include dams, streambank stabilization programs, and other flood-prevention projects targeted to protect homes, businesses, and community treasures from the ravages of streams and rivers swollen by rain and snow.

West Virginians know well the dangers of unremitting rains and rampaging waters. I will never forget the devastation I witnessed in West Virginia following the tragic 1985 floods, nor will I forget previous floods in our state that have caused millions of dollars in damage. Following the 1985 floods, I obtained nearly \$325 million in federal funding to help West Virginians recover and rebuild.

West Virginians deserve protection from such flood damage. For that reason, I believe the money I have added to federal appropriations bills for West Virginia flood-prevention projects will be money well invested.

For instance, \$4.25 million I was able to add to a federal funding bill will underwrite the first phase of a project on Howard Creek in Greenbrier County. I recently participated in groundbreaking ceremonies for this project, which will protect more than 450 residences and businesses in the downstream White Sulphur Springs area.

I also participated in

groundbreaking ceremonies for a new dam on Grant County's Mill Creek upstream from Petersburg--made possible by \$10.25 million that I added to another appropriation bill--that will afford flood protection for downtown Petersburg and provide a 50-acre lake for recreational purposes.

And I was touched by the sense of relief exhibited by residents of Hardy, Hampshire, Mineral, Grant, and Pendleton Counties who will be protected from the capricious nature of the Potomac River's South Branch by a series of streambank stabilization projects financed by \$2.5 million I added to a federal spending measure.

From the largest flood-control projects in the state--for example, Southern West Virginia's Tug Fork project, which is being built with millions of dollars in federal funding that I have added to appropriation bills over the years--to the smallest project, thousands of West Virginians have reaped a greater feeling of safety from the threat of flooding.

With every new flood-protection project launched and completed in West Virginia, I rest easier when the rains begin to fall and the rivers and streams begin to rise. Flood protection is vital to West Virginia and, against the constraints of the national debt and the imperative to reduce deficit spending, flood protection in our state will continue to be a focus of my efforts in the years ahead.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's Window into Space

In a few short years, West Virginia will be home to America's most sophisticated and scientifically advanced radio telescope--the Green Bank Telescope now under construction at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Pocahontas County.

When it is completed sometime in 1994, the Green Bank Telescope--which will be the nation's most sensitive listening device--will be trained on deep outer space, giving the nation a new window on the universe.

The presence of this sophisticated equipment in West Virginia puts our state on the cutting-edge of space technology, as scientists from across the country and around the world look to Green Bank for the latest in astronomical research.

The new Green Bank Telescope literally is growing out of the rubble of the old Green Bank Telescope, a smaller and less precise instrument that collapsed in November, 1988. Following the loss of the original telescope, I added \$75 million to a supplemental appropriation bill to construct replacement equipment.

The Green Bank Telescope will be mammoth in

size--more than 475 feet tall and 330 feet in diameter--but will have pinpoint accuracy, thanks to its laser-aiming capabilities.

I am encouraged by the progress that has been made on this project to date. Since groundbreaking ceremonies last year, which I attended, the foundation for the new telescope has been completed and the steel superstructure is underway.

Officials at the National Science Foundation (NSF), the funding agency for operations at Green Bank, estimate that the new telescope will begin monitoring the skies as early as 1995.

Space often has been called one of the last frontiers--a mysterious, mostly unknown universe whose vastness can hardly be fathomed by the human mind.

The Green Bank Telescope in Pocahontas County represents a major investment in our country's scientific future, as well as a vital commitment to mankind's future beyond earth.

The scientific work at Green Bank undoubtedly will unlock some of the secrets of space, giving West Virginia a preeminent role in America's exploration of the universe.

November 25, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Give Us Back Our Heroes

Recently, I discovered that one of my heroes was missing.

Glancing through a modern American history textbook for an account of Nathan Hale, I found that the textbook made no mention of him (or many others, such as John Paul Jones).

Nathan Hale, as all American school children used to know, when he was about to be hanged by the British as a spy during the American Revolution, declared that he regretted that he had "but one life to give" for his country.

Over several generations, Nathan Hale has inspired millions of American children, teaching them the sacrifices that many patriots have made for America's liberty.

Unfortunately, the authors of the textbook in question apparently decided that Nathan Hale is not worth remembering.

That is not the only revision affecting some modern history textbooks.

In efforts ostensibly to make reading and learning less difficult, many school textbooks have been "dumbed down" -- that is, details are left out, characters and events excluded, complex ideas ignored, and colorful pictures have been substituted for the time-honored substantive narrative, lest students become bored from trying to read the texts.

In the wake of Thanks-

giving 1992, I suggest that we not lose touch with our incomparable heritage -- the Pilgrim fathers at Plymouth, the landing at Jamestown, or George Washington, for example, whose faith gave inspiration to our tradition of annual late November Thanksgiving Days.

The saga of the founding of the United States is one of the most dramatic accounts in human history. Indeed, America's story has inspired millions of people around the world to seek representative democracy and a better life for themselves.

Our children need to know the story of the founding and development of their country -- the story of the price paid by our forefathers and mothers in carving out of an untamed wilderness the greatest single nation on earth.

Similarly, young West Virginians need to know the dramatic story of the foundation of our state, complete with the names, places, and events that shaped modern West Virginia.

As with Nathan Hale, history can and should be inspiring. Our children need to be challenged by America's history.

Above all, our children need to be taught to love our country.

I hope textbook writers will remember this the next time they are tempted to leave some of our heroes out of a history book.

December 2, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Directions for Software Valley

West Virginia's Software Valley movement, which began in 1985, has moved past its infancy and into adolescence -- growth that was clearly evident at the Software Valley XI conference held recently in the Eastern Panhandle.

As one of the founders of Software Valley, I take great pride in the steady maturation of this movement. Little more than an idea just seven years ago, Software Valley has developed into a high-tech network of state educational institutions, entrepreneurs, and government officials who are working together to give the state's economy a new dimension.

Software Valley XI was a showcase of the accomplishments of the movement over the past seven years and a preview of Software Valley's future.

At my invitation, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Administrator Daniel Goldin addressed the conference, telling the nearly 300 participants that West Virginia is poised to play an enlarged role in the nation's space exploration efforts.

In fact, during the conference I announced a \$1.65 million NASA grant to test new space-related computer

software, a joint project to be undertaken by West Virginia University and the Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) Center in Fairmont.

The IV&V Center -- which is being located in West Virginia with \$12 million I was able to add to a federal appropriations bill -- is one of a number of high-tech-related facilities that have arisen in West Virginia since the birth of the Software Valley movement.

The success of Software Valley goes hand in hand with the development of a modern, responsive infrastructure network in West Virginia, which is the reason I have made it a top priority to initiate and fund such projects: transportation systems that make West Virginia accessible; decent public services that ensure a higher standard of living; and improved public facilities and educational institutions, all of which contribute to making West Virginia an ideal place in which to work and live.

As the Software Valley movement matures, and as more and more pieces of the movement take shape, these high-technology enterprises promise to become increasingly beneficial to West Virginia's economy.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Joining the Front Lines in Law Enforcement

West Virginians will benefit from a recent realization on the part of Federal Bureau of Prisons officials that sometimes more is less.

More, in this case, is a decision by that agency to increase the capacity of its planned medium security prison in Beckley by an estimated 50 percent. And less represents the savings in federal tax dollars that the Bureau of Prisons will realize by enlarging the Beckley prison instead of building a new facility elsewhere in order to gain the additional prison space that it desperately needs.

Expanding the scope of the Raleigh County federal prison project is an excellent way for federal prison officials to meet the challenge of maintaining or improving the level of service they offer while working under increasingly tight budgetary constraints.

The Beckley prison, being built on land donated by Raleigh County with funds I added to a 1990 appropriation bill as part of a nationwide crime-fighting and anti-drug package, originally was to be staffed by 250 personnel and to accommodate 1,000 inmates.

Prison officials advised me recently that they have revised their plans and will expand the facility to accommodate a total of 1,536 inmates (1,152 medium security and 384 minimum security), with a staff of 325 personnel.

While construction costs will be higher than originally anticipated--an

exact figure has not been released by the Bureau of Prisons--and operating costs will increase, the price tag on enlarging the new Beckley prison is significantly lower than the cost of building a separate facility at another location.

That kind of planning makes sense, and I am pleased that West Virginia will directly benefit from the Bureau of Prison's cost-saving move.

In addition to the new federal prison, West Virginia, with my help, has recently become home to two additional elements of the nation's crime-fighting system: the Clarksburg FBI Fingerprint Identification Division and the U.S. Coast Guard Operations System Center in the Eastern Panhandle.

The Fingerprint Identification Division--with an estimated 2,500 employees and an annual payroll of \$75 million--will give law enforcement personnel throughout the nation state-of-the-art crime solving technology.

And the Coast Guard's new center in Martinsburg--with its staff of 90 civilian and military personnel--will play a crucial role in efforts against drug smuggling into this country, in addition to supporting other Coast Guard law-enforcement activities worldwide.

As never before, these three facilities place West Virginia in the front lines of the fight against crime, and, in so doing, add an extra dimension to our state's economic picture.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Issues Likely to Confront The 103rd Congress

Facing a new year, I am sharpening my focus on the challenges that will confront Congress in the coming months.

The national economy will be our top priority.

Among the many suggestions made for strengthening the U.S. economy, the most frequently mentioned are those aimed at "growing" our way into greater prosperity -- long-term investments in our national infrastructure that promise to create jobs, increase our productivity, and prepare Americans to take advantage of new technologies and careers.

High on the agenda of most Americans is the hope that some solutions can be found to the health-care crisis.

Reportedly, more than 35 million Americans have no health insurance, and millions more are underinsured.

Currently, health care accounts for approximately 13 percent of the gross national product, while health-care prices are rising three times the rate of general inflation, causing widespread hardships for those needing medical care, as countless West Virginia families know from experience.

Another prominent concern facing Congress will be the need for better resources to stem the growing tide of violent crime nationwide.

Further, rapid-pace changes abroad will also demand new assessments of America's role in world affairs, with decisions required on balancing our domestic needs against our international responsibilities, especially as those responsibilities affect our country's global interests.

All of these pressing concerns will be clamoring for attention against the need to bring under control massive deficits and the national debt.

American voters have sent a message to the president-elect and to members of the new Congress that these should be priorities in 1993, and that the gridlock of recent years will not be tolerated further.

That message has been received, and during this period of transition, I am heartened by signs that the new administration and Congress are coming together to tackle the difficult challenges facing our country, and to move forward into a new era of accomplishment and prosperity.

December 23, 1992



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Blending Conservation and Economic Development

One of the challenges facing West Virginians, who are blessed with a state of breathtaking beauty, is preserving West Virginia's natural assets while working to promote economic development -- an age-old struggle that sometimes results in clashes between those competing goals.

From time to time, however, opportunities come along that seem almost custom-made for West Virginia's diverse interests, and, whenever possible, I have worked to take advantage of those situations.

One such opportunity came to my attention in 1989 when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the agency charged with protecting and managing the nation's natural resources, decided to establish a consolidated national training facility.

In seeking a home for this center, agency officials looked for a setting that would allow the new state-of-the-art facility to be a working model for their conservation theories and practices. West Virginia seemed made-to-order.

The Fish and Wildlife Service's \$125 million National Training and Education Center, being built with federal monies I have added to appropriation bills, will be located at a Jefferson County site with open fields, mature hardwood forests, wildlife habitats, and a beautiful view of the Potomac River Valley. This 538-acre site fulfills the agency's desire for a campus-like setting where man-made structures can blend

with nature.

As envisioned, the new complex will feature low-lying buildings tucked into groves of trees with connecting trails in an effort to preserve the site's natural beauty.

Plans call for construction of an administrative and instructional area with classrooms, an auditorium, and biomedical, biology and chemistry laboratories. As a center intended to provide training for land management professionals from several federal agencies across the country, the campus will include large, cabin-style student living quarters, with generous windows, balconies, and courtyards that allow maximum contact with the outdoors.

As part of the agency's mission to educate the public, the new center also will provide facilities for conservation instruction to school groups, environmentalists, and civic organizations.

In view of the constrained federal budget and the desire of the agency to improve services in preparation for future environmental challenges, it makes sense that the Fish and Wildlife Service will be consolidating its many scattered training offices, and I have already added \$59.5 million -- in other words, almost half of the \$125 million price-tag -- for this project.

It also is fitting that the training facility for the nation's leading environmental conservation agency has found a home in West Virginia, a state of nationally renowned natural beauty.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

An Ill-Advised Plan

The Army Corps of Engineers recently put forth an ill-advised reorganization plan that would spell bad news for West Virginia and the nation--a plan that I intend to fight.

Under the proposal, 2,600 Army Corps employees nationwide would lose their jobs, and district offices in nine states--including West Virginia's district office in Huntington--would see reductions in staff. In Huntington's case, staff would be reduced from 970 to 615, and some of the functions of that office would be transferred to a proposed technical center to be located in Pittsburgh.

It does not make sense to propose staff reductions in Huntington, a district that is responsible for implementing one of the largest civil works programs in the country, including the Tug Fork flood control project and other flood protection projects across the state; port and riverfront development along the Ohio and Kanawha Rivers; environmental protection and wetlands preservation; and clean-up of the hazardous wastes at the Winfield Lock and Dam site.

The Army Corps plan--which requires Congressional approval--is unwise and unwarranted, and I have wasted no time in letting Army Corps officials know that the proposal does not

have my support.

Within 24 hours of learning of the plan, I met with both Deputy Secretary of the Army Donald Atwood and Chief of Engineers Gen. Arthur E. Williams to express my strong opposition to the proposed reorganization.

I have also relayed my concern to President-elect Clinton, advising him that the proposal could have a crippling effect on the Army Corps at a time when it already has a backlog of construction projects.

At the current time, the military services, defense agencies, and reserve components have 1,178 construction projects that have not been started, for which \$6.2 billion in federal funding has been previously appropriated. Army Corps officials estimate that these projects--two-thirds of which would be administered by the Army Corps--would result in 291,000 new jobs and \$43.4 billion in economic activity.

That could provide a much-needed jolt to our struggling economy, and I fear that the Army Corps reorganization plan could severely hinder the execution of the projects now on the drawing board.

The Army Corps needs to rethink its reorganization plans, and I will continue working to see that it does.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Old Values in a New Age

As the twentieth century wanes, and against the background of the sweeping changes worldwide, we hear much about a "New World Order," "New Age" values, "new morality," and new religious insights, to name but a few such novelties.

Like many West Virginians, experience has taught me to beware of the word "new," especially when used to suggest that the novelty in question is superior to all that has preceded it.

Further, any "new world order" that does not operate in the best interests of our country, or that implies that somehow American patriotism or traditional values are outdated or pernicious will never earn my allegiance.

For example, the idea that society should tolerate music whose lyrics promote the murder of policemen or should tolerate increased public displays of pornography on television or in movies is repugnant and debases, rather than improves, our culture.

Most particularly, however, I am concerned that West Virginians not lose touch with the character-shaping values that have made our state unique and that have made West Virginians such remarkable people.

The traditional values of most West Virginians have been forged in the crucible of real life -- a crucible in which faith in God; love of country and state; self-discipline, sobriety, and frugality in personal life; respect for the law; and diligent, committed labor have proved themselves, generation after generation.

Indeed, what will it profit West Virginia to become more prosperous if spiritual poverty is the price exacted for that prosperity?

As new highways, new businesses and industries, and new technologies create new opportunities for West Virginians in the years ahead, I hope that we will continue to hold precious those lasting "old values" that make West Virginians unique.

January 13, ~~1992~~ 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Heeding the Warning Bells

A majority of West Virginians, according to a recent poll, view Japan as this country's greatest economic threat.

That viewpoint mirrors a study recently released by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) that indicates that the United States, though presently in a strong position to compete effectively in the global marketplace, is losing ground to Japan, our nation's foremost competitor in international high-technology trade.

One of the most significant pieces of data in the GAO report indicates that spending in Japan for high-tech research and development, or R&D, as a percentage of gross national product (GNP), has more than doubled over the past three decades. This increase has left the U.S. lagging behind Japan in nonmilitary R&D expenditures.

In other words, Japan's investment in developing products like computers, facsimile machines, and robotics is outpacing U.S. investment.

The study indicates that Japan's practice of investing in private-sector R&D is producing gains in its international market share in several high-tech consumer product categories. In some fields, Japan already leads the U.S.

Although the U.S. can use technology developed by other countries, the GAO study indicates that reliance on second-hand research -- instead of using technology created in our own country --

would put the U.S. at a sharp disadvantage, especially considering that research in one field often provides important innovations that can be used in other fields, leading to new products and processes. Clearly, the ability to be first in developing innovations provides important lead time that can be vital in a highly competitive marketplace.

For a number of years, I have worked to increase federal investment in our national domestic infrastructure -- both physical and human -- to ensure that the U.S. maintains a leadership position in the global marketplace.

As part of those efforts, I have worked to foster high-technology development in West Virginia. By adding monies to federal appropriation bills, I have secured such projects as the National Technology Transfer Center in Wheeling and the Institute for Flexible Manufacturing Systems in Huntington to help ensure that the U.S. can continue to perform research and development in the high-technology arena and that domestic businesses can have ready access to the latest cutting-edge innovations.

I will continue to promote investment in our nation's infrastructure in the belief that the economic leadership of the U.S. is too vital to our domestic well-being and national security to ignore the warning bells now sounding.

January 20, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A New Growth Trend In West Virginia?

During the recent holiday season, some people may have missed a bit of good news for West Virginia.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, during 1992, for the second year in a row, West Virginia's population grew.

After three decades of consistent population losses, a trend that accelerated during the 1980's, current census figures indicate that both 1991 and 1992 saw population growth in West Virginia, raising West Virginia's population from 1.79 million in 1990 to 1.81 million in 1992.

Significantly, two thirds of that increase represented migration into West Virginia, as opposed to increases in births over deaths.

Further, West Virginia University's Regional Research Institute predicts that, through the mid-1990's, 35 of our state's 55 counties will experience population growth, compared with population growth in only 11 counties during the 1980's.

I am encouraged by these real and projected population increases in West Virginia. As a U.S. Senator from West Virginia and as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Commit-

tee, my primary focus has been to launch and complete programs and infrastructure improvements in West Virginia that will lay foundations for greater progress and prosperity in our state -- to put into place foundations for attracting new businesses and enterprises in West Virginia that will create increased job opportunities for West Virginians and reverse the outmigration that has robbed our state of so many of its bright young people.

I continue to believe that through the completion of a modern highway network, the construction of improved tourism facilities, the promotion of high-technology industries, the expansion of research-oriented programs, the modernization of our state's air and water transportation structures, improved and extended health-care services, and renewed investments in our state's institutions of higher education and in our students, West Virginia will enjoy economic growth and prosperity in the approaching twenty-first century.

That is my vision for West Virginia, and I shall keep working toward a more abundant, more promising future for our state and her people in the years ahead.

January 27, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Keeping Agriculture Department Offices Open in West Virginia

One of my continuing tasks is to keep reminding government officials and bureaucrats in Washington, D.C., of the unique needs of West Virginia.

Recently, for example, the outgoing Secretary of Agriculture issued a reorganization plan closing or merging 1,200 Department of Agriculture field offices nationwide, including 48 in West Virginia. Among offices proposed to be closed in our state were 26 Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) offices, 10 Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) offices, and 12 Soil Conservation Service offices.

Given West Virginia's rugged terrain, its mining and timbering industries, and its large rural, agriculturally related population, the closure of 48 field offices in our state could impact thousands of West Virginians negatively and inconveniently.

Currently, all of West Virginia's 55 counties are served by a Department of Agriculture field office. Under the proposed reorganization plan, 22 of our counties would lose their field offices.

Following issuance of the final reorganization plan, I promptly requested

a meeting in my office with incoming Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy.

I informed the new Secretary of Agriculture of my concern that the large number of West Virginians dependent on his department's services not be left without assistance. I further reported that my office was receiving calls from West Virginians throughout our state upset about the loss of vital agriculture services in their areas.

I am glad that Secretary Espy has decided to temporarily shelve the office-closing proposal.

The Secretary wisely determined that any reorganization of the department should begin at the top, in Washington, and that the local communities served by field offices should have a voice in determining the nature of the reorganization.

Further, at my request, Secretary Espy agreed to take particular care to consider West Virginia's special needs in any future reorganization plan.

This is important for the multitudes of West Virginians who depend on Department of Agriculture field offices in their counties for necessary services and assistance in managing their lands, their farms, and their businesses.

February 3, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The End of Another American Tradition

Recently, across the country -- and particularly in rural states like West Virginia -- people were dismayed by the announcement that, after roughly a century, Sears, Roebuck and Company would cease issuing its catalogues.

For generations, West Virginians depended on the Sears catalogue to link them, not only to a wide merchandise distribution network, but also to a national culture of mutual tastes, styles, technologies, and convenience.

Indeed, in the pre-television era, the Sears catalogue, as well as those of other mail-order retailers, served rural residents as a window into the urbane and sophisticated worlds of our big cities.

The story of the 1886 origins of Sears, Roebuck is a legendary element within the mythology of the American Dream -- the story of railroad telegrapher Richard Warren Sears' taking possession of an unclaimed box of watches; marketing the watches through messages sent up and down the railroad telegraph line; bringing in young Alvah Roebuck, a watch repairman, to service the watches when they needed maintenance or

repair; and finally developing a complete line of merchandise to market by mail order.

That was the beginning of the great Sears, Roebuck company.

In the past century, Americans have bought from the Sears catalogue whole houses ready for assembly; a Post-World War II Allstate automobile; their annual union suits; beds and couches; corsets and high-button shoes; tractors and hay wagons; patent medicines and washing machines; toys and bathtubs; their first radios and television sets -- just about anything that could be bought, sold, and shipped, the Sears catalogue carried at one time or another.

Little wonder that people everywhere called the Sears catalogue "the Wish Book."

Next year will see no new Sears catalogue, and with its failure to appear on our doorsteps after a century, another cherished American tradition will have vanished.

Nevertheless, few of us will be able to soon forget the passing of a good and comfortable old friend -- the Sears catalogue.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Revitalizing a Traditional West Virginia Art and Enterprise

I long ago lost patience with the fashion in which some federal agencies seem mindlessly to exploit our country's assets to the advantage of foreign interests.

Recently, I was able, in part, to help alter that process.

Since the Colonial era, quilting has been an American art, particularly in rural states like West Virginia, where quilting skills have been handed down through families for generations.

Last year, the Smithsonian Institution, one of our country's premier cultural agencies, entered into a three-year agreement that led to the production of several thousand quilts -- reproductions of classic American designs -- by Chinese manufacturers.

Under this agreement, the Chinese were to produce between 30,000 to 90,000 quilts for sale in the United States by domestic companies, including retail stores and direct-mail firms such as Land's End.

This contract set off a firestorm of protest among American quilters, and prompted me to contact Smithsonian officials to urge them to identify ways to ensure that American quilts are produced by American quilters.

At my request, representatives from the

Smithsonian and from Land's End met in my Charleston office with representatives from Cabin Creek Quilts Cooperative of Malden, West Virginia, to explore ways for utilizing the talents of West Virginia quilters.

As a result, Cabin Creek Quilts signed a \$40,000 contract to produce 100 reproduction quilts for Land's End. With fifty percent of the quilts sold out ten days after the release of the Land's End catalogue featuring the quilts, Land's End has extended Cabin Creek Quilts' contract for 1993 and has expanded the project to a minimum of five different quilt patterns, plus small-product development.

Further, I have requested the U.S. Department of Commerce to work with Cabin Creek Quilts to explore even more marketing possibilities.

Quilting is a West Virginia art that Cabin Creek Quilts is developing into a "cottage industry."

I commend the quilters of this industrious West Virginia cooperative. West Virginians can be genuinely proud of these neighbors who are helping to recapture American markets for goods created in our state by our own people, and earning a well-deserved remuneration for their efforts.

February 17, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Another New Health Effort For West Virginia.

Throughout my career, I have been concerned about the health problems of the people of our state. To provide state-of-the-art cancer treatment, I added \$13.3 million to federal funding bills for construction of a cancer treatment facility at the West Virginia University (WVU) Medical Center in Morgantown.

Further, I added funding for a statewide program for screening, education, and early detection of cervical and breast cancer; to provide for Alzheimer's disease research at the WVU and Marshall University medical schools; to establish an injury control center at the WVU trauma center; and to establish a statewide telecommunications system linking the WVU Health Sciences Center and rural hospitals across West Virginia.

Recently, I became associated with a private-sector effort to improve the health of West Virginia teenagers.

Privately funded, "Project Hope" is a worldwide multi-dimensional health-education organization currently providing health-education assistance in thirty-six countries.

Project Hope has been asked to establish "peer-

helper" pilot training programs in two West Virginia counties -- Pendleton and Lincoln -- to equip numbers of teenagers to understand the potential health problems of, and offer wise counsel to, other West Virginia teenagers at health risk.

For example, one study has shown that 23 percent of West Virginia high school seniors drive after drinking, and 50 percent have been passengers in vehicles while drinking. Further, our state ranks seventh nationwide in the number of teenagers giving birth. Studies also suggest that increasing numbers of young West Virginians suffer from depression, suicide, anorexia, obesity, bulimia, stress, malnutrition, and hopelessness, denying them satisfying and full lives.

Tied to the schools, and realizing the powerful influence that teenagers exercise on one another, Project Hope aims to educate a corps of teenagers to recognize problems among their peers, to understand and advocate healthy behaviors, and to refer their peers to community-based professionals when necessary.

These are laudable goals.

February 24, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

End the Backlog of Black Lung Claims

For more than a decade, I have worked to help black lung sufferers receive the benefits to which they are entitled in the most expeditious manner possible.

My efforts have required constant vigilance in the face of Administrations that demonstrated little compassion for miners forced to wait years for final decisions on their black lung claims.

That was certainly not the intention of the Black Lung program, which was established in 1969 by legislation that I co-sponsored. By 1984, the backlog of claims had grown to the point that it was not unusual, if a claim was appealed through the Benefits Review Board, for a claimant to wait up to seven years for a final decision.

In past years, I met with Labor Secretary Raymond Donovan and Labor Secretary William Brock to hammer out plans to eliminate the black lung claim backlog. Additionally, over the years, I have added federal funding to appropriations bills to expand the Benefits Review Board and to increase the budget of the Office of Administrative Law Judges, both key links in the processing of black lung claims. Also, since 1981 I have blocked Administration efforts to close West Virginia's six black lung field offices--in Beckley, Bluefield, Elkins, Logan, Madison, and Morgantown--which over the years have

provided vital services to black lung claimants.

As a result of these efforts, backlogs have been reduced, but claimants still face waits of several years before receiving a final decision.

My long-held suspicion that the black lung claims bottleneck is at the Benefits Review Board was confirmed recently by an Inspector General report that found that the current Board is ineffective and suffers from low morale, and that individual board members are not performing the duties for which they were hired.

The change of Administration offers another opportunity to break the logjam of black lung claims and to help the people for whom this program was created. Toward that end, I recently urged Labor Secretary Robert Reich to replace the members of the Black Lung Benefits Review Board with qualified individuals who have experience in the black lung claims judicial process.

Every day that the current Board members continue to sit is another day that black lung claimants are shortchanged, and this situation ought not be allowed to continue.

Black lung victims deserve quick action and effective relief, and I believe the appointment of a responsive, dedicated Benefits Review Board is a step in that direction.

March 3, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Meeting West Virginia's Future High-Technology Career Demands

According to a recent survey, young West Virginians wanting future career success would do well to consider the growing possibilities in high-technology-related enterprises developing in our state.

That is the opinion of 74 West Virginia company executives recently polled.

However, these executives expressed concern that our state's rising workforce might be deficient in high-technology career skills, and urged greater student preparation in computers, mathematics, engineering, chemistry, and other disciplines required by high-tech businesses and industries.

With the goal of creating new job opportunities, I have initiated several efforts to ensure West Virginia's participation in the worldwide, burgeoning high-technology revolution.

For example, among the many high-technology facilities and programs that I have helped bring to West Virginia in recent years are: the FBI's Fingerprint Identification Division headquarters in Harrison County; the national Centers for Disease Control's occupational safety and health laboratory at Morgantown; the Coast Guard Computer Operations Systems Center at Martinsburg; the NASA National Technology Transfer Center at Wheeling Jesuit College; the NASA In-

dependent Verification and Validation Center in Fairmont; and the rebuilt National Radio Telescope at Green Bank in Pocahontas County.

In addition, to help ensure that West Virginia workers are taught the skills needed to fill these high-tech jobs, several of my initiatives include job-training elements.

For example, the Institute for Flexible Manufacturing Systems in Huntington includes a "teaching factory" to train local business representatives and their employees in the use of automated equipment, and the Hardwoods Technology Center being established in Princeton will provide training to West Virginia woodworkers on computerized manufacturing machines.

My aim is to forge new job opportunities for young West Virginians in high-technology-related businesses. But the success of that goal relies on the presence in West Virginia of a skilled and capable workforce.

I hope that increased numbers of young West Virginians will discern the high-technology doorways that are opening for them on the horizon, and prepare themselves to take advantage of 21st century career possibilities that can be theirs in West Virginia in the future.

March 10, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Glimpsing the Future

A recent story in *The New York Times* offered a glimpse at the future -- an examination of a West Virginia resource center that is helping to revolutionize U.S. manufacturing.

Since initiating this project in 1989, I have added \$13.8 million to federal appropriation bills for implementation and operation of this center to train small-business enterprises and manufacturers in the "hands-on" use of state-of-the-art advanced technology.

Operated in conjunction with Marshall University, this facility was subsequently named the Robert C. Byrd Institute for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing Systems. This facility is developing computer-designed and computer-aided manufacturing processes to help private industries in West Virginia and neighboring states become more internationally competitive through the use of robotic manufacturing.

Throughout West Virginia and in the surrounding region, for decades skilled employees have been producing excellent goods and finished products, using long-dependable machine tools and trustworthy equipment.

However, around the world, constantly evolving high technologies are rendering older technologies obsolete, cutting into tradi-

tional markets with lower-priced products and inflicting serious injury on industries here in our state that are wedded to outdated methods and processes.

Virtually a model "factory of the future," the Institute at Marshall University places West Virginia in the forefront of flexible computer-integrated manufacturing and related initiatives, and its success serves as an inspiration for the new Administration's announced intention of establishing similar centers in other areas.

In this facility, West Virginia business and industrial leaders are able to see and operate the latest computer-guided machinery, and to learn means of creating new job opportunities through the adaptation of flexible-manufacturing techniques.

I have a vision for West Virginia's future -- a vision in which West Virginians play a broader role in worldwide economic competition; have greater opportunities to pursue lasting, better-paying jobs; and enjoy a rising standard of living.

Not only do I have that vision, which I know is shared by many West Virginians, but by initiating projects such as the Institute for Flexible Manufacturing Systems, I am laying a foundation that will enable us to build the West Virginia that we imagine.

March 17, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's Outlet to the Sea

Landlocked West Virginia might seem an unlikely site for a major naval communications facility, but in 1989, in response to my urgings, the U.S. Coast Guard designated our Eastern Panhandle as the site for its Operations Systems Center, a base with worldwide responsibilities.

Subsequently, I added \$4.7 million in federal funds to appropriations bills to construct a new, state-of-the-art facility in Martinsburg for Coast Guard use, which I helped to dedicate in the fall of 1991.

Currently employing 100 military and civilian personnel and funneling approximately \$7 million annually into our state's economy, the Coast Guard Center operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Among its multiple duties, the Center supports the Coast Guard and other organizations in around-the-world oceanic search-and-rescue missions, as well as assisting U.S. and international law-enforcement agencies to combat international drug trafficking and other criminal activities.

Perhaps the most crucial function of this Martinsburg facility is the Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue System (AMVER), which tracks thousands of merchant vessels on all of the world's

oceans, and is ready to relay information to rescue teams from any country, friend or foe. Currently, AMVER serves roughly 8,000 merchant vessels in its computerized database, representing 40 percent of world shipping, including some of the most popular cruise liners.

Whenever one of those ships experiences trouble, it radios one of 130 coastal radio stations around the world, which, in turn, relays that information directly to Martinsburg. The Martinsburg Center's computers then pinpoint any tabulated vessels within the vicinity of the stricken ship. In about 20 seconds, the Martinsburg Center dispatches to the nearest ships the distressed vessel's name, call numbers, distance and estimated time of each ship from the stricken carrier, and that carrier's medical capabilities.

Further, the Center can predict ocean currents, help locate drug-transporting craft, and furnish information helpful in tracking smugglers.

The Coast Guard's Operations Systems Center is further evidence of ways in which high technology and state-of-the-art computer science are fostering a career revolution in West Virginia and fulfilling my vision for our state's future.

March 24, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Poll Evinces Growing Concern About Television Violence

A major television network executive has announced plans to cut back on violence in his fall lineup because television violence may be hurting society.

I commend that decision.

For some time, I have decried the quality of much commercial programming.

I have no authority over the content of commercial television programming, and criticism of culture by an elected official often elicits outcries against censorship.

But my criticism of television violence is finding widespread echoes among the public.

A recent nationwide Harris Poll indicates that roughly 80 percent of the American people believe that gratuitous television violence is harmful to our country, and those polled are increasingly disturbed by such programming.

Understandably, people aged 50 and more were the most concerned about televised violence and the most infrequent viewers of violence-prone programs, while viewers under age 30 were more tolerant of such violence.

Interestingly, one group least concerned about television violence was teenagers, who were also among the heaviest viewers of

"real-life" crime shows that feature violent real-life film footage.

Unfortunately, according to a recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report, in 1990, a total of 4,173 teenagers were victims of firearms-related violence -- random murders, gang clashes, etc. -- the highest firearm death rate among 15- to 19-year-olds ever recorded in America.

Reared on television as an electronic babysitter from the cradle, many of those who perpetrated these murders grew up unable to differentiate between the make-believe on the television screen and real life, leading to the acting-out of engrained disvalues learned alike from crime shows and fictitious "shoot-em-ups."

I have no desire to be a television critic, per se. My concern is for the future quality of life in West Virginia and across our country.

I hope that decreased violence on one television network is the harbinger of a trend toward renewed responsibility in the media.

I hope that others in the entertainment field will follow suit.

At stake is the spiritual and moral well-being of our state and nation.

March 31, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Launching Young West Virginians Into the Space Age

Whenever reflecting upon my Southern West Virginia childhood, I think fondly, and with gratitude, of teachers who taught me to love learning for the sake of learning itself. Still today, I will pore over a book simply for the pleasure of learning.

Inspiring young people to love learning is a key goal of the Classroom of the Future at Wheeling Jesuit College, for which I recently announced the award of a construction contract.

A project conceptualized by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), begun with initial funding appropriated by Congressman Alan Mollohan, and being built with federal funding I have added to appropriation bills, this facility is designed to stir the imagination of youth.

Envision, if you will, an opportunity to experience the look and feeling of a trip into outer space. The Classroom will include a spacecraft simulator and a mission control simulator to enable students to execute mock space missions.

Multimedia computer classrooms in the building are planned to be centers of activity in which young people and teachers can work and learn on computer terminals. NASA is betting on the enthusiasm that young people exhibit for such high-tech equipment, a phenomenon nearly everyone with a child or grandchild and a home computer, a television computer game, or a local video

arcade has witnessed.

Located in Wheeling, the Classroom is designed to attract students from throughout West Virginia and the tri-state Northern Panhandle region, and to reach out to young people and their teachers across America.

The facility will also house a center in which software and multimedia resources will be developed for use by teachers and schools throughout the country. A satellite learning facility will be operated to share with students and teachers nationwide -- through satellite transmission and television reception -- the resources offered at the Classroom of the Future.

The expectation is that by exposing students to the discoveries, inventions, and possibilities presented through the use and mastery of math and science, they will be inspired to study those fields, which are so important to the future economic development of our country.

Ensuring the education of our young people, who will inherit the leadership of this nation, is a necessity. As a U.S. Senator and Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am working to develop educational opportunities, like the NASA Classroom of the Future at Wheeling Jesuit College, that will enable our children to be ably prepared to take the helm of West Virginia and America in the decades ahead.

April 7, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Defense-Conversion Workshop At Oglebay Park

Assisting West Virginia businesses and enterprises to pursue federal-government contracts has long been a priority effort on my agenda to strengthen our state's economy and to expand job opportunities for West Virginians.

The virtual collapse of the old Soviet Union has made possible a broad recasting of our country's defense requirements, at the same time foreclosing many of the federal-contracting opportunities available to the private sector.

To assist West Virginia business people to take advantage of the new possibilities presented by the need to convert from defense-related contracting to expanded domestic requirements, I am cooperating in the convening of a special workshop at Wheeling's Oglebay Park on May 5.

This workshop is being sponsored by the nonprofit Software Valley Corporation, which I helped to launch in an effort to promote high-technology business and job opportunities throughout our state.

Through the Defense-Conversion Reinvestment Act of Fiscal Year 1992, the Department of Defense has been provided nearly \$600 million to be invested in the development, deployment,

and stimulation of nondefense technologies -- in effect, an interagency federal effort to facilitate the conversion of previously defense-oriented enterprises to new domestic endeavors through eight competitive-bidding programs.

The purpose of this one-day Oglebay Park workshop will be to provide West Virginia enterprises with a detailed presentation of opportunities opening to them in this conversion effort; to allow West Virginia companies to learn about conversion proposals currently being developed in our state; and to permit attendees to coordinate, and not duplicate, their efforts in competing for the available funds. Federal agency officials will be present to supply information and to explain the full scope of the defense-conversion program.

I commend the Software Valley Corporation for conducting this advanced-technology workshop for West Virginia entrepreneurs and business people, and I encourage anyone interested in this workshop to contact Software Valley's Morgantown offices at telephone number (304) 594-9844 prior to April 30 to make workshop reservations, or for further information.

April 14, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Gracious Honor from West Virginia University

The people of West Virginia--from her youngest citizens to her oldest--merit the best possible health care, and that conviction has been uppermost in my mind as I have worked over the years to improve our state's health-care infrastructure.

Because health care is so important to me, I am deeply touched by a recent decision by West Virginia University and the University of West Virginia System Board of Trustees to honor my commitment to health care by naming the complex of health-related facilities in Morgantown "The Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences Center."

Included in that complex is an important facility for which I have added \$13.3 million in federal funding: The Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center, which is West Virginia's first state-of-the-art facility dedicated to battling cancer. Also included is the Jon Michael Moore Trauma Center, a facility specializing in the care of accident victims. These facilities were named by WVU, respectively, in memory of Senator Jennings Randolph's late wife and for my late grandson.

Though sources of distinctiveness and pride, the remoteness and ruggedness of much of West Virginia have too long also meant inaccessible health care for many, as well as long journeys to distant, out-of-state medical facilities whenever acute illness demanded intensive, specialized treatments.

Consequently, two critical elements of any health-care infrastructure in West Virginia -- in addition

to first-rate treatment facilities--are outreach and training programs, both of which serve to expand health care far beyond the walls of such facilities as the Health Sciences Center.

The Trauma Center, for instance, not only offers training for local officials on quickly responding to trauma victims, but also enables distant West Virginia hospitals to better treat trauma victims by connecting them with trauma specialists at the Center via a two-way telecommunications network.

Other outreach programs for which I have been able to add federal funding and which benefit West Virginians in all areas of our state are the Breast and Cervical Cancer screening project, and the Alzheimer's screening project, operated jointly by WVU and Marshall University.

In addition, Marshall University is also administering the Southern West Virginia Center for Rural Health, an undertaking for which I added \$4.5 million in federal funding last year and which will augment health-care services to West Virginians in Cabell, Wayne, Lincoln, Mingo, Mason, Logan, Roane, Boone, Putnam, Jackson, McDowell, and Wyoming Counties.

A modern program of health care is important to West Virginia's future growth and development. Grateful for WVU's recognition of my contributions to our state's health-care infrastructure, I shall continue my efforts to give substance to my vision of better health care for all West Virginians.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

FBI Fingerprint Identification Center Funding Update

In the face of rising crime rates, I am gratified that President Clinton has included in the Fiscal Year 1994 budget \$75.4 million that I have sought to continue the automation and revitalization of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) fingerprint identification system, which is being relocated to its new West Virginia headquarters.

Unfortunately, for roughly the past dozen years, federal investment in our criminal-justice system -- and in other vital elements of our national infrastructure -- was too often ignored or neglected.

Rising rates of murder, robbery, drug trafficking, assaults, and other felonies are one of the prices that we are now paying for that neglect.

I welcome the Administration's support of my initiative to equip the FBI with a high-technology advantage in the fight against crime.

When the new Fingerprint Identification Division facility is completed near Clarksburg, it will provide our country's law enforcement agencies -- local, state, and federal -- with a rapid, ultra-modern, state-of-the-art, computerized system for checking fingerprints, confirming criminal identities, and tracking lawbreakers.

Since 1989, as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have succeeded in adding a total of nearly \$350 million in federal funds to appropriations bills for the relocation of the FBI Fingerprint Identification system to West Virginia.

Also in recent weeks, to "keep on the fast track" the establishment of this vital facility in Harrison County, I urged Office of Management and Budget Director Leon Panetta to include in President Clinton's Supplemental budget request another \$16.7 million to support the staffing of temporary satellite offices in Clarksburg and Fairmont with a total of an estimated 500 employees from FBI headquarters. This has now been done.

Congress is expected to act on this measure in the near future.

The FBI Fingerprint Identification Division's new Harrison County facility will place West Virginia in the forefront of America's war on crime.

I look forward to 1995 when this new West Virginia facility is projected to be in operation, and when the employees there will be working at full capacity to make the homes, shops, and streets of our country safer for law-abiding citizens.

April 28, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Channel for Better Health Care

Rural West Virginians have a new ally in the quest for better health care.

That ally is Mountaineer Doctor Television--MDTV for short--a two-way, televised medical service linking specialists at West Virginia University's (WVU) Health Sciences Center with several rural medical facilities in West Virginia.

As Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I succeeded in adding \$800,000 to a 1992 appropriations bill to establish this pilot program in West Virginia, and I look forward to the day when MDTV is expanded into other areas of our state.

The potential of this system for a largely rural state like West Virginia, with its hilly terrain and its many remote communities, is self-evident.

Consider a sequence of events in which an accident victim, many miles away from trauma specialists at WVU, is aided by the nearly instantaneous transmission of X-rays or by a long-distance examination, all compliments of MDTV.

For a trauma victim, the first 60 minutes after an ac-

cident is make-or-break time, a small window during which immediate treatment can mean the difference between life and death. Doctors in rural hospitals gain an extra helping hand in more effectively treating accident victims by allowing WVU trauma specialists to actually view the patient's injuries via MDTV's network of television cameras and monitors linked by fiber optic cables.

Trauma victims are not the only patients who can benefit from MDTV. With the flick of a switch, a physician miles from Morgantown can put a patient--perhaps one who is exhibiting baffling or unusual symptoms--on television and consult with doctors at the Health Sciences Center on the best treatment, or to determine whether that patient should be transferred to another facility for care.

MDTV is an exciting new health-care tool--a wonderful blend of medicine and high technology that promises to play an important role in enhancing the quality of life for countless West Virginians of rising generations.

May 5, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Drawing the Line on Terrorism

A recent poll indicates that the vast majority of West Virginians are concerned about terrorist activities in this nation.

Sharing that concern, I am cosponsoring legislation aimed at correcting a flaw in the political asylum portion of federal immigration laws that is threatening the safety and security of Americans.

The U.S. has thus far largely avoided the waves of horrible terrorist acts that have plagued many other nations, and, if we wish to continue that pattern, we must take steps to ensure that our borders are more secure.

The bill that I am cosponsoring is intended to tighten the political asylum loophole through which, for example, Mir Aimal Kansi slipped. Kansi is the alleged gunman in the February shooting that took place near the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) headquarters, which claimed the lives of two CIA employees.

Mir Aimal Kansi, who is now the subject of an international manhunt, had

applied for asylum almost a year prior to the shooting rampage and had not yet had his hearing when this tragedy occurred.

Upon making his claim of asylum, he received a work authorization document, which allowed him to obtain a Social Security card and then a Virginia driver's license. With that he was then able to purchase the AK-47 assault rifle with which he is believed to have carried out this heinous crime.

I am proud of the role that early immigrants have played in the shaping of this great nation. But, unfortunately, we have made it all too easy for unscrupulous individuals to take advantage of our goodwill by using asylum procedures to circumvent the regular immigration process.

By working for passage of this bill, I am attempting to help make our state and our nation more safe and secure by making it easier for Federal immigration officials to curb abuse of immigration laws.

May 12, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Reaching Out to Alzheimer's Victims

With millions of Americans, I have long been concerned about Alzheimer's disease and the devastating effects that this tragic condition can wreak on its victims.

Named for the German medical researcher who originally diagnosed the syndrome, Alzheimer's disease is characterized by a progressive deterioration of brain cells that eventually terminates in dementia and, finally, death. Previously considered an affliction only of the elderly, Alzheimer's has been found to strike as early as age 40. An estimated 4 million Americans are currently suffering from Alzheimer's, 33,000 of those being West Virginians.

Realizing the impact of Alzheimer's disease in West Virginia, as well as our state's dearth of resources to cope with this growing scourge, I succeeded in 1990 in adding more than \$9.9 million in federal funds to an appropriations bill to develop the Center for Nuclear Research in Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders at West Virginia University (WVU).

In addition, I added \$1 million to a federal funding bill to initiate an outreach and screening program being conducted by the hospitals and medical schools at WVU in Morgantown and

Marshall University in Huntington. The purpose of this program is to pursue research on Alzheimer's disease in rural areas of our state in an effort to fill gaps in our knowledge about this intractable disease.

Subsequently, I also added funds to help launch a pilot adult day-care program in Parkersburg to aid Alzheimer's victims and their caregivers. Further, the federal Department of Health and Human Services is conducting a trial, Medicare-sponsored, community-based program of expanded medical care and services for Alzheimer's patients, which is centered in Wood and Ohio Counties, but extends its services into Hancock, Brooke, Marshall, Wetzel, Tyler, Pleasants, Ritchie, Wirt, and Jackson Counties, as well.

Alzheimer's disease is a cruel and debilitating affliction that can cripple its victims, disrupt the lives of families, and physically and financially exhaust the patient's caregivers.

Through the efforts that I have summarized, I hope to have put into place programs that will help us to struggle more successfully against Alzheimer's disease in West Virginia, and to ensure a better quality of life, both for Alzheimer's patients in our state and their families.

May 19, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Seeing the Forest for the Trees

The old expression "You can't see the forest for the trees" has met its polar opposite in West Virginia.

Not only do we see the forest in West Virginia, but we also recognize the role that trees can play in our state's economic future and are moving forward on initiatives to make better use of our abundant timber resources.

Several years ago, for instance, I authored and won Senate approval for my timber bridge initiative, a program under which the nation's aging and deteriorating bridges are being replaced with strong, economical wooden bridges.

Since 1987, when I earmarked \$3.3 million to establish the Timber Bridge Resource Center at the U.S. Forestry Sciences Laboratory in Morgantown, 57 decaying West Virginia bridges have been replaced under the timber bridge program.

Plans are now underway to broaden my original program by seeking uses for timber in other transportation-related areas, including guard rails, sign posts, sound barriers, and retaining walls.

Another key component in my effort to promote West Virginia's timber industry--and the nation's--is the Hardwood Technology Center near Princeton, Mercer County, launched by \$9 million in federal funding that I added to appropria-

tions bills and dedicated to researching and developing new techniques, markets, and training programs for the nation's wood products industry.

For too long, West Virginia's fine hardwoods have been exported to other states, where their workers transformed our timber into furniture and other wood products. Through initiatives like the Hardwood Technology Center, we are aiming to keep those jobs in West Virginia by training our workers in advanced hardwood-products manufacturing techniques.

Some of those techniques will be on display at Appalachian Hardwood Expo '93, a two-day event June 18 and 19 in Princeton, to advance the wood products industry and the efforts that are underway in West Virginia.

My support for West Virginia's timber industry is longstanding, dating back to my successful efforts to gain federal funding for the Forestry Sciences Laboratories in Morgantown, Princeton, and Parsons.

These laboratories--and my other timber initiatives--have given West Virginia a role in providing future generations with healthier forests, an enhanced timber industry, and increased job opportunities in the wood manufacturing, conservation, and natural resource industries.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Dawning of a New Millennium

The year 2001 A.D. -- the beginning of a new century and, indeed, of a new millennium -- is less than eight years away.

At this salient point in our history and, particularly, in the history of West Virginia, I have been reflecting on the future and on the possibilities that might be put in place to ensure a better future for our state's children and young men and women -- a future that holds the promise of new opportunities for all West Virginians.

My hope for West Virginia is that our state will enter the 21st century with sufficient jobs and opportunities for West Virginia's young people to earn a living wage so that they will not have to leave West Virginia. My vision is that, in the next century, because we in our generation have invested and built for the future, our state will be a better, more promising place in which our children and grandchildren can live and provide for their own offspring.

One of the tragedies of the 1980's was that, particularly on the national level, from a mountain of public debt, we invested a mere

molehill in our children's future -- in the public infrastructure on which much of our country's productivity, competitive edge, and prosperity will depend in the decades ahead.

Not since the tenth century -- 901 to 1000 A.D. -- has our world experienced the dawning of a new millennium. Psychologically and spiritually, the remaining years of the 1990's can be for us an exciting time -- a time to dream, to plan, to work, and to lay the groundwork for an abundant, prosperous, and opportunity-filled new era in West Virginia's history.

As Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have had the unique opportunity to provide federal funding for infrastructure improvements nationwide and to match West Virginia potentialities and advantages with national requirements -- to the benefit of both America and West Virginia.

Against the constraints of the national debt and the imperative to reduce federal deficits, I shall continue doing everything feasible to promote West Virginia's economic growth and future statewide prosperity.

June 2, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Celebrating Tourism in West Virginia

With its river rapids, beautiful mountains, and splendid recreational parks, West Virginia has established itself as a prime location for the development of a prosperous tourism industry.

I have long been a proponent of the tourism industry in West Virginia, adding funding to federal bills to encourage development of the Wheeling Heritage area, the New River Gorge National River, Monongahela National Forest, the riverfront park in Charleston, the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge, the Appalachian Regional Commission Tourism and Development Center at Concord College in Athens, and Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

In the last three years, I added \$9.9 million to federal appropriations bills for planning, design, and construction at Harpers Ferry, funding that will be used to help prepare the Park for its 50th anniversary celebration next June. With this, Park authorities hope to continue restoration of the buildings within the lower town, the area of the Park first seen by visitors.

Founded on June 30, 1944, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park began as a small project, accommodating fewer than 100,000 visitors in its first year of operation.

Subsequently, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park was officially provided its land-base from the State of West Virginia in 1955, a move that permitted the

Park to develop into the prosperous area seen today.

Following this provision, the Park has grown by strides and dashes. Last year, the Park accommodated nearly 500,000 visitors, many of whom were visiting West Virginia for the first time.

These new visitors, along with the many repeat visitors, are learning something that West Virginians have always known--not only is West Virginia a state blessed by rivers, mountains, and wildlife, but it is also a state rich in history and heritage.

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park is a perfect blend of these two elements. Located at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, the mountainous town boasts of the important role it played during the Civil War, a role that has contributed many tales regarding the area's history, most notably accounts of John Brown's raid in 1859.

As West Virginia's tourism-industry potential expands, each of its many attractions grows more important. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park has accepted the challenge, and, with my assistance, is preparing for its 50th anniversary gala celebration.

The tourism industry in West Virginia has the potential of providing both job opportunities and investment throughout the state, and I shall continue working to help realize that potential.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's 130th Birthday

On June 20th--West Virginia Day-- our state celebrated its 130th birthday as the thirty-fifth state to join the Union.

This event did not occur easily. Through the strength and fortitude of many loyal northwestern Virginians, the area that we now call West Virginia began its break from the Confederacy in 1861.

Under the leadership of Governor Francis Pierpont and Waitman T. Willey of Morgantown and John Carlile of Clarksburg, the two U.S. Senators officially representing Virginia's nonsecessionist counties, West Virginia began its long road to establishment.

As a result of the undying efforts of Sen. Willey, West Virginia's petition for statehood was passed by the U.S. Senate by a vote of 23-17.

Ultimately, through Willey's relentless pursuit, and the urgings of Lincoln's cabinet, West Virginia was officially admitted to the Union on June 20, 1863.

The drive and dedication that Willey displayed during West Virginia's birth are characteristics that have never been forgotten by West Virginians, even today.

Throughout the last 130 years, West Virginians have drawn upon this self-sufficiency and desire to succeed, and have created new opportunities for their future.

In this regard, West Virginia has pledged itself to the development of new infrastructure, a move that not only benefits the state economy, but also contrib-

utes to the improvement of the nation. As chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have had the opportunity to help shepherd much of this development.

Among my projects that are marking a true "coming of age" for our state are the National Technology Transfer Center at Wheeling Jesuit College, the FBI Fingerprint Identification Division facility in Clarksburg, and the Robert C. Byrd Institute for Flexible Manufacturing Systems in Huntington.

These three projects will use the newest and most efficient research and technology to further enable West Virginia to compete in the global market and to provide the nation and the world with essential services.

These facilities, in addition to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife National Education and Training Center in Shepherdstown, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Laboratory in Morgantown, the Robert C. Byrd Center for Hardwoods Training and Manufacturing near Princeton, and countless others on the horizon, will provide for the West Virginians of tomorrow.

West Virginians should take pride that they have laid the necessary foundations to provide for both their present and their future, and that they have had the strength and fortitude to advance our state for generations to come.

Happy Birthday, West Virginia!



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Congratulations, West Virginia Scholars!

An article published recently in West Virginia newspapers gave me encouragement about our state's future: standardized test scores of West Virginia's students are on the rise.

Specifically, basic skills tests administered to the state's 3rd- and 6th-grade students to measure math, language, and reading proficiency improved by at least eight percentage points over the scores of last year's examinees.

These statistics follow on the heels of test scores released earlier this year for 9th- and 11th-graders on basic skills, which showed similar improvement over the previous year's scores.

The improvement in test scores of our West Virginia students strengthens my conviction that we must continue to encourage our young people to take full advantage of the educational opportunities that are available to them, and it helps to justify my optimism about the role they can play in the future of our state.

That optimism was reinforced recently when I announced the West Virginia recipients of the 1993 Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships.

The 45 West Virginia students named as this year's Byrd Scholars join 256 other young West Virginians who have received scholarships since the program was established seven years ago.

I authored legislation to create this scholarship program in order to encour-

age West Virginia high school graduates--and graduates from across the country--to further their educations. I was touched when my colleagues subsequently voted to name the scholarship program in my honor.

Under the guidelines of the program, scholarships are awarded on the basis of merit to students that have been accepted for enrollment at institutions of higher learning.

Originally a one-year scholarship, the program was expanded last year by Congress, at my request, to encompass four years, enabling this year's students to receive first-year scholarships of \$1,500 and to re-apply for the same amount for each of the following three years of their educations.

The scholarships, which are awarded to students in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, have been given to nearly 37,500 students nationwide.

I salute this year's Robert C. Byrd Scholars as they prepare to embark upon another important leg in their academic journeys.

Indeed, these students have embraced the notion that education is one of the cornerstones upon which their future economic prosperity--and the prosperity of our state and nation--rests, and my efforts to build upon our educational foundations will continue to be a foremost priority in the coming years.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Celebrating Independence Keeping a Covenant

The freedoms that we as Americans currently enjoy and that we celebrate on Independence Day each year are the result of sacrifices of millions upon millions of Americans -- including thousands of our fellow West Virginians -- who surrendered their convenience, customary daily lives, and personal safety to place their lives on the line for all of us.

As Americans, we have an ongoing covenant with the veterans who have stood as vanguards against the forces of totalitarianism and dictatorship.

In my estimation, one seal of that covenant is our Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities.

In recent years, I have helped to obtain federal funds for better access and improved medical services for veterans throughout the state.

While in West Virginia recently, I participated in the dedication of a new Clinical Addition at the Huntington VA Medical Center, a facility for which I helped to obtain more than \$50 million in federal monies. The addition will provide state-of-the-art medical care to West Virginia veterans and other veterans of the tri-state region.

The Robert C. Byrd Clinical Addition, which nearly doubles the total size of the Huntington VA Medical Center, providing upgraded space for expanded cardiac services, and for the relocation of surgery, radiology, nuclear medicine, and intensive care, is the latest completed

of the four West Virginia veterans medical care facilities, for which I have helped to obtain federal funds.

I helped to secure more than \$75 million for the Martinsburg VA Medical Center replacement, which was activated in 1984, to bring to veterans in that area an upgraded facility for health care.

Through my efforts, additions were opened in 1989 at the Clarksburg VA Hospital. The construction provided expanded, upgraded space for inpatient and outpatient care. Since 1991, I have also added \$1.5 million to appropriation bills to launch and operate a pilot program, cooperatively conducted by the Clarksburg VA Medical Center and West Virginia University School of Medicine and Ruby Memorial Hospital. Through that program, West Virginia veterans, who otherwise would be sent to out-of-state facilities, are receiving specialized treatment, such as cataract surgery, closer to home and family.

A new addition to the Beckley VA Medical Center, currently under construction with federal money I helped to secure, will provide needed space for dental laboratories, a nuclear medicine unit, an outpatient psychiatry unit and various other services.

I shall continue to work for improved and accessible health care for the men and women who have fought to preserve for this nation the freedoms that we now enjoy. I salute our veterans.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Coal: The Contributions, The Challenges

Coal--and the raw power that it represents--is a common vein that runs through America's history, carrying blood to our nation's economic heart.

Of the many resources with which our country has been endowed, none has played a greater role in the development of America than the tremendous reserves of coal that lie beneath its surface.

Coal fueled America's transformation from an agrarian economy to an industrial powerhouse, supplying almost 80 percent of our nation's energy from the mid-19th century to the 1920's. Today, coal generates 56 percent of the electricity consumed in the United States.

Our nation turned to coal to power it through two world wars, and in the 1970's, when our country faced an oil embargo imposed by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, we looked to coal to help break our dependence on foreign energy.

Coal has a proud heritage and a bright future. I have every confidence that as we move into the 21st century, coal will continue to be used as the primary fuel for domestic power generation.

But coal faces challenges in the years ahead--challenges that I recently outlined for national coal industry officials during their annual meeting held in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia.

A growing concern

about the environment has made efforts to develop clean coal technologies--a move I spearheaded when I authored and obtained funding for the Clean Coal Technology program--a top priority. In fact, the future of coal use in America depends upon the development of new, cleaner methods of using fossil fuels.

I remain committed to seeking federal investment in programs to burn coal cleanly, but I caution that our budget deficits--now standing at more than \$4 trillion--will make efforts to find federal dollars for important initiatives, such as the clean coal technology program, increasingly difficult.

I am encouraged, however, by the remarks of Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary, who, during a recent Senate Appropriations subcommittee hearing that I chaired, assured me of her own commitment for the continued use and development of coal as a vital energy resource.

Secretary O'Leary described herself as a champion and a proponent of coal research and development programs, and I welcome her support in the endeavor to increase coal use.

Through the effort to provide federal resources for fossil fuel and clean coal programs--an undertaking to which I remain committed--coal can continue to play a major role in our economic future and in our quest for energy independence.

July 7, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Investing in West Virginia's Future

Recently, while participating in groundbreaking ceremonies for Charleston's Haddad Riverfront Park, I was struck by the contrast of the tranquil Kanawha River and the televised news accounts of the raging Mississippi River hundreds of miles to the west.

The heart-wrenching pictures of the devastating floods along the Mississippi basin—where thousands of acres of farmland have been rendered virtually useless, and towns and businesses have been left under muddy water—are a poignant reminder of nature's fury and the havoc that can be wrought when steps are not taken to tame her.

Along the peaceful Kanawha, as the assembled audience prepared for the construction of a beautiful new recreation area, I was reminded, too, that investments in the nation's infrastructure are multi-faceted and far-reaching, and that their original cost is often dwarfed by the future dividends that they pay.

Consider, for example, the towns of Rock Island, Illinois, and Davenport, Iowa. Rock Island's community leaders chose to erect floodwalls to protect their town against a raging Mississippi. As a result, damage there has been minimal. Davenport took the opposite course, and the lack of flood protection in that community has resulted in massive damage to the town's waterfront neighborhoods and business district.

Now consider West Virginia. Through the foresight of an earlier generation, a flood-control dam was built on the New River above Charleston--the Blue-

stone Dam at Hinton--and other dams were built on the Elk River at Sutton and on the Gauley River near Summersville. These projects tamed the Kanawha River, just as other infrastructure investments south of Charleston tamed the Guyandotte and are helping channel into peacefulness the Tug Fork River.

I believe in investing in our future through such infrastructure projects, and I have steered federal funds to West Virginia to make those kinds of investments. Indeed, public investments in better facilities and services are investments not only in our future, but also in the futures of our children.

For instance, through the Appalachian Corridor network and other highway projects, West Virginia is being opened to new economic possibilities and to an improved life for West Virginians in all corners of our state.

Through other federally funded initiatives that I have helped to gain -- improvements to airports, waterways, and public facilities and services; and projects to expand business, industry, and the federal government's presence in West Virginia -- I am working with West Virginians to plant the seeds for future growth in our state.

Together, West Virginians have joined hands to make the journey into the future, and we can all be justifiably proud of the steps we have taken to prepare West Virginia to meet the challenges that lie in the years ahead for us and for our children.

27 1995



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Meeting the "ChalleNGe"

A unique program that holds great promise for a group of young people too often ignored--our high school dropouts--will soon be underway in West Virginia.

Beginning this fall, Preston County's Camp Dawson will be the site of a remarkable undertaking known as the West Virginia Mountaineer "ChalleNGe" program--an initiative to provide young West Virginians who have given up on their high school educations a second chance to earn a diploma.

At my urging, the National Guard Bureau two years ago developed the "ChalleNGe" program, which was financed in part by \$2 million that I added to a federal appropriation bill. The program has been expanded this year and will operate in ten locations across the country, including Camp Dawson.

In addition to being given a chance to earn a GED/high school equivalency diploma, the 16- to 18-year-old cadets, as they will be called, will undergo a rigorous, 5-month resident program to help them gain vital job and life skills.

The resident program will be followed by a year-long mentoring relationship with a specially trained Guard member from each youth's community.

Participants in the Camp Dawson program must be legal U.S. residents as well as residents of West Virginia, and they must be drug-free and free of felony conviction.

Two "ChalleNGe" sessions are planned at Camp Dawson, with 68 cadets taking part in each session. Potential cadets must be nominated by a member of their local community and must then be selected for the program by a state-appointed committee.

The National Guard has set up a toll-free number--1-800-79-GUARD--for those interested in receiving additional information on the "ChalleNGe" program.

The potential of all of West Virginia's young people is too worthwhile to be lost. The Camp Dawson "ChalleNGe" program affords one more opportunity to help a group of West Virginia teenagers who might otherwise "slip through the cracks" by cultivating their talents and equipping them with necessary life skills.

The twenty-first century is almost upon us. The Camp Dawson "ChalleNGe" program will provide a promising new source of young leaders another chance to create even more opportunities for themselves and for West Virginia as the new century dawns.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A First Step Toward More Civilized TV Programming

In a tardy admission that television viewing might impact children negatively, and in response to growing outcries against gratuitous sensationalism and violence, ABC, NBC, CBS, and Fox television networks have agreed to air parental warnings before programs featuring excessive mayhem, and to issue similar advisories in printed program guides.

For years, the networks denied that television violence affected the behavior of young viewers — this in spite of a 1982 report by the National Institutes of Health stating, "After 10 years of research, the consensus among most of the research community is that violence does lead to aggressive behavior by children and teenagers who watch the programs."

In fact, television is no neutral eye peering out into reality and transmitting back to its viewers an objective picture of that reality.

All television pro-

grams, producers, writers, and directors have a point of view that they are trying to convey to their audiences. Unfortunately, too many artisans in the television industry substitute their own jaundiced and sensationalized versions of life for reality, all in the name of higher ratings and higher profits.

For many young people, life as presented over the television tube is as real as the lives they perceive in their homes and local communities.

I commend the television networks on their decision to give parents more warning about upcoming program violence.

But that gesture is just the first step toward more civilized television airways — channels that belong to the American people, not to any of the networks.

I urge television programmers to pursue additional avenues to purge from the airwaves gratuitously violent programming.

July 28, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Immigration Reform Now!

The United States is a nation that was founded by immigrants.

Men and women seeking a way of life free of religious, political, and personal persecution and oppression have been central to American history since the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock.

Unfortunately, the United States can no longer extend open arms to all those who seek entrance into our country in search of the opportunities that this nation once afforded all who made it to our shores.

Any regular viewer of television newscasts is familiar with the spectacle of thousands upon thousands of illegal immigrants streaming across the ill-policed Mexican border or pathetically seeking to swim ashore by the hundreds from leaking, rusting vessels launched from China by criminal extortionists.

In addition, the United States has endured an unprecedented explosion of legal immigration in recent years.

In 1988, for example, legal immigrants admitted to the U.S. numbered approximately 600,000, while in 1991, more than 1.8 million legal immigrants were admitted, more than tripling the 1988 total.

Against that background, particularly in this era of continuing economic hardship for our own native citizens, the government's failure to stem the tide of hundreds of thousands of

immigrants is both unfair and irresponsible.

This irresponsibility is particularly acute when one considers that the segment of our citizens who suffer most from this inpouring are those Americans at the lower end of our economic scale -- unemployed, unskilled, semi-skilled, and sometimes poorly educated men and women who are now in danger of becoming a permanent underclass in our society.

As a first step toward reversing these trends, the Senate recently passed a federal appropriation bill that funds increased border patrols and detention centers, and new positions that will help to expedite and improve the processing of immigrants. Moreover, I am also cosponsoring legislation aimed at closing the asylum loophole through which have slipped untold numbers of immigrants, some of whom have reportedly conducted illegal terrorist activities against American citizens on our own shores.

In addition, the President has recently unveiled a proposal to tighten enforcement of immigration laws.

These measures mark an excellent start toward correcting and reversing some of our out-of-control immigration problems. Further, they represent a positive step toward bolstering our security against terrorists seeking bogus asylum here and toward protecting jobs for Americans.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Carving Out Our Future

Work is now underway for the first phase of construction of the Robert C. Byrd Hardwood Technology Center, placing West Virginia's state-of-the-art wood-products research and training facility on the fast track toward operation.

A West Virginia site was recommended as the location for this new center in 1990, based on the findings of feasibility studies, which concluded that the property near Gardner, Mercer County, was central to the spectrum of wood-products businesses that would benefit from the facility.

The hardwood center is a natural extension of work I have been conducting on several fronts to help provide for West Virginians the opportunities and resources to compete successfully for a greater share of national and international business in this era of the global marketplace.

The twofold aim of this new facility is to help our state and national wood-working industry apply the most advanced hardwood-products manufacturing techniques and to develop a pool of U.S. workers trained in the use of new, high-technology machinery.

Southern West Virginia rests squarely in the center of one of the earth's most

abundant, productive, and renewable timber-producing areas. Recognizing our state's historic advantages as a producer of quality hardwood trees, I added \$9 million to appropriations bills to construct and develop this center, and to equip it with the latest advanced flexible manufacturing technology -- robotics.

The Byrd Center will stand on a 3-acre site adjacent to the U.S. Forest Service Advanced Hardwood Resource Center.

The first construction phase will consist of a 22,000-square-foot, one-story structure to provide laboratory and workshop space and initial room for offices and training.

Long range plans call for a multi-purpose complex that will house a time-shared manufacturing operation, classrooms, and dormitories to accommodate training and education, advanced-technology research, and industry seminars.

Through wise, balanced, farsighted investments, such as the hardwood center, I hope to ensure that West Virginians can carve out new and expanded job opportunities, and an improved standard of living and higher quality of life.

August 11, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Joining the National Park Service and the Community in a New Way

The Wheeling area has played a significant part in the history of West Virginia and in the history of the nation. In the early 1800's, Wheeling served as West Virginia's first state capital, as well as the western terminus of the National Road, playing an important role in the westward journey of nineteenth-century settlers.

Wheeling continued its service to the expansion of the United States through its role as an inland port, where many of the region's major products, including iron, steel, textiles, boats, glass, cigars, and chewing tobacco, could be shipped along the Ohio River. This port helped the state of West Virginia to increase its industrial development and its economic capabilities by impressive amounts.

It is because Wheeling has played such an integral part in the development and economic prosperity of our state that I recently introduced legislation to authorize the National Park Service to establish the Wheeling National Heritage Area. Since 1989, I have added \$4.8 million to appropriation bills to aid in the development of the Wheeling National Heritage Area.

This proposal creates a unique and mutually beneficial relationship between the Wheeling community and the National Park Ser-

vice. It will allow the community to play a significant and leading role in the establishment, development, and ultimate success of this national heritage area.

The Wheeling National Heritage Area, once approved, will be a self-sustaining unit managed by the local community. Through the financial assistance of federal, state, local, and private sources, the Area will not only contribute to the expansion of the National Park system, but will also enhance West Virginia development.

I have always acknowledged the importance of investment in West Virginia, as well as the development and expansion of our industry and tourism potential. But at the same time, the success of such developments relies on the willingness and ability of my fellow West Virginians to build on the foundations, which I have helped to lay.

I will continue to work toward the realization of this investment and toward the establishment of the Wheeling National Heritage Area. It is a program, and a concept, which will enable this nation to recognize the importance of local history while still granting the local community the ability to steer the Heritage Area in the direction most beneficial to the community and the nation.

August 18, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Hotline Help

West Virginians often have questions about Federal programs and services, and about regulations and opportunities that may affect them directly. Sometimes help is just a phone call away, and I have found that the following list of toll-free Federal hotlines can help West Virginians find answers to some of their questions.

Retired Army Pay Problems	1-800-428-2290
Cancer Hotline (National)	1-800-4-CANCER
Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	
Medicare Information	1-800-638-6833
Medical Scholarship Information	1-800-638-0824
National Runaway Switchboard	1-800-621-4000
(For parents and runaways to leave messages)	
Consumer Product Safety Commission ...	1-800-638-CPSC
(Product recall, complaints, fact sheets)	
Financial Aid for College Students (National)	
Department of Education	1-800-433-3243
National Guard "ChalleNGe" Program	1-800-529-7700
AIDS Hotline (National)	1-800-342-AIDS
(HIV and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome Information)	
Pesticide Emergency Information Clearinghouse ...	1-800-858-PEST
National Health Information Center	1-800-336-4797
Hill-Burton Free Hospital Care Hotline	1-800-638-0742
Small Business Administration	1-800-827-5722
Social Security Administration	1-800-772-1213
West Virginia Veterans Affairs Office	1-800-827-1000
Partnership for a Drug-Free America	1-800-662-HELP
(Drug-abuse help and information)	
Safe Drinking Water Hotline	1-800-426-4791
Hazardous Waste and Superfund Information ...	1-800-424-9346
Transportation Department	1-800-424-9393
(Auto-safety information and complaints)	
Washington, D.C., Central Reservation Center	1-800-554-2220
(Information on lodging in the Nation's Capital)	

August 25, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Pioneering a High-Tech Process To Benefit West Virginia Steel

During a recent trip to West Virginia, I participated in a ceremony at Weirton Steel in Hancock County that was an example of my efforts to help our state's industries become more competitive through the use of high-technology.

At that ceremony, I joined Weirton Steel officials and employees in launching an advanced steel-making process known as the Logistics and Integrated Scheduling--or L&IS--system.

This computerized system--for which I have added nearly \$9 million to federal appropriation bills--will allow Weirton Steel to schedule and track orders, raw materials, inventory levels, production, equipment status and availability, work in progress, shipments, and customer feedback.

The L&IS system will enable the company to dramatically reduce waste, saving the steel industry energy and money and making Weirton Steel more competitive in world markets.

I salute the men and women at Weirton Steel who are pioneering the development of this pilot project, which is being watched throughout the American steel industry with the hope that reduced costs realized through Weirton's new process will translate into production-

cost reductions industry-wide. These cost savings could help give American steel producers advantages in the global market, thus creating and preserving more American steelworkers' jobs.

The exciting developments at Weirton Steel are evidence of one important law of practical science: Technology never stands still.

Indeed, across our country, many businesses have gone under because of their inability to keep up with the cutthroat competition of foreign companies that use the newest technologies.

The computerized manufacturing system that has been set in place at Weirton will help give that company an advance-guard position in twenty-first century steel-making, and put West Virginia in the front ranks of a changing American steel industry.

Encouragingly, long-time West Virginia industries like Weirton Steel are taking their place as pioneers of emerging new technologies that promise to preserve and create good-paying jobs in West Virginia. I will continue doing all that I can to help our state's industries to achieve greater competitive expertise in the years ahead.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Showcasing West Virginia's Wildlife

West Virginia's rugged beauty and abundant wildlife have long attracted visitors to our state.

With the establishment of the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, West Virginia will soon be home to a second area specially set aside to showcase and preserve her natural riches.

The establishment of West Virginia's first wildlife refuge -- the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge -- was set into motion when I added \$850,000 to a fiscal 1990 federal appropriations bill to begin the purchase of 13 islands to serve as the core of the refuge. Since that time, I have added an additional \$2.25 million to expand the refuge's reach.

Recently, to help initiate the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, West Virginia's second refuge, I secured \$2 million in federal funding in a pending appropriations bill, including \$1 million I added above the House-approved funding level of \$1 million.

The formation of these refuges is an important step toward ensuring the protection of our state's wildlife for generations to come.

When land acquisition is completed, our Ohio River refuge is expected to consist of more than 25 islands along a 362-mile stretch of the Ohio River, extending from the tip of West Virginia's Northern

Panhandle south to Mason County.

Rich in biological significance, the islands represent a mosaic of bottomland hardwoods, wetlands, and various life forms rare to the area. The islands also serve as home to migratory birds such as the black duck and the king rail, as well as to the endangered pink musket mussel.

The Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge is also an area of great biological importance, both to West Virginia and to the nation as a whole.

The valley's 6,700 acres of wetlands host an ecosystem that is usually native to areas much farther north, with more than 580 different species of plants and more than 280 kinds of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fishes.

Preserving nature while taking advantage of the rich natural resources that nature boasts is often a balancing act.

The establishment of the Ohio River Islands and Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuges, which are to serve as protected areas that will also contribute to the tourism industry, will stand as tangible evidence that West Virginians have a deep reverence for protecting the unique character of our land, even as we strive to make responsible use of our natural resources to further West Virginia's economic development.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Breaking Ground for the Future

I recently took part in groundbreaking ceremonies in Wheeling for a pair of high-technology projects that I helped initiate in order to open up a new avenue of prosperity in West Virginia.

The ceremonies marked another step in providing facilities for the National Technology Transfer Center (NTTC) and the Classroom of the Future, NASA-related projects that will be headquartered at Wheeling Jesuit College but that will extend their reach throughout West Virginia and far beyond our borders.

As I stood on the ground that will be the future home of these two facilities, I shared with gathered West Virginians my belief that high-technology education and applications will become an increasingly important part of West Virginia's economic future.

The NTTC--for which I added \$13.5 million in construction funding to an appropriation bill--will give the private sector access to the new technologies spinning out of our space program and other federal projects.

Through the NTTC's rapid transfer of advanced technology from the public to the private sector, our companies will have a better shot at gaining a competitive edge in the world marketplace.

Another critical element in our country's ability to compete worldwide is education, particularly in the

high-tech disciplines.

Long a champion of a formal education in the so-called "basics," I also hold the firm conviction that, in this era of high-technology and world markets, being educationally literate in the traditional sense is no longer a guarantee of job readiness. Indeed, many of today's students must emerge from school at least computer literate if they are to avoid being passed by the competition.

The Classroom of the Future--which was initiated with funding obtained by Congressman Alan Mollohan and which will be built with \$10 million that I added to federal appropriations bills--will be charged with devising methods to improve the way in which young Americans learn mathematics, science, and aerospace studies.

By applying the technologies gleaned from the space program to math and science teaching, the Classroom of the Future will better prepare the teachers of tomorrow's scientists, technologists, and technicians to impart the knowledge that will be critical to the future success of our young Americans.

The NTTC and the Classroom of the Future hold great promise for the West Virginians of today and tomorrow, and I am gratified that in breaking ground for these two projects, we are continuing to take steps to meet the challenges of the future.

September 15, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Crime Fighting In West Virginia

Two spokes in the nation's criminal justice wheel--inextricably linked--were on display in West Virginia recently when ground was broken for the new Raleigh County Federal Prison and when the final bolt was installed on the steel super-structure for the new FBI facility in Harrison County.

I was on hand for both ceremonies, and I took pride in seeing two of my initiatives for our state moving forward toward completion. Both projects will mean a safer future for the citizens in our state and across the nation.

The Raleigh County Federal prison, which will house 1,152 medium-security beds and 384 minimum-security beds, is being built with \$80 million in federal funding that I added to an appropriations bill. When completed, the new prison will provide an estimated 325 jobs and an annual economic impact of \$22 million in payroll and local purchases.

In spite of the positive impact that this federal prison will make on the economy of southern West Virginia, no one can rejoice that our society is being forced to build more and more prisons to house more and more criminals and law-

breakers.

But until our society finds a way to bring the escalating crime rate under control, facilities like the new federal prison in Beckley will be essential to ensure the security and safety of millions of Americans.

Essential, too, will be facilities like the FBI's new automated Fingerprint Identification Division, which is on its way to completion in Harrison County and which will bring with it an estimated 2,500 jobs and an annual payroll of \$75 million.

The new FBI facility, for which I have added more than \$400 million to federal appropriations bills, will provide police with a rapid-fire, electronic method of checking fingerprints of suspected law-breakers.

With this state-of-the-art capability, our law enforcement personnel will enjoy a new level of identification and tracking that will help to more easily place dangerous criminals behind bars.

West Virginia is poised to make a unique contribution to our nation's criminal justice system, and I look forward to completion of both the FBI facility and Raleigh County's new federal prison.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Crown Jewel Of American Democracy

Recently, I participated in a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C.

Perhaps no other structure in our country is more revered than is our national capitol.

From its beginning, the U.S. Capitol Building has been both a practical facility and the symbol of the living institution that physically resides here -- the United States Congress -- the so-called "people's branch of government" under our Constitution.

How ironic, however, that some Americans -- even those elected to serve in Congress -- can so vehemently attack the one institution in our system of government in which the voters themselves enjoy and exercise their greatest influence -- the Congress.

In particular, I shudder at the misdirected attacks that advocate the weakening of Congress to the favor of the executive branch.

Democracy is a living form of government that must constantly adjust to the demands placed upon it by a changing society, and Congress is the one institution in our democracy through which American citizens reshape our coun-

try to meet rising challenges and to take advantage of emerging opportunities.

Since becoming a member of Congress, I have supported a number of reforms, such as televised Senate debates.

But some so-called "reforms" recently suggested -- for example, giving the President a line-item veto, which would have the effect of diminishing the strength and influence of Senators from small states like West Virginia -- cut at the very heart of the intentions of the Founding Fathers in establishing Congress as an independent center of power in a system of governmental "checks and balances."

Indeed, Congress is the jewel in America's governmental and constitutional crown. Congress is the institution established by the Constitution in which the regularly elected representatives of the American people can wrestle, struggle, debate, and decide the destiny of our country.

In celebrating the 200th anniversary of a sacred American building, let us not forget to celebrate the even greater sacredness of that branch of government that performs its appointed democratic duties in that building.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Coming of Age of Software Valley

Among a parent's proudest moments are those events that mark a "coming of age" in lives of their children--a graduation ceremony, a wedding, the birth of a grandchild. During such times, a parent often reflects on the years of preparation and activity that have preceded the milestone event.

Such was my experience recently when the Software Valley Corporation Board of Directors voted to act as a business entity and compete for federal contracts, a decision that made it necessary for me to sever my official ties with Software Valley.

As one of the original founders of the non-profit Software Valley movement more than eight years ago, I viewed the Corporation's decision to embark upon this new course with a mixture of pride and excitement.

In 1985, West Virginia's Software Valley movement was a kernel of an idea--a vision that with a coordinated effort, West Virginia could be home to a high-tech infrastructure that would bring jobs to the state and diversity to West Virginia's economic base.

By gathering together fledgling high-tech businesses and academicians under a single umbrella known as Software Valley--and with donations from interested large businesses--the Software Valley Corporation grew into the state's clearinghouse for inquiries on West Virginia's high-

tech capabilities.

Software Valley's reach grew beyond that, however, as it launched a series of statewide conferences--which I have hosted--to help West Virginians plug into the world of high-tech, and to assist our small businesses in their efforts to obtain federal contracts. The twelfth in that series of Software Valley conferences will be held October 20 and 21 in Huntington, and will give West Virginians yet another opportunity to benefit from the gathered expertise of the Software Valley Corporation.

Software Valley also has supported efforts by state universities and colleges to sharpen their high-tech focus in terms of curricula and research in order to better prepare West Virginia students for the high-tech challenges of the future.

Software Valley is now poised to take a giant step forward by entering the competition for federal contracts, and while my position as chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee makes it necessary for me to step down from an official role with Software Valley, I will continue to enthusiastically support the Corporation and its goals.

Software Valley is, indeed, coming of age, and as I look back in pride to the part I played in launching West Virginia's Software Valley movement, I wish the Corporation the best of luck in its future endeavors.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Placing Blame Where It Belongs

Growing up as I did in the coal fields of Southern West Virginia during the 1920's and 1930's, I learned the value -- indeed, the imperative -- of self-discipline, particularly in the face of adversity and hardship, as well as the values of hard work, perseverance, integrity, conscience, and numerous other qualities on which America was built by our forbearers.

For those reasons, I am especially concerned about a growing trend in our society -- a trend that, perhaps more than any outside foe or foreign aggressor, threatens the future of our country.

As nightly viewing of television newscasts illustrates, we are currently enduring a nearly unprecedented crime epidemic in our country.

Unfortunately, under a pseudo-scientific guise, some self-anointed experts seem bent on excusing every criminal for the most heinous of crimes and blaming "society" for the acts of every flawed personality, psychopath, rapist, or murderer.

Before it is too late, I appeal for a return to yardsticks by which individual men and women are judged by their own conduct, and by which criminals are

judged by their behavior.

I appeal for the rejection of pseudo-sciences that blame the police for the actions of murderers and thieves, and that blame society for the outrages of punks and ruffians against peaceful citizens and lawful institutions.

West Virginia and America were not built on excuses, and no society can survive by excusing those who will not conform their conduct to standards of conscience available to all rational people.

Further, I appeal for the restoration of values that teach children right from wrong; that teach respect for the lives and property of others; that teach citizenship in our communities; that teach love of our state and country; that teach the importance of hard work and honesty; that teach self-discipline and one's responsibility for one's own actions, one's own choices, and one's own conscience; and, most important, that teach a respect for the deep spiritual values and religious faith on which all of our rights and laws are ultimately based.

To do less is to betray the foundations that have made this the greatest nation in history.

October 13, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Stations in West Virginia's Life-Saving Network

I recently announced the expansion of a medical program that is telecasting health services for thousands of West Virginians living primarily in rural areas -- the Mountaineer Doctor Television network (MDTV).

Already operating at hospitals in New Martinsville, Wetzel County; Petersburg, Grant County; and Elkins, Randolph County, the MDTV network is adding two new "stations" -- St. Joseph's Hospital in Buckhannon, Upshur County; and Boone Memorial Hospital in Madison, Boone County.

Since 1991, I have added more than \$2.4 million to federal funding bills -- including \$800,000 in fiscal 1994 legislation -- to develop and expand this life-saving network.

This two-way televised system links physicians and other health-care providers in rural settings with medical and technological resources at the Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences Center at West Virginia University in Morgantown and in Charleston.

MDTV transmits audio and video signals across our state over telephone lines. Cameras and television monitors at each connected

site permit 24-hour-a-day communications for patient medical consultations, emergency assistance, continuing medical-education programs, student and resident educational programs, and other services.

I have vivid memories from my childhood in the coalfields of Southern West Virginia of serious disfiguring injuries and fatalities resulting from coal mine accidents and of deaths brought on by illnesses that might have been successfully treated with adequate medical services.

These early experiences spurred my commitment to help improve the quality and accessibility of health care for all West Virginians, particularly West Virginians living long distances from hospitals and medical centers that offer specialized treatment.

I am excited about the possibilities for more accessible care that the revolutionary MDTV system affords thousands of West Virginians living in our state's rural areas, enabling medical specialists and local physicians to examine patients and consult on treatment across wide distances, and I look forward to the further expansion of this network.

October 20, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia Identified As Low-Crime Leader

For the twentieth year in a row, West Virginia has achieved the distinction of having the nation's lowest overall crime rate.

West Virginians should take pride in the fact that for two decades our state has been recognized nationally as America's most crime-free place in which to live, according to statistics compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

This distinction has been one of the factors--coupled with our talented work force, low cost of living, and outstanding quality of life--that I have used to help promote West Virginia to federal agencies as a location for some of their operations.

Interestingly, the lowest crime state in the nation will soon be home to a federal facility that promises to revolutionize the national war against crime--the FBI's Fingerprint Identification Division, now under construction in Harrison County.

As this new facility takes shape on the Clarksburg horizon--being developed with the more than \$400 million that I have obtained in federal funding bills since 1989--I am thinking ahead to the day when the building will be ready for the installation of the heart and arteries of the identification division: the technologically advanced computer network that will modernize the way

that law enforcement personnel track criminals.

For that reason, I sought \$84.4 million in federal funding this year for the development of the equipment and programming that will give crime fighters nearly instant access to criminal identification information, and I am pleased to report that this funding was included in a bill that has received final congressional approval and has been signed into law.

When completed and fully occupied, the Identification Division's new complex, according to the FBI, will house approximately 2,500 employees--80 percent of whom are expected to be West Virginians--with an annual estimated impact on the economy of North Central West Virginia of roughly \$75 million.

Already, the FBI is operating two satellite facilities in Clarksburg and Fairmont which are staffed by more than 350 employees, of whom about 285 have been hired locally. The main complex will be completed in mid-1995, according to FBI estimates.

With all West Virginians, I anticipate that completion with enthusiasm, and I look forward to the numerous contributions that the FBI's Identification Division and its employees will make to West Virginia's economy, culture, and community life in the years ahead.

October 27, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Outcries Against Television Violence

A recent incident in which a mother accused an MTV cartoon series of inspiring her young son to set fire to the family's mobile home, killing her infant daughter, has reignited the perennial debate about the impact of television violence on American society.

In this instance, none less than the U.S. Attorney General and a Senate panel chairman have suggested government intervention unless television executives police themselves with regard to the violence in television programming.

Not unexpectedly, self-serving voices from within the television industry have been raised, protesting the outcry against gratuitous television violence as contrary to constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and artistic expression.

Other defenders of the status quo in television go so far as to assert that the graphic depiction of violence on television has no influence on violence and crime in society at large.

I disagree with that position.

In fact, I assert that be-

ing exposed regularly to violence, pornography, and perversion builds in viewers a greater acceptance of such behaviors, and too often ends in such once unacceptable activities' becoming normal for many people, in spite of their consequences on the quality of life in local communities.

Unfortunately, television -- perhaps the most powerful medium of communication ever developed -- is gnawing away at the moral fabric of our society and culture, numbing our sense of morality, and rotting the quality of our day-to-day speech and manners.

If the television industry does not relish censorship and criticism, let the decisionmakers in that industry learn self-restraint and conscience, or let them risk the imposition of restraints from the outside.

For the television industry to act less responsibly is to gamble with America's moral future and the lives of millions whose destiny will be largely determined by the values cultivated by television programming.

November 3, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Paving the Way to Prosperity

For generations, we West Virginians have looked to our coal-filled, forested Appalachias Mountains as the chief source of our livelihoods. Those same mountains--that wrap around us like a fortress of beauty and tranquility--have provided us comfortable harbor over the years.

But, for all the wonders they have brought us, our mountain guardians have sometimes obstructed the path to economic expansion, both in West Virginia and throughout the Appalachian states.

In 1965, with the establishment of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), our nation embarked on an effort to conquer poverty in the mountains of Appalachia.

The cornerstone of that program was the ARC Corridor Highway system, a network of modern roadways that was intended literally to pave the way to greater economic opportunity throughout the 13-state Appalachian region.

I believe that the ARC's mission--begun nearly three decades ago when a Blue Ribbon Commission was appointed to map out the Appalachian corridor highways--is as important today as it was back in 1965. For that reason, I have dedicated myself to adding millions to federal funding bills to ensure that construction of West Virginia's ARC highways, with costs averaging \$10 million to \$12 million per mile, moves forward.

As a result, West Virginia's corridor highways are becoming a reality. Last year, I added the

final chunk of federal funding needed--\$80 million--to complete Corridor G, a vital link between Charleston and Logan and Williamson. In total, I added more than \$328 million to federal bills over four years for Corridor G.

And in the past two years, I have added a total of \$175 million to appropriations bills to complete the federal government's portion of four-laning Route 19, or Corridor L, from Sutton in Braxton County to Beckley in Raleigh County.

Since 1989, I have also added \$10 million for initial work on the Parkersburg Bypass of Corridor D and over \$160 million for sections of Corridor H, from Buckhannon, Upshur County, to east of Elkins.

I believe in the Appalachian Corridor highway network and the promise that it holds for West Virginia. With better roads, West Virginia products can be moved to market more economically. Lower transportation costs can attract business and industry to the state.

But the benefits of good roads do not stop there. Improved transportation also invites tourists across our borders, bringing tourism dollars into our economy. And better, more modern roads save lives.

As every new piece of West Virginia's corridor system is put into place, I become increasingly convinced of the importance of finishing this network, not only to West Virginia and the twelve other Appalachian states, but also to the entire nation.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Signs of West Virginia's Economic Spring

Like a farmer surveying his field for signs of sprouting seed, I regularly look for evidence that my initiatives for West Virginia's economic growth are taking root.

One such sign recently appeared in an issue of U.S. News and World Report.

The magazine published a list ranking all 50 states in order of their economic performance since early 1991. The list was intended to provide a glimpse at which states are best managing their recovery from the recession and how they are doing it.

How did West Virginia stack up? Our state was listed as having the 11th strongest overall performance.

While this ranking does not suggest that West Virginia's economic crop is mature or that our seedlings are without need of further nurturing, it does provide a clear indication that we are headed in the right direction, and that is encouraging news.

In explaining West Virginia's standing, the magazine pointed to a broadening of the state's economic base, mentioning growth in construction and government jobs. Special note was made of the jobs

that will come with the FBI Fingerprint Identification Complex and the NASA facilities that I am shepherding to West Virginia.

While these facilities--and many of my other projects for West Virginia--are in the early stages of development, they serve as visible signs that the cultivation of our economic fields is well underway.

Just as a plant spreads by sending out runners, my ongoing initiatives in West Virginia are spurring growth beyond the facilities they occupy and the towns they call home.

For instance, when the FBI's Fingerprint Identification Division in Clarksburg is fully operational--sometime in 1998--an estimated \$75 million will be pumped into the economy of north central West Virginia each year, translating into an economic boost for area businesses--from automobile dealerships to gasoline stations, barbershops to butchershops, grocery stores to area restaurants.

I am encouraged by the signs of economic growth we are seeing in our state, and I will continue tending my West Virginia "crops" that are beginning to bear fruit.

November 17, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Another Building Block for 21st Century West Virginia

For more than a century, West Virginia's economy -- the engine that created jobs for our parents and grandparents and underwrote the way of solid family life and spiritual values that distinguish our state nationwide -- has rested on heavy manufacturing and natural-resource extraction.

Since the 1950's, however, a number of factors -- increased international competition, emerging high technologies, changing energy demands, and automation, to name a few -- have combined to reduce job opportunities in our state and forever alter West Virginia's industrial base.

Sensing such changes, some years ago, I conceived the vision of a 21st century West Virginia that would enjoy the dividends of a 21st century economy.

My vision for West Virginia comprises a diversified economy that frees us from the perennial boom-or-bust dilemmas of the past -- a diversified economy that includes improved highways, increased opportunities in tourism, improved education, better health care for our citizens, expanding high-technology and research enterprises, and broader job prospects for our young people.

In pursuing that goal, for example, I am helping to put into place in north central West Virginia an important aerospace community that will tie our

state's future into the dawning, international space age, and that will make West Virginia a leader among the Middle Atlantic states in the aerospace industry.

Toward that end, I added approximately \$5.1 million in federal funds to make possible the construction of the National Aerospace Education Center at Benedum Airport in Harrison County, which I recently helped to formally dedicate.

Operated under the auspices of Fairmont State College, this facility will instruct up to 120 students per year in airplane maintenance and repair, making West Virginia the training nucleus of an occupation in which a reported 4,000 positions go unfilled each year.

Further, I worked with Congressman Alan Mollohan in recruiting the Grumman Corporation's fabrication and assembly plant to join in an expanding complex of such corporate neighbors as Pratt and Whitney, the Lockheed plant in Clarksburg, and others who have caught, or will catch, the vision of West Virginia's growing future in the aerospace industry.

In the years ahead, I shall continue working to diversify West Virginia's economy, to assure a more abundant future for people in all sections of our state.

November 24, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Added Resources for the War on Crime

According to a 1992 FBI survey, 29 percent of Americans have been either victims of crime or have had a family member who was a victim of crime in the three years prior to the survey; 55 percent of Americans fear that they will be crime victims in the future; and 86 percent list their falling victim to crime as an important personal fear.

Such concern is not academic.

Recent FBI statistics indicate that, while America's population has increased roughly 41 percent in 31 years, the national violent crime rate has leapt more than 500 percent in that same period, and the overall crime rate has jumped more than 300 percent.

Further, though West Virginia perennially enjoys the lowest overall crime rate in the nation, West Virginia's crime rate is rising along with the national rate.

In the face of escalating crime nationwide, I recently offered an amendment to a national anti-crime bill. My amendment, which the Senate adopted, establishes a \$22 billion trust fund to fight crime on a large-scale national basis.

My amendment nearly doubled the original size of the package, enabling the Senate to pass the largest comprehensive crime-fighting bill in our nation's history. The Senate bill must

still be reconciled with a House version.

The new trust fund would be made up of savings accrued over a five-year period from anticipated federal personnel reductions. The monies provided by my amendment are to be used to build additional regional federal prisons, jails, "boot camps," and other state and local facilities to lock up criminals.

In addition, my amendment will put 100,000 new police officers on the streets of our communities, where the war on crime is being waged.

Of course, the only lasting crime remedy is a restoration across our nation of real family and religious values, and the re-elevation of family life to the position it has traditionally served in the history of our country in shaping values and personalities and instilling a sense of responsibility in our children.

But our nation cannot merely wait until that day arrives to do something about the daily threat posed by the criminal element in America. We must act now, and the measures prescribed through my amendment are the kinds of steps we can take nationally to stem the growing tide of violent crime and to help free our citizens from the fear of becoming the next crime statistic.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Getting Back to Family Values

During November and December--as family members travel across the miles to share a Thanksgiving meal or to celebrate the December holidays with one another--the family unit takes its place on center stage.

The family is the matrix in which children are intended to be shaped into considerate, productive participants in the larger society--indeed, the first and most enduring lessons are those learned at home.

But sadly--and to the detriment of our society as a whole--the preeminence of the family is taking a back seat to lifestyles in which fast food substitutes for the family meal, and in which discussions around the dinner table are becoming a relic of the past.

Recently, Education Secretary Richard Riley echoed my sentiments when he urged American parents to spend more time with their children--to turn off the television set and talk with their sons and daughters.

The importance of maintaining strong families cannot be overstated, for it is here that consciences--the compass which steers men and women through the shoals of moral choice--are shaped and girls and boys are taught to respect others and to live in harmony with their neighbors.

In 1940, public school teachers across the nation listed the following as the chief violations of student behavior standards: talking out of turn, chewing gum in class, making noise, running

in the hallways, cutting into lines, dress code violations, and thoughtless littering.

In 1990, the most pressing behavioral concerns of our public school teachers across the country included drug abuse, alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy, suicide, rape, robbery, and assault.

In these shocking comparisons, the schools are but reflecting the overall moral deterioration in our society at large, and as violent crime increases in our country, the calls for tougher anti-crime measures have escalated.

Certainly, legislators have demonstrated their willingness to pass crime-fighting measures, as the Senate recently did. But people seriously concerned about stemming the tides of crime and murder in this country must realize that stricter laws are but substitutes for the real remedy for our crime epidemic.

If the decline of the family continues--and if our family structure fails to reassert responsibility for molding our children into thoughtful, law-abiding adults--no amount of laws will turn around the horrors that we now witness in our city streets, in the hallways of our school buildings, and in once peaceful communities across this nation.

Let us make 1994--and every year thereafter--the year of the family, and let us redouble our efforts to teach our children the cherished values upon which responsible adulthood is built.

December 8, 1993



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

An Ear to the Skies

Sometime during the next several weeks, motors in the base of the Green Bank Telescope will be activated, providing the first test of the equipment that will rotate the 15-million-pound listening device as it searches the skies in its quest to unravel the mysteries of deep outer space.

The upcoming test will mark an important milestone in the rebirth of the Pocahontas County telescope, an ultra-modern instrument which replaces a smaller, less technologically advanced device that collapsed in November, 1988.

The loss of the 300-foot radio telescope at Green Bank five years ago was felt far beyond its remote eastern West Virginia home. Scientists across the country gleaned valuable data from the depths of outer space for more than 25 years, thanks to the telescope.

But from that loss, West Virginia soon will gain a state-of-the-art radio telescope that will give our state a continuing and larger role in the scientific community's effort to learn about the universe.

Shortly after the radio telescope collapsed, I added \$75 million to a federal funding bill to build a new telescope. The new telescope will be equipped with an innovative laser ranging system--now being devel-

oped at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank--that will be able to detect any sag in the telescope structure caused by gravity or wind.

Although the telescope dish is the size of two football fields, it will have the precision of a fine watch. For example, if or when the sensors detect that some part of the telescope is out of alignment by even the thickness of a human hair, motors on the surface of the telescope--some 2,300 of them--will move it back to the correct position.

Another key element of the Green Bank Telescope--sensitive radio receivers that will amplify the faint radio signals collected by the telescope--is now being designed and built at Green Bank. Tests on the first of the many radio receivers that will be included on the telescope have been successfully completed.

According to the National Science Foundation, which serves as the funding agency for Green Bank operations, the new telescope should be completed sometime in 1995.

With its completion, the new Green Bank Telescope will begin scanning the skies for clues to the universe, giving West Virginia a unique place in mankind's continuing search for knowledge in the stars.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Sober Thoughts for the Holiday Season

According to a recent poll testing opinions of the people of our state, 73 percent of West Virginians are concerned about drug and alcohol abuse in our society, while 97 percent of those interviewed by the poll cited drug and alcohol abuse as contributing factors to our nation's increasing crime rate.

Based on those statistics, a majority of West Virginians should be particularly on their guard as we confront the approaching New Year's Weekend.

For most Americans, this New Year's Weekend will be somewhat routine--the usual football bowl games, family and friends enjoying warm fellowship, and then back to work on January 3.

But, unfortunately, again this year, a regrettable number of Americans will never be able to forget the tragedy that New Year's 1994 will become.

Those people will forever remember this New Year's holiday as the weekend on which they lost some loved one in a traffic death.

During New Year's Weekend 1993, scores of Americans lost their lives in traffic accidents.

New Year's Weekend 1990 -- the last year such national statistics were compiled -- 289 automobile deaths were tallied nationally.

In 1989, the New Year's automobile death total was 317.

In 1988, that figure was 375.

Unfortunately, if previous years' statistics are any guide, alcohol will again be involved in more than 50 percent of this New Year's automobile accident deaths.

The National Safety Council estimates that, in the past dozen years, more than a quarter-million Americans have lost their lives as a result of alcohol- and drug-related automobile accidents.

My hope is that these grim statistics will give pause to anyone who reads them and contemplates celebrating New Year's Eve away from their homes or who plans to be on the highway the night of December 31.

On New Year's Weekend 1993, West Virginia suffered 2 highway fatalities, while New Year's Weekend 1992 saw 4 West Virginia highway deaths, 3 of those alcohol-related.

In spite of those relatively low figures, those 6 deaths over two New Year's Weekends represent deep grief and loss for the families involved.

For New Year's 1994, stay alive.

As some would say, don't drink and drive.

As I would say, don't drink--period.

The grief you will avoid will be that of those you love the most, and who cherish your life above all others.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Year of Promise for West Virginia's Future

As 1993 draws to a close, I am looking back at the events of the year, gauging the progress of my work, and planning my next steps for putting into place foundations for West Virginia's economic growth and prosperity in the years ahead.

Over the past five years, as chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have been providing the building materials to help make West Virginia more competitive in the area of high-technology, thus more capable of successfully answering the challenges of the next century.

This year, I concentrated my appropriations efforts on ensuring that the many projects and programs that I have in the pipeline for West Virginia remain on track so that their benefits to West Virginia and the nation can be realized as soon and as fully as possible.

All told, 1993 was another very good year for West Virginia. My efforts this year included:

-- Adding \$104 million to two bills to complete the four-laning of the whole length of Corridor L, stretching from I-77 near Beckley, Raleigh County, to I-79 near Sutton, Braxton County;

-- Gaining another \$84.4 million for a state-of-the-art computer system to be housed at the FBI's new Fingerprint Identification Division complex -- under construction in Harrison County -- bringing to more than \$400 million the total

funding I have obtained for this national crime-fighting project;

-- Obtaining \$20 million for staff and equipment to keep up the pace of progress on the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Laboratory in Morgantown, bringing to nearly \$80 million the total monies I have secured for this facility;

-- Adding new funding to bolster West Virginia's high-technology capabilities, including \$4 million to continue the cutting-edge work of the Robert C. Byrd Institute for Flexible Manufacturing Systems at Huntington and \$21.4 million for the 3-M Metal Matrix Composite Model Factory at Middleway, Jefferson County;

-- Adding \$13.8 million for further development of the Wheeling National Heritage Area, including \$8.5 million for construction of a new transit facility; and

-- Adding \$1 million, making a total of \$2 million in funding approved this year, to begin the establishment of the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

Looking over this sampling of my 1993 endeavors, I feel a sense of accomplishment, seeing that my work is helping West Virginia progress toward a broader, more diverse economy.

Now, as I stand at the edge of a new year, I intend to continue to pursue every opportunity for a brighter future for all West Virginians.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A New Century -- A New Millennium

Today, we are less than seven years away from the year 2001 A.D. -- the first year of the 3rd Millennium.

In the 2nd Millennium A.D., West Virginia witnessed the end of the American Indian civilization, the westward migration of pioneers, and the full force of the Industrial Revolution, during which industrial titans developed our state's coal, timber, natural gas, and other natural resources.

As we verge on both a new century and a new millennium, I am concentrating my efforts on putting into place practical and far-sighted foundations for West Virginia's future, while, at the same time, being committed to preserving a heritage that is the matrix from which flow those qualities and strengths that render West Virginians genuinely unique among all other Americans.

Looking ahead, I believe that West Virginia's immediate future depends on continuing to modernize and extend our highway system and other modes of transportation to help overcome geographic obstacles that have sometimes deterred America's twentieth-century economic opportunities from coming to West Virginia.

Further, I believe that continued capitalization on

West Virginia's natural beauty offers us a rich opportunity through a developing tourism industry to accumulate resources that we will need to further improve life in our state.

Again, through promotion of high-technology initiatives like Software Valley, increased research at our colleges and universities, improved health care across our state, expanded flood control and water and sewer service, and upgraded river transportation facilities, my hope is to help develop a twenty-first century infrastructure upon which rising generations of young West Virginians can build more abundant, fuller lives.

But I offer one caveat.

The Scriptures caution, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Throughout its history, West Virginia has served as a model for the values, patriotism, and faith that have nourished our national life and sustained our souls.

Whatever the approaching new century and new millennium promise materially, my hope is that increased prosperity and enriched opportunities do not undercut those basic family and religious values that make West Virginians truly unique and great.

January 5, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Space Age Opportunities For West Virginia

West Virginia is standing on the threshold of the nation's space program, poised to play a part in the future of that important effort.

Through Fairmont's Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) facility--for which I added \$10 million to a federal spending bill--our state is linking up with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) on a high-tech initiative to test and validate computer software used in the space program.

Two recent NASA contracts--portions of which will be undertaken in Fairmont--underscore the promise and potential of the IV&V facility.

The first of those--a \$172 million contract that NASA is negotiating with TRW, Inc.--calls for the IV&V to perform an archiving function for NASA's Earth Observing System (EOS), providing researchers nationwide and worldwide with quick and easy access to data retrieved from outer space concerning environmental changes here on earth.

According to NASA, this \$172 million contract calls on TRW to develop, install, and test this on-ground system that will process, distribute, and store data from space for use by NASA and other research agencies. Much of this system itself will be housed at the IV&V facility, with

about two-thirds of the EOS Data and Operations Systems (EDOS) work being conducted in Fairmont.

The second NASA contract--for an estimated \$81 million--was awarded to a Virginia-based company, Intermetrics, Inc. Under the contract, staff at the IV&V facility will perform approximately \$30 million worth of work as it verifies and validates the EOS data and information network.

NASA officials tell me that this contract will mark the first time that it has selected an independent contractor to test, design, and evaluate ground system software development and overall system performance.

As many as 96 employees are expected to be in place at the IV&V facility by the end of 1994, with another 100-plus workers expected to be on the job there by fiscal 1998.

Together with high-technology research and development programs that I have helped attract to Wheeling, Martinsburg, Huntington, Morgantown, Clarksburg, Bluefield-Princeton, Weirton, and other West Virginia communities, the IV&V facility in Fairmont will more firmly tie West Virginia into the rising global and twenty-first century economy, as well as offering increased numbers of West Virginians professions, vocations, and jobs in high-technology, high-paying fields.

January 12, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's Role in the Search For Energy Alternatives

Power outages and calls for energy conservation accompanying the recent sub-zero temperatures in West Virginia and across the nation serve as reminders of the value of our energy resources and their importance to U.S. energy independence, domestic well-being, and national security.

Efforts to strengthen our energy independence, which have typically entailed exploration for new domestic fuel deposits, have grown to include studies for new, more efficient uses of existing energy resources found within our national borders.

In recent years, the call to shore up that independence while practicing environmentally kinder ways to harness energy has led to renewed and expanded research and development initiatives.

Among those initiatives is the national Clean Coal Technology program, which I established in 1984 to develop new methods for the clean burning of coal -- our nation's most abundant energy resource. Since its beginning, I have gained more than \$2.7 billion for the clean coal program.

Other innovative energy-expanding initiatives include programs for the development of alternatives to traditional petroleum-based transportation fuels. Methane, methanol, and propane, for example, are all being studied as possible alternative power sources for the automotive industry.

With \$1.5 million I added to a fiscal 1992 federal appropriations bill, West Virginia University (WVU) has established one such program, the first

phase of which is aimed at developing a model program and teaching materials for training technicians in vehicle conversion, maintenance, safety, and emissions testing procedures.

Any car owner can appreciate the value of having a well-trained auto technician available at the local garage.

The challenge of developing a viable broad-based alternative fuels vehicle industry relies, in part, on ensuring ready access to technicians trained to service these revolutionary vehicles.

According to WVU officials, the second phase of the program will implement the model, providing specialized training -- through classroom lectures and hands-on laboratory experience -- to educators at community colleges, vocational schools, and other institutions with auto technician programs. In other words, WVU will train the trainers.

In the long term, this program is intended to ensure that the pool of skilled trainers and technicians across the nation can keep up with the increasing demand for alternative fuel vehicles spurred by the implementation of the Clean Air Act and energy regulations requiring greater use of clean fuels.

Through initiatives such as the WVU-based alternative fuels vehicle training program and the national Clean Coal Technology program, I am working to power-up West Virginia's role in our nation's quest for energy independence.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Training Ground for West Virginia's Future

My efforts to put more education and training programs into place in West Virginia moved a giant step ahead recently with the release of nearly \$9 million that I added to a 1993 appropriations bill for a trio of education-related projects in our state.

These projects represent my continuing commitment to developing in West Virginia a network of training and education programs aimed at preparing West Virginians for the employment opportunities of tomorrow.

The first of these projects -- a new science and computer center at Shepherd College in Jefferson County -- will move forward with the release of \$4 million in construction monies that I added to the fiscal 1993 VA/ HUD appropriations bill.

This center will house facilities to train undergraduates in science programs such as chemistry, biology, and computer sciences to meet demands for trained applicants for several high-tech operations that I have attracted to the Eastern Panhandle recently, such as new computer facilities for the Internal Revenue Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.

A second chunk of funding -- in the amount of \$1.8 million -- was released for further development of the National Aerospace Education Center at the Benedum Airport complex in Bridgeport, Harrison County. This brings to \$5.1

million the total funding that I have added for this facility, which will serve as a training center for avionics and aviation maintenance personnel and which will be operated by Fairmont State College.

The Bridgeport facility will include classrooms, laboratories, and administrative and faculty offices to accommodate as many as 250 students and to host state, regional, and national conferences, workshops, and seminars on aviation-industry concerns.

The third West Virginia project for which my funding has just been made available is the renovation of existing facilities at Davis and Elkins College in Randolph County.

Approximately \$3.2 million that I added to the fiscal 1993 VA/ HUD appropriations bill will allow the college to establish an economic development and education center to offer expanded programs to train students entering the travel and tourism industries. All told, I have added \$4.1 million to federal funding bills to help Davis and Elkins College in its efforts to serve the training needs of West Virginia's growing tourism industry.

The completion of these three new West Virginia facilities will further broaden education and training opportunities in our state, and will help supply qualified men and women to meet the growing demands of promising and expanding industries in a fast-approaching 21st century West Virginia economy.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Immigration Reform Needed

For more than two centuries, the United States has been a haven for those seeking asylum from persecution in other lands.

Indeed, throughout our history, many refugees fleeing oppression at home have made vital contributions to, and played significant roles in, America's history.

Partly in response to that heritage, in 1980, for the first time, Congress codified U.S. asylum laws to provide a safe haven for those legitimately fearing for their lives under communist dictatorships and other totalitarian states abroad.

Unfortunately, in America's desire to aid those who legitimately fear for their lives under repressive regimes, Congress made it too easy for unscrupulous persons, primarily seeking a more convenient life, to falsify their situations and take advantage of America's good will by claiming unwarranted asylum privileges to circumvent regular U.S. immigration procedures.

In too many such cases, individuals under no threat at home have lied about their political, ethnic, or religious circumstances, claiming persecution or oppression, only to sneak through normal immigration routes with minimal processing, then to disappear into our population, never to be officially heard from again.

Our country no longer

enjoys limitless resources and unbounded acres ripe for unplanned settlement. More and more, immigration is placing ever-increasing pressures and demands on our already overburdened environment and economy, and on our health, welfare, and education systems.

Consequently, I recently cosponsored, and the Senate adopted, a proposal that our immigration laws be amended to stop the rampant abuse of our asylum laws.

However, I believe the time has come for review of more than just asylum procedures; all aspects of U.S. immigration law should be reexamined.

The Cold War is over, and democracy is replacing dictatorship in much of the world.

America does not have the resources to solve all of the problems facing people living in substandard conditions worldwide, nor to accept all those who wish to come to America for a better life. With a population of roughly 260 million people, growing national needs across the spectrum, and an anticipated federal budget deficit in this fiscal year of \$223 billion, we no longer enjoy the luxury of being able to take care of the requirements of our own population and, at the same time, keep our doors open for the rest of the world to move to our shores.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Free Exercise of Religion

The First Amendment to the Constitution declares, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;...."

Most Constitutional historians understand exactly the intent of the Founding Fathers in placing those words in the Bill of Rights. Under America's Colonial experience, some of the Original Thirteen Colonies had maintained tax-supported state churches. Likewise, the Founding Fathers knew that large numbers of Americans had come to this land to practice their faith free of persecution.

The religion clause of the First Amendment was meant to protect religion against government, not government against religion. Government neutrality in religion, which is what the First Amendment requires, is one thing; but hostility to religion by the government is quite another.

In recent decades, some people have turned the Bill of Rights on its head -- prayer excluded from schools, voluntary prayer by students excluded from commencement exercises, Christmas trees and menorahs prohibited from public property, all references to religion expunged from textbooks in public

schools. How does one classify those actions but as efforts "to prohibit the free exercise" of religion?

Indeed, ongoing efforts to exclude all expressions of religious faith from American public and civic life amount to nothing less than "a tyranny of the minority" -- an attempt by a small element of our population to deny to the vast majority of Americans the rights we are guaranteed under our Constitution.

Certainly, public funds should not be used to build church properties or to underwrite the cost of religious ceremonies.

But do silent prayers in the classroom, a child saying grace over her meal in a school cafeteria, or a Nativity scene or a menorah on a courthouse square equate to "an establishment of religion?"

In truth, if our country is to significantly turn around the contemporary plague of murders in our streets, violence in our schools, soaring illegitimate birth rates nationwide, epidemic drug abuse by all ages, and the alarming decay of our society, then we would do well to allow religious values to assume anew the place of honor and significance that the Founding Fathers intended.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Returning to Basics

During the recent Senate debate on the Goals 2000: Educate America bill, I added an amendment, which the Senate adopted, calling for renewed classroom emphasis on such "core" subjects as English, mathematics, science, U.S. history, civics, and geography.

The aim of this piece of legislation is to put America's public school system back on track -- a goal that nobody can guarantee reaching, but an effort on which much of the future of our country depends.

Throughout my career, I have been, and remain, a strong believer in the value and necessity of a good education.

But I am, and have long been, frustrated with the condition of public education in America.

And all across our country and -- as indicated by much of my mail -- throughout West Virginia, as well, parents, teachers, and business and civic leaders are also expressing a growing dissatisfaction with our public schools.

All too often, mediocrity has replaced excellence, with the "dumbing down" of textbooks and the desperate pursuit, too often, of

educational fads and false panaceas that bore and cheat students of the fruits of real education.

Teachers who want to teach and children who want to learn are being physically threatened, assaulted, and having their very lives endangered by thugs and punks who arrive at school armed with guns and knives.

How can dedicated teachers teach, and how can motivated children learn, under such circumstances and in such conditions?

Public education is obviously not what it should be. More to the point, public education is not what it must be if our country is to maintain its position of political and economic leadership in the world and if future generations of Americans are to have any hope of enjoying the standard of living that most Americans experience today.

We need to fix America's public education system, and one way to reach that goal is to get back to basics -- courses and disciplines of study that will challenge and excite young minds, and that will better outfit our children to meet the demands that their careers, the workplace, and the real world will place on them in the years ahead.

February 16, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A New Order of the Ages

These words, **Novus Ordo Seclorum**, are found on the reverse side of the Great Seal of the United States and on the back of every U.S. one dollar bill.

Translated from the Latin, "Novus Ordo Seclorum" means "A New Order of the Ages."

In fact, these words indicate the confidence of our Founding Fathers that the establishment of the new "United States of America" was the beginning not only of a new nation, but of a new era in human history, as well.

Indeed, the American Revolution did signify the beginning of a new political dispensation in world politics.

The words of the Declaration of Independence flew in the face of the dominant philosophy of government in Europe at the time: "The Divine Right of Kings."

According to the theory on which rested the monarchies of Britain, France, Austria, Spain, and the other European kingdoms, as well as the tsardom of the Russian empire, a monarch was divinely ordained to rule in any manner that he saw fit. To oppose the monarch was to sin, because the monarch was the deputy of the Lord.

And to oppose the monarch's will was to oppose the Lord's Will.

Thus, by asserting the right of the governed to determine their own form of government, the Founding Fathers declared as "a divine right" the power of a free people to govern themselves.

Little wonder that "A New Order of the Ages" became one of the mottoes of the new United States of America.

Moreover, the example of the citizens of our country in determining their own form of government, electing their executive and legislative representatives, and charting their destiny as a people and a nation has inspired other peoples and nations ever since 1776.

Today, the United States represents the very essence of self-government and democracy to millions around the world.

As we pass through the last years of the twentieth century and stand on the threshold of the dawning twenty-first century, I hope that all Americans will grasp the significance of our incomparable heritage and exercise their duties as American citizens with a deeper appreciation and responsibility.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Balanced Budget Amendment To the Constitution (Part I)

Recently, the U.S. Senate rejected Senate Joint Resolution 41, a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution. Its demise was a victory for the American people, who deserve real leadership and responsible action to reduce the national debt.

By opposing the constitutional amendment, I am not suggesting that we should not bring our budget deficits under control. We must and we are.

However, a constitutional amendment to balance the budget would not accomplish that goal. It was not a substitute for responsible leadership, nor would it have been a catalyst for reasoned action.

That amendment, which called for annual balanced budgets beginning in the year 2001, was classic legerdemain--declaring, on the one hand, that the budget be balanced annually, and, on the other, that that mandate could be violated. Therefore, it constituted a false promise to the people.

Over the past dozen years the country has been on a national credit card binge. This is not the fault of the appropriations committees. Over the past half-century, 1945 to 1993, total congressional appropriations amounted to \$220 billion less than the total budget requests of all Presidents during that period.

The massive tax cuts of the early 1980's, which benefited the wealthy, and the huge defense build-up--together with spiraling entitlements, the S&L bail-out,

and the recession of the early 1990's--all resulted in a quadrupling of the national debt.

In other words, the borrow-and-spend mentality of the Reagan-Bush years added more than \$3 trillion to the nearly \$1 trillion of debt that had accumulated during the preceding 182 years of Republican and Democratic administrations.

To get control over budget deficits, debt, and interest on the debt will require tough and painful choices, including cuts in entitlements and increases in revenues--not gimmickry.

Pollsters often ask the American people a simplistic question that carries strong political appeal: "Do you favor a constitutional amendment to balance the budget?" The pollsters do not ask, "Do you favor increased taxes? Or cutting social security, veterans compensation and pensions, or military pay? Or cutting funds for education, law enforcement, or the war on drugs?"

We must not risk seriously crippling our economy with a "feel-good" constitutional amendment that would defile the Constitution and fool the American people, only to enhance the reelection of national politicians.

The 1993 budget deficit reduction package, passed by Congress, was a solid start. We must continue to build upon that effort.

I shall have more to say on this subject in subsequent columns.

March 2, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Balanced Budget Amendment To The Constitution (Part II)

I voted for a balanced budget Constitutional amendment in 1982, but by 1986, having carefully researched U.S. history, the Constitution, and other authorities while writing my book on Senate history, I had changed my mind. I voted against the amendment in 1986.

I support efforts to reduce budget deficits, but a Constitutional amendment, standing alone, is an empty promise. It is political demagoguery to tell the American people that all we need in order to balance the Federal budget is to adopt a Constitutional amendment. The amendment, recently rejected by the Senate, does not explain how the budget is to be balanced, what taxes must be raised, or what spending programs must be cut. The American people are being fooled.

We often hear the argument, "The states balance their budgets; why shouldn't the Federal Government be required to balance its budget?" Sounds good. But to compare state constitutions with the Federal Constitution is like comparing apples with oranges.

For instance, states are not required to "raise and support armies", or "provide and maintain a Navy", or "provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States," or deal with international crises, or manage a national economy.

Additionally, the states operate on two budgets: an

operating budget, which they strive to balance annually; and a capital budget, in which they borrow money for construction of highways, bridges, prisons, hospitals, schools, and so on, with bonds that mature in ten, twenty, or even fifty years. The states are in debt. How, then, can one say that the states balance their budgets?

Some states avoid operating deficits through such gimmicks as borrowing money from off-budget funds -- for example, pension funds. Other states shift state programs off budget, or onto county and municipal governments and independent agencies. As another gimmick, the cost of the highway patrol may be removed from the general fund and charged against a fund that receives revenues dedicated for highways.

This is not to say that states do not make hard choices. They do. The point is, the states are in debt, and if a Constitutional amendment to balance the budget were adopted, the Federal Government would shift programs onto the states and cities, and mandate that they fund them -- thus helping to balance the Federal budget, but greatly increasing the burden on state and local governments.

A Constitutional amendment to balance the budget is quack medicine. I shall have more to say on this subject in a subsequent column.

March 9, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Balanced Budget Amendment To The Constitution (Part III)

The Senate recently defeated a Constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget, beginning in the year 2001. As Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman, I conducted hearings on that amendment.

During those hearings, Secretary of HHS, Donna Shalala, testified that, "in the year 2000, if all programs are reduced across the board, the balanced budget amendment would require \$52 billion in cuts to Social Security." She added, "if Social Security were exempted, then the Medicare program would have to be cut that much deeper to achieve a balanced budget." Whether Social Security would be exempted from budget cuts, and whether all programs would be reduced across the board, would depend upon Congress's decisions in 2001. Of course, if Congress decided to exempt Social Security, other government programs would take deeper cuts than would otherwise result from an across-the-board cut.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Jesse Brown, testified that the Constitutional amendment to balance the budget would be "devastating" to VA programs. Veterans compensation and veterans pension benefits would be cut, many VA hospitals would close, and thousands of VA employees would lose jobs. "We could be forced to default on our commitments to those whose service has kept our Nation free and strong and to the survivors of those who made the ultimate sacrifice," Secretary Brown said.

Likewise, Defense Secretary William Perry expressed concern, saying, "the balanced budget amendment could severely jeopardize America's national security," deplete force structure, cut the National Guard and Reserves, "and the ripple effect both of those cuts and the attendant civilian jobs associated with them would have a substantial effect on the general economy."

Other department secretaries testified to severe cuts in vital programs in the year 2001 if the balanced budget amendment were adopted. Education and health care; highways, bridges and waterways; water and sewer projects; civilian research, environmental programs, job training, military pay and retirement benefits; law enforcement programs, border patrols, the war on drugs -- all these, and hundreds of other programs necessary to the Nation's health, safety, and well-being would be drastically cut when the Constitutional amendment became effective seven years from now. Its traumatic effects upon the economy would be felt nationwide.

The budget deficits must be brought under control, but a Constitutional amendment is not the answer. The more orderly approach was begun with the passage of the 1993 budget deficit reduction legislation. Congress and the President, working together, made a solid start. We must continue on that road and build upon the foundation that was laid. More on this subject later.

March 16, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution (Part IV)

The recently rejected Constitutional amendment to balance the budget would have been bad economics. The federal deficit depends, in great measure, on the state of the economy. The deficit increases automatically whenever the economy weakens because tax revenues fall and federal payments from the Treasury, like unemployment compensation, rise. Therefore, these same rising deficits act as economic stabilizers in periods of recession. In such situations, expenditures for unemployment compensation, food stamps, and other assistance programs sustain private incomes and keep sales, employment, and production at higher levels than they otherwise would be.

A balanced budget amendment would force us to raise taxes and cut expenditures even when the economy is weak--exactly the opposite of what is needed in a failing economy to keep it from sliding into a recession or even a depression. Such a course should not even be considered as a temporary policy during times of recession, much less enshrined permanently, in our Constitution.

Last year, we enacted a law, for which I voted, to reduce the deficit by around \$500 billion dollars over five years--according to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). That budget deficit reduction law established a hard freeze on discretionary spending for the next five fiscal years,

which means that not even increases for inflation will be permitted, under the discretionary spending limits. Mandatory spending targets were also set; these are programs which, by law, are required to be funded. The vote on last year's deficit reduction package showed that, though real deficit reduction is not easy, it can be done.

Perhaps the best measure of the seriousness of the proposed balanced budget Constitutional amendment is that most of its sponsors in both the House and Senate voted against last year's budget reduction package. In other words, they opposed real deficit reduction when it was on their plates! Of course, these members of Congress are the same members who cannot wait to tell their constituents that they voted for a balanced budget amendment.

To those who support a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, I say: "What specific taxes would you raise, and what specific entitlements and other mandatory funding programs would you cut, in order to balance the budget?" When it comes to the specifics, the silence is deafening.

A Constitutional amendment to balance the budget would be bad for the economy and bad for the Constitution.

I shall have one more column on this subject.

March 23, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution (Part V)

The proposed Constitutional amendment, recently rejected by Congress, promised a balanced budget without providing any mechanism to enforce that goal. It simply declared that "total outlays for any fiscal year shall not exceed total receipts for that fiscal year."

If the amendment were not enforced, the American people's faith in the Constitution would be greatly undermined. On the other hand, the likelihood is that the amendment would be enforced, and, therefore, by Constitutionalizing the budget process, an extraordinary expansion of executive and judicial authority would appear to be mandated. Both state and Federal judges might well be required to make decisions about taxing and spending -- issues that the courts clearly lack the institutional capacity to resolve in any satisfactory manner.

The Constitution and its previous amendments are a charter of government and of individual liberties. It is decidedly not a charter of economic policy. Hence, the amendment would alter the Constitution by introducing matter irrelevant to its fundamental and traditional purposes.

Furthermore, its adoption would open the possibility that tax increases or spending cuts would be ordered by the courts, whose members are not elected by the people but who serve under lifetime appointments.

Some may say that the courts would consider such questions to be "political" and, thus, beyond their

scope. However, the most recent decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court suggest that the Court would be inclined to review those questions that might once have been considered political.

Moreover, if the amendment were adopted, no longer would the people's branch -- Congress -- have control over the power of the purse, the supreme balance wheel in our Constitutional system of checks and balances.

Madison stated in *Federalist # 58*: "This power over the purse may, in fact, be regarded as the most complete and effectual weapon with which any Constitution can arm the immediate representatives of the people for obtaining a redress of every grievance and for carrying into effect every just and salutary measure."

We should ask ourselves whether a balanced budget amendment appropriately fits with the underlying purposes of our Constitution. We should question whether this amendment is enforceable, or whether it would become a broken promise, thus furthering the public's disillusionment and distrust. Most importantly, while the amendment sounds like a simple little plan to balance the budget, it would permanently damage our Constitutional system of separation of powers.

Although Congress has rejected the amendment for this year, it will be back again and again as politicians seek to milk it for votes. We should beware of this poisoned pill.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Clean Coal Technology Program Makes the Grade

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) recently released a midterm report on the impact of the Clean Coal Technology program, and the initiative received glowing marks.

In fact, the DOE reports that the clean coal program, which I authored and pushed through Congress in 1985 to expand coal use and protect coal mining jobs, has enjoyed major success in terms of creating new coal technologies and associated jobs.

I firmly believe that the Clean Coal Technology program is a necessary investment in our nation's energy and economic future, and the DOE report confirms that the program has made major inroads in the development of innovative emissions control and power generation technologies to expand coal use, protect mining jobs, and create new market opportunities at home and in the international marketplace.

DOE's report, entitled, "Clean Coal Technology--The Investment Pays Off," spotlights 23 projects that are in operation or have completed test runs, and another 13 scheduled to come on-line by the end of 1995. In all, 45 clean coal projects in 21 states are underway, representing a federal investment of \$2.5 billion and a private sector match of more than \$4 billion.

The first group of suc-

cessful projects are aimed at modernizing existing coal-fired plants with advanced pollution-control technologies, helping them to meet future environmental challenges while continuing to utilize our abundant coal reserves.

A second batch of projects, scheduled to be up and running between now and the year 2000, will focus on the development of cleaner and more efficient power generating systems for use in the years ahead.

The new coal technologies being developed under the clean coal program also offer the United States a competitive edge in world markets, where the demand for clean coal technologies is skyrocketing.

DOE officials predict that by the year 2010, the global demand for clean energy technologies will create a \$200 billion export market. The early success of the clean coal program puts our country in an excellent position to capture a significant share of that market.

The Clean Coal Technology program is fulfilling the promise that I envisioned when I created the initiative in mid-1985: that through a working partnership between government and private industry, we can strengthen our economy and achieve a greater measure of energy independence by maximizing the use of coal in the 21st Century.

April 6, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Confronting the No. 1 Drug Abuse Problem of America's Youth

If asked, most Americans might guess that the drug most commonly abused by America's youth is marijuana, "crack," cocaine, or heroin.

However, according to statistics compiled by the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, alcohol remains the Number One drug problem among young Americans.

Just as with illicit drugs, alcohol impairs one's judgment, causes people to drive recklessly, contributes to highway accidents and fatalities, and is often a contributing factor in assaults and murders. Alcohol can also lead to the gradual death of habitual drinkers.

According to 1988 data, alcoholism and related problems annually cost the nation \$85.8 billion -- \$27.5 billion more than the cost of the illicit use of other drugs.

Less than ten years ago -- 1985 -- approximately 4.6 million teenagers, ages 14-17, experienced "negative consequences" (automobile accidents, arrests for intoxication, and such) as a result of the consumption of alcohol.

Worse, in 1988 alone, 800 children up to age 14, and more than 8,000 young

Americans ages 15-24, died in alcohol-related highway accidents.

Again, while automobile drivers age 16 to 24 comprise but 17 percent of our total of licensed drivers, this age group is involved in about 36 percent of all fatal, alcohol-related automobile crashes.

Further, a recent survey indicated that nearly one third of high school seniors believe that no risk is involved in imbibing four or five alcoholic drinks almost every day!

Against this background, I succeeded in adding an amendment to the "Goals 2000: Educate America Bill," recently signed into law, calling for every school in the United States to be alcohol-free, as well as drug-free.

The aim of my amendment is to ensure that alcohol abuse receives as much corrective attention as that directed toward the elimination of other dangerous drugs.

We must not ignore alcohol and drug abuse by teenagers. Our schools should demand of our children greater self-discipline and personal responsibility, and insist on a drug-free, alcohol-free educational environment.

April 13, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's Sylvan Treasure

Recently, I helped dedicate the newly completed "Falls of Hills Creek Trail," a scenic 114-acre delight located near Richwood, Nicholas County, in the Monongahela National Forest. I added more than \$800,000 in federal funds to make this site more accessible and tourist friendly. This is money well spent.

Included in this development are three waterfalls, one of them -- at 63 feet -- the second highest in our state, as well as a series of improved pathways, boardwalks, and stairs to better accommodate hikers and other visitors.

The nearly one-million-acre Monongahela National Forest serves multiple uses as a massive watershed for the Ohio and Potomac Rivers, as one of the world's finest timber stands, and as the site for great outdoor recreation areas for camping, hunting, fishing, and tourism.

Annually, an estimated 2.2 million people visit sites in the Monongahela National Forest and surrounding areas, such as Spruce Knob -- the highest elevation in West Virginia -- Seneca Rocks, Cranberry Glades, the Canaan Valley, Blackwater Falls, Dolly Sods, and Smokehole Canyon.

Significantly, these visitors -- many from outside West Virginia -- add

dollars to West Virginia's economy through motels and hotels, restaurants, and other tourist-oriented enterprises.

Recognizing the value of tourism to our state's economy, throughout my Senate career, I have promoted efforts to strike a balance between enhancing the Monongahela National Forest as a tourism resource and protecting its natural beauty and tranquility.

In the past 2 years, I provided \$3.4 million to initiate replacement of the busy Seneca Rocks Visitors Center, which had been destroyed by fire in 1992.

In 1989 alone, an estimated 144,000 tourists visited Seneca Rocks, while authorities estimate that more than 10,000 climbers annually attempt to scale this unique rock formation.

In response to such popularity, in 1990, I helped dedicate a new Seneca Shadows Campground, for which I had provided more than \$2 million in federal funds to replace a prior facility destroyed by flooding. This camping facility can accommodate 550 campers and contains a 200-seat amphitheater.

My aim is that the Monongahela National Forest will play an important role in our state -- combining the preservation of natural wonders with the benefits of tourism dollars.

April 20, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Battling the Backlog

For many coal miners, the diagnosis of black lung disease--or pneumoconiosis--confers a lifetime sentence. Lungs clogged after years of breathing fine coal dust can eventually shut down, forcing sufferers to rely on equipment for every breath they take.

In 1970, the federal government took significant steps with respect to pneumoconiosis with the approval of new federal standards to cut down on the amount of coal dust inhaled by miners. A year earlier, in 1969, I was a co-sponsor of legislation to create a federal benefits program to help those who suffer from black lung disease.

Three different Administrations have, for more than a decade, recommended the closing of black lung field offices. During that time, I have worked to keep black lung field offices open and to unplug the black lung claim backlog and afford claimants the quickest possible decision. Among my efforts has been the addition of money to federal appropriations bills to provide extra resources to the Black Lung Benefits Review Board (BRB), the entity that makes the final decisions on black lung appeals.

During Senate hearings last year, incoming Labor

Secretary Robert Reich--at my urging--agreed to make every effort to clear up the backlog of black lung claims at the appeals level. After Executive Branch foot-dragging on the claims backlog since the early 1980's, Secretary Reich's willingness to work on this problem was welcome news.

Just recently, Secretary Reich reported to me that significant progress has been made in whittling down the claims backlog. In fact, since appointing new leadership at the BRB last July, Secretary Reich told me that the average time between receipt of a black lung appeal and its disposition has been reduced by 30 percent.

In addition to my efforts to eliminate claims backlogs and to keep clinics and black lung offices in operation, I recently co-sponsored legislation to reform the black lung program and to make the process for determining eligibility for black lung benefits more equitable.

Black lung sufferers deserve the benefits to which they are entitled, and they deserve a speedy decision on their claims. I, for one, will continue my efforts to help ensure that that happens.

April 27, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Opening the Book on Reading

In a recent survey, the A.C. Nielsen polling company discovered that American children ages 6 through 11 watch television nearly 24 hours each week.

The same survey revealed that this trend continues into the teenage years, during which American youth watch television an average of nearly 22 hours a week.

Indeed, the American Psychological Association (APA) suggests that television may exert a malignant influence on young children, exposing them to gratuitous violence and teaching them antisocial attitudes toward others.

In particular, the APA reports that, by the time an American child, watching the average of three hours of commercial television programming per day, has attained the seventh-grade level, he or she has already witnessed an average of 8,000 television murders and been exposed to more than 100,000 other assorted acts of violence.

Since its widespread introduction into American homes in the 1950's, television has usurped undeserved numbers of precious hours in which children might be otherwise occupied with one of life's most rewarding activities: Reading.

Reading enjoys a special place in our heritage.

In generations past, children were schooled primarily to equip them to read the Bible. The young Abraham Lincoln was so hungry for the written word that, after all of his daily chores were completed, he curled up with books beside the fireplace to read long into the night. Many immigrants coming to this country arrived desperate to learn to read, a skill that their peasant origins in some parts of Europe had denied them.

Our American heritage -- indeed, our West Virginia heritage -- has traditionally placed a high premium on reading skills. Good reading ability, as well as an acquaintance with the rich corpus of American and English literature, is an entree to a wealth of wisdom, knowledge, and pleasure that can lend priceless joy to any life.

I hope that more adults will introduce their children to the rewards of reading by first reading to their children, and then by encouraging their children to read for themselves.

Any child who grows to maturity with a love of reading will eternally bless those who introduced him or her to that magical appetite.

So, turn off that television set, and hand your child a book!

May 4, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's Economic Warming Trend

Although there is still much work ahead and many gains to be made, I am encouraged this spring by the recent release of studies indicating an "economic warming trend" in West Virginia.

A study by Georgia State University (GSU), released earlier this year, reports that economic growth in the southeastern U.S., including West Virginia, outpaced the rest of the nation during the last quarter of 1993. Of West Virginia, the study says that "solid economic expansion is occurring in this coal state."

The GSU study highlights construction, retail trade, and convention lodging as West Virginia growth areas, finding particularly that an increase in federal employment, which I have helped bring to West Virginia, is boosting our state's economy.

Further, a January Kiplinger Washington Letter predicted that during 1994, "Government projects will give West Virginia a lift..." noting especially some of my initiatives for our state, including the new NASA Independent Verification and Validation Center at Fairmont, the FBI Fingerprint Center at

Clarksburg, and the Coast Guard and IRS facilities near Martinsburg.

The increased federal presence that I am shepherding to our state is bringing construction jobs and long-term employment, while also supplying an economic transfusion for communities and private-sector businesses that provide supplies, equipment, and support services to new enterprises and their employees.

In addition, better highways, for which I have added federal funding to appropriations bills, are helping to attract new enterprises into our state and providing easier, less-costly transport of goods for our businesses, while opening West Virginia to expanded tourism -- the state's fastest-growing industry.

The studies cited above indicate that my efforts to lay a sturdy foundation for economic growth in West Virginia are paying off. The work of erecting a superstructure on that foundation lies ahead, and that is the responsibility of all West Virginians. Together, we should seize every opportunity to add to the current momentum of economic growth and to continue forging our state's future.

May 11, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Extending Health Care To Rural West Virginia

On my most recent trip through Southern West Virginia, I travelled to Northfork in McDowell County to participate in dedication ceremonies for a new health care facility that will serve local residents.

The drive to McDowell County underscores one of the key elements of health care delivery in our state: access to doctors, nurses, and medical facilities.

For a state like West Virginia--with many small communities nestled in mountainous terrain--the ability to get to a doctor or to a medical facility is crucial to those seeking health care.

In my ongoing effort to improve and expand health care in West Virginia, I have concentrated my energies in two areas: outreach programs, and health care delivery on the local level, such as the new Northfork clinic, a satellite facility of the Tug River Health Association, Inc., located in Gary.

The new health care center, for which I added \$500,000 in funds to the federal budget, will afford close-in primary dental and basic health services to people in the Northfork area, without the need first to travel to distant hospitals and clinics.

The Northfork facility--which also required local matching funds and which is operated, in part, by local volunteers--demonstrates the importance that many rural West Virginians attach

to having primary health care near at hand.

Outreach programs are also critical to health care in West Virginia, which will be the primary mission of the Southern West Virginia Center for Rural Health, a Huntington-based facility for which I added \$4.5 million in federal funds to a 1993 appropriations bill.

The new facility in Huntington--for which ground will be broken soon--will serve the health needs of a dozen West Virginia counties: Cabell, Wayne, Lincoln, Mingo, Logan, Boone, McDowell, Wyoming, Mason, Roane, Putnam, and Jackson.

To further meet the health needs of West Virginia's rural population, I have supported the establishment of the Mountaineer Doctor Television (MDTV) network.

Since 1991, I have added more than \$2.8 million to federal funding bills for MDTV, which affords physicians in a growing number of rural health facilities access to expert assistance from the West Virginia University Medical Center and the Charleston Area Medical Center via two-way, interactive television hook-ups.

These innovative health programs promise genuine improvements in rural health care in our state, and should make important contributions to the health of thousands of West Virginians in the years ahead.

May 18, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Haitian Refugee Crisis

Like other Americans, I am moved by the multiple problems besetting the people of Haiti.

A country with no democratic tradition, Haiti has suffered a succession of dictatorial regimes, interrupted at points by U.S. interventions.

Worse, Haiti has ranked for decades as one of the world's poorest countries.

Disastrously, since 1992, thousands of Haitians have taken to the sea in flimsy craft, headed for the United States in a quixotic dash for economic opportunity.

In late 1992, an estimated 500,000 Haitians were prepared to exodus their country to seek asylum in the United States.

During the 1992 election, now President Clinton criticized the Administration policy of repatriating Haitian economic refugees intercepted at sea, while advising genuine political refugees to seek U.S. asylum at processing centers in Haiti.

But, facing reality, President Clinton later declared his intention to continue the policy initiated by the previous administration.

Recently however, President Clinton reversed himself, announcing the processing of would-be Haitian asylum-seekers at sea or in third countries, if possible.

This is a return to a policy that had to be abandoned when 10,000 Haitian refugees were intercepted in May 1992 alone, with 12,000 Haitian refugees living in tents at Guantanamo

Bay, Cuba.

While Americans empathize with Haitians' desire for a better life, the United States cannot solve the economic problems of the world by opening our country, piecemeal, to millions wanting a better standard of living.

Thousands of Americans are currently struggling with long-term unemployment or underemployment, seeking to forestall their own plunge into poverty and hopelessness.

Moreover, particularly at this time, the states in the Southeast and Southwest are not equipped -- nor is the Federal government equipped -- to absorb tens of thousands of economic refugees flooding into our borders with few, if any, employable skills and little knowledge of English or any means of survival other than by becoming wards of the state.

Our schools, hospitals, and social service agencies are already stretched to meet the needs of our own citizens. The further burden placed on these agencies by the additional needs of thousands upon thousand of immigrants threatens to strain them to the breaking point.

We cannot afford to permit a political crisis to become the cover for an influx of economic refugees seeking a better life in the United States.

Better, we should continue pressuring Haiti to institute a legal, democratic government that will begin to meet the real needs, political and economic, of the Haitian people.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Well Done, West Virginians

West Virginia's outstanding workforce is a key pillar in the state's economic foundation and a crucial component in my effort to expand and diversify our state's economy.

Two recent events in West Virginia in which I participated underscored just how valuable our West Virginia workers are, and how they serve as one of our state's strongest selling points to federal agencies and private-sector firms looking to expand or relocate.

Most recently, I attended an awards ceremony in Parkersburg in which eight public service employees were honored for their community service activities. At an earlier gathering in Charleston, I joined with AT&T employees to celebrate their company's decision to retain its Kanawha County Customer Sales and Service (CSS) office--a decision largely based on the remarkable productivity and high quality of work performed by the men and women who staff that facility.

Both functions allowed me to shine the spotlight on the contributions of our workers to West Virginia's economic prosperity.

A case in point is the expansion of the Bureau of Public Debt operation in Parkersburg. In response to my repeated urgings, the Bureau of Public Debt, in 1991, began the process of consolidating its offices at its Parkersburg facility, which boasted exceptionally high productivity and low turnover.

The Bureau explained its decision this way: "Our

[Parkersburg] computer center is highly regarded as a modern, efficient, and well managed installation. A primary reason for that is because of our well-trained and experienced staff....Two-thirds of our employees have more than 15 years of service with the Bureau. This is a very unusual and desirable level of data processing experience....Our employment and retention experience in Parkersburg has been very positive and is one of the most dramatic differences between our Parkersburg and Washington locations."

Employee excellence was also cited as a key factor in AT&T's reversal of an earlier decision to close its Charleston CSS office. After AT&T announced plans to eliminate its Charleston operation, the employees there refused to quit. In fact, they put their shoulders to the wheel and increased the facility's productivity--and their high sense of dedication was rewarded with a decision by AT&T to remain in Charleston. Such a reversal does not come easily to a large national company, but AT&T officials demonstrated that they understand that a firm is only as good as its employees.

The experiences of AT&T and the Bureau of Public Debt are just two examples of the numerous success stories attributed to West Virginia's strong work ethic. West Virginians understand the meaning of hard work and a job well done, and the rewards of that attitude are being felt across our state.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Good Program Run Amok

A letter I received recently from a West Virginia teacher touched a deep chord and compelled me to call into question the operation of a federal entitlement program that reportedly is creating problems in our nation's classrooms.

Let me share a portion of that teacher's letter that describes a situation she believes has been created by abuses of the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) children's disability program, which provides monthly cash benefits to students who have been tagged medically or behaviorally disabled.

"I want to talk to you about an issue which is probably the most insurmountable obstacle I have to face as a teacher....students now are rewarded monetarily for disruptive behavior and lack of any effort by SSI payments," the teacher wrote.

"The resulting situation is that many students know the 'racket' and deliberately try to fail so they can test into special education. Students who are placed in a special education program at school can apply for these benefits and receive over \$400 a month," she said.

Armed with these words--and with several news stories which detailed reported abuses of the SSI program--I recently questioned top federal officials during a Senate Appropriations Subcommittee hearing about the operation of the program, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Social Security Administration (SSA).

The officials acknowledged "shortcomings" in the program, which channels benefits to nearly 600,000 children nationwide, and agreed to provide the Senate Appropriations Committee with a detailed report aimed at correcting the program's flaws.

No one wants to deprive children of needed benefits, but reports of parents "coaching" their children to disrupt class and disobey their teachers in order to qualify for SSI benefits raises serious concerns about the operation of this program.

I was particularly disturbed when, during subcommittee testimony, federal officials admitted that the SSA had not included provisions in the disability program regulations to guard against fraud because they had not contemplated possible abuse of the program.

I am also troubled that the program guidelines do not require that the monthly disability checks be spent on services to help the recipients.

Unfortunately, the SSI children's disability program is a prime example of a well-intentioned federal program running amok, and the warning bells that have been sounded about its operation need to be answered.

The goal of the program--to provide assistance for disabled children--is one that I support, and I hope that SSA officials will take immediate steps to get this program back on track.

June 8, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's 131st Birthday

On June 20, 1863, West Virginia was officially admitted to the Union as the Thirty-Fifth State.

West Virginia was born at a crucial time in American history, recognizing its responsibility to remain loyal to the Union, but accepting that its borders were lined with a large aggregate of Confederate loyalists, some of whom later served in high public office in the newly formed state of West Virginia.

But the history of West Virginia did not begin in 1863.

Long before European explorers came to America, numerous Indian tribes inhabited parts of West Virginia, and during the Colonial Era, much of current Southern West Virginia was claimed by the Cherokee nation.

In 1763, following the French and Indian War, the British Crown sought to limit settlement in present-day West Virginia, all to naught.

Into West Virginia poured the vanguard of the great American pioneer expansion westward toward the Pacific.

Into the vacancy of then western Virginia came such pioneers as Christopher Gist, Thomas Decker, Morgan Morgan, Andrew

Lewis, Daniel Boone, Lewis Wetzel, and "Mad Anne" Bailey.

Many of those whose plans included traveling toward the riches of western gold and silver found the natural beauty of West Virginia too great to abandon and settled in the Mountain State, recognizing the value West Virginia provided in raising a family and establishing one's place in society.

Today, many West Virginians have kept alive those pioneer values and the spirit of individual responsibility and personal achievement on which our nation and our state were originally founded.

West Virginia is a unique place, and West Virginians are possessed of a rare heritage that blends religious faith, an innate patriotism, a love of liberty, family loyalty, personal integrity and self-discipline, and an appreciation for the natural beauties that continue to surround them in their lives.

On this, West Virginia's 131st birthday, we all should embrace the pioneering mindset of our forefathers as we bring West Virginia into the 21st century.

Happy birthday, wild, wonderful West Virginia!

June 15, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Working for Working West Virginians

In approaching the new millennium, West Virginia, as the rest of the country, must meet the challenges of a global economy by continuing our efforts to maximize our productivity. Honing this competitive edge has been, and will continue to be, inextricably tied to the health and safety of our work force.

Growing up in West Virginia's coal fields made me acutely aware of the health and safety needs of the worker. Consequently, much of my public service career has been aimed at improving the working conditions of West Virginia's workers.

In 1969, I secured the first funding for the National Mine Health and Safety Academy in Beckley, and I have continued to support this critical facility by adding more than \$23 million, over the years, to build, equip, and operate it. In 1992, I dedicated a new disaster simulation laboratory there. This lab gives disaster-relief workers realistic experience in responding to mine emergencies.

In the early 1960's, I pioneered efforts toward improved worker safety by establishing the Appalachian Laboratory on Occupational Safety and Health (ALOSH) in Morgantown. Subsequently, recognizing increased needs and the commendable work taking place at the ALOSH facility, I added nearly \$60 million to appropriations bills, beginning in fiscal 1990, to construct and equip a new ultra-modern laboratory at Morgantown -- the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

NIOSH, construction of which is slated for completion in early 1995, is planned to be a world-class center for research into workplace health and safety. The work at NIOSH is intended to put worker safety and health considerations at the forefront of the planning stage of any workplace construction or design project.

As a complement to these efforts, I recently announced that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has chosen to designate West Virginia University (WVU) as the location of its Region III OSHA Training Center.

This initiative, which will be a collaborative endeavor between WVU and the AFL-CIO -- serving West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia -- will offer public training classes targeted to safety administrators, industry officials, and others interested in worker safety.

From the steel mills in our northern panhandle, to the chemical plants in the Kanawha Valley, to our southern coalfields, West Virginia's industries -- which, by their very nature, entail hazardous activities for our workers -- are realizing the competitive bonuses of promoting a safe and healthy work force.

Indeed, West Virginia's pioneering efforts with the National Mine Safety and Health Academy, ALOSH, NIOSH, and the new OSHA Training Center will help to put West Virginia in the forefront of the study and promotion of a safe, healthy workplace.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Preparing for the Challenges of Tomorrow

Less than a generation ago, a young West Virginia teenager might leave school at the legal age; find work in the mines, steel mills, chemical plants, or other industries in our state; and carve out a lifelong occupation at decent wages.

Today, we live in a vastly changed economic landscape.

Our coal mines are increasingly mechanized; those steel mills still operating against foreign competition are more and more specialized in both products and employees; and the chemical industry is similarly an international proposition, with many once American jobs now located outside the United States.

Cosmically, we are in the vestibule of the Space Age, and yet, many American school children have little inkling of even how to locate their home states on a map of the United States!

In too many of our schools, more energy is expended in behalf of athletic competition than in classroom competition. Star athletes carry more prestige than chemistry and math geniuses, and, too often, more money is expended on athletic equipment or driver education than on computers and laboratory equipment.

Simultaneously, across the Pacific Ocean, year af-

ter year, young Japanese students fix their sights on academic achievement, suffering pangs of deep anxiety as they prepare for examinations to determine their educational and professional futures. The competition for places in top-ranking Japanese universities and professional schools is intense.

And across the Atlantic Ocean, in Germany, 50 percent of high school students spend two or more hours daily on homework, and only 7 or 8 percent watch television for five or more hours daily.

By contrast, only 29 percent of U.S. students expend a similar amount of time daily on homework, while between 21 and 24 percent waste as much as five hours daily in front of the television tube.

Those Japanese and German young people are the future economic competitors that our American youth will be confronting in the world marketplace.

That is the future.

Our children are our most precious assets.

Our schools are the institutions charged with preparing our children to meet the challenges of the future.

Will young Americans be prepared to compete on the economic playing fields of the 21st century?



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

“Back to Basics”

An old song about 19th century schooling begins, “School days, school days, dear old Golden Rule days! Reading and writing and ‘rithmetic,”

Unfortunately, though our schools were originally established to educate our youth in the essential disciplines vital to making a living or advancing academically in a serious and competitive society, increasing demands have come to burden teachers and the school day with activities and options that too often crowd out serious academic subjects.

Today, academic subjects too often must compete for time in our schools with pep rallies, sports, driver’s training, and various clubs and other non-academic activities, all in a school day the length of six hours or less.

This is not to say that some such activities are not valuable in themselves, or that our students should not strive for a well-rounded education. But this smorgasbord of non-academic choices confronting our students leaves too little time for the “core” academic subjects that are increasingly vital for success in world competition.

Recently, a distinguished group of Ameri-

cans -- the National Education Commission on Time and Learning -- recommended both to the Federal government and the National Governors’ Association that the bulk of schooltime should be refocused on subjects such as English, mathematics, geography, the sciences, algebra, history, geometry, physics, chemistry, economics, foreign languages, civics, and the arts.

Throughout their years of pre-university schooling, German students spend an average of 3,528 hours in such “core” subjects, French students 3,280 hours, and Japanese students 3,170 hours.

Alarming, U.S. students average only 1,460 hours in comparable subjects during the same period.

Today, Western Europe and Eastern Asia are competing head to head with the United States in nearly every field of production and business.

As a nation and as a people, we have an obligation to prepare our children for the realities of the future.

Let us allow the schools to do what schools can do best: Teach serious academic subjects in a serious educational atmosphere.

July 6, 1994

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Resisting the Tide Of Illegal Immigration

Recently, I presided over a Senate Appropriations Committee hearing to explore the problems -- including the increasing costs -- associated with illegal immigration in the United States.

Illegal immigrants have forced heavy financial burdens on this nation as a whole, and our border states, such as California and Florida, have been especially pinched. Several states have recently taken legal action, claiming that federal mandates have caused them undue financial hardship. These states have all but completely tried to exempt themselves from any of the blame for illegal immigration, pointing the finger of responsibility solely at the federal government.

In their testimony before the Senate Appropriations Committee, the governors of Arizona, California, and Florida decried the problems of illegal immigration and called for more federal funding to reimburse their states for the costs of addressing these growing problems.

The Federal government does have a legitimate responsibility to re-analyze and modify its immigration policies. But the problems of illegal immigration are not limited to federal laws and mandates. It is time to realize that border states, as well as the Federal government, bear the burden for helping to stem the swelling ranks of illegal immigrants.

In my study of the issue, I found evidence that California, to some extent, encourages immigrants to enter its borders illegally. In a 1993 brochure, the California Department of

Health Services promoted a state-administered program entitled "Baby-Cal." The brochure invites illegal immigrants to receive pre-natal and maternity care and promises, "If you are not lawfully in the U.S. or have applied for amnesty, Medi-Cal will not report you to the INS" (Immigration and Naturalization Service). The care is free to the illegal immigrants, but is paid for by the tax dollars of legal U.S. citizens.

Regrettably, programs such as "Baby-Cal" act like magnets to attract illegals across our borders, making it even more difficult to barricade against illegal immigration. As long as immigrants know that the states will provide free medical care and citizenship for their newborn children, they will continue to be encouraged to enter U.S. borders illegally and take advantage of the hospitality of generous state-administered welfare programs such as California's "Baby-Cal."

While solutions to the problem of illegal immigration are far from fruition, it is clear that we need to refocus our priorities. Illegal immigration is a problem that affects all levels of government and threatens government's ability to adequately serve our own citizens.

Issuing a blank federal check is no solution to the problem. That is not a responsible or comprehensive answer.

It is clear that our country needs to refocus its priorities. Employers, state and local employees, and officials at all levels of government must get serious about the problem of illegal aliens if progress on this front is ever to be made.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Investments In Tomorrow

Recently, at a ceremony at Shepherd College at which I formally recognized the 1993 and 1994 West Virginia recipients of the national Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships, I challenged today's young students, saying, "Never stop growing; never cease wondering; never end your search for knowledge."

I have long believed that West Virginia's bright young men and women are among our state's most valuable assets, and I am deeply proud of the young scholars whom I met at Shepherd College.

As a means of encouraging such promising high school students to continue their educations, I initiated a national program in 1987 -- subsequently named by my Senate colleagues the "Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship" program -- to provide \$1,500 scholarships to talented graduating high school seniors who have been accepted for enrollment at an institution of higher education.

This program was expanded in 1993 to allow qualified recipients to apply for the same amount in each of the following three years of education.

These "Byrd Scholarships" are awarded to students in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

This year, 44 young West Virginians were named Byrd Scholars, bringing to a total of 345 the number of West Virginians who have been so hon-

ored since the beginning of the program, and to \$517,500 the amount awarded to these young West Virginians since 1987.

In West Virginia, Byrd Scholars are selected by a five-member panel composed of representatives from the West Virginia Department of Education and the Central Office of the State College and University System. The awards are based entirely on scholastic excellence -- not on extracurricular activities.

In addition, this year, 301 West Virginia high school valedictorians received the Robert C. Byrd Scholastic Recognition Award, which includes a \$50 U.S. Savings Bond, and is presented annually to valedictorians of each of West Virginia's public, private, and parochial high schools, as well as the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

Since its beginning in 1969, this award, funded from a private trust, has been presented to 6,898 graduating West Virginia high school seniors, totaling awards valued at more than \$155,000 since its inception.

These young men and women are the future of West Virginia.

Believing as I do that hard work and genuine achievement merit our encouragement and reward, these recognitions of scholastic excellence are important investments in tomorrow.

July 20, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

National Gems

West Virginia's Harpers Ferry National Historical Park is celebrating an important anniversary this year -- its 50th birthday.

To mark that event, I participated in a dedication ceremony early this summer for the Park's latest additions -- namely, the John Brown Museum and the Industrial Museum.

As I spoke that day in Harpers Ferry, I was struck by the number of families who had gathered to enjoy the celebration and the park's many exhibits, and I felt gratified that the renovations and improvements at the Harpers Ferry facility had been made possible by nearly \$30 million in federal funding that I had obtained over the past 15 years.

In a larger sense, Harpers Ferry -- which, according to National Park Service officials, last year drew 375,000 visitors who pumped over \$30 million into the local economy -- is one in a strand of National Park pearls that stretches across our country, standing as a prime example of the benefits offered by our system of federally supported parks.

American writer Wallace Stegner said, "National Parks are the best idea we ever had. Absolutely American -- absolutely democratic. They reflect us at our best...."

Our National Parks represent much of what is great in our country: They preserve our natural wonders, provide a place for recreation and peaceful reflection away from the stresses of

our daily lives, and educate us about our history, advancing our understanding of the past in order to prepare us for the future.

Indeed, investments in our park system are investments in the future, and if we want the benefits which we derive from the parks to be available to our children, our children's children, and generations beyond, we must continue to preserve and protect these valuable resources.

In addition to Harpers Ferry, West Virginia is blessed with a number of park system units and facilities -- among them the New River Gorge National River, the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge, and the proposed Wheeling National Heritage Area and Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge -- that bring to our state hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. These facilities not only enrich the lives of people who visit them, but they also expand economic opportunities in the communities in which they are located.

As chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have worked hard to maintain and improve not only West Virginia's national parks and facilities, but also the park areas across our nation which annually draw millions of men, women, and children.

Our National Parks are gems that merit careful polishing, and I am committed to continuing my efforts to make needed investments in our National Park system.

July 27, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Challenge to Young Americans

Recently, I hosted a luncheon at the U.S. Capitol for participants in the 1994 National Youth Science Camp, an assembly of some of America's most promising young high school scientists, selected from every state in the Union, including West Virginia.

Conducted for more than three decades annually at the Pocahontas County 4-H Camp near Bartow, the National Youth Science Camp aims to bring some of our nation's brightest young men and women together for several days' exposure to outstanding scientists, national leaders, and the beauties of West Virginia, in hopes of inspiring these young people to pursue careers in science and related fields, as well as to introduce them to the natural wonders and hospitality of our state.

At the Capitol luncheon, I reminded the Youth Science Campers that, just as past generations faced prodigious challenges and triumphed, their generation, too, would face obstacles ahead, and that into their hands would likewise be delivered the duty of preserving, strengthening, and improving our country.

In West Virginia and

across the nation, our most precious assets are, indeed, our children -- boys and girls who will be tomorrow's parents, leaders, and decision-makers.

Some of the challenges that I issued at the Youth Science Camp luncheon are appropriate for all of the young people of West Virginia, as well.

In 1994, and as the beginning of the Third Millennium approaches, our youth are confronting a rapidly changing world.

Unfortunately, those who are not prepared to work and perform in such a world will find themselves in marginal or peripheral occupations.

To make the most of their promise, today's young men and women must not accept easy paths. Further, they must learn to accept only the best from themselves. To do otherwise will be to cheat themselves.

That is the primary challenge facing the rising generation.

For my own part, and with my eyes on the future, I shall continue working to lay foundations on which young West Virginians can depend in their efforts to meet the future with optimism and courage.

August 3, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Taking Aim at School Violence

For the sake of our children's future, I am deeply concerned about our schools. Schools should be sacred precincts, in which students should be free to learn, search, and expand their minds, without fear for their very lives.

I am frankly alarmed that American school children daily face increasing crime and violence. Some of America's schools have become "war zones," with teachers living in fear for their lives and innocent children becoming casualties.

We have come to a sad state of affairs when metal detectors have to be installed at the schoolhouse door, and unless we take deliberate steps now to halt the violence in our schools, I fear for the future of our country.

This is not a problem restricted to urban settings. Regrettably, weapons and violence are turning up even in the small rural schools in our own state.

For that reason, I recently offered two amendments -- which the Senate adopted -- to the "Improving America's School Act," my amendments being aimed at addressing the problem of violence increasingly infecting our schools.

Many educational systems choose to address the problem of students bringing weapons to school through their own disciplinary process: taking the weapons away; sending students home; giving them detention; or reporting them

to their parents. These amount to little more than "slap-on-the-wrist" punishments that circumvent local law enforcement.

Possession of a gun on school property is a felony, and the police should be notified.

Accordingly, I offered an amendment -- which the Senate adopted -- directing every local educational agency to require school officials to refer to the criminal justice system any student bringing a weapon to school.

The Senate also approved my amendment to require the U.S. Secretary of Education to conduct the first major study of violence in schools since 1978. As a gauge of the extent of the problem and the scope and success of ongoing efforts to counter school violence, this study would be an initial step toward developing a national plan of action for combating this insidious problem.

One of the most basic lessons that history teaches is that unless each generation is initiated into disciplines that past generations have mastered, a civilization cannot expect to survive.

In West Virginia and across America, our schools are the forges of our future.

For the sake of our children, for the sake of our culture, for the sake of the continued promise of our country, let us give the attention required to make our schools safe and free from weapons.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Protecting the Wild in Wonderful West Virginia

Throughout my career in the Senate, I have worked for modern development across our state -- highway construction, recreational and flood-control dams, water and sewer improvements, energy development, improved locks on our major rivers, and other projects aimed at creating jobs and raising the standards of living of all West Virginians.

In these efforts, however, I have likewise been concerned to preserve and enhance one of West Virginia's most unique assets -- the natural wonders that are precious elements in our state's heritage.

Toward that end, in 1990, as a result of \$850,000 in funding that I added to an appropriations bill, the first eight islands were acquired to establish the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge, our state's first such natural reservation.

More recently, I helped to obtain \$2 million in a fiscal 1994 appropriations bill to initiate land purchase for the formation of the Canaan Valley Wildlife Refuge in Tucker County.

This summer, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acquired the first 86-acre portion of this new wildlife refuge, in an area of the Canaan Valley known as Balsam Swamp.

This acreage comprises the cornerstone of West Virginia's second -- and the

nation's 500th -- National Wildlife Refuge.

Subsequent to the initial allocation, I supported another \$2 million in a fiscal 1995 appropriations bill, now making its way through Congress, toward the eventual acquisition of approximately 24,000 acres for the Canaan Valley refuge.

The Canaan Valley has long been recognized as one of West Virginia's most extraordinary natural features, hosting a wide array of animal species and more than 500 varieties of plants, including several found elsewhere only in some Canadian tundra regions.

The establishment of the Canaan Valley Wildlife Refuge represents a vital investment in the future -- especially, the future of our children and grandchildren -- by preserving for rising generations thousands of West Virginia acres of unique wetlands, and botanical and wildlife species almost exclusive to West Virginia.

I believe intensely in economic development, but I also believe profoundly in our stewardship of those invaluable natural assets that set West Virginia apart among the States.

The new Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge will help to ensure that rising generations of West Virginians enjoy ageless resources that make our state a natural wonderland.

August 17, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Erma Byrd Scholars

Recently, Marshall University announced the first six West Virginia recipients of a new scholarship named in honor of my wife, Erma Byrd.

Established by Marshall University in May, the Erma Byrd Scholarship Program will offer six \$1,500 scholarships annually to West Virginia high school graduates. The scholarships can be renewed each year based on collegiate academic performance.

The 1994-1995 Erma Byrd Scholars include Kimberly Elaine Adams of Barbourville, Cabell County; Kelley T. Burns of Logan, Logan County; Littia C. Chaowadee of South Charleston, Kanawha County; Leann Renee Haines of Parkersburg, Wood County; Joseph E. Remias of Wheeling, Ohio County; and Serena Lynn Starcher of Buffalo, Putnam County.

Under the program, two recipients will be selected annually from each of the state's three congressional districts. Selections will be made by an advisory board appointed by the president of Marshall University and consisting of a chairperson, a representative from each of the state's congressional districts, and two Marshall

University faculty members.

In addition to the scholarship funds, Erma Byrd Scholars will be automatically enrolled in the Marshall University Honors Program and will participate in an annual trip to Washington, D.C., to learn more about the workings of government.

Ensuring that higher education is available to our state's scholars is a goal I have worked toward for years, and the Erma Byrd Scholars Program offers West Virginians yet another college-funding option.

Together with the Robert C. Byrd Scholastic Recognition Awards and the national Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program, the Erma Byrd Scholarship Program will help some of the future leaders of our nation to receive the training and education they will need to lead us in the next millennium, and I am deeply touched that this program has been named in my wife Erma's honor.

Erma joins me in congratulating these outstanding students, who have demonstrated a commitment to learning in their high school careers, and we wish them well as they continue their educations at Marshall University.

August 24, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Progress Report on Education

I have long been an advocate of better schools and improved academic performance by students.

Both in West Virginia and across the nation, our children are our future. Their standards of living in the years ahead and the performance of the United States on the world scene will, in large measure, depend on the quality of the teaching and learning that take place in our elementary and secondary schools.

Thus, I have been, and will continue to be, a firm supporter of policies and programs that promise and deliver the mastery of so-called "basic subjects" -- classical disciplines such as mathematics, science, English grammar, history, and geography, for example.

Understandably, I am somewhat encouraged by a report just released by the U.S. Department of Education regarding the program "the National Assessment of Progress," instituted following a 1983 report, "Nation at Risk."

According to the most recent report, students are generally taking more rigorous math and science courses than they did 20 years ago.

Further, in 1992, 78 percent of 9-year-olds understood simple scientific principles and knew some basic facts about plants and

animals, up from a reported 68 percent in 1977.

In math, in 1992, 28 percent of 9-year-olds were able to add, subtract, multiply, and divide using whole numbers, up from only 20 percent in 1978. Even better, 17-year-olds made gains in the same area, with a reported 97 percent in 1992, compared with 92 percent in 1978.

Unfortunately, in 1992, 60 percent of 9-year-olds, 64 percent of 13-year-olds, and 47 percent of 17-year-olds reported watching television three or more hours daily.

Worse, about one-third of the 17-year-olds reported having no homework in 1992, or having homework that they did not do.

And, interestingly, this recent study determined that the more time a 17-year-old spent on homework, the better his or her reading proficiency became.

Certainly, some students are on the right track.

But, for more American children, learning must become their primary task during their childhood and teenage years.

And, as their parents and role models, we must not be satisfied until every West Virginia school child is performing academically to his or her highest level.

Our future depends largely on that achievement.

August 31, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's High-tech Arsenal

As West Virginia stands on the threshold of the next millennium, it faces 21st century challenges with a new weapon in its economic arsenal--high technology.

I have long recognized the importance of high tech to West Virginia and the role that our state can play in our national quest to compete in increasingly technical world markets.

As I have worked to bring a number of high-tech initiatives into our state, the advantages they offer in terms of greater economic opportunities and increased job prospects have begun to be realized throughout West Virginia.

First and foremost, high-technology development in West Virginia is affording our mainstay industries the opportunity to take advantage of the latest high-tech advances. By applying cutting-edge techniques to their traditional manufacturing processes, our private sector will be better armed for the increasingly competitive world trade arena.

In that regard, I have worked to promote many technology transfer initiatives in West Virginia, including the Robert C. Byrd Institute for Flexible Manufacturing Systems in Huntington, the Robert C. Byrd Hardwood Technology Center in Princeton, the National Technology Transfer Center in Wheeling, and the revolutionary computerized manufacturing system, known as L&IS, at Weirton Steel.

Training West Virginians for work in this rapidly growing environment is a second critical component

of my high-tech game plan for West Virginia.

That is why I have worked to establish the Classroom of the Future at Wheeling Jesuit College, a new science and technology facility at Shepherd College in Shepherdstown, and the ADAnet computer language project at West Virginia University in Morgantown--all of which are aimed at providing the skills necessary for the high-tech jobs of the future.

Finally, with one of the most extensive, technologically advanced fiber-optics networks in the nation, West Virginia is a perfect location for many of our nation's high-technology government facilities and their back offices.

As West Virginia's high-tech network has grown, so has our state's ability to attract public and private state-of-the-art facilities. To that end, I have succeeded in bringing the FBI Fingerprint Identification Facility to Clarksburg; the IRS Computing Center, the U.S. Coast Guard Operations Systems Center, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Computer Center to Martinsburg; and the NASA Independent Verification and Validation facility to Fairmont.

These federal facilities, coupled with private-sector development and a growing cadre of workers trained in high-tech disciplines, are placing West Virginia squarely on the plateau of 21st century high technology and are offering our state new economic opportunities in the coming years.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Life-saving Health Services for West Virginia Women

In 1991, 336 women in our state died of breast cancer--the second leading cause of death among West Virginia women.

In that same year, nearly one-third of West Virginia women aged 40 and over had never had a mammogram--the most effective means to detect breast cancer in its early stages.

These are disturbing statistics since, in many cases, early diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer can greatly improve breast cancer survival rates.

Throughout my career of public service, I have worked to put into place new facilities and programs that can provide West Virginians with health-care services close to home, including specialized services required to combat cancer.

One such facility is the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center on the campus of West Virginia University. This state-of-the-art facility for the diagnosis and treatment of all forms of cancer was constructed with \$13.3 million I obtained in federal funding.

In 1991, the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center, the medical clinic on the campus of Marshall University, and Women and Children's Hospital of the Charleston Area Medical Center were selected as three of the first sites in the country for a unique Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) program, designed to deliver breast and cervical cancer diagnoses, prevention, and education to at-risk women.

Made possible by approximately \$5 million in federal funding that I added to an appropriations bill, CDC's Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program (BCCSP) now has been expanded throughout West Virginia. With 126 screening sites, this program, administered by the West Virginia Bureau of Public Health, has made significant strides since its inception.

Between April 1991 and April 1994, more than 48,000 screenings had been conducted, serving approximately 30,000 West Virginia women through the BCCSP.

Enough emphasis cannot be placed on the fact that early intervention is critical to saving the lives of women with breast cancer. The commendable goal of this program is to ensure that at least 80 percent of West Virginia women, aged 40 and over, receive a clinical breast examination and mammogram by the year 2000.

To reach this goal, the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center, in conjunction with the state Bureau of Public Health, has developed and disseminated educational materials that have supplemented the program's statewide public information and outreach campaign.

The three-pronged approach of the BCCSP--education, early diagnosis, and state-of-the-art treatment--now conducted throughout West Virginia exemplifies my vision of promoting accessible health care for West Virginians.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Schools at Risk

More than 30 years ago, Congress mandated a periodic National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) report -- subsequently dubbed "The Nation's Report Card" -- on academic achievement among our nation's school children.

Subsequently, in 1983, the U.S. Department of Education released a NAEP report entitled "A Nation at Risk," which warned that not enough time was being spent in schools on academic subjects -- "the Basics" -- for example, English, mathematics, science, history, and geography.

Unfortunately, many in educational "ivory towers" have apparently ignored that warning.

Currently, in more than 30 states, followers of educational fads are committed to a school-reform process called "Outcome-Based Education" -- "OBE," for short.

The goals of OBE are not academic, but psychological and sociological: tolerance; intra- and inter-group communication; self-esteem; environmentalism; and group-centered problem-solving. Mastery of subject matter is apparently considered secondary; grades and achievement measurement are ignored; curriculum and textbooks are "dumbed down"; mathematical and spelling accuracy are de-emphasized; testing and competition are shunned; and children are increasingly being treated as educational guinea pigs in obedience to "scholastic political correctness."

The OBE fad is being

served at the expense of scholastic performance, to the detriment of our children, and at the risk of producing public school graduates unfit for collegiate-level work and -- worse -- the job market, nationally and internationally.

Grades and achievement measurement are very important, and, when a student demonstrates mastery of subject matter, self-esteem will follow. Competition in scholastic activities is desirable, because when students go out into the real world, they are going to come face to face with real competition. To deemphasize mathematical and spelling accuracy and to "dumb-down" our textbooks are not only ridiculous but just plain foolish.

Overwhelmingly, parents, elected officials, and taxpayers who underwrite our schools are demanding that educators spend time, money, and resources on guaranteeing achievement in the classic, basic disciplines. If the proponents of scholastic fads do not heed this demand, reform will be imposed from outside the educational establishment.

No one should expect that the public schools can solve all of society's problems, personal or social. But we do have a right to expect our schools to prepare our children to master a predetermined body of disciplines needed for jobs, careers, and achievement in a modern economy.

Before it is too late, both for our country and for our children, let us hope that academic excellence is reinstated as the primary goal of our schools nationwide.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Reaching Out With West Virginia's Scientific "Ear"

In November 1988, the old National Radio Telescope at Green Bank, Pocahontas County, collapsed.

Understandably, the collapse of the telescope brought a cry of dismay from the Nation's scientific community, with calls for an early replacement.

Subsequently, to replace this vital scientific instrument, I added \$75 million to a supplemental appropriations bill in 1989.

Since then, construction at the Green Bank site has moved forward rapidly, with planned construction currently approximately 50 percent finished, and completion scheduled for autumn of 1996.

When fully operational, the National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) will place West Virginia firmly in the front ranks of international space research.

In spite of the 1988 calamity, the Green Bank scientific installation has nevertheless continued to host numerous educational activities, in anticipation of fully resumed research and training in the future.

For example, a series of Science Teachers Training programs, conducted by NRAO in partnership with West Virginia University (WVU), has been offered regularly since 1987, with support from both the National Science and Benedum Foundations. Since their inception, these programs have involved more than 350 teachers from across the country in exhaustive two-week summer courses that feature lectures on astronomy, actual scientific research using a 40-foot-diameter radio telescope, de-

tailed seminars about science education, and construction of scientific instruments for classroom use.

Since 1987, these seminar-trained teachers have conducted workshops in their own school districts, sharing their knowledge and training with an estimated 15,000 other science teachers across the nation.

This year, the Teachers Training program was redesigned to concentrate on West Virginia teachers, as well as college students attending WVU and Glenville State, West Liberty, and Fairmont State Colleges who are training to be teachers. As part of the redesigned Green Bank program, which will continue through 1996, the college student participants will be assigned to "student-teach" in schools near their colleges. Through this redesigned program, West Virginia teachers, schools, and students will be further enriched by the expertise available at Green Bank.

Additionally, the Observatory staff conducts workshops for small college science faculties nationwide; provides summer jobs for undergraduate science, engineering, and computer students; conducts tours for interested visitors; and, in cooperation with Glenville State, provides an "elder-hostel" program that allows the senior citizen participants to operate the 40-foot-diameter radio telescope.

Certainly, the Green Bank facility is proving its value as an educational tool, and I look forward to the completion and dedication of the new massive telescope and fully resumed activities two years hence.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Promise of Corridor H

Economic prosperity flows along concrete rivers.

For nearly thirty years, the people of West Virginia and the other twelve Appalachian States have been promised interconnected streams of asphalt -- the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Corridor Highways -- that would serve as inlets for economic opportunities.

But, since 1965, when the ARC Corridors were roughly mapped out in legislation to authorize the Commission, the promise of a completed ARC Corridor Highway system has remained unfulfilled.

I am working to remedy that.

As chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have increased the federal share of funding for Corridor Highway construction, recognizing that industry and jobs would otherwise find only limited passage into the mountains and valleys of Appalachia.

Further, I was able to include the entire Corridor Highway System, as well as U.S. 52 in Southern West Virginia, as part of the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA).

As a result of my efforts, West Virginia -- the only state entirely within the region identified as Appalachia -- has seen reenergized progress on Corridor Highway construction in recent years. Since 1989, I have added to appropriations bills the full federal share needed to complete

construction of Corridor G from Charleston, to Logan, to Williamson, and the total federal portion of funds required to upgrade to four lanes the full length of Corridor L, which runs from I-79 near Sutton to I-64 near Beckley.

In addition, over recent years, I have added \$10 million to a bill for planning and design of the Parkersburg Bypass of Corridor D and \$160.5 million to several bills for construction on Corridor H.

This year, based on the West Virginia Division of Highways' decision that work could begin next year on additional sections of Corridor H, I added \$110 million to two federal appropriations bills, which have been signed into law, to enable the project to move forward without delay.

This new funding brings to \$270.5 million the total monies I have added to federal appropriations bills to help ensure that the dotted lines that now signify Corridor H on West Virginia road maps will be filled in over the coming years.

In the meantime, the federal government must continue to make good on its nearly 30-year-old promise to the people of West Virginia, and I will keep fighting to see that Corridor H from Weston to Wardensville is eventually completed, opening Central West Virginia to further economic growth.

October 5, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The War on Crime Begins at Home

Crime is a terrible problem in our country. Parents fear for the safety of their children. People are being terrorized in their own neighborhoods. Even in West Virginia, which has consistently reported crime rates among the very lowest in the nation, criminal activity is growing.

Congress recently passed, and the President signed into law, the Fiscal 1995 Commerce/Justice/State Appropriations Bill, which will provide the money to initiate community policing programs, construct prisons, strengthen efforts to prevent illegal immigration, and support other crime-combating initiatives.

The bill includes \$84.4 million I sought for continued development of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) computerized fingerprint identification system that will be housed at the new FBI center at Clarksburg, a project for which I have obtained more than \$500 million.

The ultra-modern computerized system will provide law enforcement officers at every level with nearly instant access to fingerprint information and criminal history files, thus helping to identify, track, and catch law-breakers.

Also in the appropriations bill is \$19.6 million I

sought to provide start-up costs and initial staffing for the \$60 million Beckley Federal Prison, now under construction in Raleigh County with funding I provided as part of a 1990 anti-crime, anti-drug package.

The Beckley prison will help to ensure that prison cells are available in which to lock up the climbing numbers of criminals and hold them for the duration of their sentences.

These measures, though important, are only a small part of the solution to crime in our country. To a large extent, crime must be fought at the local level, by the officers on the beat, prosecutors, judges, and community members.

But most importantly, crime prevention begins at home, fostered by parents who instill in their children a strong sense of family and religious values -- the kind of traditional values still alive today in West Virginia.

At every opportunity, I speak on the Senate floor and in West Virginia about the need to return to those "old values," and I will continue to do so, recognizing that no amount of laws can replace the home-grown foundation of religious faith and family values in the fight against crime.

October 12, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Time to Turn Back the "Values Clock"

Like most West Virginians, I am increasingly concerned about the deterioration that I witness in public morals, entertainment, and personal values in our national life.

For most of this century, mass communications -- movies, radio, and television, in particular -- have increasingly glamorized the values, preferences, and lifestyles of immoral, and even criminal, elements of our society, to the point of displacing responsible behavior.

Day in and day out, television and movies trivialize adultery, drug use, juvenile delinquency, rape, violence, murder, profanity, cheating, and a variety of perversions.

Indeed, the words of some popular rock and "rap" songs are not fit for utterance in decent company.

Responsible behavior, lawfulness, religion, patriotism, industriousness, fidelity, honesty, hard work, self discipline, and other values that render civilized life possible are routinely ridiculed, satirized, and denigrated.

No society or culture can hope to survive and flourish if it flouts the values and traditions on which civilization depends universally, and America, which is the paramount embodiment of mankind's highest

aspirations, is no exception.

From the beginning of American history, the family has been the primary promoter of our value system. From one generation to the next, American families have instilled in their offspring a respect for the Ten Commandments and other great religious principles, and have imbued them with a strong sense of right and wrong, of duty to country, and respect for authority and the law -- values that are primary building blocks for character and citizenship, and precepts without which societies and nations cannot survive.

Similarly, religious faith has been a well-spring, nourishing the highest ideals of personal and public morality, as well as citizenship and public responsibility.

For too long, however, both the family and religion have suffered undeserved assaults.

The philosophy of "do your own thing" is a cancer eating away at the soul of our country.

The time has come to reverse this immorality, and to turn back the "values clock" in our country.

In the name of national survival and community preservation, the traditional family and religious values must be restored to positions of primacy in American life.

October 19, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Caring For Our National Treasures

It was fitting that the groundbreaking ceremonies for the new U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Education and Training Center (NETC) in the Eastern Panhandle took place on a dazzling day that showcased West Virginia's impending fall glory.

As we assembled to herald the beginnings of this new, state-of-the-art facility, I was struck by the appropriate choice of West Virginia as the location for the national center, which is being built with more than \$103 million that I obtained in federal appropriations bills.

Indeed, West Virginia's abundant assets and its close proximity to Washington, D.C., made it the logical site for the NETC, which will become the national training headquarters for the men and women who will protect and manage our country's precious natural resources.

When the National Education and Training Center is fully operational -- sometime in late 1996 -- it will be staffed by approximately 200 permanent and contract personnel and will provide training to as many as 250 federal and state conservation professionals at a time.

This new center is not only a symbol of our nation's commitment to protecting America's bounty,

but it also serves to remind us that each generation has a sacred covenant with the generations that follow to preserve our natural heritage so that it might be enjoyed in the years ahead.

The NETC -- a 16-building complex being built on a 538-acre Jefferson County site along the Potomac River -- will include classrooms, laboratories, administrative space, and living quarters for those who will train there. The facility also will be available for conservation instruction to environmentalists, civic organizations, and school groups.

Because the future of America's growing awareness of environmental issues rests with our youth, I am particularly encouraged that our young people, who will be the next millennium's caretakers of the land, will have access to the training center and to the professionals who stand on the front lines of the effort to maintain our country's natural treasures.

With all West Virginians, I look forward to the opening of the National Education and Training Center, both to share the glories of West Virginia with natural resources professionals from across the country and to provide those professionals with the most up-to-date facilities in which to train.

October 26, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

An Update on the Idea Of American Citizenship

Too often in our contemporary era, we use the word "citizen" without realizing its deep meaning.

In the Book of Acts, in the New Testament, as the Apostle Paul is about to be scourged like a commoner, he startled the authorities in Jerusalem by declaring that he was legally a Roman citizen, and demanded that he be tried in Rome.

That demand -- the legal right of a Roman citizen to be tried in Rome -- set the local officials into a panic, for Roman citizenship in the Ancient World bore with it a value of which few of us today can conceive.

Perhaps only one other citizenship in world history can parallel the prestige of Roman citizenship, and that is American citizenship.

Indeed, in many ways today, American citizenship is the equivalent of Ancient Roman citizenship.

Because of its value, annually, thousands seek illegal entrance into the United States, largely because of the Privileges that they perceive as belonging to Americans.

Unfortunately, most people do not grasp that American citizenship is not only about Privilege, but even more so about responsibility.

To some people,

American citizenship means being able to do whatever one wants to do.

But as perhaps no men have in human history, our Founding Fathers understood that there was a price that could be exacted for the political creation that they had brought into existence. They stated that price in the Declaration of Independence: "...We mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

Based on that model, American citizenship is not doing what one wants to do, but doing what one ought to do.

Best understood, the essence of American citizenship is responsibility -- responsibility for one's own behavior, responsibility for one's own family, responsibility for one's own community, and responsibility for one's own country.

As we move toward the close of this century and further into the third century of our life as a nation, I hope that increasing numbers of West Virginians and their fellow Americans will actively nurture an inner sense of citizen responsibility, commitment, and dedication, without which this "last, best hope of earth" -- as Abraham Lincoln described our Nation -- might be lost.

November 2, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Handy Hotlines

West Virginians often have questions about Federal programs and services, and about regulations and opportunities that may affect them directly. Sometimes help is just a phone call away, and I have found that the following list of toll-free Federal hotlines can help West Virginians find answers to some of their questions.

Retired Army Pay Problems	1-800-428-2290
Cancer Hotline (National)	1-800-422-6237
Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	
Medicare Information	1-800-638-6833
Medical Scholarship Information	1-800-638-0824
National Runaway Switchboard	1-800-621-4000
(For parents and runaways to leave messages)	
Consumer Product Safety Commission	1-800-638-2772
(Product recall, complaints, fact sheets)	
Financial Aid for College Students (National)	
Department of Education	1-800-433-3243
National Guard "ChalleNGe" Program	1-800-529-7700
AIDS Hotline (National)	1-800-342-2437
(HIV and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome Information)	
Pesticide Emergency Information	1-800-858-7378
National Health Information Center	1-800-336-4797
Energy Conservation Hotline	1-800-428-2525
Hill-Burton Free Hospital Care Hotline ...	1-800-638-0742
Small Business Administration	1-800-827-5722
Social Security Administration	1-800-772-1213
West Virginia Veterans Affairs Office	1-800-827-1000
National Drug Hotline	1-800-662-4357
(Drug-abuse help and information)	
Safe Drinking Water Hotline	1-800-426-4791
Hazardous Waste and Superfund	
Information	1-800-424-9346
Auto Safety Hotline	1-800-424-9393
(Auto-safety information and complaints)	
Washington, D.C., Central Reservation	
Center	1-800-554-2220
(Information on lodging in the Nation's Capital)	

November 10, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Expanding the MDTV Network

West Virginia's revolutionary health-care tool -- Mountaineer Doctor Television (MDTV) -- is poised to add a new channel to its growing network.

Beginning next month, the Clarksburg Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center will become part of the MDTV system, a two-way, interactive television hookup that allows doctors and patients in the state's rural hospitals to consult with specialists at medical hub centers at West Virginia University (WVU) Medical Center in Morgantown and the Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC).

In the past several years, I have added more than \$5 million to federal appropriations bills to establish MDTV in West Virginia and to expand it into rural corners of our state where health care is not readily accessible.

MDTV is an exciting medical outreach program that promises genuine improvement in rural health care in our state. I expect that MDTV will make important contributions to the health of thousands of West Virginians in the years ahead.

Currently, MDTV connects its two major hub sites -- at WVU in Morgantown and CAMC in Charleston -- to six sites across West Virginia: Wetzel County Hos-

pital, New Martinsville; Davis Memorial, Elkins; Grant Memorial, Petersburg; Boone Memorial, Madison; St. Joseph's, Buckhannon; and the Cabin Creek Clinic, Kanawha County.

The Clarksburg VA Medical Center will be the seventh West Virginia medical facility connected to the MDTV hub sites, and is expected to be in operation next month.

In addition, I added report language to the Fiscal 1995 Labor/HHS Appropriations Bill to establish two more MDTV hub sites in the state -- at Marshall University in Huntington and the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine in Lewisburg. My language also calls for the addition of three new community health centers in West Virginia to the MDTV network, bringing to ten the total number of MDTV remote sites across our state.

Access to modern health care and expert medical specialists will be essential for the people of our state in the years ahead.

Thankfully, West Virginia's growing MDTV network will afford much of that access, and will ensure vital services and necessary help to widespread patients through the miracle of an expanding communications system.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

1994 Progress Report

For the past six years -- my sixth term as a U.S. Senator from West Virginia -- my sights have been set on laying deeper and broader foundations for our state's economic future, both for the remaining years of the 1990's and well into the dawning 21st century, little more than a half-dozen years ahead.

Through my appropriations efforts, federal funding for Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Corridor Highway G, from Charleston southwest toward Williamson at the Kentucky border, has been completed, as has federal funding for Corridor L, stretching roughly from I-77 near Beckley, Raleigh County, to I-79 near Sutton, Braxton County; more miles of Corridor H, from I-79 near Weston eastward toward Buckhannon and Elkins, have opened; and preliminary design and planning work is underway on upgrading U.S. 52 between Huntington and Bluefield (proposed I-73). In addition, I have added federal funding for the Robert C. Byrd Expressway in Weirton and for the upgrading and four-laning of Route 9 in the Eastern Panhandle.

Further, as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I secured necessary federal funding to initiate construction of the new Internal Revenue Service computing center and to further equip the new, 130-person Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms facility -- both in Martinsburg, Berkeley County. Additionally, through my efforts, another 400 new employees are being added to the consolidated Bureau of

Public Debt in Parkersburg, Wood County, which will eventually employ approximately 1,540 people.

In addition, in September, I broke ground for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's new National Education and Training Center near Shepherdstown, Jefferson County, another facility for which I added funding to federal appropriations bills.

In crime fighting, my appropriations efforts advanced the continued construction of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Fingerprint Identification Center near Clarksburg, Harrison County, which will eventually employ an estimated 2,500 people; and the construction of the new Federal Medium Security Prison at Beckley, Raleigh County, which will employ nearly 500 people and which is more than two-thirds complete.

Moreover, I was successful in adding funding for construction of new library facilities at Marshall University, Huntington, and the College of West Virginia, Beckley, as well as a new science and technology facility at Shepherd College, in the Eastern Panhandle.

These examples represent only a portion of the initiatives on which I have been working to provide new opportunities for economic growth for West Virginia and her people well into the next century.

During my seventh term in the Senate, I shall continue doing everything feasible to promote West Virginia's economic growth and future statewide prosperity.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Filling a National Need

The United States set a bleak new record recently: For the first time in American history, more than 1 million people are incarcerated in our nation's jails.

Given these figures and the escalating crime rate in our country, the need for adequate prison space becomes a national priority.

West Virginia is on the verge of playing an important role in helping to fulfill that national need with the soon-to-be-completed medium-security federal prison in Beckley, Raleigh County.

That facility -- being built with funding that I provided in a federal appropriations bill -- is almost seventy percent complete, and efforts to staff the new prison are already underway.

Nearly 500 employees will be required to run the new prison, which will house 1,536 inmates and which is expected to be in full operation in mid-1995.

According to the Federal Bureau of Prisons, nearly two-thirds of the Beckley Federal prison employees will be drawn from the West Virginia workforce, a process that is already underway.

Recently, Federal Bureau of Prisons Director Kathleen Hawk advised me

that a warden and two associate wardens -- both of whom have West Virginia connections -- have been appointed to run the Beckley prison.

In addition, the Federal Bureau of Prisons held a two-day job fair in Beckley at the beginning of November, and the response was overwhelming. More than 3,000 people attended the sessions, and job applications were requested by more than 2,800.

Federal officials tell me that correctional officer positions at the new prison will be the largest number filled, and positions also will be available in the medical, food service, educational, and clerical fields.

Federal Bureau of Prisons officials report that exceptionally well-qualified, experienced candidates were seen for all disciplines, and, based on this, they are optimistic that they will have no difficulty finding people for positions that traditionally have been hard to fill. This is a tribute to West Virginia and to the strong work ethic that is a hallmark of our West Virginia workforce.

With all West Virginians, I look forward to the completion of this new federal facility and to the jobs that it will bring.

November 30, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

GATT

I recently voted to delay Senate consideration of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Uruguay Round, believing that this massive trade agreement deserved more time for study than the 20 hours allowed under the "fast track" process.

Further, I believe that an agreement with the potential to adversely impact our nation's economy and federal, state, and local laws should not be voted on by the lame-duck members of this Congress, who are retiring or were defeated in the recent elections. For these lame-duck members, this was a free vote. They will not have to face the voters and answer for their vote on GATT.

I do not believe that GATT, as currently crafted, will best serve the interests of West Virginia or the nation as a whole.

Too often in the past, I have seen our nation enter into "free-trade" agreements that are touted as a route to better economic times and increased job opportunities, only later to witness jobs moving overseas. Such has been the case in West Virginia, where many manufacturing industries have declined as foreign concerns have captured a greater share of the domestic and international markets.

One of the most disconcerting parts of the GATT agreement is the establishment of a secretive World Trade Organization -- a new body comprised of unelected, unaccountable,

international bureaucrats with extensive powers, which can be used in secretive ways against the U.S.

The WTO, in which the U.S. will have no veto, will have the leverage to influence elimination or modification of a staggering range of federal, state, and municipal laws and regulations dealing with labor issues, environmental protection, food labeling, meat inspection, and other consumer health and safety protections.

Further, if we refuse to change our laws to suit the WTO, our nation can be fined, thus imposing, in effect, taxes on the American people.

Additionally, the WTO can determine that one U.S. industry is in violation of GATT rules, but impose sanctions on another part of our economy. For example, sanctions could be imposed on the agricultural industry for failure to comply with a GATT ruling on the automobile industry.

Against my warnings and in spite of my procedural move to block consideration of GATT until the next Congress, the proponents of this agreement were successful in gaining Congressional approval.

Some suggest that if we dislike what we get as a member of GATT, we can simply withdraw, but the reality is that we will have limited opportunities to do so. Pulling out of this kind of agreement is never a quick and easy process.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

1994 Progress Report: Health Services

For the past several years, I have been working to expand and improve West Virginia's health care infrastructure -- those facilities and programs of outreach aimed at delivering education and treatment to meet pressing health problems in our state.

In continuing that effort, this year, for example, I added funds to an appropriations bill for two veterans-oriented health programs -- construction of a medical research addition at the Huntington Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center, and for continued operation of a veterans' health-services demonstration project being conducted cooperatively by the Clarksburg VA Medical Center and Ruby Memorial Hospital at West Virginia University (WVU) in Morgantown.

Additionally, I added monies to build a new health care clinic at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine in Lewisburg, a facility that will serve residents of Greenbrier, Monroe, Nicholas, Pocahontas, Raleigh, and Summers counties.

Specifically targeting West Virginia's unusually high incidence of heart and lung diseases, I added funds to the Labor/Health and Human Services Appropriations Bill to establish at the West Virginia University School of Medicine an ultra-modern facility to provide medical education and

treatment geared to the needs of cardiovascular and respiratory-disease patients.

Also this year, I added funds to the Labor/HHS bill for the further expansion of Mountaineer Doctor Television, a state-of-the-art medical outreach program for which I provided initial funding in fiscal 1992 to connect physicians at the WVU Health Sciences Center with rural areas, so that patients and doctors in outlying regions can have instant access to specialized medical expertise.

These recently funded initiatives join a list of other health care programs I have aided in putting into place in West Virginia in recent years.

The Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center, for example, constructed with a total of \$13.3 million in federal funds which I added to bills beginning in fiscal 1986, is giving West Virginians close-to-home expert diagnosis and treatment of cancer. Also funded with my appropriations from prior years are a new rural health clinic taking shape at Marshall University in Huntington and a new Centers for Disease Control Laboratory in Morgantown for the study of workplace health and safety.

These and other programs and facilities in our state are helping to make top-of-the-line health care services more readily available to all West Virginians.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Joyous Season of Endings And New Beginnings

For generations, this season of the year -- those weeks preceding and following the Winter Solstice -- has played a significant role in Western civilization, in which America has assumed an ever-growing role.

The Christian Church has long celebrated December 25 as the birthday of Jesus Christ, with an added festival on January 6 to memorialize the visit of the Three Wise Men at the stable in Bethlehem.

Judaism has set aside an eight-day period in late November and early December to commemorate Hanukkah -- a remembrance of the recapture of the Temple in Jerusalem in 165 B.C. from Syrian Greeks after its defilement with pagan worship.

And from the Romans, we have the month of January, named after the god Janus, whose name meant "door," and who was the deity of beginnings.

Religious festivals of light and joy are particularly appropriate during a season of shortening days, lengthening shadows, and early darkness -- festivals for giving thanks to God for life, love, and blessings, and for sharing the warmth of our hearts with family and

friends.

Likewise, January, with New Year's Day, represents a logical season for starting anew, establishing fresh habits, resolving to work harder and to do better, and setting valuable goals.

At this time of year, I extend my own best wishes to all of the people of West Virginia, in a hope that their lives and homes will be filled with the real spirit of this special season, and that the dawning new year -- 1995 -- will be more fulfilling and rewarding than even the passing year has been.

More importantly, perhaps, I offer my hope that West Virginians will take special precautions on the highways of our state during this season.

Too often, these holidays have been occasions for indulgence in alcohol, with catastrophic consequences on our highways and tragic results for some travellers and their loved ones.

To everyone, then, I wish the most joyous of holiday seasons, accompanied by a sincere hope that the New Year will bring enlarged prosperity and enriching fulfillment.

Happy 1995, West Virginia!

December 21, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The West Virginia Spirit

One Sunday morning some weeks ago, leafing through The Washington Post, I noticed that West Virginia was the target of one of that newspaper's regular columns.

Each week, the Post sponsors a contest, asking readers to respond to a particular challenge.

The challenge that caught my eye that Sunday encouraged readers to come up with "good" things about West Virginia. That sounds innocent enough, and, as a matter of fact, the challenge was suggested by a West Virginian who was sincere in her desire for positive comments about our home state. The real purpose of this game, unfortunately, is to parody a given target, and in this case, abandoning better judgement, the writers of this column turned a good-natured suggestion into a "roast" of the state I love.

Consequently, after weeks of collecting contest entries, the Post printed the "winners." Readers from as far away as Houston, Texas, joined in the skewering, producing a list of some of the most snide, arrogant, crude, and offensive characterizations that I believe I have ever seen.

As West Virginians, this strikes us as nothing new. Over the years, our

state has perpetually been depicted in television and the movies as a backward state, filled with poverty-stricken, illiterate "hillbillies." Those depictions sting and anger, but it is especially infuriating to me when a major American newspaper encourages the perpetuation of mindless, misguided stereotypes.

West Virginia is a marvelous state, peopled by some of the warmest, most hardworking, charitable, patriotic, and God-fearing men and women in this nation. West Virginians have shared hard times, and perhaps it is these shared hardships and unjust put-downs from so many detractors that have helped to instill in us a fierce pride and loyalty toward our state.

At this time, as our nation faces difficult challenges at home and abroad, it is irresponsible for a newspaper or any individual to spread discord and disunity among our states. Instead, we should be making every effort to inspire among our citizens that combination of loyalty, pride, good will, and concern for neighbors and community that comprise the "West Virginia spirit" -- one of the numberless "good" things West Virginia has to offer.

December 28, 1994



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Caring for Our Children

With the increasing numbers of dual-income families, finding accessible, affordable, quality child care has become a priority concern for many people in our state and nation.

West Virginia is poised to play an important role in the national imperative to develop the best possible daytime care for our national treasures -- America's children.

Toward that end, I recently announced the award of a \$700,000 federal grant -- made possible by funding that I added to the Fiscal 1993 VA/HUD Appropriations Bill -- for construction of a new child care center in Upshur County.

That facility, known as the Child Development Center of Central West Virginia, will replace the existing child care center on the campus of West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon, which currently occupies a temporary structure built during World War II.

The new facility, construction of which should be underway during the summer of 1995, will have space for the children of approximately 85 families,

providing its young clients with a safe, modern environment.

The Child Development Center has a mission beyond its child care function, however -- a mission that will touch children across our state.

Upon its completion, the new center will not only serve as a training site for child care providers, but professionals at the center also will assist individuals in establishing and improving child care throughout West Virginia.

Unquestionably, our children are our nation's most precious assets, and their health and well-being are of paramount concern. With rising numbers of children in a patchwork of child care situations, we must search for ways to ensure their happiness, education, and safety while not in the care of their parents.

I am excited about the evolution of the Child Development Center in Upshur County and the promise it holds for our children, and I look forward to the completion of its new facility and the growth of the new child-care initiative that will take root there.

January 4, 1995



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Caution: Fiscal Rapids Ahead!

Since earliest times, people have questioned the use of their taxes and have resisted tax increases.

Little wonder that any suggestion of the reduction, cancellation, or reformulation of any tax is generally greeted with an initial burst of enthusiasm.

The truth is, however, that, without revenues supplied by taxes, governments cannot afford the services virtually demanded by citizens -- national defense, law enforcement, schools, highways and transportation, Social Security benefits, many health services, and more.

In the early 1980's, in allegiance to so-called "supply-side" economic theories, a massive tax reduction was pushed through Congress by the administration then in power, without adequate attention to the overall impact of that tax reduction and without a parallel reduction in programs favored by most Americans. At the same time, the administration launched the most far-reaching defense buildup in American history.

Unfortunately, the result was the \$4.5-trillion-plus national debt that now plagues our country and threatens to burden rising generations of Americans for decades to come with heavy interest payments on the debt.

More ominously, currently, voices in both national political parties are attempting to outdo one another in promising tax cuts.

In order to pay for these tax cuts, the President has already put forward a plan, with few details, for federal program cuts.

I anticipate that, in coming weeks, the fever for a tax cut will generate a landslide in Congress of proposed spending cuts and program consolidations, with little thought given to either the impact that tax reductions will have on reducing the federal debt or the havoc that will be wrought on every program from defense and police protection to air-traffic safety and educational quality nationwide.

Wisdom suggests that, for the foreseeable future, money from any federal spending cuts ought to be applied to whittling down our crushing multi-trillion-dollar national debt. Wisdom also suggests that program cuts be made with a surgeon's scalpel instead of an ax, lest we literally cut off our noses to spite our faces in the process.

Certainly, the time has come to put our national fiscal house in order.

Such reordering, however, requires intelligence and vision, not demagoguery and mindlessness.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Restraining Hand of Congress

During 1994, conflicts in little-known areas of the world -- the Balkans, the Horn of Africa, central and southern Africa, southwest Asia, and in the former Soviet Union -- have created economic and humanitarian disasters for countless numbers of people.

Sadly, there are many more cauldrons of ethnic, religious, and ideological tensions brewing in areas around the globe than there are cooks capable of creating a recipe for peace.

In the past year, the United States committed some 48,000 of its men and women in uniform to United Nations (UN) multilateral or unilateral "peacekeeping" operations in Somalia, Haiti, Rwanda, the former Yugoslavia, the Sinai, Iraq, and Israel. The United States has provided transportation and financial support for many other UN operations.

U.S. military personnel are the best-equipped, best-organized, and most well-trained forces in the world, and they have the ability and resources to move quickly and effectively to meet any contingency. But the demand for their services is overwhelming, and it threatens to exhaust our personnel and equipment, as well as add considerably to our national budget deficit.

Further, while our hearts go out to those who are caught in the crossfire of warring factions, our best judgment tells us that U.S. military might cannot solve all of the world's problems.

A recent government estimate predicts that the

demand for international humanitarian aid and intervention will skyrocket in 1995. Thus, we can expect a swelling number of calls from around the globe for peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance -- calls that must be answered with a measured response which includes a careful examination of whether or not we can play a legitimate and helpful role in mitigating the conflict.

In the past year, Congressional efforts that I led resulted in the withdrawal of U.S. forces from questionable missions in Somalia and Rwanda.

It was through the much maligned "power of the purse" that the Congress was able to exercise a restraining hand on these military ventures. Absent that power to limit or cut off funding for military operations, the Congress would be impotent to check the President's power to interject our troops in ill-advised military missions.

Congress must continue to fulfill its role in decisions affecting the commitment of U.S. troops and humanitarian support. But in order to do so, the Congress must maintain a firm grasp on the federal purse strings.

I have been, and will continue to be, a steadfast voice for preserving the "power of the purse" for the Congress, the "People's Branch." That is where the framers of the Constitution placed it, and their wisdom has stood the test of time for 200 years.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

In Behalf of Voluntary School Prayer

The First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America -- part of our "Bill of Rights" -- declares, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...."

That passage was explicitly written into our Bill of Rights at the appeal of Baptist ministers in Virginia, whose own religious liberties had been officially penalized before the American Revolution by Colonial officials.

Unfortunately, since the early 1960's, opponents of all religion have turned that passage of the First Amendment on its head to prohibit the free exercise of religion in our public life and, particularly, to expunge any expression of religious faith from our public schools.

This movement has even gone so far as to deny students the opportunity of having prayer at their high school graduations.

Against that background, should we be surprised to witness nationwide rising drug abuse among our children, rampant teenage sexual promiscuity, children murdering children, gangs of teenage thugs terrorizing

their neighborhoods, and a pervading moral malaise among youth in both our inner cities and our suburbs?

In an effort to restore something of a spiritual balance to our public schools, I have introduced a joint Congressional resolution to propose an Amendment to the Constitution clarifying the intent of the Constitution with regard to public school prayer.

My amendment is not an effort to require or to deny voluntary prayer in schools. My amendment is an effort to make clear that the words that the Constitution uses with regard to religious freedom do not mean that voluntary prayer is prohibited from our public schools or public school activities.

In short, I hope to end a three-decades-long "tyranny of the minority" in denying to the majority of school children in our country the slightest vestige of the exercise of a liberty otherwise guaranteed by the Constitution -- the right of children in our public school system to voluntarily pray in our public schools and their right to voluntarily pray at public school activities.

January 25, 1995



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Ushering in West Virginia's High-Tech Future

Two recent grant awards for West Virginia projects -- aimed at helping our industries take advantage of federally sponsored research and advanced technology and at furthering our student's science and math skills -- demonstrate the multi-faceted advantages offered by our state's blossoming high-technology initiatives.

When I began promoting high-tech ventures in West Virginia more than a decade ago, I envisioned the kind of practical application that both of these grants will make possible.

The first, a \$49 million, five-year cooperative agreement between the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Wheeling Jesuit College, will provide for operation of the National Technology Transfer Center (NTTC) in Wheeling.

That facility, which was built with \$13.5 million that I added to federal appropriations bills, will pioneer the transfer of federally sponsored high-tech research and advanced technology to the private sector, affording the nation's industries a leg-up in the increasingly competitive world trade arena.

Through the NTTC, West Virginia and U.S. companies will be able to access and leverage billions of dollars worth of federally funded research results,

scientific/engineering expertise, and technology -- high-tech know-how that might otherwise be beyond their reach.

The second grant that recently came West Virginia's way -- also from NASA -- is a five-year, \$10 million cooperative agreement for operation of the Classroom of the Future.

The Classroom, which is housed in the Center for Educational Technologies (CETC) on the Wheeling Jesuit campus, is not only providing students with cutting-edge math and science training, but is also spearheading an effort to produce and evaluate educational technology products and programs.

I was in Wheeling this past fall to dedicate the CETC -- construction of which was made possible by \$10 million in federal funding that I added to appropriations bills -- and I was impressed by the tremendous potential offered by this new undertaking, both to our students and to our educators.

Indeed, West Virginia has taken giant strides in the past decade with respect to high technology, and I am optimistic that these latest grant approvals will expand and extend the many benefits that high technology offers West Virginia and the nation.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Balanced Budget Amendment And the People's Right to Know

An informed and active citizenry is essential to the workings of a representative democracy.

Unfortunately, in the 104th Congress, the new leadership seems determined to ram legislation through the two houses with little or no opportunity for debate, the process by which challenges and solutions are hashed out in public view.

I am not a party to the so-called "Contract with America," that seems to be driving the federal legislative agenda. My contract is with the Constitution of the United States.

The American people have a right to know how their lives and livelihoods will be affected by new laws. They have a right to weigh in on the legislative process with their concerns about, or support for, legislative proposals, and they deserve to have the facts.

The public should be outraged by the actions of some members of the 104th Congress, who are attempting to hide, under a veil of secrecy, the whole truth about legislative proposals such as the proposed Constitutional amendment to balance the budget.

The members of Congress have a responsibility, a duty, to be straightforward with the people they represent. But the proponents of a balanced budget Constitutional amendment seem bent on trying to hustle the ill-conceived proposal through the Congress before the public has the chance to review it. These proponents apparently recognize, as recent polls illustrate, that the more the public learns about the potential effects of the amendment, the less they like it, and the more likely they are to oppose it.

I support reducing the deficits.

I am for the goal of balancing the budget. For those reasons, I voted for budget deficit reduction packages in 1990 and in 1993. Not a single Republican in the House or Senate voted for the 1993 bill that was calculated to shave the deficit by well in excess of \$500 billion over five years.

As the Founding Fathers created it, the United States Senate is an institution intended to foster careful reflection, caution, and considered debate.

As opposed to the House, where members are elected every two years and the legislation is often influenced by the passions sweeping the nation, the Senate was designed by the Constitutional framers as the body where steaming passions would be allowed to cool through thoughtful, thorough examination. It is the Senate's Constitutional role to deliberate, and to guard against hastily produced, poorly crafted, and ill-advised legislation.

To those who are impatient for quick action regardless of the quality of the legislation, this process may seem frustrating, but it is this process that protects the rights of the American public and ensures that legislators will be held accountable for their actions.

I hope that the proponents of the balanced budget amendment will abandon this tactic of denying the public's right to know and will live up to their responsibility to the Constitution and to posterity by participating in a thorough public debate on the proposed Constitutional amendment to balance the budget.

Through such debate, I believe the American public will recognize the pitfalls and the folly of enacting a Constitutional amendment to balance the budget.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Time to Lead

Without question, I am concerned about the burden that will be imposed on future generations if the federal budget deficits are not further reduced.

But I am equally concerned about the possibility that our children and our grandchildren will have to pay an even greater price for another deficit -- a deficit of leadership.

I fear that the members of Congress who favor the balanced budget constitutional amendment, claiming that it is required to force them to take decisive action to whittle down the deficit, are merely using the amendment as a clever dodge to disguise their lack of courage to do the job they were elected to do -- to lead.

A constitutional amendment will give the members of Congress no greater vision and no more power to craft and pass balanced budgets than they already possess.

To the contrary, it will result in a massive shift of power out of the hands of the Congress -- the people's directly elected representatives -- and into the hands of the executive and judiciary branches.

The proposed amendment, if adopted, would drastically change the system of government under which this nation has flourished for over 200 years. It would irreparably damage the Constitution, which, with its carefully weighted checks and balances, its guarantees of liberty, its eloquent preamble, and its flex-

ibility, has inspired, guided, and protected this nation for generations.

I am not opposed to amending the Constitution. In fact, I have voted for constitutional amendments five times in the past. However, I am opposed to attempts to write fiscal policy into the basic charter of our nation, and that is what this amendment would do.

The constitutional framers, believing that fiscal decisions should be left to elected representatives, never intended fiscal policy to be contained in that document. Welding fiscal policy into the Constitution would exclude the kind of flexibility required to respond to changes in the economy, such as recessions, and the result could be even higher deficits, higher unemployment, and a disabled economy.

The budget deficits must be reduced, and I have supported two measures -- one in 1990 and another in 1993 -- that have put the deficits on a downward slope. Like those measures, any future effective plan to balance the budget will require tough, painful choices. It will require courage and leadership, but it can be done.

If the proponents can produce the two-thirds supermajority needed to pass a constitutional amendment, why not begin with an actual plan to further reduce the deficits? Such legislation would only require a simple majority of votes to pass both houses.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

COPS: Fighting Crime on the Local Level

Thanks to a new federal initiative -- the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program -- 116 West Virginia communities recently received grants to help hire extra police officers to patrol their streets.

The COPS program -- established in the 1994 Omnibus Crime Bill to enable local communities to expand their police forces and fight crime on the local level -- was funded through my amendment to the Crime Bill that set up the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund.

Through the latest COPS grants -- a total of \$5,327,620 was awarded -- nearly all of the West Virginia recipients will be able to hire one additional officer, with the exception of Morgantown and Parkersburg, which will be able to hire two new officers.

These latest awards, intended for communities with populations of less than 50,000, are the second round of grants approved for West Virginia under the COPS program.

Under the initial round, Huntington, Morgantown, Clarksburg, and the Boone County Sheriff's Department shared a \$1.2 million grant to hire a total of sixteen new officers, including six each in Huntington and Clarksburg; three in Boone County; and one in Morgantown.

The grants, which are awarded on a competitive

basis, provide up to 75 percent of an officer's salary and benefits over a three-year period. The size of the grants is based, in part, on the salary levels in each community.

Clearly, the battle against crime -- the effort to reclaim our streets and to ensure that our communities are safe from those who would flaunt the laws of the land -- must begin at the grassroots level.

In our homes, parents must continue to teach their children the moral and spiritual values and respect for authority that will enable young Americans to grow into law-abiding adults.

In our schools, our young students must understand respect for their teachers and for their peers, and school authorities should impose the discipline necessary to make schools safe havens for learning and teaching.

In our towns and cities, local leaders must have the financial resources with which to maintain law and order.

The COPS program helps to provide those much-needed resources, and serves as a signal that the local fight against crime has support on the national level.

My hat is off to all of the West Virginia towns and cities that successfully competed for COPS grants, and, in so doing, will gain an extra measure of security in the years to come.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Poignant Revelation

Recently, former President Ronald Reagan released a letter to the American media revealing that he is suffering from Alzheimer's Disease.

His revelation resulted in a nationwide outpouring of compassion and concern, and it brought renewed attention to this insidious disease.

Millions of Americans suffer from Alzheimer's Disease, most of them not on the national stage, but privately, in the bounds of their homes or nursing homes.

For all Alzheimer's patients and their loved ones, though, the battle against this disease is a lonely and difficult one, waged primarily within the confines of minds that progressively shut down.

Several years ago -- in the hope of establishing a network of services in West Virginia to assist the victims of Alzheimer's and their families -- I added \$9.9 million to a federal appropriations bill to develop the Center for Nuclear Research in Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders at West Virginia University (WVU) in Morgantown.

Since that time, I have been successful in adding additional funding to a number of other appropria-

tions measures to expand the Alzheimer's research, treatment, and care network around the state through programs based at WVU and Marshall University in Huntington, as well as through a pilot Alzheimer's day-care facility in Parkersburg.

This past summer, I had the opportunity to dedicate the Parkersburg facility, which was launched by the Wood County Senior Citizens Association with the help of \$700,000 in federal funding that I had added to a fiscal 1992 appropriations bill.

I was struck by the outpouring of gratitude from those who have been touched by Alzheimer's, and that appreciation validated my efforts in West Virginia to help ease the burden of this tragic disease.

The latest statistics show that nearly 36,000 West Virginians suffer from Alzheimer's, a disease that counts among its victims an estimated four million men and women nationwide.

For all of its victims -- from former President Reagan to the millions of average Americans across our land -- we must not relent in our efforts to ease the suffering wrought by Alzheimer's Disease.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

In Behalf of Public Broadcasting

It is unfortunate that, under the guise of budget economy, some in Congress have taken advantage of current debate on reducing the federal budget deficits to suggest the dismantling of the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), one of our nation's cultural gems.

Since the early years of television, thoughtful people have sought alternatives to the trash and vulgarity that have increasingly contaminated the television airwaves.

In time, "educational television" laid the foundations for today's public broadcasting stations.

Consequently, as the public television network grew, children in our inner cities and in rural states like West Virginia could be reached by television images that stretched their imaginations, taught them stories by great authors, exposed them to initial concepts in science and arithmetic, and challenged them with mainstream values such as telling the truth, respecting other children, obeying their parents, and becoming good citizens.

The Public Broadcasting System, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and National Public Radio have increasingly filled the voids left by the commercial networks when those networks appeared to turn their backs on good music, drama, public debates, documentaries, and

substance and challenge in entertainment.

Indeed, the Public Broadcasting System has evolved into a kind of cultural cutting edge -- the pioneering network -- that carved the frontiers and plowed the first fields that have provided the market that several other culturally oriented stations are now exploiting.

Lamentably, in commercial television, the bottom line is profit, and until certain kinds of programming prove themselves, most commercial networks are unwilling to take risks on most types of programming -- that is, until public television demonstrates the existence of a market for that kind of programming.

I hope that we will think long and sincerely before we punish, dismantle, or destroy one of the most valuable assets in our national cultural treasury, and risk reducing the Public Broadcasting System, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and National Public Radio to bad and ineffectual imitations of our commercial broadcasting networks.

To stifle, shut down, starve, emasculate, or cripple our Public Broadcasting System, by denying it the seed money that guarantees its very survival in some of our most isolated rural communities, would be to kill one of the finest golden-egg-laying geese on the American cultural scene.

March 8, 1995



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

FBI Fingerprint Center is Making its Mark

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has attained another notable milestone on its way toward making its Clarksburg facility a keystone in America's crime-fighting infrastructure -- employee hiring has surpassed the 1,000 mark.

The FBI presence in the state has grown steadily since March of 1991, when thirteen men and women -- including 10 who transferred from FBI headquarters and three newly hired West Virginians—became the first staff members of the West Virginia Fingerprint Division, subsequently named the Criminal Justice Information Services Division (CJIS). With the addition of new employees in recent weeks, CJIS's staff has grown to more than 1,000. When fully operational, the FBI estimates it will employ a staff of approximately 2,500.

Indeed, the FBI facility promises to become a major source of jobs in the years ahead, providing quality job opportunities, not only for those directly working there but for collateral enterprises that will serve both the FBI and its broadening employee base -- department stores, health-care organizations, food suppliers, motels, and such. The growing CJIS will be a dy-

namo to power the economy of North Central West Virginia long into the next century.

In 1990, I was able to add \$185 million to a federal appropriations bill to launch the new ultra-modern fingerprint center. Since then, I have supported more than \$340 million in federal monies to keep the project on track and to develop its state-of-the-art computer system. Construction of the new facility is expected to be completed this summer.

In addition to the benefits to West Virginia's economy, CJIS will place West Virginia in the forefront of America's war on crime. It will provide our country's law enforcement agencies -- local, state, and federal -- with a rapid, advanced computer system for checking fingerprints, revolutionizing the way that law-enforcement personnel track and catch criminals.

I applaud all of those West Virginians who have sought and secured positions with CJIS, as well as those employees who have transferred from FBI headquarters. I renew my heartiest welcome to this exciting, vital, and imperative new crime-fighting institution that is finding a home in our state.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Line-Item Veto Charade

Many years ago, when the British explorer George Mallory was asked why he wanted to climb Mount Everest, he replied, "Because it is there." In similar fashion, some members of the Senate appear committed to a strategy of despoiling the U.S. Constitution for no other apparent reason than because it is there.

Their latest charge is to enact a measure they claim gives the President line-item veto authority. Never mind that what they actually propose is not a line-item veto at all. Their strategy is to pass anything, in this case something called separate enrollment, and then pawn it off as line-item veto.

Their mutation works like this: Once the House and Senate pass an appropriations bill, every "item" in that bill would be stripped out and magically transformed into a separate bill. This means that, instead of sending the President one spending bill for, say, the Department of Defense, the Congress would actually send him more than a thousand little "billetes." The key problem here is that that process does not meet the requirements of the Constitution.

Article I, section 7, clause 2 of the Constitution requires that "Every Bill" must pass the House and Senate, and before "it" can

become a law "it" must be presented to the President. Under a separate enrollment process, though, several thousand little "its" will be created from the original bill without ever having been passed by the House and Senate. And, to add insult to injury, the sponsors of this legislative sleight of hand even admit the procedure is unconstitutional.

The Congress does not need to trample on the Constitution to achieve the goal that line-item veto proponents are trying to achieve. Senator Daschle, the Democratic Leader, offered a substitute amendment to allow the President to excise any spending. If the Daschle proposal were enacted, all the President would have to do is send a message to Congress and the Congress would be forced to vote on his proposed spending cuts in an expedited manner. If the Congress agreed, the money would not be spent.

Unlike the convoluted and unconstitutional separate enrollment measure, the Daschle amendment was a workable proposal. Moreover, it would not have shifted the balance of powers from the Congress -- the American people's directly elected representatives -- to the Executive Branch and scores of faceless bureaucrats.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Come Out from Behind The Balanced Budget Gimmick!

The United States can boast one of the world's oldest forms of government, with a Constitution that has functioned for more than two centuries, and that has, again and again, served as a model for other nations seeking to forge a more functional, rational system of self-government.

Since its creation in 1787, only 27 amendments have been added to the U.S. Constitution, the first ten of those as the Bill of Rights, adopted in 1791.

To their credit, our forefathers through many generations have declined to trivialize the basic law of the land with a plethora of alterations.

Most recently, a politically motivated effort to add a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution was defeated in the U.S. Senate, and I am glad to have led the charge against it.

I agree that we must make balancing the federal budget a major priority, and I am concerned about our crushing national debt.

We owe it to our children and grandchildren to come to grips with the debt, the deficits, and the rising interest on the debt. But we also owe it to our children to preserve the Constitution's incomparable system of mixed powers and of checks and balances.

Our Constitution has served us well. In no small measure, America has avoided the chaos and disruption that have too often convulsed other nations, and we owe this felicitous circumstance to the sanctity and reverence in which past generations have held our Constitution, and because of our forebears' reluctance to debase the Constitution with politically motivated amendments.

Thus, I have urged my colleagues to put the recent balanced budget amendment vote behind them and to forge bipartisan policies to solve our country's fiscal ills now.

As constructed by James Madison and the other Founding Fathers, the Constitution was never intended to include language promoting any particular fiscal theory or politically partisan policy.

For the sake of the future, let us indeed get on with reducing our federal deficits and paying down our national debt, in a spirit of genuine patriotism, sacrifice, and cooperation.

But let us not achieve those goals by corrupting the most effective instrument of self-government ever devised by human genius -- the Constitution of the United States of America.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Forging the Future on a Foundation of the Past

Nearly fifteen years ago, I began a written narrative of the history of the United States Senate, the fourth and final volume of which has just been published.

This most recently published volume of The Senate: 1789-1989 is a compilation of 46 speeches of enduring historical interest that have been delivered by U.S. Senators over the years.

The other volumes include a chronological overview of the Senate's first 200 years; a topical volume that touches on issues ranging broadly from the structure of the Senate to its role in treaties and impeachments; and a statistical volume that contains facts and figures on nearly every facet of the Senate's history.

My chief purpose in crafting this work, for which I receive no royalties or other income, has been to help instill in the members of the Senate and the American public, now and in the future, a greater awareness of the importance of the Senate's role in our government and the Senate's contributions to our nation's history.

After being sworn in as a new Senator in January 1959, I developed a keen interest in the rules, precedents, and history of the U.S. Senate. For me, the Senate came to mean something far more majestic than its grand halls of marble and its ornate chamber where speeches and laws are made.

There was something about the Senate that was far nobler than these tangible things -- something imperishable. It had a soul!

During my Senate service, particularly in recent years, I have witnessed a disconcerting change in the institution and its membership. Very few Senators today have a sense of history or an understanding of, and reverence for, the role of the institution as intended by the founders of our nation and as molded by the legions of distinguished men and women who have served in the Senate throughout its existence.

Lacking that historical foundation, I fear that many Senators today are ill-prepared to recognize and avoid the perils that have led to the downfall of past leaders, and, in some cases, of entire nations.

Even in recent weeks, as the Senate has considered such issues as the line-item veto and the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, I have seen the disturbing signs of this lack of institutional memory and the threat it poses to our Constitution and our nation.

I hope that my multi-volumed work will serve as a warning beacon to elected leaders and the members of the American public, who might otherwise unwittingly allow a repeat of history's missteps.

We must recognize that it is on the foundation of the past that we forge our future.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Tax Favors vs. Deficit Reduction

During recent consideration of the 1995 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Bill, the Senate approved my amendment -- by a vote of 99 to 0 -- to direct all the savings from spending cuts in the bill toward deficit reduction, a requirement that prevents the savings from being used to finance other spending programs or political tax favors.

The Supplemental Bill contains billions of dollars in spending cuts for a broad range of federal programs.

For example, the bill pares funding for agricultural programs, public housing, foreign aid, and airport improvements.

While I cannot agree with all of the rescissions, they are the kinds of painful choices that will be required if we are going to make a serious attempt to cut the budget deficits.

After the recent weeks of nationally televised hand-wringing and teeth-gnashing by members of Congress over the need to balance the federal budget, one would have expected these federal spending cuts to have been directed toward deficit reduction.

Instead, the original version of the Senate bill left these savings unfettered

by such a restriction, allowing them to be redirected toward other federal spending programs or toward offsetting the cost of proposed tax cuts, the lion's share of which, according to the U.S. Treasury Department, will benefit the wealthiest Americans.

It was to correct that glaring error that I offered, and the Senate adopted, my amendment.

However, even as the Senate was embroiled in the final hours of debate on the Supplemental Bill, the House passed a massive tax cut giveaway, which will cost \$189 billion over five years and approximately \$700 billion over ten years in lost revenues. That cut would irresponsibly add to the \$1.2 trillion in spending cuts already needed over the next seven years to bring the budget into balance.

This persistent movement to squander budget savings on tax cuts for the well-to-do and for big corporations is just plain crazy.

Voting for tax cuts is popular. It is an easy vote. But this is not the time for popular, easy votes. This is the time for leadership, for fiscal constraint, and for taking the difficult steps required to reduce the budget deficits.

April 12, 1995



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

In Recognition of 25 Years Of Safer Mining

Recently, the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) recognized the 25th anniversary of the Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969, which has led to a quarter-century of effective life-saving health and safety regulations in mining.

Fueled in part by a mine explosion at Farmington in Marion County, West Virginia, in 1968, which resulted in the deaths of 78 miners, the Coal Mine Health and Safety Act was initiated to provide workers with regulated safety requirements and improved working conditions in the mines. The Act, which notably set the foundation for creating the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, has made a significant impact on the mining industry.

West Virginia's abundant coal resources, along with my upbringing in West Virginia's southern coal mining communities, have made mining safety and health issues a priority throughout my career in public office. In 1969, I secured the initial funding for the National Mine Health and Safety Academy in Raleigh County, a facility which is operated by MSHA. Subsequently, I have added more than \$23 million to appropriations bills to upgrade and expand the Academy's services and capabilities.

Further, in 1992, I added \$1.5 million to an appropriations bill to support the creation of a mine disaster simulation laboratory at the Academy. The technologically advanced laboratory realistically simulates mine-disaster conditions, enabling rescue personnel to train for real-life emergencies.

The Academy and its simulation lab are examples of the progress made possible by the Coal Mine Health and Safety Act -- progress evident in safety statistics. During the three-year period prior to passage of the Act, an average of more than 250 workers across the nation died annually in coal mining accidents. Between 1992 and 1994, the average number of annual coal mining deaths totalled fewer than 50.

Also, cases of black-lung disease, caused by inhalation of coal dust in the mines, have been reduced in the last 25 years by an average of 75 percent, and the prevalence of black lung disease among miners has declined by more than two-thirds.

I am thankful for the lives saved because of the passage of the Coal Mine Health and Safety Act 25 years ago, and I commend MSHA's efforts in improving mining safety conditions. Such efforts will continue to earn my support.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Cardinal's Twin Significance

The Cardinal holds special significance for West Virginians.

Since 1949, the brilliant scarlet male and his beautifully subtle mate have served as West Virginia's state bird. Often the only spot of brightness during gray winter months, the Cardinal is a promise of springtime and a sign of each year's renewal.

The "Cardinal" is also the Amtrak passenger train that three days a week stops in southern West Virginia on its runs between New York and Chicago.

For more than a decade, I have worked with Amtrak officials to keep the Cardinal operating through West Virginia, touting its importance to our state's blossoming tourism industry and promoting it as an important link between West Virginia and points beyond.

Earlier this year, Amtrak announced nationwide restructuring of its train routes, citing budget cutbacks as the impetus for its decision to streamline its passenger service. The Cardinal, which has been one of Amtrak's poorest financial performers, faced possible elimination absent the restructuring plan.

During a recent meeting in my office with Amtrak President Thomas M. Downs, I was advised that in September, the Car-

dinal will stop in West Virginia every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, instead of its present Sunday-Wednesday-Friday timetable.

In addition, the train will make its eight West Virginia stops -- in White Sulphur Springs, Alderson, Hinton, Prince, Thurmond, Montgomery, Charleston, and Huntington -- during daylight hours, an improvement in the current schedule of nighttime stops in West Virginia during the New York-to-Chicago leg of the round-trip journey.

Amtrak has also decided to use its more reliable, modern "superliner" cars on the Cardinal route.

This new, daytime schedule, coupled with the fact that full-time weekend service will be offered, should boost ridership and tourism in scenic southern West Virginia.

The endpoints of the Cardinal route will be changed, terminating in Washington, D.C., to the east and Cincinnati to the west.

I am encouraged by Amtrak's plan to make the Cardinal and its entire system more efficient, competitive, and customer-oriented, and, like its avian namesake, I hope that the Cardinal passenger train will provide West Virginia a glimmer of economic springtime in the years to come.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Origins of Our Nation

Our U.S. Constitution and our system of government are deeply rooted in history.

The Framers of the U.S. Constitution were well acquainted with history and drew upon their knowledge of it as they formulated our governmental system.

Among the Framers' greatest influences was the French author-philosopher Montesquieu, whose political theories were significantly molded by a detailed understanding of the history of the ancient Roman republic and the history of England and the unwritten English constitution. Montesquieu asserted that the three governmental powers -- judicial, executive, and legislative -- should be kept separate and distinct from one another to ensure political freedom and to safeguard against tyrannical rule.

Thus, the Framers, guided by Montesquieu's insight and that of other political philosophers, together with their own knowledge of the classics and of English history and the colonial experience, instituted for the United States a governmental structure of mixed powers and checks and balances.

During my spare-time studies over a period of several years, I came to discover numerous parallels between Roman history and the history of our own republic, including the presence of such sociological

themes as a sense of manifest destiny, religious faith, and family values that instilled patriotism and reverence, self discipline, and respect for authority.

Subsequently, in 1993, I delivered a series of 14 Senate speeches on the history of the ancient Romans and their governmental system.

I used those talks to demonstrate, through the examples of Roman history, the threat to our form of government and our way of life that are posed by popular but ill-conceived proposals, like the line-item veto and the balanced budget Constitutional amendment, that would shift the power of the purse from the legislative to the executive branch, thus undermining the balance of powers.

The full texts of my 14 speeches are contained in a new publication, entitled The Senate of the Roman Republic, for which I receive no royalties or other compensation.

A copy of my book can be purchased, at a cost of \$17.00, including postage, by calling the U.S. Government Printing Office at (202) 512-1808, or by sending a check to the Superintendent of Documents at P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954. Your check should be accompanied by a note indicating your name, address, the name of the book, and the stock number: 052-071-01072-6.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Memorial Day, 1995

From its humble beginnings during the Civil War, Memorial Day has grown to serve as our nation's official holiday to honor the patriotic men and women who have fought for our principles and freedoms.

Memorial Day -- or "Decoration Day" as it is often called -- was originally observed on May 30, a date that may have been chosen to correspond with France's "Day of the Ashes," which commemorates the return of Napoleon Bonaparte's remains to French soil. In its earliest years, Memorial Day was an occasion to decorate the graves of the Civil War dead -- both Union and Confederate -- with flowers.

Memorial Day is now officially celebrated on the last Monday of May, serving as one of the "holiday bookends" that mark the unofficial beginning and end of summer and characterized by flags, parades, and the flowers of springtime.

As we prepare to observe yet another Memorial Day, it is worth noting that on numerous occasions in the 20th Century, America's military might has been tapped to restore peace to the world or to save mankind from cruel tyrannies --

against German Imperialism in World War I, against Nazism in World War II, and against militant communism from 1945 until this decade, for instance.

In fact, 1995 marks the 50th Anniversary of V-E Day -- the day that commemorates "Victory in Europe" and the end of the Second World War. During that war -- as they had done in World War I and as they continued to do in subsequent world conflicts, thousands of West Virginians answered the call to duty.

West Virginians are a peace-loving people, but they stand tall when called upon to defend our country's rights and freedoms and to preserve the principles upon which America was founded.

They know, as do I, that a strong national defense is essential to maintaining our liberties -- a fact that has underscored my work in the United States Congress on behalf of a strong, viable defense.

On Memorial Day 1995, then, I join all West Virginians in paying tribute to the contributions of all of the loyal men and women who have served our state and nation with distinction.

May 10, 1995



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Telescope Will Bring Universe Closer to Home

In the early 1600's, astronomer and mathematician Galileo fitted two glass lenses within a long tube and gave birth to the modern telescope -- a device with which man can gaze upon the stars and bring his world closer to the heavens.

Scientific discovery has advanced considerably since the 17th Century, and while Galileo surely marveled at what he saw through the crude lenses which he contrived, he had no way of knowing the level which technology would achieve, exemplified today through the powerful, state-of-the-art radio telescope currently under construction at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank in Pocahontas County.

It was in response to the collapse of the vintage 1962 telescope at Green Bank in 1988, coupled with the need for a sensitive and sophisticated device for research and development, that I added \$75 million to a 1989 federal appropriations bill for the construction of the new Green Bank Telescope.

When operational in late 1996, signals from the sun, planets, stars, and galaxies gathered by the telescope will be studied by astronomers to help provide a greater understanding of the evolution and workings of the universe.

The recent placement of a 336,000-pound, 148-foot axle marked the end of the initial phase of construction. The axle is a key component in the telescope's mov-

ing structure, which consists of two elements, a base that mechanically rolls on a circular track, and a tilting framework which allows for vertical positioning.

The second phase of construction will incorporate the tipping structure, which will weigh over 9 million pounds and include the reflecting surface, or dish, which will span 2.3 acres. The total height of the finished Green Bank Telescope will stretch more than 480 feet, twice the height of the Statue of Liberty.

Advanced computerization will perform a variety of functions, such as automatically compensating for the movement of the earth -- thus enhancing research capabilities by enabling scientists to study one specific point over an extended period of time.

Computerization will also monitor deformations in the surface of the dish caused by gravity and temperature changes. Minute changes will be corrected by the 2,000 automated adjusters assigned to the reflecting panels.

As the world's largest fully steerable, single-dish radio telescope, the Green Bank Telescope will also be the most precise telescope ever built for research with radio microwave frequencies. This scientific accomplishment will be a visible symbol of West Virginia's emergence into the high-technology world that will shape the 21st Century.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Car Wars

America's future economic strength relies, in great measure, on our ability to compete in the emerging global marketplace.

Although the United States, given a level playing field, possesses the wherewithal to lead in the international economic races, some of our trading partners erect trade barriers that unfairly tilt the playing field, forcing the U.S. to run uphill.

Japan's closed auto market provides, perhaps, the most egregious example of such unfair trade practices.

In 1994, the U.S. trade deficit with Japan reached a record high \$65.7 billion, and the greatest portion of that lopsided deficit was comprised of the automobile and auto parts industries. Overall, while Japanese automakers held some 22.5 percent of the American market, the share of the Japanese market held by the Big Three U.S. automakers was less than 1 percent.

Astoundingly, the U.S. automobile trade deficit with Japan last year accounted for 22 percent of our total trade deficit worldwide.

The impact of that deficit on the American economy is far-reaching, affecting some 700,000 employees of the Big Three automakers and more than 2.2 million Americans employed in the auto parts and supporting industries, including aluminum, steel, glass, rubber, electronics, and machine tool manufac-

turers.

So unwilling are the Japanese to open their borders to foreign-made autos and parts that they recently shut out any consideration of compromising on the matter, walking out of trade negotiations that were underway between their country and the U.S.

A new era in trade is upon us. Air travel, computerization, and telecommunications have led to an intertwining of nations and national economies unlike that witnessed by past generations. In this global environment, the economic woes and fortunes of one nation necessarily have some impact beyond its own borders.

In the interest of the future economic vitality of the U.S. and of domestic jobs, Japan cannot be permitted to continue rigging its markets against the U.S.

It was, therefore, in response to the Japanese trade impasse, that I recently offered, and the Senate overwhelmingly approved, a resolution supporting sanctions against Japan, unless the Japanese agree to work toward some middle ground on the auto trade issue.

Our nations have much to offer each other, but we must be able to work together. Time remains for the Japanese to return to the negotiating table, and I hope that my resolution will help spur them to do so. That act would be a good starting point in forging a more open and cooperative relationship of mutual benefit.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Timber Bridges Linking Wood Resources to Progress

The bridges which join this country together are an important part of our national infrastructure. But a surprising number of the bridges currently in use need to be repaired or replaced. Because of the efforts of my National Timber Bridge Initiative, upgrading these older steel and concrete bridges can be done by using treated hardwood.

Recent technological advancements have led to the development of chemically treated wood which is versatile enough to be used in a variety of construction projects, including noise barriers, box culverts, retaining walls, pedestrian bridges, railroad ties, marine facilities, and highway bridges.

More than 40 percent of the 578,000 highway bridges in the United States are considered structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. Responding to this decline, in 1988, I added \$3.3 million to a federal appropriations bill to create the National Timber Bridge Initiative, a nationwide program which is improving transportation networks. Since that time, I have added more than \$11 million to appropriations bills to continue the Initiative, which, along with research and development, technical assistance, and technology transfer, has funded construction of 349 bridges in 48 states. Sixty of these bridges have been con-

structed in West Virginia alone.

The most recent examples of timber bridges in West Virginia are currently being built in Monroe and Preston Counties. When completed, these bridges will carry a full range of highway traffic, including trucks, school buses, and emergency response vehicles.

The use of wood as a construction material makes sound economic sense. Timber bridges are made from hardwoods, native to West Virginia and other states, which last up to three times longer than steel or concrete in bridges because they do not rust and are not affected by de-icing chemicals. Also, timber bridges have lower material and construction costs and are easier to repair.

One of the principal objectives of the Timber Bridge Initiative is to stimulate West Virginia's timber industry, creating greater economic diversity and stability for our rural timber-producing communities. Timber bridges utilize wood resources from these communities and at the same time help to create local jobs and related services.

My National Timber Bridge Initiative is upgrading our nation's infrastructure while helping to create new markets for West Virginia's abundant hardwood resources -- a winning proposition on two important fronts.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Timber Bridges Linking Wood Resources to Progress

The bridges which join this country together are an important part of our national infrastructure. But a surprising number of the bridges currently in use need to be repaired or replaced. Because of the efforts of my National Timber Bridge Initiative, upgrading these older steel and concrete bridges can be done by using treated hardwood.

Recent technological advancements have led to the development of chemically treated wood which is versatile enough to be used in a variety of construction projects, including noise barriers, box culverts, retaining walls, pedestrian bridges, railroad ties, marine facilities, and highway bridges.

More than 40 percent of the 578,000 highway bridges in the United States are considered structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. Responding to this decline, in 1988, I added \$3.3 million to a federal appropriations bill to create the National Timber Bridge Initiative, a nationwide program which is improving transportation networks. Since that time, I have added more than \$11 million to appropriations bills to continue the Initiative, which, along with research and development, technical assistance, and technology transfer, has funded construction of 349 bridges in 48 states. Sixty of these bridges have been con-

structed in West Virginia alone.

The most recent examples of timber bridges in West Virginia are currently being built in Monroe and Preston Counties. When completed, these bridges will carry a full range of highway traffic, including trucks, school buses, and emergency response vehicles.

The use of wood as a construction material makes sound economic sense. Timber bridges are made from hardwoods, native to West Virginia and other states, which last up to three times longer than steel or concrete in bridges because they do not rust and are not affected by de-icing chemicals. Also, timber bridges have lower material and construction costs and are easier to repair.

One of the principal objectives of the Timber Bridge Initiative is to stimulate West Virginia's timber industry, creating greater economic diversity and stability for our rural timber-producing communities. Timber bridges utilize wood resources from these communities and at the same time help to create local jobs and related services.

My National Timber Bridge Initiative is upgrading our nation's infrastructure while helping to create new markets for West Virginia's abundant hardwood resources -- a winning proposition on two important fronts.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's 132nd Birthday

In 1863, West Virginia officially became the thirty-fifth state to join the Union. On June 20th of that year, the hardworking founders of the State of West Virginia watched their dreams become a reality, as the northwestern and western counties of Virginia finally were recognized by the U.S. Congress and President Lincoln.

As West Virginia celebrates its 132nd birthday, all of its citizens know that birthdays can be a reflective time. Usually, we take a moment to take a reflective gaze upon our past, and set our eyes on the horizons of the future.

Throughout my tenure in the Senate, I have worked to develop the infrastructure and economic opportunities of our state. One of my top priorities has been the construction of the Appalachian Regional Commission Corridor Highway System in West Virginia. Earlier this month, I participated in the ground-breaking for the final 3.1-mile section of Corridor G, reaching from Charleston to Williamson, a project for which I have added \$329 million to federal appropriations bills.

I have also added \$270.5 million to federal appropriations bills for construction of Corridor H, which will stretch from Weston, Lewis County, to Wardensville in Hardy County; and I have added \$175 million to federal appropriations bills for construction of Corridor L, which runs from Sutton, Braxton County, to Beckley.

New opportunities can be seen springing up in all areas of the state as a result of my efforts. The FBI Fin-

gerprint Identification Division facility taking shape in Clarksburg has already hired more than 1,000 employees, and expects to have a total of 2,500 people on the payroll once it is fully operational in 1998. In April, 450 employees began work in completed portions of this state-of-the-art facility, which will generate an annual economic impact of \$75 million.

Additionally, the new federal prison in Beckley, which is nearly completed, is expected to hire a total of 491 workers, with employees beginning to occupy the minimum security portion of the facility next month. When fully staffed, the prison will have an annual economic impact of about \$28 million.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Education and Training Center now under construction in the Eastern Panhandle will help put West Virginia in the spotlight as a national training center for conservationists. And the Classroom of the Future and the National Technology Transfer Center in Wheeling will further efforts to train our young people for the industries of the future. These projects are only a few of the vast number of my initiatives that are contributing to our state's future.

So, as we celebrate our state's 132nd birthday, let us rededicate ourselves to the economic development of West Virginia to ensure that our children will be able to celebrate many more West Virginia Days in the next millennium.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Building West Virginia's "Field of Dreams"

In the movie "Field of Dreams," Kevin Costner answers the call, "If you build it, he will come," by constructing a baseball diamond in his cornfields. In doing so, Costner hopes to facilitate a relationship between himself and that which had previously been unreachable.

I, too, have heard the call that they will come if it is built, but West Virginia's "Field of Dreams" is not that of emerald green grass and perfectly laid chalk lines. Instead, this "field" is one of the four-lane highways of the Corridor Highway System that reach through Appalachia just as Costner's baseball field cut through Iowa. And once our field is completed, the jobs and industry that the people of West Virginia so richly deserve will come.

Thirty years ago, in 1965, Congress enacted the Appalachian Regional Development Act, thus promising the people of West Virginia and the entire Appalachian region a vast network of Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Corridor Highways. Since then, we have watched this vision slowly become reality, with new, modern, divided, four-lane highways replacing narrow, winding, unsafe roads throughout Appalachia.

Last week, I had the opportunity to participate in the ground-breaking for the final 3.1-mile section of Corridor G in West Virginia. Stretching from

Charleston, through Logan, to Williamson and the Kentucky border, this newest addition to the Corridor Highway System provides yet another building block in my goal of completing our ARC highway promise.

But the ARC highways cannot completely fulfill their objectives until Corridor H becomes a reality. To help assure this, I have added \$270.5 million to federal appropriations bills for Corridor H, and its potential benefits are easy to see.

Of the 399 counties that are part of the ARC, 110 counties lie on the ARC highway system. Research shows that, since 1969, those 110 counties grew 69 percent faster in income, 49 percent faster in earnings, and 32 percent faster in per capita income that their "twin" counties in areas not along major highways.

Corridor H will provide American travelers access into West Virginia, highlighting the natural beauty and economic opportunity available within our borders. In constructing Corridor H, we will provide West Virginia another inlet for the development of tourism, industry, and jobs.

Just as Costner's field soon brought a large number of visitors to his Iowa farm, the ARC Highway System is already bringing economic renewal to West Virginia. In West Virginia's "Field of Dreams," Corridor H signals the arrival of new possibilities to all the areas it touches.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Life-Saving Potential of Corridor H

The opportunity to help save lives has been one of my primary motivations in adding \$270.5 million to appropriations bills in recent years for construction of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Corridor Highway H in West Virginia.

Highway planners acknowledge that most West Virginia roads, including those in the region to be served by Corridor H, were constructed at a time when safety was not a primary consideration. Built where terrain permitted, primarily alongside riverbanks in narrow valleys and on twisting hill and mountain ledges, these outdated roads have not kept pace with the advances in automobiles or the growth in the volume of automobile travel.

These old roads are significant contributors to West Virginia's being ranked third among the fifty states in per-vehicle-mile fatalities.

Today's modern roads, including the divided, four-lane ARC Highways, are designed as much for safety as for convenience, efficiency, and ease of travel.

The West Virginia Division of Highways estimates that construction of Corridor H could reduce traffic fatalities in that area by 52 percent and accident rates by some 70 percent.

Highway planners point to a list of inadequacies in the existing roads throughout Grant, Hardy, Tucker, and Randolph counties that contribute to death and injury of auto travelers in that region.

Traffic entering and leaving those sharply winding, two-lane roads is unrestricted, causing drivers to unexpectedly encounter moving vehicles at crossroads and driveways, many of which are camouflaged by steep terrain or trees and plants that reach to the edges of the roadway.

To help avoid these dangerous conditions, Corridor H would be built with improved visibility of off-road zones and access limitations that, in some cases, would include construction of overpasses to allow the free-flow of cross traffic on main routes.

Corridor H would also be designed with better grading, gentler and fewer curves, and longer sight distances that would enhance safer passage for drivers who today must contend with creeping truck traffic on narrow, two-lane roads where passing is a high-risk proposition.

While many of us enjoy an occasional scenic drive along a country road, the residents of these Eastern West Virginia counties -- breadwinners driving to and from work, schoolchildren on buses, emergency personnel responding to calls for help -- have no choice but to drive daily on antiquated, black-topped deathtraps.

These citizens are just as deserving as their fellow West Virginians of modern, safer, four-lane highways that exist in other areas of the state. They should not be denied the lifesaving potential of a completed Corridor H.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Investing in Our Parks

As we enter the summer months, millions of visitors will stream into our country's National Parks. Those hikers, rafters, campers, and sightseers have realized that true relaxation and utter enjoyment can be experienced within the confines of our National Park System.

I, too, have witnessed the vast opportunities our parks provide, and I have recognized that investing in our National Park System yields more than just expanded trails and new welcoming centers. Directing federal funds to our parks has provided a boost to local and state economies, thus improving the area's tourism and recreation industries.

In West Virginia alone, hundreds of thousands of visitors arrive to admire the beauty of our state every year. They are taken in by the rugged allure and natural grandeur of areas such as Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, New River Gorge National River, the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge, and the developing Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. These parks represent the pastoral elegance that will continue to bring travelers within our borders.

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to dedicate the restored railroad depot at Thurmond, on the New River Gorge National River. The dedication of the depot gave West Virginians another chance to recognize

the history, resources, and overall opportunities available in our National Park System. By investing in the National Parks of West Virginia, we are placing faith in our tourism industry and, in turn, making worthy contributions to the future of our state and our nation.

In that regard, I have added federal funding to assist the National Park Service in providing for its parks in West Virginia. As a result of this funding, areas such as the Eastern Panhandle have reaped the benefits of my efforts over the last 15 years, with Harpers Ferry National Historical Park's visitors contributing more than \$30 million to the local economy in 1993 alone.

Additionally, I have seen such promise in the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge and in the past two years I have helped to obtain \$4 million in federal appropriations bills for the project. These monies are allowing the Fish and Wildlife Service to purchase the land necessary to develop the Refuge.

West Virginia's parks are an investment in the infrastructure of our state, providing a venture that eventually works toward an enhanced economic future for our children and our children's children. Our state's parks are a tribute to West Virginia's natural beauty and to our economic vitality in the coming millennium.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Keeping Minds Open When School is Closed

The end of the school year symbolically marks the beginning of summer. Annually around this time, thousands of West Virginia children take a two-month break from their schoolwork, turning their thoughts to warm weather, visits with family and friends, and exploring West Virginia's many natural recreation areas.

While it is a rite of summer for students to have fun during this break, it is also important for them to continue developing their minds. A rewarding way for students to continue their education outside the classroom is through reading.

Astoundingly, a study recently released by the Department of Education, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, reports that 90 percent of third- and fourth-graders have not read a book or story at home in months. At the same time, about a quarter of those children were watching six or more hours of television a day.

These statistics are troubling because they indicate that our young people may be heading in the wrong direction. If our country is to maintain its position of political and economic leadership in the world, and if future generations of Americans are to have any hope of enjoying the standard of living that most Americans experience today, our youngsters must read and read voraciously.

Technology may swiftly be launching us into a worldwide network of information, but it is still important to read in order to master the "basic subjects" -- classical disciplines such as mathematics, science, grammar, history, and geography -- and to discover the wisdom which can be found in the great literature of the world. To operate the most sophisticated computer that technology yields still requires the fundamental ability to read and to comprehend what is being read.

Today's children are the foundation for tomorrow's future. We rely on education as a key element to ensure that this foundation is a solid one; and, as a nation, we must prepare our children for the realities of the worldwide competition which they will surely have to face.

Schools alone cannot fulfill every educational need. Parental involvement is a vital force for promoting good reading and good study habits, and for weeding out mindless and baneful influences. Reading at home can be a meaningful and cherished family activity, as well as an effective way for students to polish their learning skills.

Parents should be urged to read aloud to their children, and to encourage children to read on their own, and often. This summer, schools will be closed; but, through books, minds can stay open.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Striking a Blow against Underage Drinking

When it comes to substance abuse in this nation, alcohol is our biggest scourge. Almost 14 million Americans over the age of 18 are alcoholics.

As a nation that purports to care about the health, safety, and well-being of its people, the very least we can do is to try to address this alcohol plague by discouraging the early drinking that often results in later addiction or alcohol dependency.

With that in mind, I recently authored, and the Senate approved, an amendment requiring states to adopt a "zero-tolerance" standard for drivers under the nationwide legal drinking age of 21. That standard would make drivers 20 years old and younger who register blood-alcohol levels as low as 0.02 percent subject to state-imposed drunk-driving sanctions.

The zero-tolerance law -- already on the books in West Virginia and twenty-three other states -- corrects a glaring legal loophole that actually allows those under the age of 21 to drink and drive without fear of prosecution, as long as their blood-alcohol level is below the state's legal adult standard for drunk driving, most commonly 0.10 percent.

Where is the logic in telling teenagers it is illegal to drink, while overlooking alcohol in their systems when they get behind the wheel of a car?

In 1994, approximately 2,200 people were killed because of minors who were drinking and driving, and of that group, 1,600 were young people themselves.

My amendment will not only help save lives, but it will also send a message to our nation's youth that drinking and driving is wrong; that it is a violation of law; and that it will be appropriately punished according to the laws of each state.

Under my amendment, states that fail to adopt a zero-tolerance law will lose 5 percent of their federal highway construction funds in fiscal year 1998, and 10 percent of those funds every year thereafter.

I hope that my amendment will be successful in spurring the states without zero-tolerance laws to take the responsible step and enact them.

The simple fact is that alcohol mixed with teenage driving inexperience is a lethal combination. Zero tolerance will save lives, especially the lives of teenagers.

July 12, 1995



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Re-emphasizing Education

Recently, a great deal of media attention has been applied to the deficiencies of the American educational system. Critics of our current system cite a lack of academic rigor, the need for increased remediation, and the practice of grade inflation as signs that American high school graduates are unprepared for the high-tech, high-demand world that is waiting for them beyond the schoolhouse doors.

In fact, in an article last month in The Washington Times, employers expressed "alarm and disgust" at our current educational system, stating that "one-fifth of American workers are not fully proficient in their jobs."

As we question the direction that our educational system is headed, it is important for us to recognize the importance of schooling and the need for our state's and our nation's youth to begin learning life's teachings at an early age. In reforming our system and in preparing our children for the jobs of the future, we must first instill the desire to perform in an exemplary manner.

True educational excellence can only be achieved if the student is willing to work for it; learning cannot be presented as a gift or forced upon a young person like unwelcome medicine. Education must be something embraced, sought after, and valued. Learning must be recognized for the

treasure that it is, and our nation's youth must understand that their futures lie in the quality, scope, and depth of the educations they gain today.

The lack of communication skills of today's youth and the inability of today's high school graduates to adequately handle the demands of their jobs can be traced in part to a lack of pride and an absence of self-respect. If today's youth do not seek out the opportunities available in their educational journeys, they will not be capable of exerting the type of creativity and hard work that they will later need as they confront the challenges of the workplace.

As educational critics begin to look for solutions to what ails the American educational system, they must certainly contemplate the traditional values evident in West Virginia. One way in which our nation's youth can begin to achieve academic excellence is for them to regain a sense of determination, dedication, and hard work.

It is time for parents, community leaders, and local officials to accept their societal responsibilities and teach our nation's youth the value of education. We must help our children to realize just how important education and learning truly are, not only for their own personal future but also for the future of our state and nation.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Study Results Are Encouraging For Corridor H

The President's Appalachian Regional Commission in its 1964 report to President Johnson said, "Developmental activity in Appalachia cannot proceed until the regional isolation has been overcome....by a transportation network which provides access to and from the rest of the nation and within the region itself....The remoteness and isolation of the region, lying directly adjacent to the greatest concentrations of people and wealth in the country, is the very basis of the Appalachian lag."

These words continue to ring true today due to the fact that the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Corridor Highway System remains largely incomplete 30 years after it was promised to the people of Appalachia.

Construction of the ARC Corridor Highway System -- and most recently West Virginia's Corridor H -- has spurred a host of negative essays, based more on personal opinion than on actual attempts to measure the highways' impact.

However, a recent study, "The Economic Effects of the Appalachian Regional Commission" by Andrew Isserman and Terance Rephann of the Regional Research Institute at West Virginia University, provides an encouraging statistical analysis of the ARC and the Corridor Highway System.

That study, published in

the Journal of the American Planning Association, used a "control group" model that compared 391 ARC counties with "twin" counties in other parts of the country.

The study reached a persuasive conclusion with respect to the impact of Corridor Highways: The 110 counties on the Appalachian Corridor Highway System, when compared to their "twin" counties elsewhere in the nation not on a major highway, grew 69% faster in income, 49% faster in earnings, and 6% faster in population.

According to the study, the ARC highways do make a positive difference in the economic well-being of the counties they traverse.

And there is every reason to believe that the Corridor H counties and their business ventures -- including, for example, the expanding tourism, poultry, timber, and wood-products industries -- can expect the same kind of economic boost experienced in other Corridor Highway counties from construction of a safer more modern highway.

To argue against Corridor H is to advocate limited job and economic opportunities at the expense of the people of that region, as well as the state and the nation.

The statistics tell the story. Economic development does follow the paths of the ARC Corridor Highways and it will accompany the construction of Corridor H.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Recognizing Scholastic Excellence

Every year, many of our nation's top high school graduates take the summer months to prepare for the approaching college academic year. Recognizing the importance of education, these students arrange for student loans and grants and take on summer jobs to help offset the cost of a college education.

These students realize that the costs that come with pursuing a college degree are well worth the sacrifice. There is no greater mission than the continued pursuit of education, and, in order to ensure a sound future for our nation, those who desire to pursue their educations in the college or university setting should be given the means and encouragement to do so.

It is for that reason that I initiated a national scholarship program in 1985, a program that my Senate colleagues later named the "Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program." Through these scholarships, awarded on the basis of academic excellence, I sought to reward the brightest minds in West Virginia and throughout the nation for hard work throughout their high school careers.

When first started, the program awarded students across the nation a one-time \$1,500 scholarship for college. In 1993, Congress expanded the award, making the scholarship a renewable, annual payment of \$1,500 for up to four years, for a total of \$6,000. To continue receipt of the scholarship, Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholars are required to maintain the same academic excellence in the university or college setting that they exhibited in high school.

This year, 45 new Rob-

ert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships were awarded to West Virginia high school students. This brings to 390 the total number of West Virginians who have received this scholarship since the program's inception in 1985. These scholars are selected by a five-member panel comprised of representatives from the West Virginia Department of Education and the Central Office of the State College and University System. Education officials in the other states have established their own selection procedures.

Also this year, 313 high school valedictorians in West Virginia -- the top of the class in public, private, and parochial schools -- have been awarded a \$50 savings bond to be put toward their educations. Made possible through a private trust fund, the Robert C. Byrd Scholastic Recognition Award has, since its inception in 1969, signaled to our state's top high school students that education and hard work are, indeed, valued. To date, 7,211 West Virginians have received this recognition award.

As we approach the next millennium, I am confident, from looking at each year's crop of Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship and Robert C. Byrd Scholastic Recognition Award recipients, that hard work, dedication, and a thirst for learning are values that many of West Virginia's high school students continue to treasure. These and other investments in our children's academic dreams help to ensure that our nation is well prepared to answer the challenges of the future.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Recognizing ARC's Importance

In 1965, Congress established the Appalachian Regional Development Act, providing the residents of Appalachia with the means to develop their infrastructure and economic opportunities under the watch of the Appalachian Regional Commission.

As one of the original cosponsors of the legislation that created ARC, I continually worked to spare the program from threats of elimination during the Reagan Administration and have fought to avoid the drastic reductions in ARC funding proposed by the Bush and Clinton Administrations.

Over the last 30 years, ARC has been a good example of a federal program working to accomplish its goals without being burdened by the growing presence of a federal bureaucracy, while continuing to help Appalachian states advance economically. But ARC's work is still far from completion.

Recently, I led a bipartisan defeat of an amendment to a federal appropriations bill that would have stripped ARC of an additional \$40 million in funding, over and above the 35 percent reduction already made in this year's funding.

It is unfortunate that ARC funding has been cut 35 percent while funding for other non-military programs has only been tabbed for a 13 percent reduction.

It is deplorable that some Senators tried to slash ARC's funding by an addi-

tional \$40 million, especially after the Senate and the eight Republican and five Democratic governors who represent the region have voiced their support for ARC.

The \$40 million that was attacked was funding that the Senate Appropriations Committee approved at my request for further construction of the ARC Corridor Highway system in 13 Appalachian states. With only 75 percent of the system completed, now is not the time to divert our attentions from the Corridor highways. Fortunately, this ill-advised amendment was rejected, with 19 Republican Senators voting with me against the amendment.

ARC is not just another federal program "gone out of control." ARC is a well-managed program with a small staff and a smaller operating budget. In fact, only 4 percent of its budget goes for overhead, thus allowing the Commission to put its federal funding right into the communities it was designed to serve.

At a time when domestic spending is being drastically cut back, we must realize that positive, result-producing programs such as the Appalachian Regional Commission must continue to be a priority, both for the federal government and the Appalachian states. ARC must continue to work toward the goals it set 30 years ago, and I will continue to fight to aid ARC in fulfilling its mission.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Restoring Trust and Objectivity

On several recent occasions, I have spoken on the Senate floor about the large honoraria that some members of the press receive from private corporations and special interest groups.

Because of the public perception that highly paid lobbyists and special interest groups have undue influence over many legislators, the Senate adopted my amendment in 1991 prohibiting members of the Senate from accepting honoraria.

Ironically, we now hear reports of journalists and news commentators who receive thousands of dollars to speak to special interest groups whose issues they cover in their stories and news reports.

If the news media are to salvage their position of trust and authority in American society, they, too, should abide by the highest of ethical standards. The communications industry wields such enormous power that the media should be willing to take any reasonable step to help reassure the public about the accuracy and objectivity of what they report. With the hope that the Senate might help lead the way in this regard, I recently offered a resolution requiring journalists accredited to Senate galleries -- which are funded with tax dollars and staffed with Senate employees -- to disclose sources of honoraria and earned outside income.

The purpose of my

resolution is not to probe into the personal financial holdings or private lives of the members of the press, but to deal with a skeptical public perception concerning the impropriety of certain forms of outside earned income, such as speaking fees, and to address the possible doubts concerning the question of objectivity in reporting, when such reporting conceivably might be influenced by such fees.

Likewise, in order to deal with the people's flagging trust in our traditional institutions, I recently offered a "Sense of the Senate" amendment calling on the Judicial Conference of the United States to take a closer look at the judicial branch's regulations governing gifts and travel. This amendment was adopted by the Senate by a 75-23 vote.

These actions on my part were not intended to target or blame an individual or profession for past problems. Instead, they are intended to shore up the people's faith in our nation's time-honored institutions. Certainly, the news media's position as the interpreter and sole purveyor of the news brings with it an enormous responsibility to the public. My actions present the members of the media and the judiciary with the opportunity to remove the shadows of doubt and skepticism -- hopefully, voluntarily -- that have been cast across those professions.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Paving the Road to the Future

Recently, the U.S. Senate passed the Fiscal Year 1996 Transportation Appropriations Bill. This bill embodies the congressional trend -- initiated this year -- of cutting nonmilitary domestic investments in infrastructure by slashing transportation appropriations more than \$1 billion below last year's level.

In its quest to reduce the overall budget, while, at the same time, increasing military spending by billions of dollars and providing tax breaks for the wealthy, Congress, under the new Republican leadership, is proceeding to deal devastating blows to almost all domestic infrastructure programs.

This year's transportation bill is an example of such discretionary domestic budget cuts, for the monies appropriated fall far short of meeting the growing needs of our nation.

During the six years that I was chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, from 1989 to 1994, inclusive, I recognized that our nation's economic prosperity depends heavily on the adequacy of our highways, airports, railroads, and transit systems. For that reason, I advocated increased and sustained funding for our nation's transportation infrastructure.

Currently, 70 percent of

our nation's interstate highways in metropolitan areas are congested during peak hours. Nearly a quarter of our nation's more than half-million bridges are structurally deficient, while another 14 percent are functionally obsolete. And the number of arrivals and departures at our airports is expected to grow 60 percent in the next decade.

But Congress is cutting its investment in transportation infrastructure. Some members of Congress have decided that unnecessary, unrequested, and outdated missile defense systems are more important than the roads, bridges, and airports that our citizens use on a regular basis.

Cuts, such as those made to the transportation bill, will leave the next generation with an unsafe and inefficient transportation system that will result in devastating repercussions on the economy, on private industry, and on public travel.

We must reverse this "slash-and-burn" budget mentality before its impact is irreversible. Our nation's spending practices must reflect the demands and priorities of its citizens. Our transportation infrastructure is a necessary and well directed investment in our nation's future.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Helpful Hotlines

Because of the vast number of regulations and options affecting Federal programs and services, West Virginians often have questions regarding specific problems or concerns. As such, the Federal government has established a system of toll-free phone numbers that can help West Virginians receive answers to their questions and overall assistance with their concerns.

Retired Army Pay Problems	1-800-428-2290
Cancer Hotline	1-800-422-6237
Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	
Medicare Information	1-800-638-6833
Medical Scholarship Information	1-800-638-0824
National Runaway Switchboard	1-800-621-4000
(For parents and runaways to leave messages)	
Consumer Product Safety Commission ...	1-800-638-2772
(Product recall, complaints, fact sheets)	
Financial Aid for College Students (National)	
Department of Education	1-800-433-3243
National Guard "ChalleNGe" Program ...	1-800-529-7700
AIDS Hotline (National)	1-800-342-2437
(HIV and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome Information)	
Pesticide Emergency Information	1-800-858-7378
National Health Information Center	1-800-336-4797
Energy Conservation Hotline	1-800-428-2525
Hill-Burton Free Hospital Care Hotline ..	1-800-638-0742
Small Business Administration	1-800-827-5722
Social Security Administration	1-800-772-1213
West Virginia Veterans Affairs Office ...	1-800-827-1000
National Drug Hotline	1-800-662-4357
(Drug-abuse help and information)	
Safe Drinking Water Hotline	1-800-426-4791
Hazardous Waste and Superfund Information .	1-800-424-9346
Auto Safety Hotline	1-800-424-9393
(Auto-safety information and complaints)	
Washington, D.C., Central Reservation Center .	1-800-554-2220
(Information on lodging in the Nation's Capital)	

August 30, 1995



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Re-evaluating Military Spending

In the 1980's, the United States invested billions of dollars to develop high-tech weapons and missile defense systems. During those closing years of the Cold War, Congress rightly focused on strengthening our nation's military, and funded the projects and programs that could be effective in a confrontation with the former Soviet Union.

Just as the Soviet Union no longer exists, however, the need for massive increases in military spending is also a relic of the past. The end of the Cold War marks an important crossroads for federal defense spending, but unfortunately some members of Congress still scurry to cast their votes for bloated defense budgets.

I recently spoke in support of an amendment that would have cut \$7 billion that was added to the President's fiscal 1996 budget request for the Department of Defense -- \$7 billion over and above the funding sought by the President and the Department of Defense itself.

These increases in military spending have a greater impact than just providing another missile defense system or constructing more B-2 stealth bombers. We are paying for these unnecessary weapons with funds that should be used for much-needed domestic infrastructure programs.

Sadly, as some of my colleagues force this added funding on the Department of Defense, they are stripping education, law enforcement, transportation, and

other domestic programs by \$183 billion over a period of seven years.

Effects of these cuts will mean a further deterioration of the nation's infrastructure. These are not the dividends that the end of the Cold War promised. We are now crafting a defense budget that does not reflect the needs and demands of our nation. We are building some planes and weapons and defense systems, not because they are needed, but because we have failed to move beyond the mindset of the Cold War era. Like caged mice on an exercise wheel, we go round and round, buying weapons we do not need. These taxpayers' dollars could be better applied towards reducing the nation's deficits.

The time has come for us to recognize that the future of our nation does not lie in the expensive and seldom-used weapons systems of days gone by. Instead, investments in domestic infrastructure -- schools, police, roads, civilian research, environmental clean-up, water and sewer projects, and the like -- are the key to a productive future.

I recognized the wisdom of increased military spending during the Cold War. But the time has come for us to acknowledge that the Cold War has ended. While it is important that we maintain a credible and dependable military force, we will also be placing our nation's defense on a sound foundation by investing in our domestic fiscal and human infrastructure.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

FBI Moving Forward in Harrison County

The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Fingerprint Identification Division is beginning to make its mark on West Virginia.

The new facility -- located in Harrison County and initiated by \$185 million that I added to a fiscal year 1990 appropriations bill and more than \$300 million in additional federal funding that I supported -- will serve as the nation's center to convert the FBI's antiquated fingerprint system into a state-of-the-art computerized network.

Recently, a ceremony was held in Clarksburg -- in which I participated -- to kick off work on the FBI's Fingerprint Image Conversion Operation (FICO) contract in Harrison County.

Through the FICO contract, some 32 million FBI fingerprint cards will be converted into computer-readable, digitized images, thereby providing law enforcement officials with a high-tech ally in the war against crime.

Until recently, the FBI operated two satellite facilities -- in Clarksburg and Fairmont -- to begin advance work in connection with the planned, ultra-modern computerized criminal history information network that will be housed at the Fingerprint Identification Division.

The 300 employees at the Clarksburg satellite operation, however, were transferred several weeks ago to the new Clarksburg FBI complex, bringing to more than 1,100 the employees on board there. Ac-

ording to FBI officials, those employees are handling a variety of tasks, including receipt and classification of criminal and civil fingerprint cards and records conversion and processing operations, as well as various policy, administrative, and liaison functions. Already, FBI employees in West Virginia have converted over 2 million criminal history records to an electronic format.

During my visit to Clarksburg, I was pleased to learn that construction on the main building is almost complete, and that employees are using portions of the entire building. When fully operational sometime in 1998, the facility is expected to employ approximately 2,500 personnel and pump an estimated \$75 million into the local economy annually.

In late August, I was advised that the FBI has now received its first electronically transmitted fingerprint images from the Boston Police Department's live-scan fingerprint device. This milestone, FBI officials advise, is the beginning of the end for manual, paper and ink fingerprint cards.

I am encouraged that the work on the FBI facility is proceeding smoothly, and that West Virginia and Harrison County will be home to the most technologically advanced, large-scale weapon ever developed in the age-old battle to curb crime and to help promote domestic tranquility.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Coast Guard's West Virginia Connection

In 1789, when a young man named Alexander Hamilton was appointed Treasurer of the United States, he proposed a service of small, armed vessels intended to enforce the new revenue laws. With this proposal, the United States Coast Guard was born.

Most people do not connect Alexander Hamilton with the Coast Guard. He is usually thought of as one of the triumvirate who crafted The Federalist Papers and laid the framework for our Constitution, or remembered for his tragic duel with Aaron Burr.

In much the same way, few people connect the Coast Guard with West Virginia. But like Hamilton's new idea in 1789, innovation is paying off in West Virginia for the U.S. Coast Guard.

Recently, I was in Falling Waters in the state's Eastern Panhandle to dedicate the Coast Guard National Vessel Documentation Center, an 18,000-square-foot facility that will house about 100 personnel and have a \$5 million annual economic impact.

For some time, I had urged the Coast Guard to look at West Virginia--its low crime rate, moderate cost of living, strong workforce, and advanced telecommunications systems--as an ideal place to locate certain segments of its operations that do not require water ports. The Coast Guard Documentation Cen-

ter is one such operation.

Through a number of cost-benefit studies, the Coast Guard determined that it could consolidate its 14 vessel documentation offices and provide documentation to all of its customers, no matter where they were located, and save tax dollars each year in the process.

West Virginia appears to be a comfortable match for the Coast Guard. This latest Coast Guard venture joins my earlier effort to establish the Coast Guard Operations Systems Center in Martinsburg. The Systems Center--in operation since 1991--employs approximately 150 Coast Guard and contract personnel, with an annual economic impact of \$8 million. Together, the two facilities mean 250 jobs and a total economic impact of \$13 million for West Virginia.

The U.S. Coast Guard has had a tradition of doing more with less, and in these tight budgetary times, it is a tradition that other government entities should emulate. Technology affords new and innovative ways to accomplish needs, and consolidation is one proven way to promote efficiency and save tax dollars.

West Virginia and the Coast Guard have a bright future together, and I am pleased that many-fold advantages will be realized through the Coast Guard's expanded presence in our state.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Lessons of "The Streak"

On two successive nights in early September, millions of baseball fans across the nation watched as Baltimore Orioles short-stop Cal Ripken, Jr., went into the record books.

On those two nights -- September 5 and 6 -- Ripken equalled and broke the record for playing in consecutive games, a record established in 1939 when baseball legend Lou Gehrig played in his 2,130th straight game.

But "The Streak", as it has become known, is about much more than showing up at the ballpark each night.

Ripken's determination and devotion to his job -- a job that he has not missed since May 30, 1982 -- sends a message to young and old alike that hard work is still revered and that persistence and perseverance are traits to be rewarded.

America's response to Ripken's accomplishment has underscored that message. In reporting the story, news organizations across the country have searched out hard-working Americans who have not missed a day of work in decades and students who have achieved perfect school at-

tendance records. Their stories have been told, and, basking in Ripken's reflected light, they, too, have earned the nation's respect and praise.

In accepting the accolades for his feat, Ripken had a simple explanation: He was just doing his job, he said.

In short, "The Streak" has seemingly revived the notion that "giving one's all" is something for which to strive and something that will win the nation's admiration.

I have long taken pride in the work ethic of West Virginians, who are known as a people who cleave to the notion that a day's salary deserves a day's work.

I hope that Ripken's achievement will inspire other Americans across the country to redouble their efforts to take pride in their work -- no matter what their occupation -- and to do a good job each day, every day.

Cal Ripken and his streak, and the nation's overwhelming positive response, have hit the right chord. It is music to my ears.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

SOME BASIC ABC'S FOR A SOLID EDUCATION

A month ago, thousands of children in West Virginia, and millions nationwide, went back to school. Families returned to the routine of juggling the demands of daily life with homework and class projects, athletic and band practices, chess and debate clubs. All the while, our children have become acquainted with new teachers and new classmates.

Last year, Education Secretary Richard Riley launched an initiative that underscores time-tested "keys to success." This program, "Strong Families, Strong Schools," echoes some of my own thoughts on education by highlighting the importance of parental involvement in the education of children, and offering guidelines on what parents can do to raise a child's level of achievement. The following are some of those "keys to success."

- Read together. Research shows that the single most effective way to prepare children for future success in reading is to read aloud to them. Children who read at home with their parents perform better in school.

- Limit the amount of time that the television set is on at home. Parents should not only supervise the type of programs their children watch, but they should also limit the amount of time their children spend in front of the television.

- Make sure your children go to school every day. Set a regular time for homework each day, and provide a quiet place for your children to study. Be available for questions, and show your children that you are interested in their school work. Give children responsibility for chores, and hold them accountable for completing them.

- If you are employed, and your children are home alone after school, ensure that there is some way to monitor their activities. Talk to your children and their friends. Make certain they clearly understand the dangers of alcohol and drug use.

- Express high expectations for your children and praise achievement. Stress the importance of mastering the "basics." Encourage your children to take challenging math and science classes, as well as advanced courses in history and English. Foster an attitude of excellence whereby a child does not settle for doing less than his best. Encourage the child's academic interests with trips to the library.

- Keep track of your child's academic progress. Talk regularly to his teachers, and be a frequent visitor to his school. Show a personal interest in your child's education, and get involved with your PTA. Encourage the establishment of challenging standards in your school if they are not already in place.

There is no short cut to success. We as a nation must recognize the importance of old-fashioned hard work and study. Indeed, these are the keys that can help to unlock bright futures for our young people in the years ahead.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Reforming the Welfare System

The Senate recently passed, with bipartisan support, legislation providing for a major overhaul of our nation's social welfare policy.

The Senate welfare reform bill would abolish the current Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program and the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program, and would send welfare funds to the states in the form of block grants. States would have great flexibility to design their welfare programs to meet their own unique needs.

In order to end the perpetuation of welfare as a way of life, the bill imposes work participation rates and a five-year lifetime limit on an individual's ability to receive benefits. Under the bill, the work participation rates, the percentage of welfare recipients required to be working each year, would climb from 25 percent in 1996 to 50 percent in the year 2000. In addition, states are given the option of exempting 20 percent of their welfare caseload from the five-year lifetime limit on the receipt of welfare benefits.

The bill would also strengthen child-support enforcement to make sure that "deadbeat" parents are living up to their responsibilities to help support their children. Increased collection of child support eases the burden on our nation's welfare system.

Shortly before passage,

the Senate overwhelmingly approved a bipartisan amendment to provide additional funds for child care. Child care, though one of the more controversial elements of the welfare reform bill, is an important component of any serious effort to get people off welfare and into the workforce. Without such strong child-care provisions, a welfare mother could be put in the position of having to leave her child alone at home in order to meet the work requirements in the bill.

The Senate-passed bill also includes a contingency fund which state governments can access in times of economic downturn or other unforeseen circumstances when their block grant allocation may not be sufficient to meet their needs.

The House of Representatives passed its harsher version of welfare reform legislation last spring. Now that the Senate has passed its bill, a conference committee must meet to work out the differences between the House- and Senate-passed measures.

It is my hope that the Congress will soon be successful in overhauling our current, costly welfare system, and that the taxpayers' money will no longer be spent in a manner that encourages dependency but, rather, one that enables people who want to work to move off the welfare rolls and into the workforce.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Paying for a Budget Face Lift With Medicare

The effort to bring the federal budget into balance within the next decade will require across-the-board pain and sacrifice. Even the most sensitive of domestic programs, including Medicare, can be expected to be trimmed in the budget-cutting exercise. Of that there is little disagreement. However, there is wide discrepancy as to how to implement those cuts and how deep they must go.

The Republican majority in Congress is claiming that some \$270 billion must be cut from Medicare in order to achieve a balanced budget and ensure the long-term solvency of the financially troubled program.

While it is true that steps need to be taken to make certain that Medicare remains solvent for future generations, a \$270 billion cut is, in fact, more than triple what is actually needed to stabilize the Medicare trust fund. Further, that cut is far beyond what the program can absorb without jeopardizing the quality and accessibility of care for millions of older and disabled Americans.

Disturbingly, under the Republican plan, that excessive cut is not being applied to the Medicare trust fund. It is actually going to be parceled out in the form of generous tax breaks -- some \$245 billion worth of them -- that will benefit the wealthy in our society. That

is a misguided tactic that benefits the rich at the expense of the elderly.

To make matters worse, the Republican leadership plans to wrap their Medicare proposal in the massive reconciliation bill, which must be considered on a fast track in the Senate that leaves little or no opportunity for debate or amendment. Thus, Medicare reform, already obscured by claims and counter-claims and waves of hype, oversimplification, and scare-tactics, is soon to be swept through Congress in a blind rush that will leave the American public wondering what hit them.

That is no way to lead.

The American people deserve to hear an honest, public debate on the matter of Medicare. They have a vital interest in the Medicare program and they deserve the opportunity to weigh in on any Congressional plan that affects it.

It is time for the Republican leadership to bring out into the light of day their plans to balance the budget, including such controversial and painful proposals as those that would cut Medicare and other popular programs. As for their current plan to drastically cut Medicare while handing out tax breaks to the rich, I believe that an informed public will see it for what it really is: a budget face lift being paid for with Medicare.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Early Adolescence: Easing the Transition

Nearly 20 million Americans are between the ages of ten and fourteen.

The parents of youngsters at these tender ages would most certainly bear testimony to the roller coaster of emotions evidenced in the pre- and early-teen years. Caught between childhood and adulthood, these years are spent striving for independence and making choices that set these children on the journey through the rest of their lives.

Too often, it seems, young Americans are set adrift during these crucial years to chart their own course to early adulthood, and with frightening results.

A decade-long study conducted by a blue-ribbon panel of scholars, scientists, former Cabinet officials, and members of Congress cautions that as many as fifty percent of youths ages ten to fourteen are making choices and pursuing activities that could jeopardize their future health, happiness, and productivity.

The recently issued report of the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development -- entitled "Great Transitions" -- concludes that declining parental involvement in the lives of early adolescents has led to an increase in undesirable behavior -- experimentation with drinking, smoking, and drugs, for instance -- that can lead to lifelong problems.

Further, the report found a disturbing trend relative to after-school activities for this age group: The average 8th grader spends more than twenty hours a week in front of the television set. Time spent on homework was barely five hours a week, with even fewer number of hours -- an average of two -- spent on outside reading.

The solutions suggested by the Carnegie Council to counter these alarming tendencies are straightforward and simple: More parental involvement and interest in the lives of their adolescent children; more guidance from parents, schools, and communities on making the right choices; more emphasis in school on learning not only the basics, but also on the importance of maintaining healthy minds and bodies.

I propose an additional solution: That parents see to it that the time their children spend watching television be severely limited.

The Carnegie Council has sounded an important wake-up call. Our children -- our nation's most precious asset -- hold America's future in their hands, and it is incumbent upon us to ensure that through guidance, love, and support, they are armed with the education and moral underpinnings necessary to achieve happy, productive lives in the coming 21st century.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

An Unbalanced National Transportation Plan

One billion dollars for special mass transit projects, but not a drop for highway demonstration projects. That was the decree from the House Republican leadership on the fiscal 1996 Transportation Appropriations Bill, a decree that leaves West Virginia and other mostly rural states out in the cold.

Earlier this year, I had included \$9 million in the Senate version of the Transportation Bill for the 3.7-mile Merritt's Creek Connector on State Route 2 in Cabell County. By West Virginia construction standards -- where one mile of four-lane highway can cost as much as \$15-\$18 million -- that is a pittance. But it was also the largest chunk from a total of only \$39.5 million included in the Senate version of Transportation Bill this year for highway demonstration projects nationwide. That \$39.5 million figure, by the way, represents an 89-percent reduction from the more than \$350 million in last year's bill for such highways.

The House bill, however, in keeping with the House chairman's pledge to block any "earmarked" highway projects, contained not one thin dime for such roads. The House chairman reportedly called such earmarking "immoral," and House Republican committee members claimed that keeping the highway demonstration projects out of the bill was a move of fiscal responsibility. What they tried to brush under the rug, however, was the fact that the bill contains more than \$1 billion for earmarked mass transit projects, including \$333 million for 81 bus and

bus-related projects and \$666 million for 30 transit programs, such as commuter rail systems, in urban areas.

When the House and Senate versions of the bill came to an impasse recently at the House/Senate conference committee, the House Republicans refused to budge from their position, and they blocked the entire \$39.5 million from inclusion in the conference report. That is not only unfair; it is also unrealistic and unwise.

Highways are the lifeblood of West Virginia. They are sorely needed in our state and in many other states, which, like West Virginia, have very little mass transit and lack major airports and other transportation modes. In these states, highways are fundamental to economic development, and lack of adequate highways can spell economic stagnation. Highway demonstration projects are one of the few ways in which members of the House and Senate can address their states' and districts' special highway needs -- needs that are often ignored by federal agency bureaucrats and which are not properly addressed by the mathematical formulas generally used to distribute federal highway funds.

I have no qualms about earmarks for buses and transit projects. They answer a real need in high-population urban areas. But, clearly, by leaving highways out of the mix, the fiscal 1996 Transportation Appropriations Bill ignores a huge segment of America. That is no way to build a national transportation system.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's Blessings

On my recent visit to West Virginia to participate in ceremonies marking the anniversary of the disastrous 1985 flood, I was reminded of just how fortunate we in West Virginia are.

The 1985 flood ripped through 29 counties, put whole communities under water, and left thousands homeless. Without warning, its raging waters tore through West Virginia's hills and valleys, taking the lives of forty-three human beings.

The force of that flood twisted bridges, mangled roadways, and covered valleys so thoroughly with rocks and debris that, in some places, the land was left looking like a distant planet from a science fiction movie.

In 1985, just a few weeks before Thanksgiving, there seemed little to be thankful about for the victims of that terrible flood. And yet, so many who had lost everything stayed in West Virginia, dug what they could find of their belongings from the thick mud, and rebuilt their homes and their lives.

To most people, especially those from outside the borders of our state, that seems remarkable. It is almost inconceivable to some that families who had lost loved ones, witnessed the total destruction of their houses, and seen irreplaceable mementos swept away forever could put it all aside and stay in their flood-

stricken communities.

I am often asked why I think these people did not just pack up and move away.

What keeps them here?

I can only answer that question through the prism of my own experience and emotions about our state.

West Virginia is our home. We have roots here. We feel a special connection to the land. And we have a strong bond, a kinship, to one another.

Perhaps it is because West Virginia is a poor state, where most people have never had much in the way of material riches, that we have never lost sight of those things -- family, friends, community, faith in God, loyalty to country, and traditional values -- that are most important in life. And, perhaps it is disasters like the 1985 flood that keep us focused on those priorities, by reminding us of just how fleeting the kind of happiness is that comes from spacious homes, fancy cars, and expensive clothes.

This Thanksgiving, I hope that my fellow West Virginians will join with me in reflecting on all that we have for which to be thankful.

And I urge them to dedicate themselves to the preservation of our traditional values and -- through our churches, schools, and civic organizations -- to pass those spiritual and family values on to future generations.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's New Tool For Medical Diagnosis

The Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences Center at West Virginia University (WVU) in Morgantown recently unveiled the state's first Positron Emission Tomography (PET) scanner, making available to West Virginians one of the most advanced tools known to modern medicine.

The PET scanner, housed in a new PET center, which has been established with \$10 million that I added to a 1991 appropriations bill, will offer top-flight medical services to West Virginians right in their own back yard.

This new scanner, one of only 60 currently in operation around the nation, not only brings ultra-modern health care to our state, but it also provides an expanded opportunity for WVU personnel to conduct specialized scientific research. That, in turn, will help to make the University's Health Sciences Center a more attractive location for nationally prominent medical professionals.

To conduct a PET test, I am advised that medical personnel inject a small quantity of radioactive material into the patient. That material -- which, according to WVU physicians, produces no harmful side-effects in the patient -- is then carried through the bloodstream to the organ the doctor wishes to examine.

The PET scanner detects emissions produced by

the injected material, records data about the organ, and then produces a live color picture, which is examined and analyzed by the physician.

One of the great benefits to using the PET scanner is that it can provide a three-dimensional look at the organ in action.

Imagine the ability to watch the heart in motion, beat by beat, pumping blood throughout the body, or the chance to see a cross section of a working kidney, without having to make a single incision. What a departure from the one-dimensional, still picture provided by an X-ray!

To a physician, the PET scanner can mean the chance to catch a life-threatening ailment early and accurately without the need of an invasive procedure.

To the patient, it can mean the difference between the mild inconvenience of spending a few hours in the PET center and a long and costly hospital stay involving exploratory surgery, just for a diagnosis.

The opening of this new PET center is the latest stride in my long-running efforts to make health care more accessible to West Virginians. Along with the professionals at the Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences Center, I look forward to its successful long-term operation and to the many life-saving diagnoses it will make possible.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

MDTV Improving Rural Medicine

West Virginians cherish the freedom found in the mountains and valleys of our state. But while the rural landscape eloquently showcases nature's beauty, it can also make it difficult to deliver modern health care services to remote areas. That dilemma, which prompted the development in West Virginia of the televised medical service called Mountaineer Doctor Television, or MDTV, continues to drive the program's expansion.

In 1991, I added the initial federal appropriations to help establish MDTV in our state. Including that first funding, I have, over the years, added more than \$5 million in federal funds for the initiative; and in recent weeks, I have announced that four new sites -- Rainelle Medical Center, Roane General Hospital, Monroe Health Care Center, and Marshall University -- have been selected for inclusion in the MDTV network.

The four newest MDTV sites will join seven other remote sites: Boone Memorial Hospital; Braxton County Memorial Hospital; Davis Memorial Hospital in Elkins; Grant Memorial Hospital; St. Joseph's Hospital in Buckhannon; the Veterans Affairs Hospital/Clarksburg; and the Veterans Affairs Hospital/Martinsburg. Those will be connected to two major hub locations: the Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences Center in Morgan-town and the

Charleston Area Medical Center.

MDTV uses sophisticated, two-way video broadcasts to link physicians and other health care providers at the rural sites to the medical specialists and technological resources available at the two hub facilities.

The MDTV cameras capture images of patients at the remote sites and then transmit audio and video signals across telephone lines to screens at the hub sites, where specialists can consult on the patients' medical conditions and then provide advice to the local medical professionals.

In addition to the life-saving health benefits gained through the program, MDTV can save patients, their families, and the medical community time and money. Sparing patients of in person visits to medical specialists saves them -- and, in some cases, their caregiver family members -- the expense of travel and the loss of workdays. MDTV representatives estimate that the use of the network saves patients an average of \$2,500.

Residents of rural communities are receiving better health care through MDTV. To ensure that more West Virginians have access to it, I have included a provision in a fiscal 1996 appropriations bill to enable the further expansion in West Virginia of this modern medical outreach program.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Happy 10th Anniversary to Software Valley

I recently attended a celebration in West Virginia marking the 10-year anniversary of the Software Valley initiative.

It was in 1985 that I hosted the first Software Valley symposium, a gathering of representatives from government, academia, and business who came together to explore the possibility of founding West Virginia-based high-technology businesses, and of attracting out-of-state high-tech firms to locate in West Virginia.

Since its inception, Software Valley has been an assertive matchmaker, bringing federal agencies and their contractors together with West Virginia companies to forge promising business relationships. It has assisted in stringing "networking" lines that are providing for greater cooperation among West Virginia businesses. And it has served as an informational and educational resource, helping West Virginia firms to gain the know-how to become state-of-the-art competitors for the 21st century.

Four years after the launching of Software Valley, an opportunity opened for me and for West Virginia, when, for the first time, I was able to assume the Chairmanship of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

As Chairman, I added funds to appropriations bills to support the development of infrastructure that would provide a foundation upon which initiatives like Software Valley could build the private-sector framework for a

broader, more diversified West Virginia economy.

For example, as a result of my efforts, West Virginia is benefiting from construction of modern, safe, four-lane divided highways and renovation of river locks and dams that are providing for more cost-efficient transport of goods and services. My efforts have also included the establishment of high-tech federal facilities, such as the FBI Fingerprint Identification complex, that are creating an atmosphere conducive to new and greater private-sector investment. And I have added funding for the development of programs that provide training for the jobs of the future.

Much of this federally supported infrastructure is still taking shape, and as the current ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, I am continuing, within very severe federal budget constraints, to ensure that my various projects come to full fruition.

However, while federal funds can help to spur private-sector investment, long-term growth cannot be dependent on a constant influx of government assistance. A strong economic base requires a commitment from the private sector.

Therefore, although I no longer serve in an official capacity with the organization, like the proud parent of a child gone off to undertake a new challenge, I look forward to seeing greater achievements from Software Valley as it moves into its second decade.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Time for Bipartisanship

"All government -- indeed, every human benefit and enjoyment, every virtue, and every prudent act -- is founded on compromise." These, the words of Edmund Burke in an address to the British Parliament 220 years ago, bear repeating in the halls of Congress today.

In all my years of public service, I have never before witnessed such politically motivated and potentially disastrous intransigence as that which characterizes the current majority in Congress.

It was that partisan intransigence that forced the recent federal government shutdown, the longest in our nation's history, and that threatens future crisis. For if the current Congressional leadership remains wedded to its present "our way or no way" course, the workings of the federal government could again be brought to a standstill in the coming weeks. And, further, the chance to craft a thoughtful plan to move toward a balanced budget will be destined for failure.

Throughout the past year, the 13 appropriations bills -- traditionally rapidly moving measures by virtue of the fact that they must be passed every year -- have been weighted down by controversial pieces of the so-called "Contract with America."

Attaching the lopsided and ill-conceived elements of that contract -- for example, deep cuts in education, law enforcement, civilian research, Medicare, and

natural resources conservation, together with reduced discretionary funding for transportation infrastructure, coupled with a big build-up in military spending -- doomed the appropriations bills' enactment by the start of the new fiscal year and caused the federal government to stop operating for four business days. The cost of that shutdown is estimated at over \$700 million -- \$700 million in wasted federal tax dollars. That is the price of obstinacy.

Equally disconcerting and irresponsible was the calculated attempt by many members to attach partisan strings to the two temporary measures -- the continuing resolution and the debt limit extension -- that were necessary to end the federal shutdown and to keep the government operating until after all of the appropriations bills are completed and signed.

Now, with another possible shutdown looming just ahead, members of Congress and the Administration are engaged in negotiations intended to lead to a seven-year plan to bring the budget into balance. The test of their leadership will be whether or not the negotiators will put the good of the nation and the laudable goal of reasoned budget trimming ahead of political gamesmanship. If they turn a deaf ear to the advice of Edmund Burke and refuse to compromise, they will surely squander a real chance to bring the federal deficit down and to move toward a balanced budget.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Step Toward Peace on Earth

In the midst of this season of miracles, the world is poised on the brink of peace in the Balkans, a region which for the past four years has been battered by a brutal war.

Sadly, however, as the Bosnian peace agreement was being hammered out, the world paused to mourn the tragic assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, pointedly reminding us of the delicate nature of peacemaking and the tenacity and ugliness of those who would go to any lengths to sabotage it. The hope for Peace on Earth, then, however deeply felt and widely voiced, must be tempered with the reality that peace is a very fragile thing. It requires careful cultivation and diligent preservation.

In the case of the Balkans, peace is balanced on the narrow edge of an agreement made possible only by U.S. Diplomatic leadership and the conditions created by resolute U.S. and NATO military power. It is to that military might that the warring parties are looking to deter further war, to ensure stability, and to provide a chance to back away from conflict and begin anew in peace. The risks of not attempting to stabilize this fragile region, resulting in the spread of war, are substantial and troubling.

Against that background, after long consideration and deep personal reflection and concern, and underpinned by the recognition that all other alternatives for peace have been exhausted, I have given my

qualified support to a narrowly defined, one-year U.S. military mission in Bosnia.

Unfortunately, as with any military involvement, there are no guarantees that the Bosnian peace plan will proceed as the Administration currently proposes. There exists the possibility that the mission will not go well, or that it might be strained by efforts to expand the defined role.

Thankfully, in that event, the Congress, through the power of the purse, could force an end to the U.S. mission and bring our troops home again. It was my amendment to a fiscal 1994 Defense Appropriations Bill that set a deadline for the cutoff of funds for the U.S. mission in Somalia, thereby setting an enforceable end date to our involvement there. I have insisted on language in the Bosnian Resolution that sets up another deadline, thereby forcing the President to come back to Congress and justify the authorization and appropriations for any extension of our stay there.

In the meantime, U.S. troops, including service men and women from West Virginia, will join with NATO in a renewed effort to rebuild peace.

Thus, I stand behind our troops, and, in this season of hope, I join with the families of service men and women in offering up prayers for the safe return of their loved ones. May they be protected by the armor of what is right and just, and may their mission end in lasting peace.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Creating a Model for Classroom Reform

I have always believed that quality education is essential for molding a stronger nation. However, the deterioration of this nation's public schools and the lack of discipline in our classrooms impede the educational process. Disruptions in the schools, ranging from disorderliness to violence and gang-related murder, create a poor educational environment for teachers and students who are really striving to learn.

That is why I recently proposed an amendment to the District of Columbia Appropriations Bill to help return discipline to public classrooms in the District that could serve as a model for schools throughout the country.

My amendment would implement a two-year pilot project, requiring a study to determine the project's effectiveness in D.C. schools. If successful, schools across the country could follow its example.

My amendment would require community service for suspended students, propose a dress code, and make the Chief of the National Guard Bureau an ex-officio member of a new commission planned to oversee school reform.

Disciplinary suspension of a student is often looked upon as a vacation by the suspended individual. Students who are expelled and then left to their own devices tend to become bored and then, as a result, may get into further trouble. But

requiring them to perform public service will benefit the community, provide supervision for the time the student is out of the classroom, and demonstrate to the student that job opportunities will likely be limited without the benefit of an education.

Also, a dress code would keep obnoxious or inappropriate clothing out of the classroom. One reads newspaper articles about young people fighting and even murdering each other over articles of clothing. A dress code would minimize the differences between income levels among students, and remove the focus from clothes, brand names, and gang symbols, placing it, instead, on scholarship.

The third part of my amendment would include the Chief of the National Guard Bureau as an ex-officio member of the proposed Commission on Consensus Reform in the District of Columbia Public Schools, a commission intended to create and oversee reform goals. The National Guard is involved in youth programs throughout the United States and has a direct and positive impact on "at-risk" youth.

Our schools are a tremendous resource for our nation's future. It is important, therefore, to curb violence and restore sanity to our institutions of learning. We must reclaim the classroom.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Homecoming '96!

From the earliest days of my public service in our nation's capital, Erma and I have relished each and every opportunity to spend time in West Virginia. Like so many West Virginians whose jobs keep them stationed out of state, our hearts remain among good friends in the West Virginia hills.

Therefore, I was especially honored this past summer to be invited by Governor Gaston Caperton to serve as honorary co-chairman of Homecoming '96.

Although the post carries no official responsibilities, I look forward to this year-long celebration and to the chance to attend some of the festivities that will be staged in every corner of our state.

Those of us who call it home could easily pen a list of West Virginia's attributes, suitable for inclusion in a marketing pamphlet. It would contain the beautiful landscape and exciting tourist attractions, the numerous well-made products, the quality of life, and the presence of strong family values and abiding faith in God that can be found here.

But, beyond those traits that can adequately be described on paper, there exists, in West Virginia, a quality that defies simple

description. It is something that must be experienced first-hand, something that leads to a deep-seated attachment to this state. We West Virginians know quite well those wonderful feelings that well up in our souls as the visions of home sweet home settle in upon us. And, when we hear a homespun tale, or smell a fragrance that stirs a distant pleasant memory, or spot a familiar face in a crowd of strangers, there is nothing that stirs the depths of our hearts more.

Thus, West Virginia is engaging in a statewide celebration that not only beckons displaced West Virginians to come home again, but that also invites the whole nation to discover the West Virginia that we well know and cherish.

Homecoming '96 is an exciting venture, full of promise and possibilities. It is a tremendous chance to introduce newcomers to our state, and to showcase the progress being made here, including the renewed economic growth which I have worked so hard to help bring about. It is also, perhaps, a chance to entice some new enterprises to make West Virginia their home, too.

So, along with my fellow West Virginians at home and away, I look forward to a successful Homecoming '96!

December 27, 1995



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Call for Civility

It is with a measure of sadness and concern that I look back upon the year just ended, having witnessed a poison settle in upon the U.S. Senate that threatens to further undermine the public's trust in government.

During 1995, some members of the Senate, with growing frequency and severity, showed callous disregard for decorum and pummeled their colleagues with strident words better suited to tavern brawls than to debate in the world's greatest deliberative body.

Although the venom stopped short of the violent acts that have erupted on occasion throughout the Senate's existence, the past year's frequent outbursts of incivility could cause 1995 to be listed among the Senate's lowest years.

Most recently, for example, one member went so far as to label the President and other Senators "liars."

I cannot help but wonder what our young people think when they hear adults in the premiere upper body among the world's legislatures casting such rash aspersions upon other persons.

Such utterly reckless statements serve no constructive purpose in the legislative process. They only poison the waters of the well of mutual respect and co-

munity which must prevail in Congress -- particularly in the current, already bitter environment -- if our two political parties are to work together in the best interests of the people.

I do not intend to suggest that there is no room for disagreement in the Senate. The Senate is a deliberative body. It is a forum created to facilitate debate, including passionate argument. But when the American people are treated to such harsh words as have recently spewed forth on the Senate floor, it is no wonder that there is growing disrespect for the Congress throughout the country.

The members of the Senate have an enormously important responsibility, but the ability to carry out that responsibility is crippled when the people lose faith in, and respect for, their representatives and the institutions in which they serve.

I hope that in 1996 the members of Congress will exercise a greater restraint upon their passions and avoid making extreme statements that can only serve to further polarize the relationships between the two parties in the House and Senate and between the executive and legislative branches. The welfare of the country may depend upon it.

January 3, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

High Goals, Wholesome Books, And Dreams

A recent survey found a pervasive fear of violence and of dying young among a large sector of our nation's youth.

The study, conducted by the child advocacy group Children Now and the health care provider Kaiser Permanente, found that 63 percent of 7- to 10-year-olds and 42 percent of 11- to 17-year-olds worry that they will die young.

Also, according to the study, 71 percent of respondents who were between the ages of 7 to 10 years worried that they would be shot or stabbed at school or at home.

Survey analysts noted that, in a great many cases, these children's awareness of their own mortality was validated by their own experiences. Not only have many of them seen unspeakable acts of violence on television and in the movies, but, all too often, these children have either witnessed a violent act or know someone who has been the victim of violence.

These findings are frightening, and they are made even more so when coupled with other recently reported facts about violence and youth in America. For example, an October special edition of The New York Times Magazine, devoted to "childhood in America", noted that an estimated 135,000 U.S. children take guns to school every day and that, despite a nationwide decline in violent crime in recent years, the arrest rates for violent

crimes committed by juveniles between the ages of 10 and 17 doubled between 1983 and 1992.

Also disturbing is the magazine's report of the finding that, in 1991, more teenagers and young adults died from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, HIV infection or AIDS, birth defects, pneumonia, influenza, stroke, and chronic lung disease combined.

Such numbers present a huge challenge to the future of our nation.

How can we prepare our young people to take the reins of leadership in the coming years when, fixated on the possibility of dying young, they focus more of their attention on their own funerals than on their graduation days?

I believe that we have an obligation to our nation to encourage our young people to envision a future in which they finish their educations, build careers, raise families, and reap the fruits of old age.

To accomplish that, we must raise our voices against violence on television, and crack down on violent crime in our schools and in our neighborhoods.

Government, parents, teachers, and civic leaders should join together to rid our children's daily lives of gangs and guns, replacing them, instead, with high goals, wholesome books, and dreams.

There is no more worthy resolution for this new year of 1996.

January 17, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

An Instrument for the Public Good

The growing prison population is an unfortunate fact of life in the 20th century.

In 1982, nearly 29,700 inmates were in Federal correctional institutions. As of November, 1995, the Federal prison population had risen to nearly 101,000. This rapid increase is due largely to more severe sentencing, longer terms, less liberal parole laws, and greater numbers of non-citizen inmates. Long-range forecasts project that the total Federal prison population will approach 136,000 by the year 2002.

We have to have adequate correctional facilities -- sufficient to accommodate the growth in the prison population -- and qualified, dedicated staff. Further, we must make the financial commitment to build those facilities and to support that kind of staff.

That is why I included language in a 1989 appropriations bill report recommending that the Bureau of Prisons review its expansion requirements in the Mid-Atlantic States in order to ensure that sufficient Federal prisons were provided in the region.

Subsequently, I authored a national anti-drug initiative, included in a fiscal year 1990 appropriations bill, which provided funding to help alleviate the

growing problem of overcrowding in the Federal prison system. Based on its review, conducted at my request, the Bureau of Prisons selected Beckley as the site for a new Federal prison.

That complex -- constructed with \$80 million made available through my anti-drug initiative -- is now formally named the Robert C. Byrd Federal Correctional Institution.

Standing on 283 acres near the Raleigh County Airport, the Byrd Federal Correctional Institution is designed to house 1,152 medium security and 384 minimum security inmates. When fully operational later this year, it is expected to generate an annual economic impact of approximately \$28 million and to employ a staff of 491, sixty percent of whom are expected to be local hires.

The new Robert C. Byrd Federal Correctional Institution, like other modern prisons, is intended to protect the public by confining offenders in a safe, humane, and secure environment; providing positive, self-improvement opportunities to inmates who want to follow a more constructive path in life; and establishing and maintaining a safe and supportive workplace for all employees.

January 24, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Trail Blazing in the Age of Telecommunications

The age of telecommunications presents West Virginia with a wealth of opportunities for educational growth and economic development.

Telecommunications tools -- television sets, computers, satellite transmissions, and fiber-optic links -- can enable educational institutions to reach out to rural communities, helping to build a better educated citizenry. Recognizing the benefits that telecommunications can provide for West Virginia and its largely rural population, I have worked to put programs into place that are making "distance learning" available to greater numbers of West Virginians.

For example, I recently announced that by mid-year the National Guard will begin demonstrating telecommunications services in Huntington, Charleston, and Fairmont. In addition to providing a cost-effective means of training members of the National Guard and Army Reserve, the high-tech communications equipment will be made available to members of the local communities for a variety of purposes, including economic development and worker retraining.

Mountaineer Doctor Television (MDTV), an initiative developing in West Virginia through funds that I have added to federal appropriations bills, provides a wide array of distance learning experiences, in ad-

dition to the medical care that it extends to rural residents. Last year, the Morgantown-based MDTV provided over 500 hours of educational and video-conferencing services throughout the state, including medical conferences and programs for the West Virginia University College of Business and Economics.

The MDTV network is not only a cost-efficient vehicle for teaching over distance, but, in many instances, MDTV also provides residents of small communities with access to educational experiences, such as college-level lectures and conferences, that would not otherwise be available locally at any cost.

The Huntington-based Robert C. Byrd Institute for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing is another of my initiatives that is making use of teletechnology to boost education. The Byrd Institute provides small-business clients with a venue for interactive video conferencing and distance learning classes at sites throughout the state. For example, the Byrd Institute is one of 192 sites nationwide to host a monthly interactive teleconference series aimed at providing cutting-edge information and advice to small- and medium-sized businesses.

These initiatives serve as tangible evidence that West Virginia is already blazing trails in the age of telecommunications.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

COPS

The 1994 Omnibus Crime Bill included an amendment that I authored to establish the \$22 billion Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund, comprised of savings achieved by streamlining government. My amendment ensured that the bill's crime-fighting programs would be funded. And, in some cases, such as the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, my amendment enabled the expansion of major anti-crime initiatives.

Today, approximately 33,000 of the 100,000 new officers that the COPS program pledged to put on our nation's streets have been added to police forces across the nation. Because of COPS, well over 100 West Virginia communities have already been approved to receive grants to put more officers on the beat, and dozens more towns in our state could be awarded future COPS grants.

A recent *Time* magazine article about community policing reported that serious crime is on the retreat. Nationally, murders fell 12 percent in the first six months of 1995, and, in the suburbs, where the numbers of felonies have long been steadily rising, incidents of violent crime fell between four and five percent last year.

What has brought about this decline in crime? According to the *Time* report, community policing is a key part of the answer.

However, despite the COPS program's obvious success, and despite the fact

that it has the support of virtually every major law enforcement group in the country, the Republican Congressional leadership has been attempting to gut the COPS program.

For example, the recently enacted continuing resolution included funding for COPS, but at only 75 percent of last year's level, or about half the amount authorized by the Crime Bill.

In addition, the most recent version of the Fiscal 1996 Commerce/Justice/State Appropriations Bill proposed to distribute community policing funds by a complicated mathematical formula, based on the number of reported crimes in each state. That formula would strongly favor urban areas and put mostly rural states like West Virginia -- which has one of the nation's lowest crime rates -- at a significant disadvantage. Furthermore, under this block grant program, there would be no assurances that the funds would be used to hire more officers. It would, therefore, dramatically weaken the COPS program and make it much more difficult for West Virginia communities to win COPS grants.

Community policing is proving to be an effective strategy that reduces crime and helps citizens to feel safe in their own neighborhoods. Given its record of success, COPS should be maintained and allowed to fulfill its commitment to the American people, including the people of West Virginia.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Power of the People and the Duty to be Informed

Thomas Jefferson, who authored the Declaration of Independence, wrote, "The people are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty."

Ours is a republican form of government, one in which the power is rooted in the people. Jefferson's words underscore the duty of every citizen to participate in our government.

The act of voting is at the heart of this duty. And, in order to ensure that our elected officials are the best suited for our nation, voters must be informed. But a recent article in The Washington Post found that millions of Americans cannot answer even basic questions about American politics.

The article reports that only 24 percent of citizens who were asked to name the two U.S. Senators from their state actually got both names correct. Further, 54 percent of those polled got both names incorrect.

Also, two-thirds of those interviewed could not name the person who serves in the U.S. House of Representatives from their congressional district.

Our republican form of government cannot operate without an informed citizenry. How can elected leaders properly represent a public which cannot even name the people who hold some of the country's most important leadership positions?

According to the article, four in ten Americans

could not name Al Gore as the vice president of the United States, while two out of three could not name the majority leader of the Senate, Robert Dole of Kansas, a Republican candidate for president.

It is not inconsequential that people across our country cannot name their elected leaders. A lack of political knowledge undermines our country's political system.

The Post article reports that Americans who are informed are more likely to vote, and they are more likely to see their vote as a remedy for what they believe is wrong with government. Those Americans who are less informed are less likely to vote and more likely to believe that their country is in decline.

It is through information that people form opinions and ideas concerning the direction in which they think the country should be headed. Every citizen's vote is his voice in our government. It is the duty of every citizen to be informed in order to vote wisely.

An informed knowledge of their government is a key that encourages people to get involved in the processes of government, to vote, and to participate in their government. When faced with disappointing facts like those contained in the recent Post article, it is important for Americans to remember the wisdom of Thomas Jefferson.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Reviving the Dream of the Challenger

Ten years ago, seven courageous Americans, including teacher Christa McAuliffe, boarded NASA's Challenger space shuttle, embarking on a mission designed to draw upon the wonders of space travel to inspire our nation's youth to strive for excellence.

Just 73 seconds into that flight, the Challenger mission ended in tragedy, taking the lives of those seven astronauts and suspending the Challenger's dream of helping young Americans to "reach for the stars."

In the years since that disaster, however, NASA and the families of the Challenger crew have worked together to bring renewed life to the aspirations of the Challenger astronauts.

Their efforts have resulted in the establishment across the country of more than two dozen Challenger Learning Centers (CLC), state-of-the-art facilities that combine cutting-edge technologies with the thrill of space exploration to spark students' interests in the study of math and science.

One of those Challenger Centers -- initiated by Congressman Alan B. Mollohan and housed in the Center for Educational Technologies, which was constructed and equipped with \$10 million I added to federal appropriations bills -- began operating at Wheeling Jesuit College in November of 1994.

The Wheeling Center gives young people and their teachers hands-on experiences that supplement classroom work and provide

them with access to a wealth of NASA technology.

Like the other CLC's scattered around the country, the Wheeling facility contains replicas of a space station and of NASA's mission control center that allow teachers and students to "fly" simulated space missions.

In its first year of operation, Wheeling Jesuit's Challenger Learning Center flew approximately 10,000 young Ohio Valley residents on mock NASA missions. Another 15,000 students have already made reservations for 1996.

In addition, the Wheeling staff is actively pursuing ways to take the Learning Center concept to new levels, experimenting with innovations that can make all CLC's more accessible to physically challenged students. For example, the Wheeling Center staff, working cooperatively with the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind in Romney, Hampshire County, recently modified the facility to enable blind and hearing-impaired students to take CLC flights.

West Virginians can be proud of their Challenger Learning Center and its endeavors to keep the dream of the Challenger alive. In reaching out to West Virginia teachers and students, and in pursuing methods to extend the CLC experience to physically impaired youth, the Wheeling CLC epitomizes the kind of impact that the Challenger crew had hoped to make on young Americans.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

An Educated Workforce for West Virginia's Future

The most recent figures on the domestic labor force reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics should serve as a guiding light in our efforts to build a stronger economic base for West Virginia in the 21st century.

Noteworthy among the Bureau's latest projections, which provide a glimpse of the U.S. job market trends from 1992 through the year 2005, are statistics that underscore the importance of education to job seekers of the next 10 years.

According to the Bureau, the level of educational attainment in the labor force has been steadily rising in recent years and is expected to continue to grow through the early years of the next millennium. Job opportunities for those with the highest levels of education are expected to grow at a much more rapid rate than for those who do not earn high school diplomas. Additionally, individuals who cannot read and write will find, with growing frequency, that they are not even being considered for job openings.

In fact, 75 percent of the fastest growing occupational groups are predicted to be executive, administrative, managerial, professional specialty, technical, and related support occupations.

The brightest spot in the job market spectrum is projected to be the service industry. Already the largest employment sector, ser-

vice-producing industries -- health care services, the social and educational fields, and the wholesale and retail trades, for example -- are expected to account for almost two-thirds of all new jobs in the coming years.

Although that service industry growth is projected to translate into the creation of millions of new low-wage jobs, the fastest percentage growth will, again, be in the highest paying positions, those requiring the most formal education. Meanwhile, medium-wage employment opportunities will show little change, meaning that, for the most part, those who start out on the lowest rungs will find it extremely difficult to work their way up the economic ladder unless they attain at least a college education.

All of this serves as convincing evidence that the surest path to a stable, well-paying career of tomorrow is through education, and further, that building a well-educated population is fundamental to ensuring a strong economy for West Virginia's future.

If our state is to have a real chance at successfully competing for new and expanded opportunities in this shifting economic atmosphere, future and current members of our West Virginia workforce must be prepared with education and training in the anticipated growth fields in order to fill the emerging job vacancies.

February 28, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Changing Channels

Recently, 31 top television executives came to Washington to meet with President Clinton to announce their intentions to voluntarily rate the programs their companies sponsor.

This meeting demonstrates, at long last, a recognition by the nation's broadcasters that there is a correlation between television programming and the state of violence and moral decay in our communities. I see this as a much needed first step in an effort to inject responsibility into programming, and I applaud this decision.

For years, I have spoken of the power of television and its overwhelming influence in our society, and in particular with our young people. The average child will watch 25,000 hours of programming by the time that child reaches the age of 18.

For many young people, television is more than just entertainment. Often it serves as a babysitter, companion, and friend. Demands on the modern family, often comprised of two parents who must both work, leave little time for closely monitoring what each child watches on TV. This, coupled with the increase in prime-time programs which peddle sex and violence, means that we must give parents the necessary tools to help ensure that the time youngsters spend in front of the television is as wholesome and

enriching as possible. Even this new rating system can never take the place of the careful guidance which parents must give to their children. However, it can be a helpful tool.

This new commitment from the networks demonstrates a proper recognition that they are indeed responsible for their broadcast product. With this action, the networks appear to have realized that there is much more involved in television programming than popularity ratings and advertising dollars. These executives now acknowledge that they have an obligation to viewers, and parents in particular, to provide a means for screening what children are exposed to on a day-to-day basis.

In the past, the television industry has stridently resisted such efforts and has hidden behind a distorted view of the Constitutional protection of freedom of speech.

While we all are concerned about protecting the precious rights set forth in the Constitution, certainly parents have not only the right, but also the obligation to keep what they may view as objectionable material away from young impressionable children. In the long run, having the networks work in cooperation with parents may serve to help reverse the cycle of violence and vulgarity in which this country seems to find itself so mired today.

March 6, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

In Support of the West Virginia Guard and Reserve

West Virginians have a long and distinguished history of supporting U.S. military missions around the globe.

Most recently, as part of the international effort in Bosnia, National Guard units from West Virginia have been, or are being, deployed to that troubled region.

Prior to the recent peace agreement, which was signed last December, the 167th Airlift Wing in Martinsburg was deployed on three occasions -- once in the summer of 1992, and twice in 1993 -- in support of Operation Provide Promise, the predecessor to the current mission, known as Operation Joint Endeavor. On the third occasion, they were joined by the Charleston-based 130th Airlift Wing.

Now, both the Martinsburg and Charleston Airlift wings are again in line to be called to serve in support of the current Bosnian peacekeeping effort.

When deployed, sometime in the April-to-June time frame, these two Air Guard units will join the 152nd Prisoner of War Information unit from Moundsville, the first West Virginia Army National Guard unit to be deployed as part of Operation Joint Endeavor.

Throughout my years in Congress, I have obtained federal funds to ensure that West Virginia's reserve components are well trained, equipped, and ready to respond to assigned missions. Modernization

projects in many communities throughout West Virginia for which I have obtained federal funds include the building of armories, reserve centers, and hangars; upgrades to airfields; renovations of maintenance centers; and acquisition of new equipment. The benefits of these investments are best realized, and best appreciated, during times of local or international crisis.

For example, over the last decade, as a member of both the Senate Appropriations Committee and the Armed Services Committee, I have pushed for modernization of facilities at the Charleston and Martinsburg Air National Guard bases. Also, as part of that effort, I included language in the FY 1995 Defense Authorization and Appropriations bills to provide the Martinsburg Air Wing with 12 new C-130 aircraft, eight of which recently have been delivered to the unit. The repeated and continuing involvement of the 130th and the 167th units in Bosnia confirms the need for, and value of, these peacetime investments.

While I have given my qualified support to a narrowly defined U.S. involvement in Bosnia for the period of one year, I stand ready to join in taking action to bring our troops home if the U.S. mission there begins to broaden beyond Congressional intent.

In the meantime, I remain steadfastly behind the men and women of the Guard and Reserve, and I commend them for their dedication, service, and patriotism.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Walk Down My Hall of Memories

It was in 1946 that I first tossed my hat into the political ring, running for, and winning, a seat in the West Virginia House of Delegates. Since that time, I have been privileged to serve in both houses of the West Virginia State Legislature and both houses of the U.S. Congress.

Recently, while reflecting upon my fifty years of public service, I was struck by the enormous changes which have come about in West Virginia since the beginning of my career.

In 1946, West Virginia's lot was believed to be inextricably linked to coal. That year, approximately 144 million tons of coal were mined by a force of 122,200 workers.

Physical infrastructure was scant. Only one major flood control dam -- the Tygart -- stood in the interior of our state. The Gallipolis Locks and Dam was the only major navigational structure on the Ohio River along our state's border. Fewer than 10 miles of four-lane highway existed in our state. Most of the rest were tortuous, two-lane roads that made driving anywhere a long and dangerous undertaking.

In 1996, ours is no longer the narrowly defined economy of fifty years ago. While coal and steel remain respected members of our industrial base, they represent a much smaller segment of the economic spectrum than they did fifty years ago. In 1994, just 27,000 West Virginia mine workers produced 164 million tons of coal. During the

last decade, the "information age" has dotted our landscape with numerous high-tech firms.

Additionally, several new, ultra-modern federal offices, offering thousands of jobs, have located to West Virginia as a result of my efforts.

Today, 871 miles of four-lane divided highways traverse our hills and valleys, making for faster, safer travel. Ten major flood control dams now stand within our borders, and several navigational locks and dams, including a greatly updated Gallipolis Locks and Dam -- today renamed the Robert C. Byrd Locks and Dam -- have modernized the Ohio River navigational system, saving shippers hundreds of millions of dollars annually.

Since 1946, we have taken a war-time industrial base and transformed it into a technology-rich economy that rivals any in the nation. We have upgraded our physical infrastructure, improved our schools, and expanded the reach of modern medical services.

Throughout this era of change, we have also managed to preserve those precious old values that set West Virginians apart, an accomplishment for which we should be equally proud and thankful.

Reflecting on this walk along the path of my "hall of memories," I am heartened by the advances we have made in West Virginia, and I am convinced that we are on the right track as we prepare to enter the next millennium.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Combating Crimes of Violence Against Women

Rising with the escalating numbers of violent crimes in America are the crimes of brutality committed against women.

Recognizing that disturbing trend, Congress, in 1994, passed landmark anti-crime legislation that included provisions specifically targeting violence against women as a category of crime deserving special attention by law enforcement.

The statistics are compelling. For example, according to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports, every six minutes in the United States a woman is raped. In addition, the FBI reports that domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to American women between the ages of 15 and 44, greater than the combined total of car accidents, muggings, and rapes.

To address these crimes, the 1994 Omnibus Crime Bill set aside \$1.6 billion -- funding made possible through the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund, created by my amendment to that bill -- for police, prosecutors, prevention programs, and victim assistance initiatives to address sexual violence or domestic abuse.

In addition to providing funding that is supporting the establishment of resources such as women's shelters and domestic violence hotlines, the bill instituted tough new penalties for sex offenses.

It also included a provision which makes it a federal offense with additional

penalties to cross state lines to continue abusing a spouse or a partner, an important step toward protecting those women who suffer repeated batterings and who finally gather the courage to leave their abuser.

Beyond the actions the law has spurred at the federal level, it is aiding state level efforts to combat violence against women.

Last year, West Virginia received \$426,000 as its first installment of federal funding under that new program. The state is expected to receive at least four more annual grants.

Our state's initial steps to advance the goals of the law include the establishment of the "West Virginians Against Violence Committee," which will administer federal funds and oversee the development of programs throughout West Virginia to combat rape and abuse.

The fallout from these crimes reaches far beyond those women who are themselves the victims of rape or assault. It touches every woman who finds herself afraid to walk to her car after work, or reluctant to stop at the grocery store in the dark, and it affects every man who worries about the safety of his wife, daughter, coworker, or friend.

It is, then, in all our best interests to turn back the rising tide of violence against women. Ensuring that the objectives of the violence-against-women provisions of the anti-crime law are realized is a logical starting point.

March 27, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

"Read To Me" Day

From the time I was a young lad growing up in the coalfields of Southern West Virginia, I was a lover of books and learning. I coveted books the way some children might covet a friend's new toy.

Looking back on those early years, I recall that one day when I was in the third grade, attending a two-room school, I noticed a geography book which belonged to a student in a higher grade. That very night I went home and told my dad that I wanted this fourth-grade geography book. I can still clearly remember that book -- Frye's Geography -- with its pretty-colored maps.

My dad was a poor coal miner with little schooling, but he understood the value of a good education. So, on the very next Saturday he took me to town, where he bought me a brand-new Frye's Geography book.

The following Monday, I proudly carried my new book to school, showed it to my teacher, and insisted on studying from it. In that way, I advanced myself to the fourth-grade geography class before I had actually achieved that higher station.

I was fortunate that my parents recognized the value of books and that they supported and encouraged my interest in them. I have carried that fascination with

books and their mysteries throughout my entire life.

Reading is a key to success. Books can open up new worlds. They can transport the reader through time and space. They can introduce new and different ideas and empower their readers with knowledge.

As my parents did, all parents have the ability to stimulate a lifelong interest in reading and to nurture a love of books. They can do so simply by reading aloud to their children.

It was in recognition of the connection between reading to a child, and the development by that child of an attachment to books, that Governor Gaston Caperton recently declared April 17, "Read to Me" Day in West Virginia, an event promoted by West Virginia Public Television.

I commend Governor Caperton on his declaration. A one-day observance of this kind is valuable in directing the public's attention to the issue of reading. But this message is so important that I believe that it deserves year-round recognition.

Therefore, I urge parents to make every day "Read to Me" Day by reading to their children. It will be one of the greatest gifts that a child will ever receive.

April 3, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Terrible Blow to the Constitution

The Republican leadership recently pushed through Congress an extreme brand of presidential line-item veto, and with it, a monumental change in our constitutional system of checks and balances and separation of powers.

Proponents of this so-called line-item veto power promote it as a cure for much of our nation's fiscal ills, arguing that it will give the president a knife with which to cut "pork" from congressionally approved spending bills.

In reality, this authority will do little to trim the federal budget, because it will affect, almost exclusively, discretionary spending, the portion of the budget that has already been cut to the bone in recent years.

Meanwhile, the real culprits in the growth of the deficits -- entitlements and tax giveaways -- will be allowed to continue to swell, immune from this new authority.

The recent legislation actually gives the president incredible rescission power to first sign a bill into law and then strike any money items from it. It will also give the president the ability to reach into the accompanying conference report, the statement of the House and Senate managers, and even charts and tables, and cancel any money items mentioned therein. This is truly a radical change from the qualified veto power given to the president by the Framers of the Constitution.

Supporters also claim that the Congress, with a simple majority in both houses, could, at a future date, repeal the law. That claim, however, ignores the fact that a president could block such a repeal with a

veto. It would require a two-thirds vote of both bodies to override the president's veto, which would be very unlikely. As a matter of fact, during the past two centuries in the life of the Republic, presidents, beginning with George Washington, have vetoed -- not counting pocket vetoes -- 1,460 bills, and only 105 (or seven percent) of such vetoes have been overridden by Congress.

This power over the purse, once surrendered to the president, will probably never be retrieved by Congress. Although the recent legislation contains a sunset provision that would terminate the law on January 1, 2005, it remains to be seen whether Congress, at the end of those eight years, will vote to extend this surrender of control of the purse.

In this recent legislation, Congress has initiated an unprecedented and massive shift of power from the legislative branch -- the people's directly elected representatives -- to the executive. It has given the president a club which he can hold over the head of every member of the House and Senate to impose his own will on legislation, treaties, and nominations.

In instituting such an enormous change in our constitutional system, the members of the current Congress have demonstrated a reckless lack of regard for both the intent of the Framers of the Constitution and for future generations.

I believe that this change is unconstitutional, and I hope that, as many constitutional scholars predict, it will be overturned by the courts.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Protecting Children From a Bad Influence

Modern telecommunications technology offers a seemingly unlimited variety of channels available to today's television viewer. But along with a growing number of choices comes the responsibility of ensuring that the television is tuned to programs that are suitable for everyone who is watching.

A good step in that direction was taken recently, when Congress passed -- with my support -- legislation that requires manufacturers to install in all new television sets a device known as the "V" Chip (V for Violence), which can electronically block shows labeled for violent or other questionable content.

Also, recently, the television industry commendably agreed to devise a rating system, allowing the "V" Chip to read rating codes and zap out those programs labeled unsuitable for children's viewing.

Television has a strong influence on a child's perception. Studies cited in Congressional hearings indicate that the average American child watches 25 hours of television each week. That same child will be exposed to an estimated 8,000 murders and 100,000 acts of violence on television by the time he or she completes elementary school.

These studies have also found that children exposed to violent programming at a young age have a higher tendency for violent and aggressive behavior later in life than children who are not exposed.

Also, children exposed to violent programs have shown to be more prone to assume that acts of violence are acceptable social behavior.

For many years, I have been concerned about the corrupting effects, particularly on children, of violence and crudeness on much of television, recognizing that as long as broadcasters navigate by the compass of economic gain, questionable programming will persist.

The amount of time that children are exposed to the bombardment of violent television shows, coupled with the damaging long-term effects of such exposure, makes it more important than ever for parents to arm their families against these negative influences. Parents have a responsibility to strictly limit the amount of time their children watch television, and to censor televised material which could have damaging effects on their youngsters. The "V" Chip will be a useful tool in helping to combat television violence.

April 17, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Caring for West Virginia's Children

Today's families are finding it increasingly difficult to make ends meet without the incomes of two working parents. As a result, growing numbers of families are facing the emotionally and financially difficult dilemma of finding professional day care for their children.

In response to the modern child care needs of West Virginia families, I added \$700,000 to a federal appropriations bill in 1992 for the construction of a facility, which, in addition to providing space for day care, would accommodate the training of child care workers and assist working parents in coping with the competing demands of work and family.

I recently attended the dedication of that new facility--the Child Development Center of Central West Virginia--which is located in Buckhannon, Upshur County.

This new Center provides quality care for preschoolers while their parents work. The Center's child care program combines generous portions of play and imagination with education, helping to ensure that children have a chance to be children while preparing to move on to grade school.

In addition, the Child Development Center (CDC) offers a program of educa-

tion and instruction for child care providers and college students interested in pursuing careers in the child development field. Students and providers who are enrolled in apprenticeships at the CDC facility learn how to best teach and encourage young children, gaining valuable hands-on experience which they can take back to their own communities and use to enhance their own careers. Also, through an outreach program, the CDC is taking child care know-how to seventeen West Virginia counties, so that the need for professional day care can be answered with effective, quality programs throughout the state.

In addition, as part of its comprehensive program, the CDC offers advice and guidance to parents so that they are equipped to make the most of their limited hours at home with their children.

Our children are our future. Therefore, ensuring that they can grow and develop in warm, happy, nurturing environments is a society-wide concern. In a commendable fashion, the Child Development Center of Central West Virginia is addressing that concern, and I am glad to have had a hand in helping its important work grow.

April 24, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The False Promise of Term Limits

Once again, the ill-conceived issue of term limits has been thrust into the political spotlight, only to be wisely rejected by both the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives.

Proponents of the issue have recently tried to tap into election-year voter anger to peddle term limits as an avenue to better government. They claim that limiting Congressional terms -- or, in actuality, limiting the tenure, or years of service, of members -- will help the public to exercise greater control over their elected federal representatives.

What the advocates of term limits conveniently ignore is that the public already has the power to limit the service of their representatives in Congress and, thus, to influence the quality of their representation, simply by exercising their right to vote.

Term limits would dramatically weaken the public's voting power -- the constitutionally provided vehicle for returning to office effective representatives or removing those who perform poorly -- diminishing the people's ability to influence the actions and votes of lawmakers and, thereby, the quality of representation.

Limiting the tenure of Congressional members -- for example, to two six-year terms for Senators, as a recently proposed Constitutional Amendment would have mandated -- would create individuals accountable to no one in their final terms. Without having to fear the reprisal of the electorate, last-termers could vote any way they pleased,

cut any deal that benefitted them, or rip off the public treasury with wild abandon. It would constitute a free ride for those who might wish to use it as such.

For anyone concerned that the current system fails to attract new ideas and fresh talent, consider the fact that 51 of the current 100 Senators have served less than two terms, and nearly half of the members of the House of Representatives have served fewer than four years.

Another problem with limiting Congressional terms, of particular concern to West Virginia, is the disadvantage at which such a proposal places small states, which garner power in Congress not through the size of their delegations but through the ability of senior members to earn powerful chairmanships of key committees from long service.

Without seniority, small states like West Virginia cannot hope to stand up to the voting power of large delegations from populous states.

Further, there is the matter of experience. It takes years to master the difficult issues with which this country must contend. We all benefit from the guidance of Congressmen who have gained insight through years of experience in office, just as we benefit from members of other professions who have gained hands-on experience in their fields.

Unlike the proponents of term limits, I believe the public has the wisdom to choose their own representatives and the good sense to see through the false promise of term limits.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Responsibilities in the Computer Age

The Internet is rapidly becoming widely available at public facilities and private locations throughout West Virginia, paralleling its growth across the nation and around the world.

This network of computer sites is an incredible resource. The potential scope of its influence is immense. With a few keystrokes, one can, for example, learn about current events around the globe, conduct research at distant libraries, find up-to-the-minute data on nearly any conceivable topic, and view art exhibits or hear live concerts being staged at far-away venues.

While the Internet, in these and other ways, provides a remarkable conduit for retrieving information available on the "World Wide Web," it also provides an unprecedented opportunity to disseminate information, a prospect that is both exciting and troubling.

Many users seem to forget that the Internet, or "Net", is far from private. Messages, even those addressed to a specific individual at a private computer, are not necessarily secure from prying eyes.

As the Internet has expanded, there have been numerous accounts of individuals naively sending messages that have fallen into unintended hands. These intercepted messages have, in some cases, resulted in personal disgrace or legal troubles for the writer, or others named in the messages.

Even more disturbing have been the accounts of individuals knowingly using the Internet in menacing

ways.

Numerous computer sites have been created by purveyors of sexually explicit and violence-filled material. Information on how to build bombs, for example, has been distributed over the Net. In one reported case, Internet-provided bomb-making information was used by a group of young people in the Midwest for a spree of dangerous mail-box pranks.

Even more distressing are the reports of some individuals using the Net to prey upon young children. For example, pedophiles have been known to locate victims over the Net via electronic mail. They accomplish this by entering into two-way computer conversations with youngsters. They gain the children's trust, and entice them to provide personal information, often including photographs and home addresses, that can be used to lure the youngsters into danger.

Obviously, the Internet can be a tool for tremendous good. But, like other innovations intended to benefit society, if used irresponsibly, the Net can be equally destructive.

As it becomes more broadly accessible, I urge West Virginians to act responsibly when communicating on the Internet. I also urge parents to take an active interest in their child's use of the computer. In this age, with the dangers that lurk on the World Wide Web, parental supervision of a child's computer activity is at least as important as monitoring their television viewing habits.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Illegal Immigration Enforcement Help for West Virginia

According to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), approximately 4 million illegal immigrants are residing in this nation today, and that number is growing by nearly 300,000 per year.

Although illegal immigration is not as prominent a problem in West Virginia as it is in border states like California, Florida, and Texas, our state is not immune from the difficulties associated with the influx of illegal immigrants.

The most powerful magnet for illegal immigrants is jobs. Foreign citizens regularly cross our borders in droves for a chance at employment and a better way of life.

All Americans suffer when illegal immigrants, through honest oversight or willful intent to skirt the law, are allowed to fill jobs in our country. In addition, when illegals or their children subsist on welfare and other government-supported services, it is U.S. taxpayers who get stuck with the bill.

To address these problems, the Senate recently passed, with my support, legislation intended to establish a coherent national policy aimed at stemming the tide of illegal immigration.

That bill makes much-needed and substantive reforms in the current law by focusing on the problem of illegal immigration without unfairly punishing law-abiding employers and those who come to this country and play by the rules.

It provides for expedited deportation of aliens

who commit crimes, imposes new restrictions on the use of welfare by immigrants, and makes it tougher for immigrants to falsely seek asylum protection.

Also, because laws can do little good without a means for enforcing them, the bill contains several measures for improving enforcement, including increasing the number of Border Patrol agents and INS officers.

Further, recognizing that a cohesive national immigration policy requires every state to have the necessary resources to participate in enforcing that policy, I co-sponsored an amendment to the Illegal Immigration Bill to place a minimum of 10 full-time INS agents in each state, including West Virginia, one of only three states which currently have no permanent INS presence.

A full-time INS staff in West Virginia will help state and local law enforcement deal with immigration problems and provide employers with the administrative guidance required to comply with federal immigration procedures. It will also help legal immigrants process paperwork more efficiently.

The Senate-passed Illegal Immigration Reform Bill is a positive step in the nation's overall effort to improve U.S. immigration policies, and with the new INS agents provided for by my amendment, West Virginia will be better able to address the challenges of the expanding immigrant population.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Tapping the Potential of Corridor Highways

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is charged with helping the Appalachian states identify and implement strategies for reversing the region's history of economic adversity.

Central to that mission is the construction of the 13-state ARC Corridor Highway System. Simply put, the presence of a more modern, safer highway helps to make communities along its path more attractive to business.

But, such a highway, in and of itself, does not guarantee prosperity to its adjacent communities. Also required are the efforts of local governments, residents, and businesses working together to capitalize on the economy-boosting potential that accompanies a new, up-to-date highway.

Recognizing the importance of local participation in nurturing that potential, I added \$300,000 to a federal appropriations bill to fund an initiative that would assist Corridor communities in plotting their economic futures.

The first step of that initiative, intended to serve as a model for use throughout Appalachia, focuses on helping communities along Corridor L -- which runs from I-79 near Sutton to I-64/77 near Beckley -- to form a comprehensive economic development program.

Although other communities which later use the model may concentrate on different areas of economic growth, in the case of Corridor L, the program focuses on further enhancing tourist activities along the route, since the four counties traversed by Corridor L -- Braxton, Nicholas, Fayette, and Raleigh -- have recently

seen impressive growth in the tourism industry.

In this model program, ARC has been working with residents, businesses, academia, and government entities from the Corridor L communities to identify the tourist attractions that already exist along the route, discern the tourism-related needs of the region, and develop and implement an overarching strategy for increasing tourism jobs and income throughout the area.

Recently, the Corridor L Tourism Enhancement Steering Committee, the governing board for the project, selected 22 local entities to receive grants from the funding I added to an appropriations bill. Among the broad range of selected projects -- all of which fit under the umbrella strategy for growing Corridor L tourist activity -- are several to help inform tourists about area attractions through signs, maps, guides, and videotapes, and others to assist businesses in marketing locally made goods.

Concord College, West Virginia University, and Davis and Elkins College, educational institutions with expertise in tourism, are also pitching in by providing technical assistance to project participants in implementing the master plan.

Along with local participants, I look forward to the long-term success of the Corridor L Tourism Enhancement Project, and in turn, to the benefits that it can afford throughout Appalachia as other Corridor communities use this model to write their own economic development success stories.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Wrong Blueprint for America

Recently, the Senate passed its version of the federal budget. I voted against this legislation because it continues the unwarranted onslaught against our country's human and physical infrastructure. This budget shows a lack of commitment to the basic needs of our people. It severely shortchanges our nation's future. That is why I offered two amendments to restore critical funding to infrastructure needs over the next six years.

While I agree that achieving a balanced budget is an important and laudable goal, to do so at all costs would be unwise. The list of current domestic unmet needs for transportation, education, clean water and clean air, water and sewerage systems, research, law enforcement, our nation's parks, and housing is extensive and alarming.

For example, a status report on our surface transportation system indicates that it would require annual investments of roughly \$15 billion to adequately maintain our transportation infrastructure.

In the area of safe drinking water, in West Virginia alone, a recent study reported that it would take \$162 million to clean up and provide potable water to approximately 79,000 West Virginians. It would take another \$405 million to

meet the worsening drinking water supply of some 476,000 West Virginians.

While some persist in slashing the very programs that would address these demands, they continue to ignore the unchecked growth of corporate welfare and tax expenditures -- special exemptions that cost the U.S. taxpayer \$500 billion per year -- that are eating away at the very foundation of our national economy.

In order to avoid a further increase in the deficit, my amendments would have paid for critical improvements in our sewer and water systems through a combination of closing corporate loopholes and elimination of, or modifications of, tax expenditures.

While I well understand the gravity of our budget deficits and believe they need to be brought under control, there is another deficit looming on the horizon which in many ways is far more serious. That is the infrastructure deficit. I close with the question I asked my colleagues in the Senate. Once we allow America to fall into total disrepair, how will we ever afford the trillions of dollars it will take to put it right? My amendments failed in the Senate, but I will continue to try to raise the funding levels for America's important infrastructure needs before it is too late.

May 29, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Debut for West Virginia

On June 20, West Virginia will celebrate its 133rd birthday, and, while many of us who call West Virginia our home take a few minutes each year to reflect on this notable date in history, this year's birthday celebration will be made especially memorable by another statewide observance -- Homecoming '96.

The creation of Governor Gaston Caperton, Homecoming '96 is, in many respects, a "debut" for West Virginia. While it may be uncommon to be staging a "coming out party" for an honoree at the ripe age of 133, Homecoming '96 is an exceptional opportunity to reintroduce the grace and beauty of our state to the entire nation. At the same time, it serves as an appropriate venue for impressing potential business suitors with the many economic attributes that make her exceptional.

June 20 has logically been chosen as a centerpiece occasion in the list of official Homecoming '96 events being staged throughout the year. As such, a number of activities have been scheduled for that day in communities around West Virginia.

The day's anchor events are slated for Charleston, the high points of which include a reunion on the Capitol grounds of the knights and ladies of the Golden Horseshoe, those individuals who, as teenagers, earned the highest marks among those who were

given a statewide exam to measure their knowledge of West Virginia history.

Including family members, organizers expect more than 1,500 participants to attend the Golden Horseshoe reunion, including winners from the 1930's -- the earliest years of the contest -- and individuals now residing in other states, some from as far away as the West Coast. As one who places great importance on reading and studying history, I commend this show of support for learning about our West Virginia heritage.

In addition to the Golden Horseshoe reunion, that evening, my Homecoming '96 honorary cochairperson, country music star Kathy Mattea, will headline a birthday concert in Charleston which will include a number of West Virginia artists. This spectacular show will feature an array of music from across West Virginia, reflecting the variety of sounds and talent found throughout our state.

I take this opportunity to invite everyone wishing to help honor West Virginia to join in on the birthday celebrations that will be staged around our state on June 20.

In addition, I urge West Virginia residents, faraway West Virginia natives, and individuals from out of state to participate in the host of Homecoming events slated to take place throughout the rest of the year. Together, we can make Homecoming '96 a shining success!



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Window to the Stars

The National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Green Bank has aided in the discovery of a bright new star, which can be found right in West Virginia.

This "star" is not a celestial body, but a gifted young lady named Naomi Sue Bates from Pendleton County.

Naomi, a high school senior, was selected as a finalist in the 55th annual national Westinghouse Science Talent Search competition, which recognizes the nation's most accomplished high school science students. Her project is a study of the rotation of the Milky Way Galaxy, which she tracks using a radio telescope at the Green Bank Observatory.

In 1989, I added \$75 million to a federal appropriations bill for the construction of a 330-foot ultramodern radio telescope at the Observatory. Although the main focus of the Observatory is to provide state-of-the-art research facilities to astronomers from around the country, it also offers educational programs for teachers and students.

Each year, hundreds of high school teachers are invited to Green Bank for intensive programs, including lectures, astronomy classes, and hands-on research opportunities. In recent years, these programs have benefitted teachers from West

Virginia high schools, and student teachers from West Virginia University and Glenville State College. After visiting Green Bank, these teachers are encouraged to return to the Observatory to introduce their own students to the experience.

Naomi is one of the many students who benefit from the educational opportunities at the Green Bank site. Her first visit was during her freshman year, and after returning several times on her own, she set up a mentorship program between her school and the Observatory to spend more time pursuing her own projects.

In addition, numerous groups visit the Observatory annually to learn about the universe. In conjunction with the 30th birthday celebration for a giant, 140-foot telescope last September, more than 1,150 West Virginia students, between the ages of 5 and 18, toured the Observatory and participated in educational programs and demonstrations.

Students from West Virginia and across the country are getting a unique educational opportunity through this hands-on experience in astronomy. The Observatory at Green Bank is more than a research facility. For students like Naomi, it is a window to the stars.

June 12, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Benefiting from the Lessons of Nature

West Virginians are proud of the relationship they have with nature throughout our state. The preservation of our natural resources, along with the benefits of West Virginia's growing tourist industry, are important reasons for maintaining our wilderness areas.

The Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge, headquartered in Parkersburg, is one of the richest and most diverse natural areas in West Virginia. In 1989, I added \$850,000 to an appropriations bill to establish the area as the state's first national wildlife refuge. Since that time, I have added another \$2.25 million to appropriations bills for its land acquisition.

The Ohio River Islands Refuge consists of a series of islands, stretching from the Northern Panhandle county of Hancock to south of Point Pleasant in Mason County. This habitat is ecologically sensitive and is an important migratory route for many birds. It contains a rich mosaic of bottomland hardwoods, wetlands, and life forms which are rare to the area, including many species of songbirds and waterfowl, and at least 20 species of plants and animals which are on West Virginia's rare species list.

One West Virginian who knows about the wonders of the Ohio River Islands Refuge is Bonnie C. Welcker, a senior at Parkersburg South High School. Bonnie has volunteered at the Refuge for the past three years, where she studies mollusks and their impact on inland waterways.

Bonnie's research, which focuses on the reproduction of Asian freshwater clams and zebra mussels, recently earned her a finalist position in the 55th annual Westinghouse Science Talent Search. She is currently pursuing population control solutions for zebra mussel reproduction that could save millions of dollars each year in mussel population management.

The rapidly reproducing zebra mussels, which migrated from Lake Erie and spread throughout many of the nation's waterways, including the Ohio River, have been a nuisance to some forms of native stream life, as well as to humans, who have discovered large numbers of the mollusks attached to ship hulls and canal locks. Zebra mussels have also clogged industrial pipelines, forcing temporary shutdowns and the expenditure of vast sums of money to remove the clinging creatures. Bonnie is researching ways to suppress the mass reproduction of zebra mussels without causing harm to other forms of life in the island habitats.

Preserving wildlife in areas such as the Ohio River Island Wildlife Refuge is an investment in ensuring that future generations will also benefit from the beauty and lessons of nature. I am proud to have played a role in the creation of the Refuge for our children and grandchildren, and I am encouraged by young people like Bonnie who recognize the value in understanding and improving our environment.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Investments in West Virginia Tourism

According to a study conducted for the West Virginia Division of Tourism, our state's tourism industry has grown consistently over the last six years, with tourism sales increasing 26.2 percent since 1989.

The study reports that in 1995 tourism in our state generated \$3.82 billion in economic impact and employed 72,605 individuals with a combined payroll of \$1.37 billion.

Recognizing that West Virginia is blessed with remarkable resources, I have worked to lay foundations for a robust tourism industry in West Virginia, bringing federal investment to our state to enhance our natural resources and to preserve our historic sites.

For example, in the last 15 years, I have obtained more than \$30 million in federal funds for the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, a place of magnificent natural beauty and significant historic interest.

Likewise, since 1979, I have obtained \$101.1 million in appropriations for operations and construction of facilities at the New River Gorge National River that have made the Gorge safer and more accessible to visitors, while preserving its natural qualities.

The Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge is comprised of a mosaic of bottomland hardwoods, wetlands, and many species of songbirds and waterfowl, with at least 20 species of plants and animals on the state's endangered species

list. Since 1989, I have added \$3.1 million to appropriations bills to establish this rich and diverse natural habitat as the state's first national wildlife refuge.

In addition to those examples, I have been able to invest in numerous other parks and recreational areas across our state.

The Haddad Riverfront Park in Charleston is a centerpiece of leisure-time activity, for which I have obtained \$4.5 million in federal funds.

Since 1990, I have added a total of \$1.9 million to appropriations bills to expand facilities at the Harris Riverfront Park in Huntington in response to a growing interest in boating, picnicking, and other recreational activities there.

I have also helped to obtain \$6 million for land acquisition for the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, which hosts a wide array of animal species and more than 500 varieties of plants.

These areas enrich the lives of people who visit them and expand economic opportunities for the communities in which they are located.

In these ways, the federal investments I have steered to our state, along with the considerable contributions of the State, local communities, and private-sector enterprises, are paying dividends not only in a strong tourist trade, but also in a healthier economy and a better quality of life.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Striving for Completion Of the ARC Highways

For 32 years, the people of Appalachia have awaited the completion of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Corridor Highways, a network of modern roads intended to increase the safety of travel and attract jobs and economic opportunities into our Appalachian communities.

During that time, Appalachian residents witnessed the completion of the Interstate system, a national network of up-to-date highways that avoided vast sections of the 13 Appalachian states, routing many of their accompanying benefits away from the mountainous, economically strapped region.

Meanwhile, lacking a consistent source of funding of the magnitude needed to build roads through the rugged Appalachians, the ARC Highways progressed slowly. Today they remain nearly 24 percent incomplete. That is, of the 3,025 miles that comprise the ARC system, roughly 725 miles are unfinished.

To help address this inequity, in recent years, I have secured authorization for the entire ARC Highway System and added funds to appropriations bills to ensure that construction of these important roads would continue. But, the ARC Highways need and deserve a focused and comprehensive effort at the federal level to expedite their completion.

For that reason, I recently introduced a bill in the Senate to ensure that sufficient funding would be set aside in the next major highway bill to complete the ARC Corridors by the year 2003.

The rationale behind the ARC Highways is no less sound today than it was in 1964 when the President's Appalachian Regional Commission's report stated, "Development activities in Appalachia cannot proceed until the regional isolation has been overcome by a transportation network which provides access to and from the rest of the nation and within the region itself."

In those areas where the ARC Highways have been constructed, there have been impressive economic successes. The Appalachian Regional Commission has conducted studies that indicate that, of the hundreds of thousands of jobs that have been created in the Appalachian region over recent decades, more than 80 percent of these jobs have been located along either the ARC Highways or the Interstates.

By ensuring, through my amendment, that sufficient federal funds would be directed specifically at completing construction of the ARC Highway System, I am aiming to see to it that the promise made 32 years ago to the people of Appalachia is, at long last, fulfilled.

July 3, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

“Campaign Grease”

Despite all of its clamoring for change, the Republicans' much-touted Contract with America failed to mention a word about one of the root problems plaguing Congress today: excessive campaign fund-raising.

The need for members of Congress to constantly focus on raising the huge sums necessary to remain in public service has taken a heavy toll, yet many of those who trumpeted the glories of the Contract with America decided that putting an end to our current grotesque and out-of-control campaign spending system was just not worthy of attention.

As Senate Majority Leader, I tried eight times in 1987 and 1988 to get cloture on campaign finance reform legislation, but my attempts were blocked eight times by the Republican Party in the Senate. Those failed attempts constituted real losses to the American people. The public deserves Congressional representatives whose attention is not fractured by the need to raise campaign funds, and who are not beholden to special interest groups out of the onerous need to fill campaign coffers.

But, once again, despite an increase of public concern, the Senate recently blocked attempts to put a stop to the noxious system currently in place for the financing of senatorial campaigns.

How unfortunate! I believe that until members of Congress come to grips with the simple fact that exorbitant campaign spending is a serious concern, the Congress will continue to be perceived as being owned

by special interests.

Countless times, action on the Senate floor has been slowed or delayed because Senators are elsewhere raising huge sums of money -- money essential for running for reelection. The traveling; the time away from the Senate; the time away from talking with constituents; the time robbed from reading and reflection; and the siphoning off of energies to the demands of collecting what has been called “campaign grease” is making us all less able to be good public servants.

If I were starting out in politics today, with a background like mine -- grocer, welder, butcher, just common ordinary trades -- I could not even hope to raise the huge sums of money needed to hire costly political campaign consultants, or to pay for the high-priced television advertisements required for a contemporary campaign.

According to data from the Congressional Research Service, the average cost of a winning senatorial campaign rose from \$600,000 in 1976 to more than \$4 million in 1994. Four million dollars! And that, of course, is just the average.

That kind of system sends the clear message to the American people that it is money, not ideas and not principles, that reigns supreme in our political system.

We must bring into check the obscene spending that occurs in pursuit of public office. We must act, once again, to put the United States Senate within the reach of anyone with the desire, the spirit, the brains, and the spunk to serve.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Irresponsible Advertising

In a time when our nation is working to curb alcohol abuse, I am troubled by a disturbing "step backward" by at least one member of the alcohol industry, an act that I consider a significant threat to our society.

Last month, the Joseph E. Seagram and Sons Corporation began airing commercials for whiskey on a television station in Texas, violating the liquor industry's 48-year-old Code of Good Practice, a self-imposed decision not to advertise distilled spirits products on television.

The Seagram commercial is doubly disturbing because it not only defies the industry's own long-term agreement, but it also aims to appeal to a young audience. The advertisement portrays two dogs graduating from obedience school. One holds a "mere" newspaper. The other carries a bottle of whiskey. The canine with the newspaper is labeled simply "graduate," while the dog with the whiskey is titled the "valedictorian."

I find it preposterous that the Seagram Corporation would associate academic achievement with hard liquor.

Alcohol is the number one drug problem among young Americans. Drinking impairs one's judgement, and alcohol mixed with

teenage driving is a lethal combination. That is why, earlier this year, I authored an amendment that requires states to pass "zero tolerance" laws which would make it illegal for a person under the age of 21 to drive a car with a blood alcohol level greater than .02 percent.

An individual of legal drinking age makes his or her own decision to drink, but surely it is careless to impose messages relating valedictorian status with alcohol, and to broadcast these messages through the seducing medium of television.

It is dangerously irresponsible for liquor companies to merchandise their vices using the influential power and looming ubiquity of television.

The overwhelming influences of television on our nation have contributed mightily to the moral decay in our communities. And since the broadcasting brew is already being polluted by commercials from the beer and wine industries, it is even more important to guard against mixing hard liquor ads into the caldron.

The health, well-being, and moral character of our nation far outweigh the profit that might be generated from broadcast advertisements peddling hard liquor.

July 17, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Caring for Some of War's Most Innocent Victims

Sergeant Paul Hanson of Wheeling served in the Persian Gulf War. Subsequently, his son, Jayce, was born with crippling birth defects.

The Department of Defense recently acknowledged that some Gulf War veterans may have been exposed to chemical warfare agents, including mustard gas and sarin, that have been linked to central and peripheral nervous system problems, as well as possible birth defects in children born to exposure victims.

The Hansons are one among a number of military families with children born with birth defects that may have been caused by the exposure of a parent to chemical warfare agents in the Persian Gulf.

Medical research is needed to determine if the exposure of these military parents to chemical warfare agents has caused the birth defects and catastrophic illnesses with which their children are afflicted.

To investigate that possible connection, I offered amendments to both the Fiscal Year 1997 Department of Defense Authorization and Appropriations Bills that will provide \$10 million for independent medical research into this problem area.

My amendment to the Defense Authorization Bill also ensures that appropriate medical care for Jayce, and children like him, is available through the military health care system, or through the CHAMPUS health care program with

civilian physicians, if these physicians are required for the kinds of specialized care many of these children need. Also, because the costs of multiple operations or expensive medical treatments commonly needed by these children can easily reach \$100,000, my amendment waives the CHAMPUS program's required 20-percent co-payment.

Further, because these children, due to their "pre-existing conditions," are often denied coverage by private insurers, my amendment ensures that their medical care continues to be covered by the military even if their parents have left the service.

The number of children affected is not large, according to the Department of Defense, but these children are in truly desperate straits. For example, until research can prove that Jayce's maladies are not linked to Sergeant Hanson's service in the Gulf War, the child should be given the benefit of the doubt.

President Clinton last month announced that he would seek legislation to provide benefits for children of Vietnam veterans born with spina bifida as a result of their parents' exposure to Agent Orange. Jayce and the other children like him should not have to wait twenty years before it is acknowledged that the incalculable difficulties they face may have resulted from their parents' service to our country.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Balancing Global Competition

A number of West Virginia companies have recently been feeling the squeeze created by unfair overseas competition.

For example, this spring, two Ritchie County textile manufacturers, Hodges Apparel and Safety Stitch, were notified that their primary client needed to move its work offshore in order to regain profitability. Unless these firms can garner other orders, the talented and dedicated employees at these companies will be out of work.

These potential job losses, and similar situations throughout the country, are not occurring because the quality of clothing produced in the United States is poor; quite the contrary. The design and quality of U.S.-made clothing and textiles are competitive with the design and quality of overseas products. But U.S. production costs must include pension and health care payments for workers, and the expenses of meeting workplace safety and environmental standards. Since many overseas manufacturers are not required to cover these costs and meet these standards, they overwork and underpay their workers, forcing them to labor in unsafe factories that pollute the air and water around them.

Job losses on this scale constitute more than a minor unraveling of the economic fabric of Ritchie County -- they are a tear in the very fabric of American society.

That is why I recently cosponsored a bill which

would provide protections for U.S. textile and apparel producers from unfair competition caused by overseas producers seeking to exceed U.S. quotas.

The Textile and Apparel Global Competitiveness Act, which I cosponsored, requires more even-handed trade negotiations on textile and apparel goods, helping, among other things, to provide U.S. firms greater access to foreign markets. This legislation increases enforcement of existing trade laws and imposes higher fines on quota-breaking foreign firms. These fines provide additional revenue for trade adjustment assistance to U.S. textile and apparel makers.

The United States is proud of its laws that protect workers and the environment. Nobody wants to reduce our standard of living by giving up workplace safety or clean air and water in order to "compete" with inexpensive goods produced by workers paid just pennies a day before they return to squalid homes under skies laden with pollutants.

Attempts by these overseas producers to evade U.S. trade laws and treaties must be firmly and effectively halted. Companies in West Virginia and across the United States which produce quality goods should not have to compete on an uneven playing field against foreign firms. The Textile and Apparel Global Competitiveness Act targets this problem and aims to level the playing field and protect U.S. jobs.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Reforming our Welfare System

The Congress recently approved comprehensive welfare reform legislation that marks a sharp break from the last 60 years of federal welfare policy.

While there exists significant disagreement over how to reform the welfare system, there is also widespread acknowledgment that the current system has failed.

Under the new policy, many existing federal welfare programs will be combined into block grants, obligating states to provide services to poverty-stricken families with children.

States will be given the responsibility of designing their own particular programs and setting rules for eligibility. In order to receive their full block grant, states will have to enforce rigid work requirements for welfare recipients and provide adequate child care resources to families with children.

During Senate consideration of this legislation, I supported amendments to preserve the "safety net" provided by the food stamp program, and to ensure that eligibility for Medicaid would not be adversely affected by any provisions in the bill.

At the conclusion of the debate, I supported the welfare reform initiative because I believe it represents a much-needed improvement over our current welfare system, which is ridden with misguided incentives that too often discour-

age work.

For example, one of welfare's primary cash programs, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), was originally intended to help widows care for their children. But AFDC has since been expanded to assist divorced and never-married individuals and their children. Many AFDC mothers had their first child as an unmarried teenager, and dropped out of high school. Too often, these eligible recipients have collected AFDC assistance for many years, far beyond the temporary "safety net" intended by the program. Clearly, we must do something to reverse such perilous trends of illegitimacy and dependence.

The Welfare Reform Bill will also ban most legal immigrants from receiving general welfare assistance for their first five years of residence in this country, the reason being that immigrants are frequently required to have a sponsor who bears responsibility for their financial support. Furthermore, illegal immigrants will be permanently banned from most forms of assistance.

The new measure aims to correct the ever-deepening cycles of dependence that have developed in the last 60 years. While this legislation is not a panacea for the welfare problems in our country, I believe it is headed in the right direction.

August 7, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Education and Preserving Liberty

Meeting young people from West Virginia and throughout the nation is one of the most enjoyable aspects of my job as a United States Senator. I recently had the opportunity to again host a luncheon for the National Youth Science Camp. Each year, the nation's most outstanding math and science students meet for three weeks at Bartow in Pocahontas County, to participate in recreational and educational activities, including a trip to the nation's capital. It was inspiring to see the glow of energetic hope on the faces of these students, and the sparkle of youthful ambition in their eyes.

Indeed, these qualities could also be found in the ideas of the early leaders of our nation. The hope for a brighter future, coupled with the ambition to create a government promising liberty for all of its people, guided our forefathers more than two centuries ago when they set out to write the framework for governing our Republic.

One idea I tried to set in the minds of these National Youth Science campers and other young people I meet -- people who will grow up to comprise the future of our nation -- is to learn more about, and to understand the importance of, the Constitutional liberties enjoyed in this country.

It is a responsibility of today's youth to preserve the sacred freedoms set forth in our Constitution more than 200 years ago. The constitutional checks and balances envisioned by the Framers need to be learned and then learned again by each succeeding generation in order to safeguard these liberties.

The Constitution was meant to be a living document, but without an understanding of its pearls of genius, its subtle tensions and counter tensions, its sublime encouragement toward consensus building, it is as dead and dry as the parchment upon which it is written. We have rights as citizens of this Republic, but the flip side of that coin is our very serious responsibility to understand what makes our system work.

I encourage people of all ages to set a goal of striving for a real understanding of the marvelous institutions of this Republic which are our birthright. Free societies are only sustained by hard work, and liberty does not come without a price. The currency with which it is purchased is an informed citizenry -- and informed citizens are made, not born.

Only by learning about the tools that provide our freedoms, can we preserve the precious liberties which make the United States the greatest nation on earth.

August 14, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Safe Drinking Water

Most Americans take safe drinking water for granted. They assume that when they turn on the faucet, clean water will automatically flow out.

Last year, however, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) completed "Water 2000," a study about safe drinking water needs of communities throughout the United States. The findings of that study paint a disappointing picture about the quality and availability of water throughout our nation.

According to Water 2000, nearly three million U.S. families, representing eight million people, do not have access to safe drinking water.

Disturbingly, the study ranked West Virginia among the five worst states in the nation in terms of the availability of safe drinking water. The study found that it would require \$162 million to clean up and provide potable water to approximately 79,000 citizens in West Virginia, and another \$405 million to meet the worsening drinking water supply situation of 476,000 West Virginians, nearly half the population of the state! Several other states are facing similar circumstances.

For citizens of the United States, the world's most advanced and industrialized nation, to confidently use water for drinking, cooking, and recreation ought to be a birthright.

American parents ought to be able to offer their children a drink of tap water without fear that the glass contains health-threatening bacteria.

Unfortunately, however, the Republican-led Congress

has shown little interest in addressing this serious situation, carelessly axing off domestic infrastructure investment at every turn.

During recent debate on the budget resolution, I made two attempts to restore some of the funding cut from our national infrastructure.

I offered an amendment that would restore \$65 billion to the federal budget to support a broad range of domestic infrastructure programs, including highways, bridges, education, and modern water and sewer systems. I then offered an amendment to include \$6.5 billion for federal water and sewer programs, and to meet operating and maintenance needs at our national parks. Regrettably, both of these amendments were defeated.

Subsequent to passage of the budget resolution, I met with Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman to urge him to use part of the \$100 million in discretionary funds provided to him as part of the 1996 Farm Bill to creatively address some of this nation's most pressing water resources needs. Further, with my support, the Fiscal 1997 Agriculture Appropriations Bill contained almost \$100 million more for basic water and sewer needs than the Fiscal 1996 Bill.

These steps are moving us in the right direction, but they are just small steps, and we need to go further. In the most prosperous and powerful nation on the face of the earth, there ought never to be any question about government's doing all that it can to ensure that Americans have safe drinking water.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Fresh Start for Learning

In a recent survey released by the Horatio Alger Association, American youth cited "friends," "sports," and "social activities" as the top three reasons for attending school. "Learning" ranked seventh in the survey. While social interaction is an important aspect of school, this survey provides evidence of the extent to which our students are failing to embrace the primary purpose of our educational system and the value of learning.

Too often, particularly during their summer vacations, students neglect reading, writing, and other essential skills, in favor of athletics and social activities. Unfortunately, that summertime mode of fun and play also carries over into the school year, causing young people to neglect their studies.

I believe it is never too late to readjust one's attitude toward learning, and the beginning of the school year presents a timely opportunity to return to the classroom with a fresh enthusiasm.

There are clearly long-term, measurable benefits to making the most of one's education. For example, the U.S. Department of Education has reported that the median income for year-round, full-time workers who are 25 years old and have a high school diploma is \$19,963. In comparison, the median income of those who do not finish high school is just \$15,386.

Such statistics serve as compelling evidence that those who commit themselves to their studies can benefit from greater economic stability. Furthermore, beyond increased earning power, an education can instill one with a feeling of self-worth and accomplishment unmatched by other endeavors.

The value of education, however, extends beyond the individual. Our public educational system is available to all because, as a nation, we recognize that learning improves our citizenry and establishes a foundation for a strong country.

Autumn, the traditional beginning of the school year, is a good time for a new start for our students. I urge all students to take this time to recommit and rededicate themselves to their studies.

In addition, I call on parents to help their children recognize the wealth of opportunities that can be gained only through education. Parents should encourage their children to strive to learn, to take challenging courses in school, and to practice healthy study habits at home. Parents should monitor their children's progress by looking over their homework and their test scores, and by communicating with their children's teachers.

I believe that learning is a life-long endeavor, and that it is never too early, or too late, to begin.

August 28, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Old Values are Slipping Away

Recently, I attended a ceremony at Stotesbury, Raleigh County, to dedicate a historical marker at the former site of the Mark Twain High School, my alma mater. From 1921 to 1965, children would hike from nearby coal towns to attend Mark Twain. I remember my teachers encouraging me to learn there, and I recall absorbing every book I could lay my hands on. In 1934, at the age of 16, I graduated from Mark Twain as valedictorian of my class, an event which marked an important early step in the journey that has led me to the United States Senate.

Attending that recent event at Stotesbury caused me to reflect on those early years in West Virginia and to contemplate the kind of change that has taken place in our nation since I was at Mark Twain. This nation has lost some of the old values that were present during my school days.

All across America in the days of my childhood, there was more of a sense of personal belonging -- to family, to community, to country -- than can generally be found today. We, as a nation, valued simpler things: a phone call from an old friend; a country fair with time to admire the neighbor's prize cow; a chat with the children on the back porch during a balmy summer evening; a home-cooked meal with family seated around the same dinner table; a Sunday morning church service where you knew everybody in the congregation and took the time to talk with them all before leaving the church.

Instead, America today has become a place obsessed with speed. We rush

to eat, we rush to work, we rush to sleep, we rush to get from one place to another. How could we get by without fast food, instant coffee, high-speed elevators, microwaves, quick-stop food markets, and drive-through banks? Why, there are even drive-through funeral parlors, so that you can catch a quick look at the dearly departed, shed a tear, and be merrily on your way.

It seems that most of America hardly stops to take a breath anymore, much less to take time to talk quietly with children, commiserate with a friend about a problem, or pause to reflect on the events of the day.

But, change is inevitable, and much of the change which has occurred in the last 50 years has been, and will continue to be, beneficial for all of us. Still, I think that America hungers and thirsts for the richness of those earlier days. As a society we are trying to find a way in the midst of all the turmoil to turn back at least part of our lives and find something like what I remember from my days at Mark Twain.

The historical marker which preserves the memory of my alma mater also serves as a reminder of the values which still live in the valleys and hills of West Virginia. These are the same ideas for which so many Americans are yearning today.

Let us, in West Virginia, recognize what a valuable commodity we have in these values, and let us collectively dedicate our energies to preserving and perpetuating them for our children and our children's children.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Defending the Institution of Marriage

Recently, I cosponsored, and the Senate overwhelmingly approved, the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), a bill to protect the institution of marriage, and in turn, the values and spiritual beliefs of the majority of West Virginians.

The DOMA bill responds to the drive spearheaded by a small segment of society for legal recognition of same-sex marriages. Quite simply, DOMA defines the word "marriage" as the legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the term "spouse" as a husband or wife of the opposite sex.

It is almost incomprehensible to me that the Congress should have to be considering a matter such as this, but we live in an era in which "tolerance" has progressed beyond a mere call for acceptance and crossed over to become a demand for the rest of us to give up beliefs that we hold dear in order to prove our collective purity. This push for legal recognition of same-sex marriages reflects a demand for "political correctness" gone berserk.

The suggestion that relationships between members of the same gender should be accorded the status of marriage flies in the face of thousands of years of human experience.

The marriage bond, as recognized in the Judeo-Christian tradition, is the

cornerstone on which society itself depends for its moral and spiritual regeneration.

During my childhood in Southern West Virginia, my family looked to the Bible as a moral compass. I still read the Bible and look to it for guidance. In preparing to debate this issue, I found a number of relevant passages, including one from the first Chapter of Genesis which reads, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth....."

On a more pragmatic level, DOMA provides that no state shall be required to recognize a same-sex marriage sanctioned by another state. Further, it helps to protect federal aid programs that provide benefits to spouses from the potentially exorbitant costs that could result from a change in the broadly accepted definition of "spouse."

In passing the Defense of Marriage Act, the Congress took a stand for American values by defending the oldest institution -- the institution of marriage between male and female as set forth in the Holy Bible.

I am proud to have been a cosponsor of this important legislation.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Looking Out for the Safety of Our Miners

I recently delivered the keynote address at the 20th Anniversary Celebration for the Mine Health and Safety Academy, located in Beckley.

One of those in attendance was Mrs. Sarah Kaznoski, who lost her husband Pete in the 1968 Farmington mine explosion. This horrific mine explosion, in which 78 miners were killed, was the catalyst for the passage of the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969, which provided for the construction of facilities and the financing of a program to help prevent accidents and unsafe working conditions in our nation's coal mines.

The tragic loss suffered by Mrs. Kaznoski was shared by the families of thousands of other miners prior to the establishment of the Academy. In the 1960's there was an annual average of more than 430 deaths in the nation's mines.

I know first-hand the misery in the mines. I have seen the crushed limbs, felt the heartache of the aftermath of the explosions, and carried the coffins up the steep hillsides. For me, easing the lot of the miner and his family is much, much more than an exercise on paper. It is a visceral responsibility and an absolute moral obligation.

In 1969, I proposed that a Mine Safety and Health Institute be established and located in West Virginia, and in 1972, I secured \$13 million for construction of the facility. I continued to push for funding in Congress for the next four years. Finally, on August 19, 1976, and at a total cost of \$20.9 million, the Beckley Mine Health and Safety Academy became a reality.

The Mine Academy has played a prominent role in the reduction of mining deaths and injuries during the past 20 years by serving as the central training facility for Federal mine inspectors and mine safety professionals from other government agencies, the mining industry, and labor. Since its founding, the average number of annual mining fatalities has been reduced by over 75 percent.

The U.S. sits atop coal reserves equivalent to all of the world's known oil reserves of approximately one trillion barrels. Our miners will be toiling to extract coal to power our nation for many years to come, and they deserve our commitment to do all that we can to make their jobs safe. I shall not relent in my determination to work for increased safety and improved health for our miners.

September 18, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Aquaculture -- West Virginia's Emerging New Industry

In today's competitive economy, staying at the forefront of emerging businesses is essential to creating and retaining jobs. I have long made it one of my priorities to help West Virginia achieve the kind of business climate that is conducive to such cutting-edge enterprises and the jobs that they provide.

For example, in 1987, recognizing the increasing consumption of fish and seafood in the United States and around the world, I began efforts to explore opportunities for West Virginia in the emerging aquaculture industry through federal funding of aquaculture studies and demonstration projects. In 1990, I added \$50,000 to a federal appropriations bill to initiate a study of the possibilities of establishing a national aquaculture center in West Virginia.

While warm-water "catfish farming" has been successfully developed in the Southern states, the potential for a successful aquaculture industry in West Virginia is dependent upon establishing aquaculture systems that produce fish such as trout and salmon, species that prefer cold and cool water temperatures like those characteristic of West Virginia's lakes and streams.

That is why this year I added \$6 million in federal funds to begin construction of the National Center for Cool and Cold Water Aquaculture, which will be located on federal land at Leetown in Jefferson County.

This center will be unique because it will be the first such facility to focus on fish farming in the more moderate and chilly temperatures found in the Appalachian region. When completed, this facility will

quality, and health of cool and cold water fish species.

Currently, there are dozens of family-owned fish-farming operations in West Virginia, plus several high school vocational agriculture programs that teach aquaculture techniques.

The National Center for Cool and Cold Water Aquaculture is expected to provide information and technology to these aquaculture farmers to help them increase their production efficiency. The Center will also develop safer, more economical, and environmentally sustainable aquaculture practices to be used to establish new fish-farming operations across West Virginia.

A finding from a recent study conducted by the National Conservation Fund -- a national organization dedicated to natural resources conservation -- also bodes well for the establishment of a viable fish-farming industry in West Virginia. According to the Conservation Fund's study, active and abandoned mine sites make ideal locations for aquaculture production, providing the potential for West Virginia to become one of the largest trout producers in the U.S.

There are great possibilities for aquaculture growth in West Virginia. The lakes, streams, and mines across our state are exceptionally well suited for developing profitable fish-farming operations. It is my hope that the \$6 million I have added to the Fiscal Year 1997 Agriculture Appropriations Bill to build the National Center for Cool and Cold Water Aquaculture will help this up-and-coming industry to generate lasting and profitable economic opportunities for the future of West Virginia.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Healthier West Virginia

West Virginians should get active for the benefit of their health!

Evidence of the positive health effects of physical activity is plentiful. Recently, the Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service released a report entitled "Physical Activity and Health." This report indicates that even moderate amounts of regular exercise are beneficial to our health. Further, as the intensity and duration of the physical activity increases, so do the benefits.

According to the Surgeon General's report, the benefits of physical activity are numerous. A lower risk of cardiovascular disease, colon cancer, and developing diabetes, as well as lower mortality rates, are just a few of the benefits associated with regular exercise.

Many Americans today are motivated to exercise because it helps to control body weight. Weight control is certainly one of the most important reasons to exercise, because excess weight can lead to the development of a number of diseases and other health complications.

One does not have to exercise in a gym, lift weights, or engage in a sport in order to enjoy the results of physical activity. Even moderate activities such as gardening, pushing a stroller, or raking leaves for thirty minutes or an hour are

healthful physical activities.

Unfortunately, the Surgeon General's report indicates that too many American adults, 60 percent, are not regularly engaging in physical activity. Even more disconcerting, 25 percent of Americans indicate that they do not participate in any form of physical activity at all. That is regrettable, since exercise can help to prevent the sufferings caused by ill health and the resulting costly medical bills.

The report also finds that seniors are more inactive than younger persons. This is especially significant for our state, where more than 20 percent of West Virginians are over 60 years of age (compared to the national average of 16 percent). The benefits of increased physical activity for older citizens, such as increased strength to aid in the prevention of falls, can be particularly important in helping the elderly to continue to live independently. The report cautions that, if previously inactive, the elderly should start off slowly and check with their doctors before embarking on a new physical activity routine.

An order form for the Surgeon General's report can be obtained by calling the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's toll-free line at 1-888-CDC-4NRG.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Deregulation Clips West Virginia's Wings

On the day that I cast my 14,000th vote in the U.S. Senate, I observed that one of the votes I most regretted was one supporting airline deregulation.

At the time of the airline deregulation vote, I was told that the measure would lead to cheaper fares. It has, but only in some regions of the country and in large urban areas. Meanwhile, West Virginians sometimes pay hundreds of dollars more to fly than before.

I was also told that deregulation would lead to an increase in the number of flights, and make air service more convenient. Again, it has, but only for those fortunate enough to live at the centers of major markets.

Today, as compared with pre-deregulation days, West Virginians have far fewer flights to choose from, and, in many cases, must drive to another state in order to fly at a reasonable price. This is a far cry from convenience!

On October 3, 1996, the Senate passed the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill, containing a provision that directs the Secretary of Transportation to examine the impact of deregulation on small communities. The study is intended to determine if users of small community airports are paying "a disproportionately greater price" as compared with passengers using hub airports. It will, as well, attempt to discern the number of small communities that have lost air service as a result of the deregulation of commercial air carriers.

I strongly support this study, but must observe that, from the perspective of West Virginians, it is already evident that small communities are paying a disproportionately high price for air travel. For example, if

a West Virginian wants to fly from Charleston, West Virginia, to Washington, D.C., he will pay a one-way coach fare of \$332. To benefit from airline deregulation, he must spend over three hours driving to Columbus, Ohio, in order to fly for \$179. In other words, he must drive west, consuming gasoline and adding another automobile to the highways, in order to fly east at a reasonable fare.

Under deregulation, it is becoming increasingly difficult for small airports in West Virginia to continue to operate. Several of these airports benefit from Essential Air Service (EAS) support. Intended as a temporary subsidy to help small airports develop profitable service, EAS has become a permanent necessity to keep some small airports open due to the impact of deregulation. Essential air service, in recent years, has been repeatedly left out of the President's budget, only to be restored by my amendments to appropriations bills in order to keep our airline service alive in West Virginia and other rural states. Fortunately, EAS has been authorized to be funded at a level of \$50 million in the new FAA bill.

The FAA bill, with its required study of deregulation, is a positive step for our small airports. But it is not enough. It is my hope that the findings of that study will lead to ways to successfully reverse the deregulation-induced pattern of rising fares and declining service threatening West Virginia's small rural airports.

For West Virginia to continue to strengthen its economy, our state must have an adequate and cost-efficient transportation system. In this age, that means air service, as well as highways and waterways and rail service.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Help for Second Generation Victims Of the Vietnam War

After more than twenty years, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has concluded that sufficient scientific evidence exists linking veterans' exposure to Agent Orange during the Vietnam conflict, in certain instances, to the tragic incidence of the birth defect spina bifida in the children of these veterans. This year, I cosponsored an amendment to the fiscal 1997 Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill to provide needed authority for the VA to treat these children for their service-connected disabilities arising from their fathers' exposure to Agent Orange. This is an unprecedented but appropriate action, since scientific research is now sophisticated enough to allow an understanding of the effects of toxic exposures on ourselves and, also importantly, on future generations.

As a result of the Agent Orange Act of 1991, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the National Academy of Sciences have, at regular intervals, reviewed the ongoing research on Agent Orange exposure. As a result, Veterans' disability compensation has been awarded, in some instances, for several Agent Orange-related illnesses, including nonHodgkin's lymphoma, soft-tissue sarcoma, Hodgkin's disease, chlo-racne, respiratory cancers, multiple myeloma, prostate cancer, and acute and sub-acute peripheral neuropathy. The report update, issued last spring, also found "lim-

ited/suggestive evidence" linking the birth defect spina bifida to Agent Orange exposure. On the basis of this finding, VA Secretary Jesse Brown recommended that a service connection be granted to Vietnam veterans' children with spina bifida.

The research and the legislation are long overdue for families that have been struggling for over twenty years. Spina bifida is a serious neural tube defect, caused by the improper development of the vertebrae or spinal cord, and resulting in varying degrees of paralysis of the lower limbs. The damage is permanent and incurable, requiring surgery, medication, and assistive devices like braces, crutches, or wheelchairs.

This legislation will, beginning in 1998, provide health care through the Department of Veterans Affairs, two years of vocational training, and a small monthly stipend to these second-generation victims of the Vietnam conflict.

Someone once observed that "procrastination is the thief of time." These children and their families have already lost time, lost long years of doubt and wondering and of financial hardship that they bore alone because of delays in recognizing and investigating this tragedy. This legislation acknowledges responsibility for the tragic aftermath of our involvement in Vietnam, and takes care of these children.

October 16, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Drafting Parents for the War on Drugs

In 1987 and 1988, the national Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education (PRIDE) estimated that just over 28 percent of 12th graders throughout the nation had used drugs. This is a disturbing statistic, and such data have helped to prompt increased efforts at the local, state, and federal levels to wipe out illegal drugs in our communities.

Largely in response to the prevalence of drug use among young people in the last few decades, schools throughout the nation have introduced antidrug programs. With my support, criminal penalties for the sale and purchase of illegal drugs have been stiffened, and federal and state governments have funded the implementation and operation of drug-prevention programs.

Although many may have assumed that such efforts have led to a decline in the use of drugs by youth in recent years, a study recently released by PRIDE reports that the current rate of teenage drugs use is, regrettably, on the rise from what it was in 1987 and 1988.

According to PRIDE statistics, drug use in 1995 and 1996 reached a level of more than 40 percent among the nation's population of 12th graders, the highest recorded level since PRIDE started its annual survey in 1987.

Anyone with an interest in the youth of our nation and their future should view this statistic with alarm. But equally disturbing, especially to parents, should be the data provided by PRIDE and by the federal Office of National Drug

Control Policy (ONDCP) that identify the failure of parents to communicate with their children as one of the weakest links in the national chain of antidrug efforts.

According to studies by ONDCP, while 94 percent of parents claim to have discussed drugs with their children, only 64 percent of teenagers report that their parents have actually discussed the dangers of drug use with them.

Furthermore, that ONDCP study found that 40 percent of parents felt that they had little influence over their children's decision about whether or not to use drugs. But the PRIDE study found that while 35.5 percent of children who claim that their parents have never talked with them about drugs have tried drugs in the past year, among students who have actually heard warnings about drug use from their parents, that number fell to 26.6 percent.

Clearly, if our nation is to reverse the trend of increased drug use among youth, parents need to be full participants in the anti-drug campaign. Parents should make it a priority to sit down with their children and discuss the harmful effects of drugs. But I would go a step further. I believe that parents also need to warn their children about alcohol -- also a drug -- a drug which is dangerous both to the user and to innocent victims of alcohol-related automobile accidents.

If we do not address these concerns today, the consequences could be tragic for the future of our nation.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Spirited Salute to Our Veterans

On the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, 1918, the cease-fire that ended World War I brought silence to the muddy battlefields of Europe. Now, each year on the eleventh day of the eleventh month, we honor American veterans of all wars.

Almost 5 million Americans served during World War I, which was optimistically, if wrongly, called the "war to end all wars." Since that time, valiant American men and women have carried the U.S. flag into combat in other wars and smaller conflicts, from the globe-spanning battles of World War II to the recent Operation Desert Storm in the Persian Gulf. Almost 40 million Americans have answered their country's call to battle since the turn of this century. Just over 700,000 of those noble souls sacrificed their lives in the course of answering their call to duty.

As a nation, we owe an unquenchable debt of gratitude to these wartime veterans and to their families, who bear the pain and worry of separation from, or loss of, their loved ones. We also owe our thanks and commendation to those who serve in peacetime, maintaining the vigilance and skills needed to deter conflict. During the Cold War,

their unblinking presence kept at bay the largest army the world has ever seen, in the former Soviet Union.

Today, the Armed Forces of the United States are deployed across the globe, maintaining the watchful preparedness that keeps peace and stability in places like the Korean peninsula and the Persian Gulf, or supporting operations intended to reintroduce peace and stability into regions of conflict. While I may not always agree with the missions to which U.S. forces are deployed, the men and women of our military always have my unflinching support.

Active duty forces depend on the support of Reserve and National Guard units more than ever. The citizen-soldiers of the National Guard and Reserves carry the double burden of civilian jobs in addition to their military role. They, and the employers that support them so admirably, also deserve our appreciation.

Veterans Day is a day for remembrance, a day for prayers, and a day for thanks. To all who have so bravely faced the dangers of battle, to all who have lost their lives, and to all who stand watch over our nation today, I offer my heartfelt prayers and my sincere thanks.

October 30, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

One of the Best Investments Ever Made

On June 29, 1956, President Eisenhower signed the Federal Aid Highway Act, authorizing construction of the U.S. Interstate Highway System. In the forty years since its enactment, that law has made a profound positive difference for hundreds of millions of Americans by saving lives, reducing injuries, increasing business investment, expanding employment opportunities, and producing savings to the public and the private sector.

The Interstate System represents just over one percent of the nation's highway mileage, but it carries nearly one quarter of all roadway traffic.

According to Federal Highway Administration figures, 45 percent of the nation's trucking firms travel the Interstates, and the use of these modern highways is estimated to save those firms 17 percent on operations as compared to using other roads.

In addition, the higher speeds and reliability of travel times afforded by Interstate Highways have made "just-in-time" delivery of goods more feasible, reducing warehouse costs and adding to manufacturing efficiency. Further, the ease of travel on interstates has made it possible for many companies to expand the size of their markets. The resulting increase in competition among businesses coupled with the reduced manufacturing costs has helped to cut the prices of products regularly purchased by working families.

The Interstates have also improved mobility, mutually benefiting businesses and employees. Because workers are able to travel

greater distances in less time, they are also able to work at jobs farther from home. In turn, businesses can recruit from a geographically expanded pool of employees, thereby increasing the likelihood of matching the right employees with existing jobs, consequently, improving productivity.

In addition, being able to work at greater distances from home has, in many cases, allowed American families to purchase more affordable homes in more rural settings, providing for a better quality of life.

A study recently released by the American Highway Users Alliance -- a national organization comprised of individual, corporate, and association members -- estimates that, based on Federal Highway Administration data, the use of the Interstate Highway System over the last 40 years has saved 1,800 lives, reduced injuries by 89,000, and resulted in economic savings of \$3 billion in West Virginia alone. Moreover, nationwide, forty years of Interstate usage has provided between \$2.1 and \$2.5 trillion in economic benefits.

With the proliferation of shortsighted critics who haphazardly slap a "pork" label on a host of federal infrastructure programs, one wonders what chance the nation would have to construct the more than 45,500 miles of Interstate System if it were being proposed today. Thank goodness that in the 1950's, Congress and the President recognized the Interstate System for what it truly was -- one of the best investments that our nation could ever make.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Giving Thanks

This year, as in years past, West Virginians will celebrate Thanksgiving by bringing family and friends together for a communal meal rich in tradition.

It was in 1621, 375 years ago, that the Pilgrims, with faith in a Divine Providence, celebrated their first harvest with a feast which most Americans regard as "The First Thanksgiving."

Thanksgiving, as we now celebrate it each November, is a time for us to rejoice in the successful harvest, and to share with our neighbors the bounty of the land we inhabit. It is for many, a welcome day of relaxation and feasting before preparations continue for the cold winter ahead.

Like those early settlers, West Virginians look forward to spending a day with family and friends over a table groaning with delicious dishes, some likely prepared only on this one day each year. We feast not only on food, but also on the warmth of family caring, and on the richness of communion with our friends and neighbors. In a world which sometimes seems to be growing ever more splintered and divided, on this day we draw together in a way that is uniquely American. We are, indeed, fortunate that in West Virginia, that spirit of community still stands fast

against the inroads of modern life.

Some West Virginians will celebrate their Thanksgiving by sharing with the less fortunate. They will cook and serve meals for neighbors in their communities who otherwise would not be able to join in the spirit of the day. This kindness and thoughtfulness for those less fortunate than themselves is a laudable characteristic of West Virginians, borne perhaps from a history of making do in a state with an unforgiving, though beautiful, nature.

Raging floods, fires, deep snows, and mine collapses have always called forth an immediate and generous response from communities across our state. As fiercely independent as Mountaineers might be, in times of trouble they can be counted on to shoulder a sandbag, a shovel, or a pick to respond to the crisis and to assist the victims. This year, as in years past, neighbors and volunteers have responded magnificently to the challenge of repeated flooding throughout West Virginia.

So, on this day of Thanksgiving, as we give thanks for God's blessings on our wonderful families, let us also offer thanks for the spirit of community and caring that lives on in West Virginia.

November 13, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Streamlining Success

The recently completed consolidation of the Bureau of Public Debt office in Parkersburg is an impressive success story for both the federal government and West Virginia.

This most recent consolidation follows on an earlier consolidation, involving the Chicago Bureau of Public Debt office, which was undertaken with \$1 million in federal funding I helped to obtain in 1972, and furthered by my pressing to expedite the move and to provide facilities to accommodate the Bureau's growth in Parkersburg. That consolidation resulted in the relocation of functions and jobs from the Bureau's Chicago office to Parkersburg, and it has helped to make the Parkersburg office an even more valuable component of the U.S. Treasury Department.

Beginning in 1984, I added language to a series of appropriations bills urging the Treasury Department to transfer more of the Bureau of Public Debt's functions and jobs from Washington to the Bureau's Parkersburg office.

In 1991, I was able to announce that the Bureau would, in fact, consolidate most of its operations in Parkersburg.

At the beginning of that process, it was estimated that this consolidation would save the U.S. Treasury Department \$5.9 million annually. Now that the effort has been completed, savings attributable to the consolidation are estimated at an impressive \$15 million annually.

With the consolidation now finalized, the Bureau of Public Debt has gained significant improvements in productivity and reduced space costs that have resulted in savings to the American taxpayer far beyond those projected when the consolidation was initially proposed.

The merging of most of the Bureau of Public Debt's duties in the Parkersburg office and the transfer of 300 personnel to that office have also translated into benefits for West Virginia. Since the beginning of the streamlining, the economic impact by the Bureau on the Parkersburg community has doubled. In 1991, the Bureau's Parkersburg office employed about 1,100 workers, and provided an annual boost to the local economy of about \$40 million, including \$28 million for salaries and \$12 million for benefits, rent, utilities, and local purchases. Today, the facility houses about 1,400 full-time permanent employees with an estimated annual economic impact of \$80 million in salaries, benefits, rents, utilities, and local purchases.

Cost efficiencies and productivity improvements like those achieved at the Bureau of Public Debt in Parkersburg are demonstrative of the kinds of gains that are possible for the U.S. government and the American public from the consolidation of federal offices. The consolidation of the Parkersburg Bureau of Public Debt office is a real success story and I am proud that I helped to make it happen.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Television's Idle Jabber

A recent study conducted at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), reports some encouraging news about what Americans are being offered as television viewing. Results of the study show that network executives, likely responding to growing criticism about the effects of television violence on children, took a small but important step in the right direction by curbing the number of violent programs appearing on television last year. More changes like this must be made in order for our society to free itself from the moral deterioration and spiritless idle caused by recurrent television viewing.

The UCLA study found that programming during the 1994-95 television season included fewer violent shows than the previous year. Based on 3,000 hours of programming, five series during the 1994-95 season contained violence in what the report calls "a large number" of episodes. The report says that figure is down from nine frequently violent series the season before.

Throughout my career, I have repeatedly cautioned about the detrimental effects of irresponsible television programming. In September, I cosponsored a Senate resolution urging the major networks to revive their traditional "Family Hour" and voluntarily reserve the first hour of prime time broadcasting for family-oriented programming. Last year, I voted for legislation requiring that a "V" Chip -- a device to help parents weed out programs labeled for violent or questionable content -- be placed in all new television sets.

While television execu-

tives are primarily responsible for the content of their broadcasts, a portion of the responsibility for improved television programming rests with the public -- the viewers who have the power to turn to alternative programming or simply turn off the set, and with parents who have the obligation to establish viewing rules for their own families.

In far too many homes, the television set has become the centerpiece of family activity. Where children once sat in front of the fireplace, their minds working, their imaginations fueled by the ideas expressed on the printed page, today they sit in dull mesmerization before the flickering screen of the "boob tube."

More enrichment can be found between the covers of a good book than between the opening and closing credits of any television show. More fulfillment can be cultivated by a family conversation than by the idle jabber spilling from the small screen.

Although the study at UCLA indicates an improvement in the quality of programming broadcast to the screens of millions of homes across the country, television networks can, and should, demonstrate much greater responsibility in strengthening the quality of their programming. And, as a nation, we are also compelled to improve the quality of our lives and the lives of our children by turning off the television set. We should make efforts to redirect precious time and energy away from television's allure, and toward more productive activities. The alternatives might be pleasantly surprising and positively worthwhile.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Improving the Safety of America's Workforce

Many American workers are subjected to serious hazards in the workplace. Job-related deaths and injuries exact a staggering emotional and financial toll on workers, family members, the legal system, employers, and the U.S. economy.

Having grown up in the Southern West Virginia coal fields, I have seen more than my share of broken bodies, devastated families, and men slowly choking to death from pneumoconiosis. These indelible memories have resulted in my determination to do all that I can to find funds to help address the problem of on-the-job dangers.

More than 30 years ago, I initiated efforts that established, funded, and constructed facilities for the Appalachian Laboratory on Occupational Safety and Health (ALOSH) in Morgantown. In 1989, in response to the continuing growth of staff and the expansion of research responsibilities at ALOSH, I redoubled my efforts to fund construction of a new laboratory that would answer the changing needs of workplace safety researchers.

Since that time, I have added more than \$90 million to appropriations bills for construction, equipment, and staffing of a new National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) laboratory in Morgantown, and in October of this year, I helped to dedicate that state-of-the-art research laboratory.

There is no more appro-

priate place in the nation to be waging an assault on dangers in the American workplace than in West Virginia. From 1980 to 1989, the average annual rate of workplace fatalities in West Virginia was 15.7 per 100,000 workers -- more than double the national average. Dust-related lung diseases in West Virginia accounted for 8,350 deaths from 1968 to 1991. From 1989 through 1990, West Virginia's mortality rate for those diseases ranked first among the 50 states. These numbers are simply morally unacceptable.

The 300 people who will staff the new NIOSH facility when it becomes fully operational will develop lab techniques to further the understanding of occupational disease and to fortify the ability to prevent health damage in the workplace. They will examine ways to better address the relationship between hazardous substances and toxic reactions, and devise new methods for monitoring hazardous workplace agents with the aim of giving immediate notification of exposures as they occur.

In the American workplace, safety must be a forethought, not an afterthought. With this new West Virginia laboratory, our nation takes a step toward increasing the available knowledge about workplace hazards, with the hope of decreasing injury and loss of life to American workers. America's workforce deserves nothing less.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Battle over Booze Ads

I find disconcerting the recently announced decision by the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States to lift its self-imposed, decades-old ban of hard liquor advertising on television and radio.

In view of the alcohol industry's disappointing decision, I was heartened to see that, according to press accounts, the four major networks have decided to continue to ban hard liquor advertisements. Unfortunately, that commendable stand by the networks does not resolve the matter. It merely shifts the burden of responsibility in broadcasting with respect to the negative impact of alcohol advertising to local affiliate stations, cable operators and programmers, and radio stations.

West Virginia's broadcasters have a vested interest in the future of the communities they serve. They understand that, and they have demonstrated their commitment to our communities by providing local news coverage and forums for the debate of local issues, granting free air time for public service announcements, warning the public of local emergencies, and airing information about community charitable functions.

Alcohol is a dangerous drug. For many years, I have

taken the opportunity when addressing groups of young West Virginians to warn them about the dangers of alcohol, and I have supported legislative efforts to discourage people -- particularly young people -- from drinking any alcohol. For example, earlier this year, I authored an amendment which requires states to pass "zero tolerance" laws that will make it illegal for persons under the age of 21 to drive a motor vehicle if they have a blood alcohol level greater than .02 percent.

More recently, I have written to West Virginia broadcasters and cable operators, urging them to put the health and well-being of West Virginians ahead of the profits that may be gained by accepting alcohol advertisements. I hope that they will follow the example set by the networks and refuse to air ads peddling intoxicating beverages.

Now, in addition, I call on West Virginians to act responsibly, and, particularly in the midst of this season when alcohol is so prevalent at holiday celebrations, to set a positive example for young people by abstaining from drinking intoxicating beverages. Genuine holiday cheer comes from the heart, not from a bottle.

December 11, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Green Bank Telescope Update

As the constellations shift in West Virginia's winter sky, progress continues on the steady and intricate construction of the giant radio telescope being built at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank in Pocahontas County.

Expected to be completed in 1998, the Green Bank telescope is foreseen to be one of the most powerful instruments man has ever built in his pursuit to understand the heavens. This state-of-the-art device will be the world's largest steerable radio telescope, and, for its size, the most precise telescope ever constructed for research at microwave frequencies.

The new telescope -- for which I added \$75 million to an appropriation bill in 1989 -- responds to the need for a sensitive and sophisticated instrument for research and development in astronomy. It will replace an outdated radio telescope that collapsed at Green Bank in 1988.

Several important advancements in the development of the telescope have recently been completed. The elevation shaft has been welded and installed, and the elevation wheel has been assembled. When finished, these components will lift the massive dish more than 475 feet in the air, with two

20-story elevators providing access to the raised segment of the structure. Also, more than two-thirds of the 2,200 main antenna surface panels have been completed and are being painted. These surface panels, each with an area of 50 square feet, will comprise the surface of the dish. Thanks to sophisticated automation, this fully adjustable surface will never vary from an ideal shape by more than the thickness of a piece of paper.

While it will provide state-of-the-art research capabilities to scientists across the country and around the world, the telescope will also make a sizable contribution to West Virginia's high-tech educational offerings. Each year, hundreds of high school teachers visit Green Bank for hands-on educational programs that help them to teach their students about astronomy. In addition, the Observatory offers daily public tours, and special tours are provided to students and other groups.

I am glad to have made possible the funding for the construction of the Green Bank radio telescope in our state. This sophisticated instrument in West Virginia will have a lasting influence on man's understanding of God's handiwork in the heavens.

December 18, 1996



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

12-25-96

A Good Year for West Virginia

As 1996 draws to a close, I am glad to report progress in my efforts to help lay a firm foundation for the growth of West Virginia's economy. Working within the narrowing federal budgetary constraints, I successfully added millions of dollars to appropriations bills to help bring to fruition several still-developing initiatives in West Virginia that offer benefits to our state and nation.

For example, in my ongoing effort to assist the fight against crime and provide greater peace of mind to American families, I helped to obtain \$92.2 million for continued development of the first-of-its-kind computer system that will be headquartered at the FBI Fingerprint Identification Division in Clarksburg.

Just this fall, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) laboratory -- a facility built and equipped with a total of \$90 million I have added to past appropriations bills -- officially opened its doors in Morgantown. Another \$8 million I added this year will support operations of that cutting-edge facility.

Also, in keeping with my long-running interest in improving West Virginians' access to health care, I added \$800,000 to an appropriations bill for continued expansion of Mountaineer Doctor Television (MDTV), a televised service that helps medical specialists reach out to patients in rural communities.

To broaden the protection of West Virginia's precious natural resources, I obtained \$2 million so that the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge can increase its holdings, and \$1 million for the expansion of the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

also added \$11.5 million for staffing and operations at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Education and Training Center at Shepherdstown, bringing to \$138 million the total monies I have added to appropriations bills in recent years for that state-of-the-art facility.

Further, West Virginia's high-technology transformation will be assisted with \$14 million I obtained for operations of the NASA Independent Validation and Verification Facility at Fairmont, and a total of \$9.8 million I obtained for the NASA-sponsored Classroom of the Future and National Technology Transfer Center at Wheeling Jesuit University. Additionally, \$4 million I added will enable the business-outreach programs of the Robert C. Byrd Institute of Flexible Manufacturing in Huntington to continue.

Mass transit users in the Morgantown and Charleston areas will benefit from \$4.2 million I added to update automation of the Personal Rapid Transit System in Morgantown and \$3.2 million I added for the Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation Authority.

And, as a result of \$6 million I added to the Agriculture Appropriations Bill this year, Leetown in Jefferson County will be home to the nation's first Cool and Cold Water Aquaculture Center, placing West Virginia at the forefront of research in this new and expanding area of the fish-farming industry.

The future economic viability of our nation relies largely in its making wise investments in itself. These West Virginia initiatives, for which I have secured federal funding, are exactly that -- wise investments in the future of our



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Sugar Grove – A West Virginia Success Story

West Virginia has a long and proud tradition of military service to the United States, and the people of the Mountain State possess admirable qualities for serving and protecting the ideals of our American heritage. Citizens demonstrating honor, bravery, and a sense of responsibility and respect for country make West Virginia a natural home for a national defense presence.

The Naval Security Group Activity, located at Sugar Grove in Pendleton County, represents the value that such a presence can bring to our state.

In 1962, a decision by the Department of the Navy to abandon plans for construction at Sugar Grove of a 600-foot-diameter "Big Dish," a powerful new radio telescope, placed the future of that naval installation in jeopardy. Recognizing its value to the community, the state, and the military, I spoke with President Kennedy and met with Defense Secretary Robert MacNamara a number of times, successfully making a case for the continued Department of Defense presence at Sugar Grove.

Since that time, I have supported funding for the construction of an underground operations building, including \$7.4 million for a major expansion and renovation of that facility. I also helped to obtain funding for a post exchange and a community building. More recently, the small, outdated community building was replaced, using \$990,000 I added to an appropriations bill for a larger structure that now serves military personnel as well as local residents. I also helped to obtain \$400,000 for a new fire station and \$1.4 million for water and sewage systems.

Most recently, I added \$10.8 million to a federal appropriations bill for construction of a

73-person bachelor enlisted quarters with an attached dining facility at the Sugar Grove naval complex, and for 17 to 23 new family housing units to accommodate the influx of military personnel being added to the installation. As a result of my efforts to maintain the installation, and due to the facility's ideal location within the National Radio Quiet Zone, it today continues to render an important military service in fulfilling communications research and development needs for the Navy.

Nearly 100 personnel have been added to the installation since 1992, for a total of about 280, with staff levels expected to reach 300 in the next two years.

The unit has also contributed to growth outside the base. The annual economic impact on the local community is \$12.2 million, an increase of \$4.3 million since 1993.

The Sugar Grove command is proud of its participation in the community. Along with taking part in local events, the base has "adopted" a nearby nursing home and sponsored a special education olympics. It has also established an academic excellence partnership with a local elementary school, and is working to establish a similar program with the local high school.

The enlisted men and women from our state have always served this country with bravery, honor, and pride. The success that the naval installation has had with the community illustrates that the men and women who serve in the armed forces are not only an asset to the country which they protect, but also to the state in which they live. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am proud that I could help along the way with funds for the National Security Group Activity at Sugar Grove.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Giving Wings to West Virginia's Poultry Industry

Boasting sales of more than \$195 million in 1995, poultry production is a leading contributor to West Virginia's economy. Chicken and turkey farms provide hundreds of jobs in many of West Virginia's most rural areas, and poultry processing is the fifth largest employer in our state. Broiler chickens are impressively distinguished as West Virginia's top agricultural commodity and one of our state's most successful exports.

Recognizing an opportunity to strengthen one of West Virginia's fastest growing industries, in 1987 I added \$375,000 in planning funds to a federal appropriations bill to launch a new poultry research initiative that would be administered by West Virginia University's (WVU) Division of Animal and Veterinary Sciences.

With those funds, WVU and members of the poultry industry, working together, drew up plans for a pair of modern facilities that would house research on poultry production.

Subsequently, to support construction of these facilities -- one at WVU's farm in Morgantown and the second at the University's Reymann Memorial Farm in Hardy County -- I added \$3.4 million to fiscal 1989 and 1990 appropriations bills.

The future success of poultry farming in our state is rooted in devising methods that increase the value and demand of West Virginia poultry products. Global competition for poultry and eggs is intensifying due, in part, to the escalation of consumer expectations for higher quality poultry products at

a low cost. With the investment of the federal funds that I have provided, the two poultry research laboratories are addressing these challenges and blazing new technological trails for West Virginia's poultry interests.

Currently under way at these two state-of-the-art facilities is research aimed at developing technology that will promote production efficiency and competitiveness, as well as studies aimed at identifying sustainable economical agricultural practices.

The development, commercialization, and use of these newly discovered technologies will have far-reaching benefits for West Virginia and the nation. In the years ahead, these technologies can help to create jobs and raise the standard of living for rural West Virginians.

Other research at the two labs is intended to produce safer and healthier food. For example, studies are now under way to develop methods of controlling salmonella, a potentially lethal bacteria that can infect poultry products and be passed on to human consumers.

Promoting innovation to ensure the future productivity of West Virginia's poultry farmlands, these two WVU-administered laboratories are helping to fulfill my vision for a broader economic base in West Virginia. The 21st century will demand the adoption of cutting-edge practices to sustain economic growth and job creation, and the technological infrastructure I have helped to put into place in West Virginia today will help to keep our state's poultry industry flying high, well into the future.

January 8, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Balancing Preservation and Recreation

One of the challenges facing West Virginians, who are blessed with a state of breathtaking beauty, is that of preserving West Virginia's natural assets while working to promote economic development in our state. Nowhere is this more the case than in the nearly one-million-acre Monongahela National Forest. Annually, an estimated 2.2 million people visit sites in the Monongahela National Forest and its surrounding areas. Significantly, this large number of visitors -- thousands from outside West Virginia -- pours money into West Virginia's economy through the use of motels and hotels, restaurants, and other tourist-oriented enterprises.

I have long recognized the value and potential of tourism to our state's economy. Likewise, I have long recognized the incomparable natural legacy that is ours in our forests. Thus, throughout my Senate career, I have promoted efforts to strike a balance between enhancing the Monongahela National Forest as a tourism resource and, at the same time, protecting its natural beauty and tranquility.

For example, improvements to trails and picnic areas throughout the Forest have been undertaken with funds I have added to appropriations bills over the years.

In 1994, I helped to dedicate an upgraded Falls of Hills Creek Trail, which was improved with \$1.1 million, of which I had added \$800,000. Hidden away under the protection of the Forest Service, this 114-acre delight includes three waterfalls, with one of them -- at 63 feet in height -- the second highest in our state. The funds I obtained have allowed for the construction of a series of improved pathways, boardwalks, and stairs to make the trail more accessible to visitors.

Another of the beautiful attractions of the Monongahela National

Forest is Seneca Rocks, which annually draws more than 150,000 tourists, including campers, hikers, and picnickers. To help these visitors more fully enjoy the offerings of the Forest, and in an effort to replace a prior facility which was damaged by the severe flood of 1985, I added \$1.6 million for a new Seneca Shadows Campground and picnic area. These new facilities were completed and opened to the public in 1990.

Further, in the last five years, I have added \$7.1 million to replace the Seneca Rocks Visitors Center, which was destroyed by fire in 1992. The new center will provide needed services to those who climb, hike, or merely come to gaze at the unusual, towering rock formation.

The Cranberry Glades area is widely recognized as a unique and particularly environmentally sensitive portion of the Forest. With federal funds I obtained, two limestone treatment facilities began operating between 1988 and 1995 on the Cranberry River to treat acid mine drainage and improve the river's habitat, helping to ensure a healthy stock of fish for anglers. Also in an effort to allow visitation, but still preserve the area's natural character, in 1992, I added \$330,000 to an appropriations bill to upgrade the Cranberry Mountain Visitors Center. The upgrade of that center, which was originally constructed with \$100,000 I had added to a fiscal 1965 appropriations bill, has just recently been completed.

By obtaining federal funds for the development of its splendid scenic treasures and a wide range of outdoor activities and resources, I hope to preserve the Monongahela National Forest's scenic beauty, while expanding the outdoor activities that are available to the tourists who support a growing industry in our state.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Leaving a Larger Imprint on West Virginia

I recently announced that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) will be adding 1,100 new employees at its Fingerprint Identification Division complex in Clarksburg. Those employees, who will initially be offered two-year term appointments, will bring the number of staff at that facility to a total of 3,000 by the end of this September -- significantly more than the total staff number of 2,500 that the FBI had expected to employ upon the center's full implementation in 1999.

It was in response to the FBI's concern that its fingerprint system stood at the brink of collapse, a potential disaster for law enforcement, that I, in 1990, helped to launch the new Clarksburg complex and its computer system by adding \$185 million to a federal appropriations bill. Including that initial funding for construction and equipment, I have obtained more than \$600 million in appropriations bills for the Clarksburg fingerprint division.

The latest round of hiring responds to the growing numbers of inquiries from business interests and law enforcement agencies for the kinds of services that only this comprehensive, ultramodern fingerprint system can provide.

Fingerprint division assistance, for example, is regularly sought by schools, child-care services, and adoption agencies that check the backgrounds of prospective employees and

potential adoptive parents. In that way, the FBI helps to ensure that children are sheltered from child molesters and abusers and have safe environments in which to learn and live.

The ability of local police forces to have quick access to a comprehensive database of criminal fingerprint and identification information is of immense value and importance to every community.

Imagine the difference it will make when an individual is detained briefly for some minor offense on the East Coast, and, through this revolutionary fingerprint system, is identified within minutes as a fugitive murderer from the Pacific Northwest. This contribution to the security and the peace of mind of American families is inestimable.

Additionally, the FBI complex, as a major employer, is contributing to an economic revitalization of our state. Currently, the complex provides an annual economic impact on the local community estimated at \$50 million -- a figure that will rise as more employees come on board, resulting in the FBI's leaving an even larger imprint on our state. Therefore, the recent decision by the FBI to add another 1,100 employees -- most of whom are expected to be awarded permanent positions -- can be celebrated as a most welcome piece of economic news for West Virginia.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Good Grammar Makes a Comeback

For centuries, the written word has been one of the most useful tools for allowing man to communicate and record information. In recent decades, however, conveniences made by technological advances such as the telephone have, for many purposes, replaced traditional correspondence. Even more recently, though, an unanticipated development brought on by the growing popularity of the computer has helped writing begin to make a comeback, and electronic communication, including e-mail, is reacquainting people with the written word. This is good news for a society that has grown lackadaisical about the correct application of English and grammar. But, as we enjoy the benefits of the Electronic Age, it is also critical to be aware of proper grammar.

Among other elements, our culture is defined by the quality of our education and the caliber of our language. As a nation, we have a responsibility to maintain our language as a vigorous, vivid, and exact tool of communication. Whether it be for an e-mail message, a fax transmission, or an amendment to the U.S. Constitution, proper grammar reflects the organized thought that is necessary for clarity and accuracy.

Striving for correct English usage in writing is more than a courtesy to one's readers. In what condition would our nation be

today had our forefathers not made the effort to carefully craft the wording of documents like the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights?

Throughout my career, I have stressed the importance of education and the employment of proper grammar, and I have always advocated the usage of proper English when meeting young people across West Virginia.

As keyboards and monitors unite with chalk and slate in the classroom, teachers and parents need to prepare students with the fundamentals of grammar in order to ready them for the challenges of the approaching new millennium. Good grammatical skills are essential for effective communication, and by equipping future generations with such knowledge, our nation, which is becoming more digitized and complex every day, will be able to continue to grow and prosper.

It is ironic that technology is bringing us back to the fundamentals of the English language. But, while use of the computer is encouraging people to write more frequently, we must be mindful of the fact that precision and clarity of thought in writing are fundamental to understanding written ideas. I hope that, as a society, we will work toward improving our grammatical skills, which will strengthen the way we communicate and enrich the way we live.

January 29, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Recognizing a Sound Investment

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) National Tracing Center (NTC) in Berkeley County was recognized recently for its contributions to the effort to streamline government.

The NTC received a national Hammer Award for its work to improve the ATF's crime-fighting capabilities. The award recognizes successful efforts to improve the efficiency of government.

The NTC's effective use of technology and teamwork is an outstanding example of how thoughtful federal investment can contribute to more efficient production at a greater savings to taxpayers.

In 1990, I added language to an Appropriations Committee report initiating a study of the feasibility of relocating certain functions of the ATF from Washington, D.C., to proximate, lower-cost areas. Subsequently, I added report language to designate nearly \$3 million toward locating the Tracing Center in Berkeley County.

The NTC -- with a staff of 138 federal and contract personnel and an annual economic impact of approximately \$6 million -- traces the origin of firearms recovered in crimes and provides that information to ATF and other law enforcement agencies.

To conduct and complete searches, the NTC maintains microfilm records, but, due to a back-

log in transferring hard-copy files to microfilm, NTC staff also must routinely sort through stacks of paper files. In 1992, the NTC maintained a backlog of 28 million paper documents that had yet to be transferred to microfilm, a number that was increasing every day. The turnaround time for searching through this mound of documents and completing a firearms trace request consequently grew from a matter of hours or a few days to as many as 45 days, jeopardizing the mission of the Tracing Center.

An independent contractor, consulted by ATF management at the time, estimated that the cost of conversion to microfilm would be \$50 million over a 28-year period. To their credit, the NTC staff discovered new technologies and completed the conversion project in just 18 months at a cost of \$14.2 million. I have been advised that this achievement would not have been possible in the NTC's previous facility.

In winning the Hammer Award, the Berkeley County Tracing Center staff has received a well-deserved pat on the back. Their success in cutting government red tape to improve the operations of the ATF is commendable. But, even more importantly, the federal dollars saved by this facility are proof positive that the NTC's move to West Virginia was a sound federal investment.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Court Challenge to the Line Item Veto

In March of last year, President Clinton, with great fanfare, signed into law the Line Item Veto Act of 1996. Although enacted in March, the measure did not take effect until January 1, 1997.

I have been a strong opponent of the line-item veto because of my grave concern that the power it confers on the President of the United States would upend the system of checks and balances and the separation of powers laid out in our Constitution by our Founding Fathers.

I am so opposed to the Act that, on January 2nd, I took the uncommon -- and for me, unprecedented -- step of initiating a legal action which challenges the constitutionality of the Act. This lawsuit, which was filed in the U.S. District Court, District of Columbia, is based on the simple principle that the plain words of the Constitution mean what they say.

Specifically, the very first provision of the Constitution mandates that "all legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States." Under the Line Item Veto Act, though, the President will, for the first time in our history, have the power to selectively and unilaterally "cancel," or repeal, parts of legislation that he has just signed into law.

Clearly, the act of re-

pealing a law or part of a law, no less than enacting or amending a law, is an act of legislating which the Framers of the Constitution never envisioned for the executive.

In passing the Line Item Veto Act last year, the Congress chose to follow the same fateful path taken by the Senate of ancient Rome some 2,000 years ago, a path which ultimately led to the fall of that great republic. Julius Caesar did not seize power. The Roman Senate knowingly, willingly, and desiring to do so, ceded power to Caesar. Most importantly, this included the power over the purse. Once the Roman Senate gave away its control of the purse strings, it gave away its power to check the executive. This is what the Congress did last year; it voluntarily handed power over the purse -- a power belonging to the people and exercised by their directly elected representatives in Congress -- to the executive branch.

And so, for the preservation of our Constitution and our Constitutional form of government, I have taken the extraordinary step of going to court to challenge the new law. Let us hope that it is not too late to save our nation from the colossal mistake the Congress made in shifting the people's power over the purse to the President.

February 12, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Planning for Your Trip Abroad

I am regularly called upon to assist West Virginians in planning their overseas vacations. Perhaps the single most important piece of guidance I offer is my advice to apply for a passport well in advance of travel abroad.

I suggest, for example, that West Virginians anticipating international travel this year during the peak vacation season for travel abroad, March through June, should apply now for a passport. It is a vital document of identification, and is required for travel between the United States and most foreign countries.

A first-time applicant 13 years of age or older must apply in person, and can do so at most post offices and courthouses by completing an application -- Form DSP-11. An applicant should have in hand a certified copy of his or her birth certificate, a valid form of identification, and two recent 2" by 2" front-view photographs. The application fee is \$65.00 for citizens over the age of 18, and \$40.00 for those under age 18. For persons born in West Virginia, a birth certificate can be obtained from the Vital Registration Office in Charleston at (304) 558-2931.

Applicants who are unable to obtain a copy of their birth certificate may submit other forms of identifica-

tion, such as a hospital birth record, school or family Bible records, or notarized affidavits of persons having knowledge of their birth.

Travelers departing within a two-week period from the date of application may request expedited service for an additional \$30.00 fee. Further, an expired passport may be renewed through the mail simply by completing a renewal application -- Form DSP-82 -- attaching a \$35.00 fee, and mailing it, along with the outdated passport and two photographs, to the address printed on the renewal form.

The Department of State has established the National Passport Information Center (NPIC), (900) 225-5674, to assist with passport inquiries. The charge for the 900 service is 35 cents per minute for automated information and \$1.05 per minute for operator-assisted calls. The credit card option, (888) 362-8668, is based on a flat rate of \$4.95 per call. The NPIC will take calls in English, Spanish, and TDD, a telecommunications system for the deaf.

With early planning, foreign travel can be a relaxing and enriching experience. I hope that this information helps to ensure smooth sailing for adventuring Mountaineers this year.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Fulfilling a 32-Year Quest

As my first piece of legislation in the 105th Congress, I have introduced a bill to provide sufficient funding by the year 2003 to complete the 13-state Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Corridor Highway System. I hope that, as a result of my bill, the people of Appalachia will finally see the beginning of the end of a 32-year quest for a system of more modern, safer roads that are needed to help end the cycle of poverty indigenous to the region.

For a number of years, I have worked against the political tide in my efforts to add funding to appropriations bills to make good on the federal government's promise to the people of Appalachia to build these highways. In total, I have added \$804 million, since 1989, for construction of ARC Highways in West Virginia.

However, without a reliable and steady source of annual federal funds, like that which has been available to the now complete Interstate Highway System, the pace of construction of the 3,025-mile ARC system has been unacceptably slow.

Under my bill, the Appalachian states would be eligible to receive annual construction funds on a matching basis, like those provided for the Interstate System. My legislation

would also ensure that the ARC Corridors would not have to compete with the states' other pressing highway needs for limited federal resources.

On December 16, 1996, I met with President Clinton in the Oval Office to urge his support for my approach to completing the ARC Highway program. In addition, I met with his Budget Director, Franklin D. Raines, and with the new Transportation Secretary, Rodney E. Slater.

Subsequently, as a result of my urging, the President included \$2.3 million for construction of the Corridor Highways in his recently released six-year budget. This is an important initial boost, providing 35 percent of the total cost of construction. However, as Congress takes up the highway reauthorization bill this year, I will continue to press for 100 percent of the federal funding required to complete the Corridors, together with state matching funds, as called for in my bill, to see to it that the long-awaited, and much-needed, Corridor Highways are finally finished.

The entire nation has benefited from the improvements brought about by the Appalachian Corridor Highway System. So, too, will we all benefit from its completion in the near future.

February 26, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Preserving the Miracle of the Constitution

In May of 1787, a Constitutional Convention convened in Philadelphia for the purpose of breathing life into the promise of the Declaration of Independence. The result of that gathering was so extraordinary that George Washington described it as "little short of a miracle." In fact, I have often felt that the spirit of the Creator himself must have helped to guide those deliberations.

I find inconceivable the thinking of those who advocate marring the genius of our Constitution with a balanced budget amendment -- a proposal so riddled with flawed thinking that its effect would be to disrupt the carefully balanced powers of the three branches so assiduously planned by the Constitutional Framers.

Certainly, I agree that, for the good of our nation, we must work to bring the budget into balance, as we are doing. But I believe that we can meet that responsibility without resorting to the ruination of our Constitution and the disastrous encumbrance that would then be placed on future leaders, who will be charged with making decisions that will affect the security and economic strength of our nation.

For example, one of the key contributors to our current budget imbalance has been the heavy spending

that this nation undertook during the Cold War. Our nation ran up the deficit because there was a strong consensus in the nation as a whole that we needed to spend whatever it took to assure our survival as a nation, and to prevail over the "Evil Empire" that was the former Soviet Union.

It was a successful strategy, and the funds expended toward that goal constitute one of the best investments our nation has ever made. Yet, it could never have been done under the balanced budget amendment that was recently defeated in the U.S. Senate.

Balancing the budget is indeed a very difficult task that requires inflicting pain. It means making decisions that are not popular, and hurting some people by cutting programs that matter in their lives. We have all the constitutional power we need right now to balance the budget. All that we have to do now is don the "velvet cloak of responsibility," and we need to begin by telling the people the truth about the pain that will be felt.

If we do that, the balanced budget amendment will at last be relegated to the ash heap of bad ideas where it most assuredly belongs, and "the miracle at Philadelphia" may be preserved for yet a little longer.

March 5, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Praying for Our Nation

Whenever I look back upon my early years growing up in West Virginia's southern coal communities, I am reminded of the central role that faith played in our lives.

I can still recall the sound of my mother's prayers being offered up each night in the soft glow of a kerosene lamp. It was faith, to a large degree, which helped men to endure the blackness of the deep mines day in and day out, and faith which wives clutched, white-knuckled with fear, as they waited and watched for their husbands to emerge from the mines in the wake of an explosion.

Throughout decades of enormous change, during the depths of the Great Depression, and in the aftermath of ruinous natural disasters, West Virginians have always turned to their faith for strength and guidance.

Faith is what has kept us going when hope has been in short supply.

I hesitate to imagine in what condition our state and our nation would be today were freedom of religion not among the basic tenets upon which our nation was founded.

Judging from the proliferation of examples of the current fragile state of our moral fabric, it is evident

that we need the anchor of faith today as much as we have ever needed it.

Yet, ironically, our nation in recent years has been embarked on a course to discourage voluntary prayer in schools and in commencement exercises -- a course that, in effect, denies religious freedom to many of our most vulnerable citizens at a time when they are struggling to chart their futures and searching for a moral compass.

I do not believe that the Constitutional Framers ever envisioned that their words would be so interpreted as to separate our young people from the practice of their religious faith in this way.

I, therefore, have proposed a clarifying amendment to the Constitution. My amendment would make it clear that the words the Constitution uses with regard to the establishment and the free exercise of religion do not mean that voluntary prayer is prohibited from our public schools or their extracurricular activities.

Just as we and our forefathers have found direction, strength, and inspiration in prayer, for the sake of our nation, our schoolchildren should not be denied the opportunity to voluntarily seek support and guidance from the Creator through prayer.

March 12, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Colliding Values

I was astonished recently to read a newspaper article describing a movie entitled *Crash*, which is soon to be released to theaters throughout the country. This movie, which reportedly depicts characters perversely aroused by automobile accidents and their resultant physical mutilation, is beyond the pale. *Crash* appears to be yet another effort by the entertainment industry to shock and titillate in order to run up profits with a blatant disregard for moral decency. Unfortunately, it is just the latest nefarious example of how today's television and movie fare is detrimental to the moral fabric of our nation.

It is ironic that, at a time when a movie in the depraved vein of *Crash* is being released, the television industry, under pressure from Congress and the President, recently announced with great fanfare that it was taking steps to give parents more information about the programs their children watch. The television industry's solution is a "ratings system," not greatly unlike that which is currently used by the movie industry.

The ratings system, which took effect in January, relies on six age-based designations to assist par-

ents in determining the appropriateness of programs for their children. For example, shows with a TV-Y rating are said to be suitable for all children. At the other end of the spectrum, TV-M is intended to indicate that a program is suitable only for audiences seventeen and older.

I am concerned that an age-based system does not offer parents enough information. A better system would be content based. Rather than being forced to trust some television executive's determination about what kind of programming is appropriate for designated age groups, parents should be told more specifically whether a program on television contains violence, sex, or foul language.

Bowing to the pressure of public concern about the cultivation of our children's moral character, entertainment industry executives are trying to give the appearance of making some concessions. But, they need to display the courage to put our national well-being ahead of the "quick buck" by providing programs and films that put forth good examples for our young people and that celebrate the morals and values on which our nation was founded.

March 19, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Returning Government to the Man on the Street

When I first ran for the United States Senate in 1958, I campaigned with Senator Jennings Randolph. Together, we shared a total campaign fund of about \$50,000. Today, the average cost of a U.S. Senate race is \$4.5 million, and some Senate campaigns have cost over \$20 million.

How, in the future, can a poor boy from the backwoods of West Virginia, or any other state, hope to run for the U.S. Senate? It is already beyond their means.

No longer do candidates' positions on the issues count most. No longer do experience and capabilities count most. Instead, Senate races are tilted to the advantage of the candidates who have the ability to raise the most money.

As each day dawns, the public is confronted with new and increasingly garish allegations concerning the campaign fundraising practices that have become a way of life in our nation. The incessant money chase that currently permeates every crevice of our political system is like an unending circular marathon. And it is a race that sends a clear message to the people that it is money, not ideas or principles, that reigns supreme in American politics.

Unfortunately, the Supreme Court has blocked attempts to set mandatory limits on campaign spending by equating such campaign expenditures with the Constitutional guarantee of free speech. A Constitutional Amendment, which I supported, was recently intro-

duced in Congress to nullify that decision, and to allow the Congress to reign in campaign spending. Unfortunately for the American people, that amendment was defeated.

I have long fought for reform of our campaign financing system. As Majority Leader in 1987 and 1988, I tried eight times to thwart a politically motivated filibuster blocking a campaign finance reform measure, but I was unsuccessful.

Money has become the great "unequalizer" in politics. Money talks, and a lot of money talks louder than a little money. Hence, the more money, the more "freedom of speech" a candidate has. This would seem to be the effect of the Supreme Court's decision if carried to its logical conclusion. Candidates with the most money have the most freedom of speech, because they can buy more television ads, more radio ads, and more newspaper space than their less-well-to-do opponents can buy.

We must put an end to the seemingly limitless escalation of campaign costs and the pervasive influence of the special interests and the wealthy. The Congress should not be allowed to dodge this issue. It should act now to put the United States Senate, the House of Representatives, and the presidency of the United States back within the reach of any candidate with the brains, the spirit, and the desire to want to serve.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Developing Alternative Sources of Oil

Our nation is far too dependent on the Middle East for oil. The involvement of the U.S. in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, for example, was driven as much by our need to maintain secure supplies of oil as it was to punish naked aggression.

Unfortunately, that region of the world is fraught with political tensions, and as long as the U.S. continues to be tied to the Gulf for a supply of oil, our own national defense and economic security will be vulnerable to the region's instability. For these reasons we must make reducing our dependence on Middle Eastern oil a priority.

Part of the solution is to find and develop alternative sources of oil. It so happens that a very important, world-class source of oil exists and awaits development at the crossroads of Europe and Asia in the Caspian Sea region of the former Soviet Union.

According to industry sources, approximately 42 billion barrels of proven oil reserves are available in that region for processing and transport to the West. If developed, some 2 to 4 million barrels of oil per day could be brought out of the Caspian Sea region, moved across Turkey by pipeline, and shipped to the U.S. market.

Not only could the de-

velopment of these reserves provide a new source of oil for the West, but it could also bring economic development and stability to the newly independent nations in the Caspian region, help to diversify the world oil suppliers, and stimulate price competition.

Azerbaijan is alone among the newly independent nations in the Caspian region in resisting Russian pressure to station troops on its soil. Russian interests would like to control the oil resources of their former territories. It would not be in the best interests of a competitive energy market or the American strategic position for Azerbaijan to be influenced by Russian factions.

To encourage independent development and cooperative economic activities in that region, Congress established a Caucasus Enterprise Fund to stimulate the development of free market economics in the Caspian region. I strongly support this strategic move.

A proactive American government program can help to stabilize these newly independent nations, while assuring competitive pricing for a resource on which we will rely well into the next century and, most importantly, easing our dependence on the potentially volatile Middle East.

April 2, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Give the Gift of Reading

A study released recently by the publishers of Education Week reported that only 26 percent of West Virginia's fourth graders achieved a "proficient" reading score on the 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress. In the words of Education Week, "74 percent scored below proficient, which means that they will have trouble doing challenging grade-level work." This is an embarrassingly poor showing that should spur a renewed commitment by West Virginians to promote the basics -- in particular, reading -- in our educational system.

The week of April 13th through the 19th has been designated National Library Week. During this week, parents are encouraged to promote the importance of reading by taking their children to the local library. Acquainting children with the resources of a library can develop a solid foundation upon which children can build stronger reading skills, and, in turn, explore the universe without ever having to leave their own back yards.

While National Library Week is a tremendous opportunity for parents to introduce their children to the library, I urge all parents to make the trip a regular practice for their children.

I am an ardent believer in the value of reading as the fundamental tool for enhancing one's education. Throughout my public career, I have read many vol-

umes of literature which have enabled me to continually strengthen my skills as an orator and as a representative of the people of West Virginia in the U.S. Senate.

My personal reading list -- one that I recommend to others -- includes the King James Version of the Holy Bible, Plutarch's Lives, Milton's Paradise Lost, Dante's Divine Comedy, Homer's The Iliad and The Odyssey, The Federalist Papers, The French Revolution by Thomas Carlyle, Emerson's essays, Shakespeare's thirty-seven plays, and any good dictionary. In addition, I have read and studied various works by Plato, Aristotle, Herodotus, Xenophon, Thucydides, and other histories, ancient and modern. While this is not my complete list of recommended reading, it does highlight a mix of literature, history, and philosophy from throughout the ages that I believe to be important for a well-rounded education.

Educators and parents must work together to ensure that their children utilize every possible resource, both inside and outside the classroom, to enhance their educational experience and to prepare them for the challenges of the 21st century. Exposure to great works of literature is one of the finest gifts that parents can provide to their children, and a trip to the library in honor of National Library Week is a good place to start.

April 9, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Comforts of Home

Much of my work keeps me in Washington, and it seems that the more time I spend in the city, the more I yearn for the peaceful serenity of my home state. The time spent surrounded by the turmoil and clutter of our busy metropolitan areas brings on a new appreciation for the uncomplicated comforts of West Virginia's tranquil hills and valleys.

Ironically, rapid advancements in technology may help to contribute to a better quality of life for many West Virginians who presently undergo long-haul commutes each workday to and from their Washington-area offices by allowing them to work closer to home several days a week.

A new telecommuting center in Jefferson County, established with \$250,000 I added to a 1997 appropriations bill, will allow its users to "telecommute," or work at their regular jobs via computers some distance away from the physical location of their offices. Telecommuting provides all of the efficiency that a location in a modern, metropolitan business office affords, while retaining many of the advantages of a more rural setting.

The Jefferson County TeleCenter will afford telecommuters the freedom to spend more quality time with their loved ones and

also permit them to be more productive in their jobs.

Moreover, the center has been designed so that it can be used during evenings and weekends for education and training programs for the surrounding community. Potential uses include offering high school, college, professional, and vocational-level courses taught by on-site instructors or computer-based training programs.

The new TeleCenter will be equipped with state-of-the-art work stations furnished with dual telephone lines to accommodate voice and data links, personal computing systems, "smart telephone" capabilities, and video conferencing. In addition, users will have access to facsimile and copy machines and other essential office equipment.

It is a fact of life in today's world that urban pollution, high rent, and crowded highways all add up to lost time, wasted dollars, wear and tear, and less overall productivity. Telecommuting can help to solve those complex problems while also allowing our citizens to lead more fulfilling lives. This TeleCenter introduces a new approach to how West Virginians traditionally view working, and I look forward to the positive changes it will foster for our state in the years to come.

April 16, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Cleaner Air and a Leaner Economy

Earlier this year, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed strict new "clean air" rules that threaten to eliminate jobs and damage the economy of West Virginia.

West Virginia has already suffered job losses due to existing ambitious clean air standards, and -- in addition to the coal industry -- chemical manufacturers, construction firms, and steel and glass makers could be adversely impacted by these newly proposed rules on ozone and particulate matter. Furthermore, new economic development initiatives on a variety of fronts could be curtailed by the imposition of these rules.

There exists a number of unanswered questions about the newly proposed rules and their potential benefits, as well as their costs, that I believe must be answered prior to their implementation.

The EPA has conceded that the costs of implementing the ozone rule will exceed any expected benefits. But even then, the EPA may have badly underestimated the total annual national cost of the ozone rule, estimating it at \$2.5 billion. The President's Council of Economic Advisers, however, sharply disagrees with that estimate, projecting the annual cost at \$60 billion.

The Small Business Administration has called these proposed rules "one of the most expensive regulations, if not the most ex-

pensive regulation, faced by small businesses in ten or more years."

The EPA also readily admits that West Virginia and the nation have dramatically improved the air quality by moving toward compliance with already existing standards, leaving in question the necessity of implementing new tougher rules at this time. It only makes sense to allow the states to continue to develop and fully implement programs to comply with existing standards, and to measure the results of those changes before possibly hamstringing our economy with tougher standards, the benefits of which are in question.

I have long supported the cleanup of West Virginia's environment, and I consider the health and safety of West Virginians to be a very important matter. However, because of my many concerns about these new rules, I recently wrote to the EPA -- joined by Senators Rockefeller, Ford, Glenn, and Robb -- urging the agency to hold off on these new rules and to allow the states first to complete action on the ambitious clean air standards that are already in place.

Cleaner air is a universally popular goal. But for the EPA to insist on instituting new rules while their benefits are questionable and before their full costs -- including the costs to jobs and to the economy -- have been determined is unwise.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Time of Our Lives

With an understanding of history, we can learn from our ancestors, avoid many of the perils that befell them, and build upon their successes. But, without the ability to measure time and to make order out of the common and uncommon occurrences of the past, a useful understanding of history could prove elusive.

Modern society uses the birth of Jesus Christ as a primary reference point for recorded history. A.D., *anno Domini*, Latin for "in the year of our Lord", and B.C., "before Christ", mark the years following and years preceding the birth of Christ. Around 527 A.D., a monk residing in Rome calculated the year of Christ's birth, and instituted that date as the starting point for what is called the "Christian Era." By recognizing this reference point, we are able to better clarify when an historic event took place.

Prior to the establishment of the Christian Era, civilizations employed other methods to record history. The modern calendar is defined by unchanging numerical rules. For example, a calendar year is characterized by four seasons and 12 months. But ancient civilizations measured time with different

criteria, including astronomical, religious, or political influences. Early agricultural civilizations reckoned time by the passing of the seasons or by the blossoming of various plants. The Greeks measured time with Olympiads, which were intervals of four years that marked the span between their celebrated games. In some other ancient calendars, years were numbered according to the year of a ruler's reign.

The modern calendar is a solar calendar, based on the 365 days required for the earth to orbit the sun. It is modeled after the calendar introduced by Pope Gregory XIII more than 400 years ago and adapted from the calendar of Julius Caesar. The names of the months originate from names of Roman Gods, and, in fact, the term "calendar" derives from the word "kalendae," Latin for the first day of the Roman month.

Although the modern calendar has seen efficiency improvements since the age of Caesar, its roots lie in the calendar of ancient Rome. It is, therefore, as much a useful tool in today's hurried, time-conscious society as it is a link to the past and a reminder of the lessons of history.

April 30, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Filling a Hole in U.S. Highway Investment

Nowhere do we pay a greater price for inadequate infrastructure investment than in our nation's highways. Our national highway system carries nearly 80 percent of U.S. interstate commerce and nearly 80 percent of intercity passenger and tourist traffic. Yet, we have allowed large segments of our National Highway System to fall into serious disrepair.

According to the Department of Transportation (DOT), only 39 percent of our entire national highway system is rated in good condition, and almost one in four of our nation's highway bridges are now categorized as either structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.

Unfortunately, the DOT has also reported that investment just to maintain the current inadequate condition of our nation's highways is a full \$15 billion short each year. And, while it is clear that the requirements we place on our national highway system are growing -- for example, the number of vehicle miles traveled annually has grown by roughly 40 percent in the last decade -- our investment in highways continues to decline. We are simply digging ourselves into a deeper and deeper hole.

In addition to the adverse economic impact of this infrastructure disinvestment, deteriorating highways take a huge toll in diminishing safety conditions

and resultant vehicle crashes and fatalities. Almost 42,000 people died on our nation's highways in 1996 alone, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration points to poor road conditions as a contributing factor to these fatal accidents. Obviously, our nation needs to put more resources into highways, but at this time of deficit reduction, federal funds are limited.

That is why I recently introduced a bill to provide additional federal funds for our nation's highways by redirecting to the Highway Trust Fund the 4.3-cent-per-gallon gas tax already being paid by consumers, but currently being used for deficit reduction.

By depositing this additional 4.3-cent gas tax into the Highway Trust Fund, the DOT will have greater resources to meet the true needs of our nation's transportation infrastructure, thereby improving safety and helping to deliver welcome economic benefits to the nation.

Only through investment here at home -- investment to maintain and renew our own physical plant -- can our economy grow and generate healthy wages for its citizens and increased revenues for the U.S. Treasury. The longer we delay increasing federal highway spending, the more expensive it will be to reverse this destructive trend, which costs our nation dearly.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

In Memory of Our Nation's Military Heros

On the last Monday of each May, our nation observes Memorial Day, a time for remembrance of the patriotic men and women who have given their lives defending the principles and freedoms that are so highly valued in our United States.

The modern Memorial Day, or "Decoration Day" as it was formerly called, follows on the post-Civil War practice of decorating the graves of the fallen soldiers of both the Union and Confederate armies.

Today, Memorial Day is casually considered one of the holiday "bookends" that mark the unofficial beginning and end of summer -- the other being Labor Day. I fear that, for too many, the real meaning of the holiday may have become blurred, and, for some, may mean, primarily, the day of the first family barbecue of the season, or of the opening of the community swimming pool.

Fortunately, there are still those veterans' organizations, patriotic individuals, and families who hang flags on front porches, plan and conduct memorial services, march in parades, and place flowers on the graves of fallen soldiers in recognition and undying appreciation of the sacrifices made to protect our nation and preserve our liberties.

In West Virginia, where patriotism runs deep, there is a tradition of standing tall when called upon to defend the rights and freedoms cherished in this country. In fact, throughout our state's history, West Virginia has played a role in the defense of our nation far outweighing its proportion among the 50 states. Our state's national defense heritage is, certainly, a badge of honor that West Virginians should wear with pride.

Through the Memorial Day ceremonies and symbolic remembrances of those occasions in the 20th century when America's might has been tapped to restore peace to the world, we are reminded not only of the need to be ever vigilant and always prepared to come to the defense of our nation, but also of the fragile nature and priceless value of peace.

I hope that on this Memorial Day, West Virginians will take time to reflect upon the sacrifices of those men and women to whom the ideals of this nation were dearer than life. One day of remembrance each year, one day of earnest gratitude and of rededicating ourselves to the tenets of patriotism is but a tiny bit of reparation on a debt that will never be repaid.

May 14, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Down-to-Earth Space-Age Help for Business

Constructed at Wheeling Jesuit University with more than \$13 million I added to a federal appropriations bill in 1991, the NASA-sponsored Robert C. Byrd National Technology Transfer Center (NTTC) has been busy making its mark on the business community in West Virginia and throughout the nation.

In the few years of its operation, the NTTC can boast of successes on several fronts to help domestic businesses by providing them with access to cutting-edge technologies and expertise developed at federally funded research laboratories.

Since the beginning of its operations, the Center has answered more than 15,000 requests for assistance, including many from businesses looking for training to bolster their competitive position in the global marketplace. The Center has also engineered several successful partnerships between federal technology sources and private sector manufacturers, and has created and produced training programs for the U.S. Navy.

In addition, the NTTC has developed NASA's first CD ROM, NASA Solutions: Sharing Aerospace Technology with America, a computer disk offering U.S. businesses and industries creative solutions to technological problems.

In keeping with the mission of the NTTC, the new CD ROM, a full-color, video-based computer disk filled with NASA technological resources, is helping to bring space-age solutions within easy reach of 20th-

century businesses.

The new CD ROM contains information about 19,500 technologies available for commercialization; 600 technology transfer success stories; and 15,000 contracting opportunities.

Users can also retrieve information from the disk about the NASA Commercial Technology Network, comprised of NASA's 10 field centers, six regional technology transfer centers, and the NTTC.

NASA Administrator Daniel S. Goldin described the CD ROM project as "the result of many innovative efforts to make NASA technologies available to U.S. industry quickly and easily."

NTTC representatives report that the disk caused a stir at Technology 2006, NASA's commercial technologies trade show in Anaheim, California, where vendors stood in line to secure a copy. More than 5,000 promotional copies of the CD ROM were distributed by the NTTC to interested parties from across the U.S., and, in response to its positive reception, the NTTC is currently updating the disk in preparation to make it available for wider circulation.

As illustrated by the success of its CD ROM, the Robert C. Byrd National Technology Transfer Center is fulfilling its mission to provide useful assistance to domestic businesses to help make America more competitive in the world marketplace, to strengthen our national economy, and to help create jobs.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Addressing Military Misconduct

The extent of the scandals that have been unearthed at many of our military facilities indicates to me that the time has arrived for a thorough review of gender-integrated training in the armed forces.

This is a serious situation, involving very serious allegations with possible repercussions on our national security. As evidence of the depth of the problem, a 1995 survey found that 61 percent of the women in the Army reported incidents of unwanted sexual attention. Also, a hotline established by the Army last fall for women to report sexual harassment, misconduct, or abuse, received 7,000 calls in only a two-and-a-half-month period.

As this evidence indicates, there is a serious problem associated with gender-integrated training. That is why, pending a much-needed review of the problem, I think that the practice of gender-integrated recruit training in the military services should be suspended.

This is not just about sexual harassment among soldiers of equal rank. It is about that, but it is about much more. It is about the use of power and authority of sergeants and officers

who are put in charge of the recruits and junior personnel for whom they are responsible to train and look after. It leads one to ask a fundamental question: are women actually safe in the U.S. military?

The purpose of an army is to fight, and to win battles. If gender integration enhances the prospects of readiness and effectiveness in combat, then we should be all for it. But, if it reduces American effectiveness on the battlefield, should we be for gender integration purely on the general grounds of social equality?

The scandals which we are seeing in the training commands must be taken as a danger sign that gender integration complicates the military's fighting capabilities. We need to review the kinds of gender-integrated training that will work, and the kinds that will not work. In the special world of military life, where the ultimate mission of fighting and winning wars is uniquely different from all other environments and roles in civilian life, the real objective is the national security of our nation and how best to maintain it with the most effective fighting force.

May 28, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Protecting Our Rivers with Responsible Stewardship

Recently, American Rivers, a national environmental organization, ranked the Potomac River seventh on the group's annual list of the Ten Most Endangered Rivers in North America. In explaining this designation, American Rivers, based on a U.S. Department of Agriculture study that detected nutrient and bacterial contamination in the waters of the South Branch of the Potomac, cited agricultural production, and, most notably, poultry production, as the central threat to the river's future.

The North and South branches of the Potomac wind through several West Virginia counties in a region commonly called the Potomac Highlands, and later flow into the water supply of the Washington, D.C., area, and eventually into the Chesapeake Bay. The rich bottom land of the Highlands region is dotted with ancestral farms raising sheep, crops, and poultry -- one of West Virginia's fastest growing industries.

American Rivers' annual promotion of its top ten list is an effort to advance public awareness about the fragility of the nation's water resources, a laudable goal. Regrettably, however, absent from the recent media reports about the problems of the Potomac are details of the exemplary efforts of West Virginia family farmers to balance economic interests with environmental goals by voluntarily implementing the Potomac Headwaters Land Treatment Watershed Project.

I obtained \$2.3 million in the Agriculture Appropriations Bill last year to launch that project. Formally implemented in January, the initiative is providing farmers in the Potomac Highlands with federal and state funds and technical assistance to help improve farming practices. The program is helping West Virginia farmers, in particular poultry farmers, to implement new practices, such as the use of poultry composters and litter-storage sheds, that reduce threats to the Potomac River by improving the efficient use of farm land.

To date, 80 percent of the eligible farmers have enrolled in the seven-year project, and have agreed to assume forty percent of the costs. As a cooperative effort, the initiative exemplifies the realization that maintaining the health and integrity of our mountain streams and rivers is best achieved through a joint private/public commitment.

The Potomac Headwaters Land Treatment Watershed Project will achieve benefits for a broad base of interests, extending from our beautiful state to the Chesapeake Bay.

I am glad to be associated with this responsible and meritorious stewardship project, and I commend West Virginia farmers for their willingness to preserve the valuable resources of the Potomac Valley while simultaneously maintaining and expanding agricultural production.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Inspiring Academic Excellence

The United States is a world leader in government funding of education. However, I routinely read reports indicating that U.S. students score lower than many countries on educational surveys. With so much being invested in learning in this country, why is it that the U.S. is not turning out better students?

Certainly, part of the reason that our students are not scoring higher is because academic excellence is not being given the kind of recognition it deserves. It is essential for students to recognize that there are myriad benefits resulting from hard work in the classroom. To help foster in children a deeper desire to learn, the nation, as a whole, needs to devote greater attention to stimulating excellence in education. The process must begin with parents and teachers who reject the trend toward lower standards, and, instead, set high goals and help young people to attain them.

Unfortunately, in today's world, with professional sports and entertainment figures earning millions, young students can be easily led to believe that their studies are secondary to athletics and other extracurricular activities. The glitz and glamour surrounding professional athletes and entertainers should not out-

shine the accomplishments of outstanding scientists, distinguished political leaders and religious figures, and experts in other fields who have attained their status by clearing the educational hurdles that have challenged them throughout their careers. The best way to attain a successful job is not by scoring touchdowns or shooting foul shots, but through the hard work of earning a solid education.

This nation must harness a new attitude toward the value of education if U.S. students are to understand its importance in the real world and be prepared to handle the responsibilities of adulthood.

As one who started out in a modest two-room schoolhouse, I know firsthand the challenges of earning a solid education. I did not have computers, or television sets, or videos, but I did have those things that make for a good education. I had teachers who inspired their students to learn. I had adoptive parents who reared me with strict but loving hands, and who instilled in me the need for self discipline and a strong sense of basic values that continue to guide me daily. These are the enduring hallmarks of a good education and the foundation of a solid perspective on life.

June 11, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Confronting Immigration Problems in West Virginia

While West Virginia does not suffer the consequences associated with illegal immigration to the same degree as our nation's border states, I believe that a coherent national policy, directed at stopping the hiring of illegal aliens and swiftly deporting individuals who are here illegally, requires every state to be included in our enforcement efforts.

That is why last year I cosponsored an amendment to the Illegal Immigration Bill requiring at least 10 full-time Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) agents to be stationed in every state.

West Virginia currently is one of three states with no permanent INS presence; yet, the problems of illegal immigration cross our state borders, as occasional arrests and deportation of illegals in our state illustrate.

As a result of my amendment, however, I was able to announce recently that two new INS offices will be located in Clarksburg and Charleston, placing 11 new agents in West Virginia. The presence of the INS will improve the state's ability to enforce national INS policy, while giving residents more direct access to INS services.

The Charleston office, which is to receive five new

agents, will provide services to the public and ensure effective enforcement of the nation's immigration laws in the state. The Clarksburg office, which will employ six agents, will be responsible for administrative duties and will also assist with the processing of fingerprints in coordination with the newly opened FBI Fingerprint Identification Complex in Clarksburg.

West Virginia's INS personnel will include detention and deportation enforcement officers who remove illegal immigrants, and special agents who will enforce immigration laws and conduct investigations.

These new offices will help prevent illegal aliens from filling jobs that rightfully should go to American citizens. Additionally, maintaining an INS presence throughout all 50 states will save taxpayer dollars by reducing travel time for agents and by expediting the deportation process.

Establishing these new INS offices in West Virginia represents a positive step in the nation's overall effort to enforce U.S. immigration policies, and furnishes West Virginia with the personnel and capabilities to meet the growing challenges confronting every state as a result of the influx of illegal immigrants into this country.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Age of Law Enforcement

With the recent dedication of the new FBI Fingerprint Identification complex in Clarksburg, the nation has officially entered a new era of fighting crime.

It was in 1989 that I began working to provide American families with a greater sense of security in their own neighborhoods by helping the FBI to establish this state-of-the-art complex and its automation that could put speedy identification of criminals within reach of officers at every level of law enforcement.

At that time, the FBI was experiencing increasing problems at its outdated fingerprint operations in downtown Washington, problems that placed the identification system in a state of near-collapse, severely handicapping the nation's ability to keep its law-abiding citizens safe from crime.

In 1990, I added \$185 million to an appropriations bill to begin construction of the complex in Harrison County. Since that time, \$600 million has been appropriated for the facility and the cutting-edge technology being headquartered there.

Having seen the new center when I participated recently in its dedication, I can say with assurance that it is a facility of which the citizens of West Virginia and the entire nation can be proud. Set on a wooded hill in a 986-acre reservation that boasts an array of na-

tive wildlife, the main building is an extraordinary structure with some creative innovations, including stonework appropriately featuring a unique fingerprint motif. Most importantly, the employees there, the majority of them West Virginians, are dedicated, hard-working people who take pride in their jobs and their significant contribution to a safer, more crime-free America.

The new capabilities at the FBI center will allow for a larger number of fingerprint checks to be made in a much shorter period of time, thus streamlining the work of the criminal justice system while helping to save countless lives.

The FBI complex is also making a huge contribution to the local economy with its annual economic impact of more than \$75 million. Presently, the FBI Fingerprint Division employs a staff of 2,700 in West Virginia, and expects to have some 3,000 employees on the payroll by the end of September.

The task of protecting law abiding citizens from those who would perpetrate crimes has never been more challenging than it is today. The new Clarksburg FBI Fingerprint Identification complex brings with it a new age of law enforcement and a renewed promise of safer streets for American families.

June 25, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Bring Back Television's Family Hour

I find it troublesome that, in the United States, a nation offering more opportunity to learn and improve oneself than any other society in history, citizens waste so much time sitting idle in front of the television mired in the midst of a bombardment of broadcast bunk.

Disturbingly, the amount of inappropriate programming on television is growing at an alarming rate, and it is at the expense of families, children, and, ultimately, the future of this country.

For many years, virtually all of the content in television shows airing daily between 8 p.m. and 9 p.m. was deemed suitable for children. "Family Hour" was first established in 1975, when, responding to congressional complaints about increasing prime time television violence, the major networks agreed to set aside a slot each night for programming suitable for the entire family. Since that time, this mutually agreed upon Family Hour for all ages programming has been challenged on legal grounds, but the networks, abiding by the spirit of that understanding, continued to air wholesome shows for some time.

In more recent years, however, the amount of obscene and violent programming during the Family Hour has skyrocketed. The once "safe haven" Family Hour slot has been invaded by shows totally unsuitable for children, and, in large

measure, even unfit for adult consumption.

That is why I recently joined several of my colleagues in urging the presidents of the major broadcasting networks to again set aside the first hour of prime time broadcasting each night for family programming. In my view, even that step would be but a drop in the bucket. In fact, it is ridiculous that the American public should have to be begging for just one hour a day of decent broadcast programming, when television viewers -- especially children -- are floundering in a 24-hour sea of slime that showcases programs ranging from mind-numbing to shocking.

Network executives should demonstrate more responsibility in choosing the content of their programming. Surely there is enough talent in the television industry to produce quality shows that entertain and, hopefully educate, without assaulting and insulting the viewer with sexual messages and violent images.

Such an uncomplicated gesture could have a strong positive impact on countless viewers and families across the country.

I will continue to call for appropriate television programming. But, meanwhile, the best way that I know to avoid the detrimental effects of this problem is to simply turn off the television set and pick up a good book.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Keeping Our Global Boat Afloat

In December, the United States will participate in an international summit in Kyoto, Japan, where the world's developed nations are expected to sign a protocol to make legally binding the current voluntary air pollution reduction targets formerly agreed to in an international treaty known as the Rio Pact, negotiated in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. Developing nations, however, would be left off the mandatory hook.

The Rio Pact's aim was a reduction in the worldwide production of greenhouse gases, which scientists widely believe have contributed to a slow warming of the Earth's atmosphere. While it is difficult to forecast what the precise effects of global warming might be, it is projected to cause a rise in sea levels; shifts in temperatures, rainfall, and agricultural patterns and zones; and an increase in the severity of weather events.

The United States should address the problem of global warming in a serious fashion by taking environmentally and economically responsible steps which address climate change concerns and also help to preserve domestic jobs.

But the notion that developed nations, including the U.S., Japan, and the European nations, can solve global warming without the participation of the developing nations -- such as China, India, Brazil, and

Mexico -- is far-fetched.

Emissions of the developing nations are growing at a rapid pace and will, in a few years, overtake those of the developed nations. In fact, based upon current trends, China alone -- a developing nation -- will surpass the U.S. in carbon emissions by 2015.

Environmentally, we are all in the same global boat. It does no good for the developed nations to work feverishly to plug the holes in one end of the boat, if the developing nations are drilling holes at the other end as fast as we are plugging ours. All that such a strategy accomplishes is to assure us all of a long, long swim.

Because of my concerns about global warming, I recently introduced a Sense of the Senate Resolution, which 64 other Senators have joined me in co-sponsoring, that urges the Administration not to sign any agreement in Kyoto which would mandate new commitments to limit greenhouse gas emissions by developed nations, unless it also mandates binding commitments on developing nations.

If the United States is going to be a leader in the issue of global warming, we must do so by ensuring that China and the other developing nations do their part to keep our global boat afloat. To do otherwise is environmentally and economically unsound.

July 9, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Stuck with the Tab for the Alcohol Industry

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), more Americans use alcohol than any other drug, and the results are devastating.

It is estimated that 69.3 percent of children between the ages of 16 and 17 have, at one point in their lifetime, experimented with alcohol. Consider, on the other hand, that 26.1 percent of children in the same age group have tried marijuana and 5.3 percent have tried cocaine, drugs that receive a great deal of publicity and attention from government and the media. Meanwhile, the dangers of alcohol are essentially ignored.

Such alarming statistics recently led me to introduce an amendment in the Senate aimed at eliminating the tax deduction for alcoholic beverage advertising expenditures and directing the resultant savings toward increased funding for education and alcohol-abuse prevention programs that are targeted at our nation's youth.

Elimination of the deduction for alcohol advertising expenditures is not, as some might call it, the introduction of a "sin tax," but rather an end to a "sin subsidy" that has left American taxpayers subsidizing alcohol advertising and picking up the tab for the high costs imposed on society by alcohol consumption. Alcohol abuse and alcoholism cause more than

100,000 deaths each year in the U.S., and cost society approximately \$100 billion annually.

Our children are besieged with media messages that create the impression that alcohol can help to solve life's problems, lead to popularity, and enhance athletic skills. These messages are distortions that gloss over the all too prevalent and detrimental results of alcohol consumption -- the loss of productivity due to hangovers, the tragic deaths and injuries caused by drunk drivers, the hospital admissions for alcohol poisoning, the sad effects of cirrhosis of the liver, and the families torn apart by alcohol abuse. My amendment would have devoted much of the savings from closing the tax loophole to a far-reaching counter-advertisement campaign to educate youth about the dangers of alcohol consumption.

If we are truly concerned about drug abuse in this nation, we should not allow the alcohol industry's enticing and unrealistic messages to flow unchallenged.

This serious issue deserves greater attention, and although my amendment was defeated on the Senate Floor, I hope that it may have helped to focus the spotlight on the dangers of alcohol and its cost to our nation and our nation's greatest treasure -- our young people.

July 16, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Unveiling the Mysteries of Science

In recent weeks, Americans have been marveling at the digital images beamed to Earth from NASA's Pathfinder mission to Mars. The robotic explorer, Sojourner, has taken us across the rocky surface of the red planet, sparking the curiosity of onlookers from across the nation and around the world. Back on Earth, in laboratories in Munich, Germany, researchers have extracted and studied fragments of DNA taken from the ancient bones of a Neanderthal skeleton, revealing that modern humans are not closely related to Neanderthals, as some theorists have believed.

These are recent examples that illustrate some of the many ways in which science can have profound effects on our society. From outer space to inner space, from the technical marvels of automation to the intricate chemical complexities of molecular biology, modern science is unveiling some of life's most intriguing mysteries.

That is why I am proud to support the goals of the National Youth Science Camp in Pocahontas County -- one of the nation's premier science education programs -- and to honor the delegates to the camp each year with a luncheon in our

nation's Capitol.

Since its inception in 1963, the National Youth Science Camp has offered an annual four-week summer program of educational and recreational activities to encourage scientific leadership in graduating high school seniors from the fifty states and the District of Columbia. These graduates, selected through a competitive process, have already demonstrated exceptional academic achievement, leadership, and an interest in the sciences. Encouragement of their further scientific growth is keenly important. In these camps may be found some of the great scientific leaders of tomorrow -- individuals who may break new ground in fields that could lead to discoveries about the nature of disease or the constitution of the universe.

By nurturing, encouraging, and sustaining such scientific curiosity, new generations will be able to discover thrilling scientific frontiers that will captivate and benefit all of mankind. The delegates to the National Youth Science Camp have tasted the excitement and the wonder of science, and through support of their enthusiasm, these young minds will lead us into a bright and promising future.

July 23, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia: A Special Place to Call Home

To those of us who call it home, West Virginia is the ideal place in which to live and rear a family. Breathtaking landscapes, a low cost-of-living coupled with a low crime rate, and the presence of strong family and religious values create a quality of life that few places can match and that few people would trade.

As a matter of fact, Money magazine's recently published list of the best 300 places to live in the United States included four West Virginia cities -- Wheeling, Huntington, Parkersburg, and Charleston -- among the nation's top 200 most livable cities. To compile its list, the magazine polled its readers and collected data from government and private sector sources, including information about each community's performance in nine categories -- crime, economy, health, housing, education, weather, leisure, arts and culture, and transportation.

I am delighted, but not surprised, that these four West Virginia cities made Money magazine's coveted list. In our state, far-flung relatives still gather for large family reunions, where they feast on "old family recipes," trade photographs, and tell stories about revered ancestors,

passing along an oral family history that has been handed down through generations.

In West Virginia, it is still considered polite in most homes to turn off the television set when entertaining a visiting friend. Families dressed in their "Sunday best" still walk together to church services, and the custom of delivering a homemade meal to an ailing neighbor continues to be practiced today, as in years gone by.

In recent years, our state has made great strides in broadening its economy to ensure that job opportunities will abound for future generations, and I am glad to have helped in that endeavor. Those efforts are paying off with improved physical infrastructure and the expanded presence of federal offices and high-tech industries, as well as enhanced crime-fighting capabilities and greater accessibility to basic health care services. And while we in West Virginia have earned the right to boast of these accomplishments, we deserve to be equally proud of our ability to hold on to those old values and lifestyle qualities that make West Virginia such a special place to call home.

July 30, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Supreme Court and the Line Item Veto

In the final days of June, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its ruling in the case of Raines v. Byrd, which I and five of my congressional colleagues brought in January of this year as a challenge to the constitutionality of the Line Item Veto Act.

Unfortunately, the Court side stepped the central question of the Act's constitutionality by deciding that my fellow plaintiffs and I did not have sufficient "standing" to bring the suit. In the opinion of the Court, we had not adequately demonstrated that we had been "deprived of something to which [we] personally [were] entitled." Thus, the effect of the Court's decision was to overturn a lower court ruling that had found the Line Item Veto Act to be an unconstitutional shift of lawmaking power from the Congress to the President.

Although I respect the Supreme Court's decision, I am disappointed with its finding in this particular case. The Constitution clearly places the function of lawmaking in the Con-

gress, not in the President. The Founding Fathers understood the abuses of power that would necessarily arise if one person were allowed to make, amend, or repeal law. That is why they created a three-branch government based on the principles of separated powers and checks and balances. The Line Item Veto Act flies in the face of those principles by giving to the President, for the first time in our history, the power unilaterally to repeal parts of a law as he sees fit.

As the Supreme Court noted, there will most certainly come a time when some state or local government, or some individual or group of individuals will feel the full brunt of the line item veto, and will then bring a case against it. At that time, I hope that the Supreme Court will address the heart of this matter and resoundingly conclude that Congress cannot, by simple statute, rearrange the basic structure of government as contained in the Constitution and confer upon the President the people's power of the purse.

August 6, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Helpful Hotlines

Because of the vast number of regulations and options affecting federal programs and services, West Virginians often have questions regarding specific problems or concerns. In response, the federal government has established a system of toll-free phone numbers that can help West Virginians obtain answers to their questions and overall assistance with their concerns. With the thought that it might be helpful, I am listing some of the most commonly requested numbers.

Auto Safety Hotline	1-800-424-9393
Consumer Product Safety Commission ...	1-800-638-2772
Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	
Cancer Hotline	1-800-422-6237
Energy Efficiency Clearinghouse	1-800-363-3737
Flood Insurance Information	1-800-638-6620
Food & Safety Tips on Meats and Poultry	1-800-535-4555
Hill-Burton Free Hospital Care Hotline ...	1-800-638-0742
Medical Scholarship Information	1-800-638-0824
Medicare Information	1-800-638-6833
National Health Information Center	1-800-336-4797
National Runaway Switchboard	1-800-621-4000
(for parents and runaways to leave messages)	
National Drug & Alcohol Treatment Referral	
Service	1-800-662-4357
Pesticide Emergency Information	1-800-858-7378
Safe Drinking Water Hotline	1-800-426-4791
Small Business Administration	1-800-827-5722
Social Security Administration	1-800-772-1213
Washington, D.C., Reservation Center	1-800-554-2220
(Information on lodging in the Nation's Capital)	
Veterans Benefits Information	1-800-827-1000

August 13, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Labor Day, 1997

Labor Day -- the first Monday in September -- was first celebrated in 1882, and is one of this nation's oldest official observances. Labor Day has important meaning because it honors the enormous accomplishments of countless working Americans over the last 200 years, and celebrates the fruits of that labor which have provided the citizens of the United States with a higher standard of living in times of peace, and a powerful engine of energy in times of war.

Certainly, Labor Day is an especially important holiday in West Virginia. From the state's earliest days, man and beast toiled to clear the mountain fields of stump and stone. Men and machines have built smooth ribbons of highway, making possible the business opportunities that those early, isolated pioneers could never have imagined. The backbreaking and life-risking efforts of miners in the coal fields, struggling to support their families, provided a source of fuel for the nation's growing heavy industries, which have today spawned the high-tech businesses emerging around the state that enable us to compete in a worldwide marketplace. The brawn and brains of West Virginians have forged this place that we so lovingly call "Almost Heaven."

West Virginia's men and women have built and maintained a workforce to be proud of. Their ability and willingness to toil as hard as their pioneering forefathers contribute to attracting new businesses, just as the state's expanding infrastructure does. Communications networks and roadways draw businesses to the state, where a skilled labor force makes the mountains and valleys hum with the music of industry.

On this Labor Day, I hope that West Virginians across the state will take a renewed sense of pride in the value and quality of their work, and harbor a greater sense of satisfaction in the contributions that they are daily making to our state and to our nation.

In addition, I hope that young West Virginians will cultivate positive attitudes toward their future work and careers, and will prepare themselves to compete in the global workplace by holding their efforts to the highest standards of excellence.

I salute the working people of West Virginia, and I thank them for the quality of life that they are making possible for all of their families and their neighbors all across our nation.

August 20, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Criminal Connection to Alcohol

Too often I come across news reports about alcohol-related crimes. Examples of such disturbing accounts range from domestic violence and child abuse to maniacal homicides. Each time I learn about another of these news stories I am reminded that alcohol's connection to crime is yet another tragic aspect of the damage that this drug -- America's favorite -- inflicts on our nation.

Findings from several studies identify alcohol as a factor in a significant proportion of violent and aggressive crimes. According to the Center for Alcohol and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, alcohol -- not illegal drugs -- is the substance most commonly used in connection with murder, rape, and other violent crimes. And, in a nationwide survey of state prisons, more inmates reported being under the influence of alcohol than of illicit drugs when they committed their crimes. Among those in prison for homicide or assault, about 4 in 10 federal and state inmates were under the influence of alcohol at the time of the crime.

There is also a correlation between the rate of violent crime in an area and the number of nearby vendors of alcohol. That correlation probably evokes no surprise in anyone who has come across a crumbling, crime-ridden inner-city

neighborhood -- like many in Washington, D.C. -- where youths stand idly on street corners swilling from brown paper bags, or stagger around in drunken stupors shouting obscenities at passersby. Statistics indicate that there is likely to be a higher number of shops peddling alcohol in such neighborhoods than in crime-free locations.

It would seem, then, as some critics of alcohol have suggested, that one easy, common sense action that communities can take to help address violent crime would be that of better zoning to prevent a proliferation of liquor stores and bars and the easy availability of this "legal" drug.

West Virginia is consistently ranked as one of the nation's safest, most crime-free states. Thankfully, our state does not have violent crimes in the same high numbers as most states, or, unfortunately, as the nation's Capital. But we cannot be lulled into a false sense of security that we are immune from the problems of crime.

Clearly, if we wish to protect the high quality of life we enjoy in West Virginia, we should invest some thought and effort into holding back the rising tide of crime. Discouraging the use of alcohol in our communities would be a good place to start.

August 27, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Fruit Research: At the Core of Better Quality Fruit

Most consumers, as they stand in their local market and pick through a bin of apples searching for perfect pieces of fruit, probably look at the color and size, check for bumps and bruises, and envision the apple's origin as part of a rolling orchard with rows of bountiful trees. Few are probably cognizant of the role that research laboratories play in providing them with large, firm, succulent specimens.

But, as the agriculture industry has become more competitive in recent years, scientific research, including a research program based in West Virginia, has played an increasingly important role in the production of quality fruits.

Recognizing the need to support our domestic fruit growers with modern technology, in 1962, I proposed the establishment of a regional fruit research station to serve the entire Appalachian region.

I envisioned the lab as a place of research aimed at benefitting fruit growers and consumers throughout the nation by enabling production of more profitable fruits for growers, and higher quality, lower cost fruits for consumers.

In 1963, I added an amendment to an appropriations bill that led to a study of the feasibility of an Appalachian fruit and berry laboratory.

Subsequently, in 1972, I secured \$200,000 in planning funds for a fruit and berry laboratory, and, in 1975, I obtained \$7.5 million for the construction of the Appalachian Fruit Research Station in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia.

The Kearneysville station -- with 72 full-time employees -- houses research into deciduous fruit production, protection, harvesting, and sorting that benefits the fruit industry from Maine to Georgia.

Among the greatest hurdles to answering the growing demand for high quality fruits is in finding ways to counter the ruinous effects of pests and disease. Recently, scientists at the Kearneysville Lab were instrumental in developing and commercializing the world's first two post-harvest biofungicides, Aspire and Bio-Save. These naturally occurring products enable growers to fight storage-related disease on apples, pears, and citrus without the use of chemicals.

By finding alternative methods to control disease in ways that also protect the environment, the Appalachian Fruit Research Station in West Virginia is proving the value of research in the modern agricultural industry.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Encouraging Education

I know firsthand the kinds of sacrifices -- both personal and financial -- that may be required in pursuit of a formal education. Because of my own experiences, I have had a special interest in finding ways to encourage others to make the necessary sacrifices to earn a coveted degree. Toward that end, I have initiated two programs that reward educational excellence.

The Robert C. Byrd Scholastic Recognition Award program annually confers a \$50 U.S. Savings Bond upon each valedictorian of the graduating classes of West Virginia's public, parochial, and private high schools, and the Schools for the Deaf and Blind at Romney. The Scholastic Recognition Award, funded by a private trust that I established, is one way that I have chosen to express my pride in our state's brightest students.

Through this program, 307 valedictorians received \$50 U.S. Savings Bonds at the end of the 1996-97 school year, bringing to 7,820 the total number of valedictorians so recognized since I established the program in 1969.

Another program I established to provide encouragement and financial assistance to studious young people is the national Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship program. Students of low-income families benefit from needs-based scholarship initiatives, and scholarships exist to recognize

student athletes. But these programs often overlook our nation's brightest students, because the reward of academic excellence is not the priority of such programs. I initiated the national scholarship program in 1985 for students who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement and have been accepted at an institution of higher learning. My Senate colleagues later named this scholarship in my honor. In 1993, the program, initially a single-year stipend, was expanded to provide 4-year scholarships of \$1,500 annually for qualified students.

This year, 45 new Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships were awarded to West Virginia High School students, bringing to 480 the total number of West Virginians who have received this scholarship since the program's inception in 1985.

The Scholastic Recognition Awards and the Byrd Scholarships are not large in comparison to the high costs of a college education today, but their inspirational impact is inestimable. Over the years, I have heard frequently from students who have received these awards. Their words of thanks and their remarks about the positive influence that these honors have had on their appreciation of the lasting value of academic achievement are evidence enough that these programs are worthwhile endeavors.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Critical Military Component

I recently had the opportunity to help dedicate a combined Army Reserve and Army National Guard complex in Huntington. The 89,968-square-foot complex, for which I added \$9.6 million in construction funds to a federal appropriations bill, will house 300 personnel from the Army Reserve and 220 from the Army National Guard, and will help to maintain a strong defense presence in West Virginia.

The new facility also serves as a symbol of the partnership between the Army Reserve and the Army National Guard that is necessary to ensure a solid total force defense structure comprised of active duty and civilian personnel. In West Virginia, the Army Reserve and the Army National Guard have always had a harmonious relationship, but more needs to be done to foster harmony at the highest levels of the military nationwide.

A fully cooperative and utilized National Guard is necessary in this country if we are to meet the changing needs of today's military within current budget constraints. But, in the Quadrennial Defense Review, a recently released broad assessment of our nation's future defense and manpower needs, defense planners called for cutting Army Reserve component forces -- including the National Guard -- by 45,000 troops. Such unbalanced force cuts would be unwise. The men

and women of the National Guard provide highly trained, specialized service at a fraction of the cost compared to their active duty counterparts. Further, the reduction of National Guard forces would greatly reduce the state's ability to respond to emergencies such as blizzards, forest fires, and heavy flooding.

In order to form a closer relationship between the Reserve and the National Guard, I recently cosponsored an amendment to change the status of the Chief of the National Guard to that of a four-star general and to include the position as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

This approach would go a long way toward correcting what I believe is a flaw in the structure of the Joint Chiefs, which does not fully include the National Guard in discussions and decisions on matters concerning force structure, force readiness, or the allocation of military funding.

Guaranteeing the Chief of the National Guard a seat at the Joint Chiefs' table would be one positive way to reduce friction and promote understanding and unity among the Guard, the Reserve, and the active duty forces, but surely there are others. In the interest of our national security, more steps should be taken to foster better coordination, cooperation, respect, and understanding among all of the critical components of our nation's fighting force.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Carding for Life

Both the tobacco and alcohol industries have received well-deserved criticism in recent years for a variety of questionable and unsavory practices, including what many critics have identified as the use of advertising campaigns specifically intended to entice young people to try, and then become hooked on, their products. In response, the tobacco industry has been attacked at both the state and federal levels, but, unfortunately, much less attention has been directed toward the alcohol industry.

According to statistics from the Centers for Disease Control's National Center for Health Statistics, the three leading causes of death for 15- to 24-year-olds -- accidents, homicides, and suicides -- often involve the use of alcohol. Efforts to curb the sale of alcohol, therefore, could be expected to yield high health payoffs to our society.

Tragedies like the recent alcohol-related death of a Louisiana State University student who reportedly had a blood alcohol level of .588 -- almost six times the level of legal intoxication -- further demonstrate that a national effort to save our young people from the destructive forces of alcohol is badly needed.

Such troubling incidents associated with youth

and alcohol prompted me recently to offer an amendment calling for coordinating the oversight of age identification checks for alcohol sales with those of tobacco-related age checks. The proposal would also increase the funding for supervision and enforcement of these provisions.

This amendment to the Agriculture Appropriations Bill will boost the ability of states to enforce age and identification requirements for the purchase of alcoholic beverages, as well as for the purchase of tobacco products. It only makes sense that store clerks who are already checking ID's for cigarettes should also check ID's for alcohol. The practice of "carding" -- checking identification cards to verify that the buyer is not under the legal age -- is such a simple step, but it can be instrumental in helping to prevent a teenager from drinking and getting behind the wheel of a car. I believe that my amendment will indeed be a constructive step in the fight to save our young people from the ravages of alcohol and make our highways measurably safer for us all. Carding underage drinkers before they get behind the wheel of a car by checking ID cards is "carding" for life.

September 24, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Progress for Workplace Safety

In October 1996, I participated in the dedication of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's (NIOSH) research laboratory in Morgantown. In its first year of operations, this state-of-the-art facility is already proving its value as a world-class center for innovative health sciences.

The new Morgantown NIOSH lab, or Health Effects Laboratory Division (HELD), is developing techniques to further the understanding and treatment of occupational injury and disease, and devising new methods for improving the safety of workers dealing with hazardous and toxic substances.

In 1962, I initiated efforts to establish the Appalachian Laboratory on Occupational Safety and Health (ALOSH) in Morgantown to provide a safer workplace for West Virginians. In 1989, responding to the growing success at ALOSH, I began to secure funds to construct, equip, and staff the new HELD facility. To date, I have added more than \$90 million to appropriations bills for that facility.

The HELD facility allows researchers to break new ground in the fight against long-time foes of miners. For example, HELD is advancing the understanding of black lung disease. Through the use of a state-of-the-art device -- the only one of its kind in the world

-- HELD is able to detect coal dust particles and conduct sensitive research never before possible. Until HELD opened, the government lacked the proper facilities for using this equipment, but this advanced capability may help to prevent future cases of the life-threatening disease that haunts so many West Virginia miners and their families.

Technicians at the Morgantown facility are also developing a prototype pocket-sized transmitter that could significantly improve the capability of scientists and technicians to detect whether workers are being exposed to harmful levels of gases or vapors at specific locations. The transmitter could also be adapted to identify the location of firefighters and hazardous materials response teams in emergency situations.

HELD's cutting-edge science will be instrumental in preventing the occupational illnesses and injuries that traditionally have burdened workers in West Virginia and have caused lost productivity and imposed high health care costs on society. By anticipating new concerns that will emerge as workplaces change, and by keeping occupational health in step with other advancements in science and medicine, this Morgantown facility will serve the health and safety of hard-working Americans.

October 1, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Constitution 101

On September 17, 1787, the U.S. Constitution was signed by 38 of the delegates attending the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. This living document, thoughtfully crafted by our Founding Fathers 210 years ago, owes its enduring nature to one of its most basic, yet most ingenious and revolutionary ideas -- that the power and sovereignty of the United States government ultimately rest in the hands of its citizens.

However, a recent poll commissioned by the National Constitution Center, an organization established to better educate Americans about the Constitution, reveals that a shocking number of people in this country have little or no understanding as to how the Constitution affects their everyday lives.

In fact, according to the results of the survey, only 5 percent of Americans could correctly answer 10 rudimentary questions about the Constitution. That is an embarrassingly low percentage.

Only 66 percent of those surveyed knew that the first ten amendments to the Constitution are called the Bill of Rights. Some re-

spondents were so far off as to guess that they are called the Pledge of Allegiance.

Further, more than half of those surveyed did not know how many members comprise the U.S. Senate. About one in three did not know the number of branches of the federal government. And, almost one-quarter could not name a single right guaranteed by the First Amendment. Other questions were answered with equal error.

How can citizens be expected to meet their Constitutional responsibilities when they lack even basic knowledge about how our government operates?

If there is anything encouraging to be found in the dismal results of the National Constitution Center's poll, perhaps it is that 9 out of 10 people surveyed said that they were proud of the U.S. Constitution. I hope that more citizens will demonstrate that pride by taking it upon themselves to learn more about their Constitution and their government so that they can adequately perform the responsibilities which were conferred upon them in Philadelphia in 1787 by some of the greatest minds in history.

October 8, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Derail Fast Track

Currently working its way through Congress is legislation intended to renew so-called "fast-track" procedures for U.S. trade agreements.

Under fast track, the Administration may engage in trade negotiations around the world -- giving a little here, taking a little there -- but the Congress is largely shut out of the process, being forced to vote up or down on implementing legislation for any trade agreement that comes before it, with little opportunity to debate it and no opportunity to amend it.

In order for the U.S. to be competitive in foreign markets, to protect American jobs, and to ensure a healthy domestic economy, the Administration should have flexibility to strike the best trade deals it can on behalf of American business and consumers. But, the Congress also has a legitimate role to play in trade negotiations, and, despite claims to the contrary, that Congressional role does not necessarily impede the Administration's ability to negotiate and strike deals that are in the best interest of the country.

In pressing for fast-track authority, however, the Administration mistakenly insists that it can only be effective in promoting U.S. trade if it is unencumbered by the input of Congress. The Administration seems to think that any

agreement it submits to the Congress will, in fact, be amended, forcing a return to the bargaining table, and thereby shredding the Administration's stature as a negotiator.

To my mind, that kind of thinking belies a staggering lack of confidence by the Administration in its own negotiating prowess.

One could just as easily argue that, if the Senate retained amending authority, our negotiators might just come up with a somewhat better product, because the fact that the entire agreement will be scrutinized and possibly amended by the elected representatives of the American people gives our negotiators more leverage at the bargaining table.

Despite claims to the contrary, there is no inconsistency between supporting free trade, or freer trade, and preserving the right of the Congress not only to scrutinize the agreements, but also to question, if necessary, parts of the agreement that might appear not to be in America's best overall interest.

Rather than expending energy trying to stamper the Senate's Constitutional powers, the Administration simply needs to do its job well and negotiate sound, strong trade agreements in the first place. After all, we all want the same result from trade negotiations -- agreements that well serve the American people.

October 15, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Surf's Up

I recently launched a homepage on the World Wide Web, providing a new site and enhanced service for West Virginia's Internet "surfers."

My homepage -- which can be accessed at <http://www.senate.gov/~byrd> -- will enable computer users to more easily and efficiently access information that is frequently requested of me. For example, my Web site includes my biographical sketch, a list of the Senate Committees on which I serve, and details about books that I have authored. I have traditionally responded to the many requests for this type of information through the mail or by fax. But now, West Virginia computer users who seek to know more about my career of public service to West Virginia literally have that data at their fingertips.

In addition, I have provided tourism-related information for West Virginians who wish to visit our Nation's Capital. On my Web site can be found maps of the city and its metro system, in addition to information about museums, monuments, and other popular Washington tourist spots. With the particular aim of assisting visiting families, I have also provided a special section on points of interest to children.

As one of West Virginia's biggest boosters,

I also wanted my Web site to help promote our state. So, in addition to some of my personal reflections about West Virginia, which I hope will provide out-of-staters with a taste of the richness of our home state, I have included a list of West Virginia sites that can link interested Web surfers to educational institutions, recreational facilities, economic development initiatives, and media outlets in West Virginia.

I am regularly asked to intervene with agencies in behalf of my constituents who are having some difficulty with, or questions about, a federal program. To help cut through federal red tape, I have included on my Web page some of the most commonly requested federal agency phone numbers.

By no means a finished product, my homepage will be frequently updated to reflect new issues facing our nation, and will include direct links to legislative information, and statements that I deliver on the Senate Floor. It currently includes a selection of my past speeches, many of which have relevance to our current national debates.

With a note of excitement about the many possibilities accompanying the launching of my new Web page, I welcome West Virginians to catch the wave!

October 22, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Securing the Blessings of Liberty

The Preamble to the Constitution contains the brief phrase, "[to] secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity," words that merely hint at the sometimes staggering costs entailed in preserving that liberty. "Freedom is not Free," etched into the dark stone of the Korean War Memorial two centuries later, begins to capture the price that Americans have always been prepared to pay to preserve freedom for themselves and future generations.

In 1938, before the world-wrenching struggle of World War II had turned the page on a new chapter of American history, Congress voted to rededicate Armistice Day -- marking the end of that "war to end all wars" that World War I sadly was not -- as Veterans Day to honor the sacrifices made by soldiers from all wars. Since that date, American soldiers, sailors, and airmen have fought in every quarter of the globe and have kept a vigilant watch from outposts at every latitude and longitude, guarding American interests and American citizens.

Throughout our nation's history, brave sons and daughters have left their homes prepared to fight and perhaps to die in foreign

lands. West Virginia has seen many of her young people march from her hills into the ranks of names on memorials in our nation's capital. These men and women came from big cities and small towns, from college campuses, factories, farms, and mines. Some were killed before they were old enough to vote. Some died not knowing the joys of falling in love, raising a family, or growing old.

They fought so that we would remain free. They fought so that their children and ours could grow to be doctors, farmers, school teachers, musicians. They answered the call of their country and they did not fail it, even in death.

Most Americans today have never seen war, and hopefully, they never will. This Veterans Day, I hope everyone will join in offering a prayer of thanks to the brave spirits who defended us with their lives, and offer their thoughts and their thanks to the men and women of today's military -- active, Guard, and reserves. May God bless all West Virginians who have fought and sacrificed for the preservation of our nation's freedom and our nation's interests throughout the world.

October 29, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Putting More Officers on the Beat

Recent statistics indicate that the violent crime rate in the U.S. is on a gradual decline. A new FBI study, for example, reports that the number of murders in this country last year was the lowest in decades. According to the Department of Justice, one initiative that is being credited with reducing the crime rate is the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program.

The COPS program was established through the 1994 Omnibus Crime Bill to enable local communities to expand their police forces and to devise new ways of fighting crime on the local level. COPS and other anti-crime initiatives are funded through the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund, which was created by my amendment to the Omnibus Crime Bill.

The goal of the COPS program has been to increase the ranks of local police forces across the country by 20 percent, or 100,000 officers, over a six-year period.

Currently, at its three-year anniversary mark, COPS has put 65,000 new officers -- more than half its goal -- on the streets of communities across the nation.

While COPS provides an important initial boost, the expanded police forces

it is making possible are expected to be sustained for the long-term through local resources.

The success of the COPS program is largely attributable to the fact that it is geared toward law enforcement at the community level, enabling large cities and small towns to determine the best strategies for fighting and deterring crime on their own streets.

West Virginia has benefited significantly from COPS. Since the program's inception in 1994, more than \$18 million in grants have been awarded to West Virginia communities. In fact, in the last three years, 47 of our state's 55 counties have received COPS grants, putting a total of 355 new officers on the front line of defense against crime in West Virginia.

When I authored the amendment to fund COPS and other anti-crime programs in 1994, I did so to help ensure that our nation could better fight an escalating war against crime. Now, three years after the passage of the Omnibus Crime Bill that launched COPS, I am encouraged by reports that the rate of serious crime is declining, and I am gratified that COPS is being recognized as a positive factor in that decline.

November 5, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Family Thanksgiving

It is time again to count our blessings, to sit together at a table surrounded by family and friends, and offer thanks to the Creator for seeing us through another year together. The busy schedules and conflicting timetables that comprise our lives make the Thanksgiving holiday one of the few times each year that every member of one's immediate family can actually eat together and share the bond of being a family. Too often during the rest of the year, the hum of the microwave replaces the hum of dinner table conversation, and too often the eerie glow of the television set replaces the warmth of family interaction.

Thanksgiving, therefore, can be one of the few times that generations have the chance to gather together around a crackling fire to ponder photographs from the past, to slice carrots and mash sweet potatoes, to hear the laughter of children and the gossip from the kitchen, and of course, to smell the sweet temptation of a juicy turkey slowly roasting. It is a time of gentle companionship around a sudsy sink. It is a chance to share stories of past Thanksgivings, that

time when everything was ready but the turkey, or when Mom used paprika instead of cinnamon in the pumpkin pie. These shared experiences are ties that bind families together.

I hope that this Thanksgiving, West Virginians will take the time to rediscover what it is that makes them a family. A shared address and a designated spot before the hypnotic television set do not make a family, but a group of loving individuals who share laughter, tears, chores, and fun together, as well as their common genetic bond, make a true family.

So, before devouring that lovingly prepared feast, families should take the time not only to show thanks for the bounty they are about to receive, but also to be thankful for the opportunity to gather in cheerful kinship. And, before anyone leaves the dirty china behind in a rush to settle into the soporific stupor of the football game, I hope that some consideration is given to grabbing a dishcloth, taking a long walk, reading some scripture together, or playing a board game for the simple pleasure of spending time with family.

November 12, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Putting Gas Taxes to Work For Safer Roads

For many years, armed with U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) statistics detailing the crumbling condition of our national highway system, I have argued for greater investment in America's infrastructure. Unfortunately, to the detriment of the nation, the dire needs of our infrastructure have been neglected for too long.

Our nation's highway system is in deplorable shape and getting worse. Currently, according to the DOT, fully 61 percent of our national highway system is rated in either "fair" or "poor" condition, and almost a quarter of our nation's bridges are rated as either structurally or functionally deficient.

Earlier this year, in an apparent awakening, the Congress passed a budget bill which included the transfer of the 4.3-cents-per-gallon gas tax from deficit reduction to the Highway Trust Fund, signaling to the American people that highway construction was being given a higher national priority.

That bill, however, in and of itself, did not authorize the funds to be spent for highway and bridge construction. It merely allowed the 4.3-cents in taxes that Americans pay at the gas pump to go into the Highway Trust Fund and accumulate. As a result, by

the end of 2003, the Trust Fund is expected to grow to an unprecedented \$72 billion and just sit there -- amounting to an empty promise to the American people.

In an attempt to end this deception, I recently authored an amendment to the six-year bill that authorizes funding levels for highway construction. My amendment would ensure that the 4.3-cents gas tax now accumulating in the Highway Trust Fund could be devoted to safer bridges, better roads, and other transportation needs. It would make available to every state in the nation sizable sums -- resulting from the public's own payment of gas taxes -- and, additionally, would direct much-needed funding specifically to the continued construction of the 13-state Appalachian Regional Commission Corridor Highway System.

Congressional consideration of a new highway reauthorization bill has been postponed until next year. But I expect to renew my efforts at that time, because, without my amendment, Americans will continue paying gas taxes under the false impression that those taxes are going to create better and safer roads, while, in reality, the highways and bridges on which they drive will continue to fall apart.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

An Award Winning Transportation System

West Virginia University's (WVU) Personal Rapid Transit System (PRT), an unmanned, electrically powered shuttle system, has safely and dependably ferried passengers between sites on WVU's two campuses and downtown Morgantown for the past 25 years. In honor of the PRT's outstanding record of service, the system was recently recognized by a national transportation publication as the "Best Overall Performer" in its class.

In its ninth annual competition among transit systems, The New Electric Railway Journal selected the PRT for best overall performance in its "People Mover" category. The publication remarked, "There are few transit systems of any type that out-perform it."

In addition to providing dependable transportation, the PRT serves as a leading example of how technology can be used to provide alternative modes of transportation in urban areas. Numerous engineers and other interested groups have visited Morgantown since the installation of the PRT to study the benefits of an electric transit system that does not require on-board operators and that also addresses pollution, traffic, and environmental concerns.

The 8.7-mile-long PRT utilizes more than 70 shuttles, accommodating about 20 passengers each.

It began operating in 1975, and was built to help demonstrate new transit technologies at a time when our nation was growing increasingly concerned about energy and the need for alternatives to traditional fuels and methods of transportation.

Even though the PRT was initiated in response to the pressures of the energy crisis of the 1970's, the need to develop alternative fuels and transportation systems like the PRT remains critical to our nation's energy independence and security today.

Recognizing that, and responding to a study that found much of the PRT's automation becoming obsolete after two decades of advancements in the computer industry, I added \$4.2 million to an appropriations bill last year to support an update of the PRT's computer technology.

This upgrade will ensure that the PRT's automation is compatible with modern software and hardware and will also allow the system to continue providing safe, efficient transportation well into the future. It will also ensure that the PRT -- recognized for its outstanding performance by The New Electric Railway Journal -- will continue to serve as a model for efficient, alternative fuel transit systems throughout the nation.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Internet Indecency

Recently, a member of my staff, attempting to secure information on White House tours through the Internet, inadvertently typed in three incorrect letters of the White House Internet address, and to her shock and disbelief, what appeared on the screen was not helpful information about White House tours, but cyber pornography.

A simple mistake of three keystrokes resulted in offensive trash appearing on the computer screen. Beyond being an affront to adults who inadvertently stumble across it, this web site and others like it present a danger to children. Young students performing research for a school project could just as easily call up this and similar sites by accident.

The Internet offers valuable information and can be a useful resource. Unfortunately, however, due to a lack of regulation of indecent material on the Internet -- the kind of regulation that exists for other media -- it can also be a free-wheeling vehicle for disseminating smut. It is, therefore, important that this new electronic medium, which is increasingly making its way into America's homes and schools, have safeguards to protect our children.

I was a strong supporter of federal legislation aimed at providing such safe-

guards. The Communications Decency Act, which was enacted in 1996, made it a crime to knowingly transmit indecent material to children via computer. That law would have helped to fill the gap between the rapid development of the Internet and the eruption of web sites that peddle pornography. The Supreme Court, however, struck down that law, leaving pornographers with nearly unrestricted access to our children via the Internet.

To my mind, the act of distributing pornographic materials over the Internet, especially when it is done in ways that lure unsuspecting computer users, particularly children, into these sites, is the height of irresponsibility and borders on abuse. Furthermore, some child abusers have gone so far as to use the Internet to draw vulnerable children into dangerous relationships.

Therefore, with legislative solutions currently blocked due to First Amendment concerns, I am glad to see that members of the technology industry are, at least, proposing voluntary measures to help protect our nation's children from obscenity, including plans to report instances of child pornography to appropriate law enforcement officials. This is a commendable, though overdue, step, and I hope that others will follow.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The National Conservation Training Center

From concerns of a gradually warming globe to the problem of waterborne bacterial diseases like *ptiesteria*, the challenges to man's ability to strike a balance between improving his existence and preserving his environment are enormous. In order for mankind to ensure long-term survival, it is essential to make our children and grandchildren sensitive to the fragile nature of our planet, and better aware of our dependence upon the efficacy and abundance of its resources.

Recognizing the need to prepare current and future generations for the difficult decisions concerning our environment, I added \$4.9 million to an appropriations bill in 1989 to initiate the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) in Jefferson County. Including that initial funding, I have helped to obtain a total of \$138 million for this recently dedicated facility that is designed to strengthen the education and training programs offered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Set in a scenic wooded area overlooking the Potomac River, this spectacular center's 538-acre campus combines state-of-the-art technology with a natural setting to provide on-site training opportunities, as well as distance learning programs for use in

field locations. Campus housing accommodates about 150 students, and the facility also features 12 classrooms with advanced audiovisual systems, four laboratory classrooms, a 250-seat auditorium, a day-care center, and a library.

The NCTC is helping to educate not only Fish and Wildlife Service professionals, but also natural resource conservation professionals from all sectors of government and society, enabling a sharing of different perspectives, discussion and debate on difficult environmental subjects, and a search for common ground and common sense solutions to a growing list of environmental problems.

In West Virginia, where the natural environment has a large influence on its people -- from concerns about the danger of heavy flooding to interests in a growing eco-tourism industry -- this facility will prove to be a particularly valuable asset.

This new "home" for the Fish and Wildlife Service is providing students with knowledge that will enable mankind to progress while preserving the natural environment. It represents the kind of balanced approach our nation must take in order to ensure a healthy environment along with a healthy economy.

December 10, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Resounding the Essence of Christmas

The sounds of Christmas are in the air, although it can be difficult to identify the spirit behind the melodies. Is it the celebration of the birth of Jesus sweetly caroled by the bells, or the crass jingling of a commercial pitch over the airwaves? The holidays are rich in many seasonal sounds, but I sometimes worry that the spirited messages of soft hymns drifting throughout a candle-lit church are obscured by the chorus of automobile horns fighting their way to the shopping malls.

All told, there is much to exalt about the Christmas tradition of gift giving.

Sharing the blessings of our own prosperity with those less fortunate is a laudable gesture that would be welcomed throughout the year. The holidays are also an occasion for each of us to spend time thinking about our loved ones and trying to surprise them with gifts that show our affection for them. And the anticipation of children, building as the mound of presents rises around the Christmas tree trimmed with cherished ornaments, is one of the warmest joys that the holiday season offers.

However, too often, the

simple pleasures of gift-giving are overpowered by the pressures and strains of the commercialization of Christmas. Too many people will overspend this season, striking a joyful chord with shopkeepers and credit card companies, but placing a heavy financial burden on families who will face big bills in January. Too many children, influenced by ubiquitous advertising campaigns, will demand over-priced clothes and shoes that bear a designer logo -- and nothing else will satisfy. And families will spend time trudging through department stores and waiting in long lines, rather than in the company of friends and neighbors or at church celebrating the true spirit of the season in prayer and song.

During this hurried holiday season, I suggest that West Virginians go back and read the gospels, particularly the books of Luke and Matthew, in order to enhance their recollection of the birth of Christ, for therein lies the true meaning of Christmas. By going back to the Book our fathers read, perhaps we will recapture that spirit of Christmas which prevailed in their time.

December 17, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Resolutions

The dawning of a new year is traditionally a time for making resolutions. Some New Year's resolutions, like old friends, are very reliable -- we make the same ones every year. We pledge to lose weight, to exercise more, to spend more time with our families, to manage our money better, to keep in touch with old friends. As a result, gyms are crowded during the month of January, diet books fly off bookstore shelves, and lots of walking shoes are sold. But every year, most people's resolve falters in fairly short order.

Failure should not, however, prevent us from trying again, and again, and again, to reach a worthy goal. Nor should we be discouraged from tackling big problems, even if progress is slow and incremental. A mountain can be reduced to rubble by a gentle breeze, given enough time.

I am an ardent believer in self-improvement, and am convinced that everyone can make a success of his or her life, given initiative and opportunity. During my career of public service, I have tried to help create those opportunities by working to attract new federal facilities and private-sector investments that are bringing jobs to West Virginia. I have assisted our state by adding funding to

federal appropriations bills to build roads and develop flood protection and water and sewer systems, the lack of which can be a hindrance to a community's economic prosperity. I have also strived to encourage educational achievement, scholarship, and vocational training to provide individuals with the tools to build their own success stories.

But, the essential ingredient for the improvement of the economy of our state and the well-being of our people lies in their own ability and willingness to take advantage of the evolving opportunities, to build upon them, and to tackle that task with drive, enthusiasm, and a strong sense of commitment.

As we ring in 1998, I hope that I will be joined by many, many West Virginians in resolving to do better in the coming year. Let us strive to improve ourselves -- our minds and our characters, as well as our physical well-being -- and to improve our families, our communities, our state, and our nation. Let us not dwell on the failures of the past, or allow ourselves to feel overwhelmed by large goals, but, instead, let us focus on doing our best day by day to make the most of ourselves and the possibilities of the future.

December 24, 1997



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Sobering Holiday Message

The following message, by an unknown author, is a sobering reminder of the tragic consequences of drinking. I hope that it will serve as a deterrent to readers who consider celebrating with alcohol and getting behind the wheel of a car this New Year's Eve.

D.U.I...A Daughter's Final Words

I went to a party, Mom,
I remember what you said;
You told me not to drink, Mom,
So I drank soda instead.

I felt really proud inside, Mom,
The way you said I would;
I didn't drink and drive, Mom,
Even though the others said I should.

I know I did the right thing, Mom,
I know you're always right.
Now, the party's finally ending, Mom;
Everyone drives out of sight.

As I got into my car, Mom,
I knew I'd get home in one piece,
Because of the way you raised me, Mom,
So responsible and so sweet.

I started to drive away, Mom,
But as I pulled onto the road;
The other car didn't see me, Mom,
And it hit me like a load.

As I lie here on the pavement, Mom,
I hear the policemen say,
The other guy is drunk, Mom,
And now I'm the one who'll pay.

I'm lying here dying, Mom,
I wish you could get here soon;
How come this happened to me, Mom,
My life burst like a balloon.

There's blood all around me, Mom,
Most of it is mine;
I hear the paramedics say, Mom,
I'll be dead in a short time.

I just wanted to tell you, Mom,
I swear I didn't drink;
It was the others, Mom,
The others didn't think.

He didn't know where he was going, Mom,
He was probably at the same party as I;
The only difference is, Mom,
He drank and I will die.

Why do people drink, Mom,
It can ruin your whole life;
I'm feeling sharp pains now, Mom,
Pains just like a knife.

The guy who hit me is walking, Mom,
I don't think it's fair,
I'm lying here dying, Mom,
While all he can do is stare.

Tell my brother not to cry, Mom,
Tell Daddy to be brave,
And when I get to Heaven, Mom,
Write "Daddy's Girl" on my grave.

Somebody should have told him, Mom,
Not to drink and drive,
If only they had taken the time, Mom,
I would still be alive.

My breath is getting shorter, Mom,
I'm becoming very scared;
Please don't cry for me, Mom,
'Cause when I needed you,
You were always there.

I have one last question, Mom,
Before I say goodbye,
I didn't ever drink, Mom,
So why am I to die?

This is the end, Mom,
I wish I could look you in the eye
To say these final words, Mom,
I Love You...Goodbye.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Pulling the Plug on Term-Paper Mills

In recent years, colleges and universities nationwide have been confronted with a new concern about term-paper fraud. As a result of the widening accessibility of the Internet, as well as the new medium's lack of regulation, a student today needs only to click a few buttons on his or her computer, and, in a matter of minutes, download a well-crafted term paper -- all without having to pick up a single book.

The problem of plagiarized research papers is an old one, but this new way to take credit for someone else's work is particularly alarming because of the ease with which research papers can be obtained and the rapid growth of web sites operated by money-hungry entrepreneurs willing to make a quick buck by promoting plagiarism.

Even a cursory search of the Internet reveals dozens of sites that offer "term-paper assistance." These sites -- with names like "Term Paper Emporium," "Recycled Papers," and "Cheat Factory"-- offer easy-to-download papers on thousands of research topics, which are available to anyone with a major credit card. In response to these "term-paper mills," as they

have been tagged by critics, some states have passed legislation aimed at prohibiting the marketing or sale of prefabricated term papers. Term-paper mills, however, attempt to circumvent such laws, contending that the information they provide is intended only for research purposes and not for classroom submission.

Ready-made term papers may be enticing to students seeking a lazy alternative to real work, but the knowledge and experience gained from the struggle to research and write a well-developed paper is an extremely valuable component of a solid education. Therefore, students who submit recycled term papers are not only plagiarizing the words and ideas of others, but they are also robbing themselves and their own intellect.

I hope educators will be vigilant and take a strong position against this kind of fraudulent activity. Moreover, students should resist the temptation of this easy way of writing a term paper. Learning is a lifelong journey, and writing a term paper is but one stop along the way. In the end, those who choose the more challenging path will reap the greater reward.

January 7, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Parents Must Set High Expectations And Be Good Role Models

A recent study of more than 12,000 American adolescents found what many West Virginia parents have known for generations; namely, parents exert a powerful influence on their children's behavior, even through the challenging teenage years.

Contrary to the prevalent modern-day impression that teenagers are impervious to parental guidance and fall under the full sway of their peers after early adolescence, the survey's findings confirmed that parents can and should continue to expect good grades and good behavior from their children throughout their teenage years.

The University of Minnesota study, published in The Journal of the American Medical Association, found that parental expectations play a major role in determining adolescents' behavior through the twelfth grade, regardless of family income, race, or the number of parents in the home.

Researchers found that the more adolescents felt loved and cared for by their parents, the less likely the adolescents were to have sex, use tobacco, alcohol or drugs, or commit acts of violence.

As a boy growing up in southern West Virginia, I knew that my foster parents

and my teachers fully expected me to do my very best, in my personal life as well as in my schooling. I wanted to please them, and I worked hard to earn their praise. Today's youth yearn for the same high expectations, as the results of this study show. They, too, want parents and teachers to care enough to expect the best of them.

In an age when many families have two parents in the work force, there is a tendency to want to relax and avoid confrontations in the few hours that the whole family spends together. That tendency should be resisted. For the good of their children, parents need to employ discipline, confront bad behavior, and set limits and adhere to them. Now, as much as ever, parents need to employ the skills handed down through families for generations by setting clear expectations and being good role models. A stern word is every bit as important as a warm hug when it comes to good parenting.

In West Virginia, where the "old values" are still revered, the results of this study may seem like a dose of good old common sense. By instilling these cherished values in their children, parents help them to build a solid foundation for life.

January 14, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Senate's Advice and Consent Function

The nation recently has had a valuable lesson in Constitutional affairs, thanks to the debate between the President and Congress over the nomination of Bill Lann Lee to head the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division.

The Constitution gives the Senate the responsibility to approve all presidential nominations. This "advice and consent" function is a vital part of the system of checks and balances that the Constitutional Framers created. By requiring presidential nominees to receive Senate confirmation before appointment, the Framers provided the legislative branch with a way of checking the power of the executive. Thus, the Senate's failure to approve Mr. Lee's nomination last November should have ended the matter.

During Congress' winter recess, however, the White House hinted that it was considering putting Mr. Lee in the office as a "recess" appointment. The Constitution allows the President, on a temporary basis, to fill vacancies during congressional recesses in order to prevent important posts from being vacant when Congress is unable promptly to return to session -- during a *sine die* adjournment, for example. Concerned that the President might use this power when there was no emergency (an

emergency would occur, perhaps, if the office of Secretary of State were to be vacant), I wrote to him, advising against what I saw as a potential misuse of power.

The President, in turn, did not make a recess appointment. Instead, Mr. Lee was installed in an "acting" capacity. I believe that this is a development fraught with opportunities for abuse. With a recess appointment, at least Mr. Lee's tenure would have expired in late 1998. Now, however, Mr. Lee may be able to remain in office much longer, and without ever garnering Senate approval.

Prompted by what I see as an unwise end run around Congress, I have written to the Attorney General to express my concern about the acting appointment and to remind the Administration that, under law, temporary appointments are actually valid for no longer than 120 days.

In reality, Mr. Lee, against the will of the Senate, could serve through the end of President Clinton's tenure. If Presidents can put nominees in office by circumventing the Senate's Constitutional "advice and consent" role, an important check against executive power will have been effectively removed, weakening the "people's branch" and the people's only voice in selecting unelected government officials.

January 21, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia: A Leader in High-Tech Crime Fighting

The FBI fingerprint identification complex, located in Harrison County, is the nation's largest and most sophisticated repository of fingerprint information. Beginning operations in April of 1995, this facility -- with more than 3,000 employees and a regional economic impact of more than \$90 million annually -- helps law enforcement agencies across the country to more effectively fight crime. Now, a new program being developed cooperatively by the FBI and West Virginia University (WVU) will further bolster the facility's mission by offering the world's first degree-granting program in forensic identification.

This new degree program will be offered at both the bachelor's and master's levels, and will enable students and law enforcement officials to expand their knowledge of fingerprint identification and other areas of forensic science, such as DNA testing. In fields such as computer science, electrical engineering, biology, medicine, dentistry, statistics, physics, mathematics, chemistry, and law, WVU faculty members have collaborated to create this one-of-a-kind program that will help make our state a forensic science leader.

In 1990, responding to growing problems at the FBI's fingerprint facility located in Washington, D.C., I added \$185 million to an appropriations bill for con-

struction of a new and improved FBI fingerprint center in Harrison County. In addition, I have helped to obtain more than \$600 million for development of the FBI's advanced automation system that is helping to speed the tracking and identification of criminals.

By instituting this new forensic science program, the FBI is answering a growing need of the law enforcement community. The International Association for Identification (IAI) recently announced that, beginning in 2005, it will require all persons employed as forensic identification specialists to hold bachelor's degrees. IAI's decision makes this new degree program especially valuable to anyone planning a law enforcement career specializing in forensic science.

WVU's establishment of this first-of-its-kind degree program serves as a good example of the kinds of spin-off opportunities available to West Virginians as a result of my work to bring federal investment to our state. While simultaneously bolstering the capabilities of the FBI's fingerprint identification complex, WVU, under the leadership of President David Hardesty, is also building a new area of educational expertise for itself and ensuring future job opportunities and a healthier economy for West Virginians.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia Aquaculture: No Fish Story!

West Virginia-produced caviar and smoked salmon? These are not such far-fetched notions, due to nearly \$13 million that I have added to federal appropriations bills to launch programs aimed at developing a fish-farming industry in our state.

A reliable supply of cool and cold water is a primary resource for aquaculture production. According to the U.S. Geological and Economic Survey, West Virginia has an abundant supply of water resources, including tens of thousands of springs scattered throughout the state.

Recognizing the potential value of West Virginia waters for the farming of fish, I added \$6 million to the Agriculture Appropriations Bill in 1996 to initiate construction in West Virginia of the National Center for Cool and Cold Water Aquaculture. I added another \$6 million to an appropriations bill last year to complete construction of this ultramodern facility. I was also successful in adding \$250,000 for initial operations of the center.

It was in the mid-1980's that I began exploring aquaculture opportunities for West Virginia by obtaining federal funding for aquaculture studies and demonstration projects. These early initiatives proved fruitful, and, today, West Virginia is home to profitable trout- and char-

farming operations, as well as aquaculture training services in high schools and higher education institutions. West Virginia aquaculture operators, however, have only begun to realize the potential of the billion-dollar, worldwide fish market.

The National Center for Cool and Cold Water Aquaculture -- now under construction on federal lands at Leetown, Jefferson County -- will house the nation's most advanced research programs aimed at efficiently producing flavorful, nutritious, cool and cold water fish products. In conjunction with the center's research, West Virginia University will use the \$600,000 that I added to an appropriations bill last year to launch a program aimed at helping small family farmers to develop successful aquaculture operations.

A short time ago, the notion of a fish-farming industry in West Virginia may have seemed implausible. But, make no mistake, the potential for a thriving aquaculture industry in West Virginia is no fish story. I firmly believe that my efforts to tap into the economic potential of West Virginia's natural water resources will provide new opportunities for our state's farmers, and will generate jobs and greater prosperity for some of West Virginia's most rural communities.

February 4, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Time to Act on the Highway Bill is Now

Our nation may be headed toward a type of "doomsday" scenario because of delay in Senate action on a bill to reauthorize funding for highway and bridge construction throughout the country.

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), or highway bill, would reauthorize federal funding for highway construction, bridge construction, highway safety, and transit programs for six years (1998 - 2003). When the Senate found itself unable to complete action on ISTEA at the end of the session last year, a short-term extension bill was passed to continue these programs through May 1, 1998, with the understanding from the Senate leadership that the Senate would return to the six-year highway bill immediately following the President's State of the Union Address.

Now, however, the State of the Union Address has come and gone, and the Senate still has not taken up the highway bill. I am increasingly concerned about the possible impact on infrastructure construction and jobs that may result from the delay on this important legislation.

Delaying action on the highway bill places states and cities in a precarious

and uncertain position as they struggle to continue, without interruption, critically important transportation projects and programs. If the Senate does not act on ISTEA before midnight of May 1 -- the cutoff date for states to obligate new federal highway funding -- highway projects across the country may suffer disruption and delay, and in cases where some construction projects dealing with safety need to go forward, accidents, injury, and perhaps even highway fatalities may result.

Without action on ISTEA, highway departments throughout the nation will find it difficult to develop and implement long-term financing plans because they will not know the level of federal resources available to them in the next six years. The current course of inaction is not justified, and it threatens the economic well-being and safety of people nationwide.

I have repeatedly pressed the Senate leadership to move the ISTEA Bill as soon as possible. The disruption of transportation projects may occur across the nation as states have to slow down or put off work on critical highway programs unless Congress gets it's act together.

February 11, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Line-Item Veto Revisited

Fewer than two years have passed since Congress recklessly handed the President the power to erase portions of a law with a "line-item veto." Now, thanks to a recent decision by a federal judge declaring the line-item veto unconstitutional, the carefully crafted balance of powers between our executive and legislative branches that the Constitution requires has been restored, subject to future action by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The recent court decision is only the latest chapter in a lengthy legal saga. That saga commenced last year when I brought suit in federal district court on behalf of myself and others, including Senators Patrick Moynihan, D-NY, and Carl Levin, D-MI, to have the 1996 Line-Item Veto Act declared unconstitutional. Although the federal district judge, Thomas P. Jackson, agreed with my view, the Supreme Court took a different approach. Rather than deciding on the Act's constitutionality, the Court decided that my fellow plaintiffs and I lacked "standing" to bring the suit because we were not "directly injured" by the Act.

This led to suits by persons who could claim injury when the President line-item vetoed projects favorable to them. Although I was not a party to these suits, I filed an "amicus" brief on behalf of myself and Senators Moynihan and Levin to direct the judge's attention to the important issues at stake.

I was particularly gratified to see that the judge -- Thomas Hogan -- fully

agreed with my analysis. As he noted in his opinion, the line-item veto "enables the President to pick and choose among portions of an enacted law to determine which ones will remain valid." By giving the President legislative powers that the Constitution assigns solely to Congress, the line-item veto disrupts the balance of powers that the Framers considered so vital between governmental branches. Under the Constitution, the President is required to faithfully execute the law. With the line-item veto, however, instead of faithfully executing a law that he has just signed, the President can turn around and unilaterally amend it.

I regret that Congress paid so little heed to these considerations when it passed the Line-Item Veto Act in 1996. Since then, however, it has become clear that my concerns about the Act were well-founded. Just as I feared, the President used his item veto as a device to intimidate Congress into letting him have his way on matters in which Congress might not otherwise be disposed to agree. By giving up a portion of its control over the purse, Congress allowed the executive to ride roughshod over the legislative branch.

Now, once again, the third branch -- the judiciary -- has stepped into the breach to save Congress from its folly. This time around, I hope that the U.S. Supreme Court will uphold Judge Hogan's decision and safeguard the balance of powers that the Framers intended.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia -- An Ecotourism Gold Mine

According to a non-profit, travel-oriented organization -- the Travel Industry of America -- ecotourism, a term that broadly describes nearly any nature-based recreational activity such as hiking, skiing, and nature photography, is the fastest growing segment of the U.S. tourism market. This is good news for West Virginia, a state boasting spectacular opportunities for abundant outdoor recreational activities.

Furthermore, given the fact that the Mountain State is within 500 miles of most of the United States' population centers, it is no surprise that West Virginia is growing into a popular destination for ecotourists.

Between 1989 and 1996, West Virginia's tourism industry grew an impressive 33 percent, and, according to the West Virginia Division of Tourism, tourism contributed an estimated \$403 billion to the state's economy in 1996. These favorable dividends are due, in part, to the federal funding I have obtained for numerous tourism initiatives in West Virginia, including many that promote ecotourism.

The New River Gorge National River in Fayette County stands out as one notable example of the successes and dividends generated by federal investment in the expanding ecotourism industry in West Virginia.

In 1974, I authored an amendment providing \$150,000 for a study to ex-

amine the New River Gorge as a potential component of the National Park System. Subsequently, former Senator Jennings Randolph and I introduced legislation, which became law in 1978, that established the New River Gorge National River as a National Park System unit. Since that time, I have added millions of dollars to federal appropriations bills for land acquisition, facilities construction, site stabilization, trail development, rafting put-ins, and other improvements in the New River Gorge.

While renowned for its river-related activities, particularly whitewater rafting, the New River Gorge also attracts hikers, bird watchers, picnickers, and other visitors who seek a natural sanctuary from urban settings and modern day stresses. This breathtaking area has become a major attraction for ecotourists, and by drawing growing numbers of visitors to West Virginia, it helps to boost the tourism trade in other parts of our state.

West Virginians have long cherished the state's natural assets. But the true value of those assets is yet to be realized. As the ecotourism industry grows and visitors continue to frequent our hotels, motels, and inns; dine in our restaurants; patronize our shops; and partake of our services; our state's natural resources will continue to yield robust economic dividends for West Virginians well into the future.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Alcohol Advertising in College Athletics

Recently, Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala urged members of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to sever their ties with the alcohol industry, and called on colleges to move to eliminate alcohol advertising from sporting events.

I second that motion. Advertising is the chief means by which the alcoholic beverage industry promotes itself and encourages the use of its products.

Confusion occurs when students, who should be focusing on academics and personal development, are surrounded by a tidal wave of promotions -- apparently sanctioned by some college and university officials -- that glamorize drinking. It is these kinds of mixed messages which overwhelm and distort the thinking of our nation's impressionable young people into believing that a rewarding and successful life somehow must include alcohol.

Increasingly, colleges and universities recognize alcohol abuse as among the most serious campus problems confronting students. According to recently reported statistics from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, almost 90 percent of college students have used alcohol, and more than 40 percent binge-drink at one time or another. Just last year, the media reported several in-

cidents in which college students died due to alcohol poisoning or excessive inebriation. In Virginia alone, five college students died within a one-month time span in alcohol-related incidents.

Given these staggering statistics, I find it extremely disconcerting that the NCAA continues to depend upon the alcohol industry for sponsorship of intercollegiate athletics. Alcohol advertising at NCAA events, by inference, ties the consumption of alcohol to personal accomplishment, teamwork, and athletic competition. Colleges must not, on the one hand, encourage healthy bodies and wholesome minds, while, on the other hand, encouraging -- at least indirectly -- the use of alcohol. It is unequivocally evident that alcohol and sports do not mix, nor do alcohol and academics.

College should be a fulfilling experience -- an opportunity to learn and grow in preparation for one's future. The consumption of alcohol is counter to such goals, and I urge colleges and universities to explore other alternatives to the sponsorship and advertising of alcohol at sporting events and other campus activities, in order to preserve student lives and better encourage productive, enriching, academic pursuits. After all, universities and colleges are expected to be places of learning.

March 4, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Rights vs. Responsibilities

Individual rights have always been important in this country. Parliament's refusal to recognize the rights of the American colonialists helped spark the American Revolution -- but, there is little actual precedent for the sense of "absoluteness" about personal rights that seems to have pervaded our country in recent years.

This current tunnel-vision focus on individual rights is contributing to a general misunderstanding about another equally important requirement of citizenship: responsibility. Responsibility is the all-essential partner to the exercise of one's individual rights. Just as mortar binds together the bricks of a building, responsibility must serve as the adhesive that supports a free society which, in turn, protects one's individual rights.

Children in this country must be taught that being a good citizen can never be just about being "free" and having rights. It is always equally about responsibility. Our nation is built on the principle of accountability and responsibility under our laws. A responsible citizen, therefore, is entitled to all of the rights given to him under the law.

An irresponsible citizen, however, who thwarts our laws may, in turn, experience a loss of some or even most of his freedoms.

Children are quick to learn by example that it is easier to shift blame than to

accept it, and that rights are, on the surface, more enjoyable than responsibilities. Parents must also understand that. While it may be easy to emphasize rights to their children, parents and teachers must also inculcate a sense of responsibility and accountability for personal actions in the young.

Responsibility includes using discretion and self-restraint in the conduct of one's rights. For example, while the First Amendment protects the right of citizens to express themselves, it does not also sanction language which endangers public safety.

Responsibility also means accepting blame and even punishment for one's unwise or illegal actions. It means taking charge of one's own life and contributing to one's community, one's nation, and one's family in a productive and beneficial way. Children must be taught that there is no free ride, and no substitute for the satisfaction and rewards that they will realize from setting high goals and working hard to accomplish them.

The concept of protected individual rights helped to make the United States unique among all of the world's nations. However, just as a building constructed of bricks without mortar cannot stand, a nation which emphasizes only rights, without stressing their corresponding responsibilities, will eventually topple.

March 11, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Venipuncture and Home Health Services

Many West Virginians are concerned about a new federal provision that prohibits Medicare beneficiaries from qualifying for home health services based solely on their need for skilled nursing care for venipuncture (the drawing of blood).

On behalf of those West Virginians who may be affected by this provision, I have contacted the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), which administers the Medicare program, for clarification about the potential ramifications of this new provision. In response to my inquiry, HCFA has provided some guidance which may serve to allay some of the concerns of West Virginia's Medicare beneficiaries.

According to HCFA, Medicare enrollees should still qualify for at-home venipuncture services provided by a skilled nurse if they also qualify for skilled home care services other than the blood draws. Further, homebound patients who need to have blood drawn but who do not qualify for other home health services are entitled to the venipuncture services of laboratory technicians. Unfortunately, in rural West Virginia, the option of having a laboratory technician provide at-home services may not be a viable one.

Perhaps, as HCFA has indicated, many beneficiaries will still qualify for home blood testing. However, I am concerned that

many of those who truly depend upon these services may not receive the care they need, and that the health of those beneficiaries may consequently be jeopardized.

Recognizing the importance of home health care, the need for venipuncture services, and the difficulty for many elderly and disabled persons to travel to and from a physician's office, I have cosponsored a bill, S. 1580, that would reinstate, for a temporary period of 18 months, a beneficiary's right to qualify for home health services solely on the basis of needing skilled nursing care for venipuncture. That bill would also require a study of the impact on beneficiaries of eliminating the venipuncture provision and on potential fraud and abuse associated with the program.

I want assurances that patients, who are truly dependent on at home blood sampling, can receive that life-saving service.

In the meantime, Medicare beneficiaries who have questions about their home health benefits should contact their personal physician. Medicare requires the primary care doctor to determine the need for home health services and authorize a plan of care, which specifies the type of medical services required, the kind of health care professionals who will administer the care, and any home medical equipment needed.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Senate's Role in Confirming Presidential Appointments

In devising our nation's constitutional system of checks and balances, the Framers specified that ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, Supreme Court justices, and certain other officers of the U.S. would be appointed by the President "with the Advice and Consent of the Senate."

Over the years, the Senate's power to confirm or reject presidential nominees has given it an important means of checking presidential power. One of the most famous examples took place on March 3, 1843, when the Senate, in a single late-night session, rejected President Tyler's nominee for Secretary of the Treasury, Caleb Cushing, three times. While the first vote had been 19 to 27, the second was only 10 in favor to 27 against. Demonstrating dwindling support, the Senate concluded the matter in a third vote on that same evening, rejecting Cushing by a vote of 2 to 29.

In recent years, however, the executive branch has effectively undermined the Senate's "Advice and Consent" function by filling senior positions "temporarily" for months -- and sometimes years -- at a time. Presidents have been able to fill key positions with people who have not been considered, let alone approved, by the public's directly elected representatives in the Senate. This practice does not just short-change the Senate, it also allows unelected members of the executive branch to

escape the scrutiny of the American people.

There is a law on the books, the Vacancies Act, that limits such temporary appointments to no more than 120 days unless a nomination is made. This law, however, has been routinely ignored in recent years. Of the 320 federal departmental positions requiring confirmation, 59, or 18 percent, have been vacant or filled by "acting" officials for over 120 days without a nomination being made, in violation of the Vacancies Act. Some positions have been filled by "acting" officials for more than two years without anyone being nominated to fill them.

For these reasons, I recently introduced legislation that would strengthen the Vacancies Act. My bill would close the loophole through which federal agencies have avoided the 120-day time limit by mandating that the Vacancies Act supersedes all other provisions of law. Further, it would enforce the time limit by requiring that the pay for anyone temporarily occupying a position be cut off once the 120-day limit has expired.

It is time for Congress to state, in no uncertain terms, that no administration will be permitted to circumvent the Vacancies Act, or any other Act designed to safeguard our constitutional duties. If this legislation is enacted, I think we shall have struck a blow not only for the Constitution, but also for the people's liberties.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Giving New Life to Our Nation's Highways

The Senate recently passed the six-year highway bill, or ISTEA II, that authorizes federal spending for highway and bridge construction and transit systems across the country. This bill, which demonstrates a reversal in the federal government's chronic underinvestment in our national highway needs, may be the single most important piece of legislation that Congress will consider this year.

A total level of \$173 billion in formula funding for highways -- \$26 billion more than the level in the committee-reported bill -- was made possible by my amendment to the bill to authorize the spending of the portion of the gas tax which has been designated for highway needs, rather than allowing revenues from the 4.3-cent tax to sit idle, unused, in the Highway Trust Fund.

Thus, my amendment would ensure a higher level of transportation funding for every state in the nation. For West Virginia, it would mean more than \$1.5 billion in formula funding over the next six years -- approximately \$593 million more than the state received in the last ISTEA bill, enacted in 1991.

Also, with my amendment, the bill provides a total of \$2.19 billion for the 13-state ARC Highway system over the six years of the bill. West Virginia would receive \$330 million of that funding for ARC highways within the state.

By contrast, the committee-reported highway bill devoted just \$300 million over six years to the ARC system, or just \$7.6 million annually for West Virginia. At that rate, the system would not be completed until the closing years of the next century, if then. In addition, the highway bill -- because of my amendment -- helps to pave the way for eventual completion of the ARC Corridor Highway System. After years of working for a consistent approach to funding the 13-state Corridor Highway system, and having had to contend with a happenstance method that has left the system less than 78 percent complete 32 years after its approval by Congress in 1965, my amendment launches a reliable funding mechanism, making the ARC Highways eligible to draw down contract authority directly from the Highway Trust Fund.

By passing ISTEA II, the Senate has told the traveling public that the revenues collected at the gas pump from American highway users will be spent on the purposes for which they were collected; namely, the maintenance, upkeep, and expansion of our national highway and transit systems. Further, this bill will bring new life to our nation's highways, providing more money to improve safety, relieve congestion, reduce fatalities, and bolster commerce and economic opportunities throughout the nation.

April 1, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Establishing a Commission to Study The Trade Deficit

Americans in recent years have been very focused on the federal budget deficit. Meanwhile, however, another deficit which should be of concern -- the worldwide trade deficit -- has grown dramatically with little notice.

Between 1970 and 1996, the U.S. merchandise trade balance shifted from a surplus of \$3.2 billion to a deficit of \$199 billion, and there are no indications that our trade deficit will decrease anytime soon. In fact, econometric forecasting firms indicate that the trade deficit will reach \$300 billion or more within the next ten years. By these estimates, unless something is done, our trade deficit will soon exceed the annual budget for the Department of Defense.

It is not clear what the particular reasons for this growing trade deficit may be, nor are the long-term effects of a persistently growing deficit well understood. Certainly, however, since the trade deficit reflects upon the ability of American businesses to compete abroad, the time for a detailed examination of the factors causing the trade deficit is long overdue. For that reason, I recently cosponsored legislation to establish a 12-member national commission to conduct a broad, thorough review of the growing U.S. trade deficit.

We need to understand the relationship between the

trade deficit and our overall economy. We need to find ways to accurately identify and quantify the effects of the trade deficit on our manufacturing capacity, the integrity of our industrial base, productivity, jobs, and wages.

This legislation, which I cosponsored with North Dakota Senator Byron Dorgan, requires the commission to make a detailed examination of the effects of the trade deficit and to identify alternative strategies for reducing the deficit, with a particular aim of retarding the migration of our manufacturing base abroad. The commission will be charged with recommending strategies necessary to the achievement of access to foreign markets -- strategies that will enhance the competitiveness and productivity of the U.S. and also improve the standard of living of our citizens.

It will only be when we truly understand the specific impacts of this large deficit on our economy that we will be able to formulate strategies to pursue the systematic reduction of the deficit. By establishing a commission to study the trade deficit, report its findings, and make recommendations based on its findings, the United States will take an important first step toward reducing the trade deficit and to better preparing our nation to compete in the emerging global economy of the next century.

April 8, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Combating Underage Drinking

Underage drinking is one of our nation's most troublesome concerns, and it is a problem that too often leads to fatal consequences. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2,315 young people died in alcohol-related crashes in 1996.

A big hurdle which West Virginia and other states must overcome in their efforts to prevent the tragedies associated with underage drinking is the lack of available resources to ensure reliable and consistent identification checks for alcoholic beverage purchases. To help improve this important enforcement activity, I added an amendment to an appropriations bill last year to provide \$25 million to help enforce laws regarding sales of alcohol to youth, as well as laws concerning possession and consumption of alcohol by minors.

My amendment established the national Combating Underage Drinking Program, which is intended to help each of the 50 states to develop a comprehensive strategy to address underage drinking, including cooperation among states, communities, and private organizations, and coordination with other ongoing public and private efforts.

Under this newly initiated program, West Virginia and each of the other 49

states recently received \$360,000 to devote to efforts aimed at combating underage drinking. These federal funds can be used in a variety of ways in correlation to each state's own existing programs and particular needs. This funding, for example, could be used to crack down on establishments that are suspected of consistently selling alcohol to minors, to educate young people about the dangers of alcohol, or to generate greater public awareness about the legal issues surrounding consumption of alcohol by minors.

In too many communities around the country, young people are finding it all too easy to lay their hands on a bottle of booze. Children are walking into liquor shops and convenience stores with fake identification and walking out with real pints of pain and suffering.

This new program, which provides federal funding specifically to combat underage drinking, sends a clear message to the states that enforcement of underage drinking laws should be a priority. It is my hope that the new national Combating Underage Drinking Program, established through my amendment, will help spare families throughout the nation the kind of pain and misery that comes in pint-size bottles.

April 15, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Crumbling Education

The Senate recently debated an education bill in which efforts were made to fund the rebuilding of our nation's dilapidated school buildings. This is an issue that merits attention and action since, according to the General Accounting Office (GAO), over fourteen-million students attend schools in need of major repair.

Crumbling school buildings are cause for concern. However, before the federal government takes on a new burden, that of providing massive amounts of scarce federal dollars for school construction, we should take a hard look at why our students are not performing well scholastically. Study after study has indicated that U.S. students perform below their peers internationally, and that their performance in all subject areas is substandard. That is deplorable. Reasons much more fundamental than aging school buildings underlie the poor academic performance by American students.

Despite the ever-increasing amounts of money being poured into education, we are losing the battle against mediocrity. I am 100 percent for education, but I want some confidence that my vote to spend additional hard-earned dollars of taxpayers will do the job of producing better students. As recent tests demonstrate, merely pouring more money

into education programs has not solved the problem of improving the quality of our nation's students. When I started out in a two-room schoolhouse, it lacked high technology, even indoor plumbing and electricity. Yet, we learned the education basics that carried this nation to its current economic prosperity and its status as a technological innovator.

I believe that something much more fundamental is at the root of our education problems. If America ever hopes to improve the quality of her students, we must correct the shallow, substandard, often poor quality of education offered to our nation's children today.

Schools need far better discipline than is the case today, especially in urban schools. We need quality teachers who receive pay that is commensurate with the important responsibilities they carry in the education of our children. And we need textbooks that inform and challenge, rather than the worthless amalgams of touchy-feely, politically correct twaddle that fill student backpacks today. Parents need to get informed and get involved. Many schools do need modernization or repair, but let no one believe that school construction programs alone will solve all that is wrong with education in America today.

April 22, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's Crime Rate the Lowest in the Country

West Virginians have new evidence showing that our state's reputation for integrity and safety is fully deserved. That evidence comes from the recently released 1996 Uniform Crime Report, which, for the 24th year in a row, ranks West Virginia's crime rate as the lowest in the country.

According to the report, the incidence of murder, rape, robbery, and breaking and entering declined in West Virginia, while the total number of offenses statewide remained, at 2,485 per 100,000 residents, remarkably low. Still, the report does suggest some reasons for concern. West Virginia's crime rate is up slightly over the previous year, bucking a national trend of decreasing crime. Of particular concern is a 4-percent increase in West Virginia's violent crime rate, in the face of a 6-percent drop nationwide in violent crime.

While I applaud the latest statistics, we should do more to prevent criminals from making additional inroads into West Virginia. That is why I am a strong supporter of federal programs aimed at fighting crime. In fact, in 1994, when a massive anticrime bill came to a standstill due to a lack of sufficient funding, I created the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund. That trust fund supports many critical federal law enforce-

ment programs called for in the 1994 bill, ensuring a stronger arsenal for fighting crime in West Virginia and across the nation.

One of the notable successes of that bill was the establishment of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program -- an initiative intended to put an additional 100,000 police officers on the beat by the year 2000. As of March, the Department of Justice reports that 70,000 new police officers have been hired through COPS and claims that the program is largely responsible for measurable reductions in crime.

The trust fund also made possible the construction and operation of new prisons, drug enforcement programs, improved security at our nation's borders, and implementation of new programs aimed at combating violence against women.

While West Virginia has benefited from all of these programs, such initiatives could not succeed without a foundation of values that includes respect for law and order. West Virginians have traditionally been a law abiding people, resilient, honest, and God fearing. This is a tradition in which we should all take pride, and I expect that as long as it continues, West Virginia will continue to be the most crime-free state in the union.

April 29, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

High-Tech Protection From High Waters

Flooding can strike with unexpected ferocity in West Virginia's narrow river valleys, making every minute count in the race against Mother Nature's unbridled will. Entire West Virginia communities have been devastated by unrestrained floodwaters, and many citizens continue to live under an ever-present threat of flooding.

Concerned for the welfare of West Virginians who must contend with that threat, I have worked on the federal level to help communities throughout West Virginia protect themselves from flooding. One of the initiatives I have supported is the Integrated Flood Observation and Warning System, or IFLOWS, which is designed to monitor rainfall and give residents of flood-prone areas the additional warning time they may need to help save lives.

IFLOWS consists of a series of gages that measure the amount of rainfall in a given area. It was developed by the National Weather Service to help reduce the annual loss of life from flash floods, and limit property damage. The program began operations in 1981 with the installation of prototypes in Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky. While federal funding provides for the construction of the gages, system operation and maintenance are the responsibility of the state government.

Recently, I announced the completion of two new flood warning systems along the Cheat and Greenbrier Rivers. The addition of gages along these rivers -- a result of my addition of \$1 million to appropriations bills in 1995 and 1997 -- has allowed for the expansion of IFLOWS into the Automated Flood Warning System network. The network integrates and shares information from approximately 250 computers and 1,500 sensors in the 12 states where the technology is now in use.

The sophisticated signaling devices that make up the network allow for constant monitoring of rainfall and fluctuations in the level of water in streams and rivers. By providing timely and accurate information about rising waters, this system enhances the capability of the National Weather Service to predict floods, giving emergency personnel and residents critical lead time to prepare for evacuations. The Automated Flood Warning System network should provide a tremendous sense of relief to the residents of communities along the Cheat and Greenbrier Rivers and its tributaries that are vulnerable to rapidly rising floodwaters.

Thanks to high technology, mankind is finding ways to minimize the dangers posed by Mother Nature's wrath.

May 6, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Thoughts on the Death of a Friend

With countless West Virginians, I am saddened by the recent death of my longtime friend and colleague, Senator Jennings Randolph.

Jennings Randolph was a man possessed of a deep love for West Virginia and our nation.

An educator, writer, public speaker, an aviation enthusiast, a corporate executive, a U.S. Representative, and a U.S. Senator, Jennings Randolph possessed many talents.

He was a man of seemingly boundless energy and limitless horizons. Both in government and in his several other fields of interest and expression, Senator Randolph seemed constantly to be looking for ways to assist other people to achieve their own potential, or for avenues by which others might attain a better life for themselves.

In 1932, Jennings Randolph was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he served until January 3, 1947.

After twelve years, in 1958, he returned to national politics, winning election to complete the unexpired term of the late Senator Matthew Mansfield Neely.

West Virginians will long be indebted to Senator Randolph for the outstanding work that he did on the Senate Environment and

Public Works Committee and for projects that he pioneered through the Appalachian Regional Commission -- an effort of which he was a sponsor and a moving spirit.

Among his lesser known accomplishments was Senator Randolph's authorship of the legislation that created the National Air and Space Museum complex on the Mall in Washington -- noted today as one of the most popular tourist attractions in the Nation's Capital.

Jennings Randolph was responsible for numerous other types of important legislation as well -- legislation to aid the handicapped and black lung victims, to promote clean water and clean air, to provide vocational and career education, and to create the National Peace Academy in 1983.

In announcing his decision not to run for reelection to the Senate in the 1984 race, Jennings said, "It's been a happy road. I have no regrets....I believe the Bible says there is a season and a time for every purpose. It is time for me not to run for reelection."

Certainly, Jennings Randolph's career was a "happy road" for West Virginia, and I know that all of the people of our state join me in paying tribute to the memory of this great West Virginian.

May 13, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Safe to Serve Food

Compared to the citizens of many other countries, American consumers enjoy a virtual smorgasbord of foods available in their local supermarkets. In recent years, however, outbreaks of food-borne illnesses have raised a number of alarming questions about the safety of the U.S. food supply. Not only are Americans getting sick from eating contaminated food, but an estimated 9,000 deaths also occur annually in this country as a result of food-borne illnesses.

Beyond the problems associated with domestic foods, the expanding importation of foreign-grown fruits and vegetables presents new and worrisome challenges for the U.S. food-safety system. For example, in 1996 and again in 1997, outbreaks of food-borne illnesses in the United States were traced to raspberries imported from Guatemala that had been contaminated with the parasite *cyclospora*. In another untoward case, radish seed sprouts from the Far East were found to be infected with a strain of *E. coli*, a bacterium that has gained notoriety in recent years as the cause of highly publicized and, in some instances, rather mysterious outbreaks of serious, and sometimes fatal, illness.

Over the last decade, importation of foreign foods has almost doubled in the

U.S., with nearly 40 percent of fruit consumed in this country coming from abroad, and imported vegetables accounting for 12 percent of U.S. vegetable consumption.

To help ensure the safety of American consumers, I recently cosponsored a bill that would provide the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) with new authority to strengthen its oversight of imported foods. Current efforts to prevent the importation of contaminated foods are concentrated at ports of entry, and only a small percentage of imported foods are inspected or tested. The new food safety bill would allow the FDA to take a more proactive approach, extending the focus of the agency to include consideration of the conditions under which imported food products are grown and processed. This would greatly enhance the FDA's ability to identify potential hazards before tainted food reaches our borders.

The bill I have cosponsored will help to ensure that as our fruit, vegetable, and other food imports increase, the health and safety of American consumers are not jeopardized by flawed food-safety systems in other countries. American consumers have a right to expect that the food they put on the family table is safe to serve.

May 20, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Many Americans Lack Basic Reading Skills

Reading is one of the most important and rewarding human activities. It exercises the imagination, expands the mind, and enriches the soul.

Sadly, however, a recent report by the National Institute for Literacy found that as many as 44 million American adults perform at the lowest of five levels of literacy.

While persons scoring at this level can perform many tasks required to interpret basic documents, they typically have problems using the reading, writing, and computational skills that are considered essential in everyday life. Many are unable to perform such simple tasks as locating an intersection on a street map.

That study placed West Virginia sixteenth from the bottom in a ranking of states by literacy rates. Overall, it found that around one in every five West Virginia adults, or 20 percent, lack basic reading skills. Nationally, illiteracy rates ranged from 11 percent to 30 percent of the adult population in each of the 50 states.

The study also found a strong correlation between reading ability and economic status. Forty-three percent of U.S. adults with the lowest literacy skills live in poverty, compared to just four percent of those with

the most advanced literacy skills.

Clearly, in order to enhance the economy of our state and ensure the economic security of future generations, more attention must be directed toward the problem of illiteracy. The solution, however, will not be a simple one. Raising literacy rates throughout the nation will require commitment and great effort.

Parents need to read to their children. The love of reading is cultivated in the lap of a parent well before a child reaches school age.

Schools need to do their part, too. When college professors or high school teachers find students in their classrooms who lack the ability to read or write, obviously, something is terribly wrong with our schools.

I have always supported funding for education at the federal level, but the failure of students to demonstrate basic reading and writing skills makes me question the wisdom of putting more and more federal funding into an educational system that is producing a lower quality of students.

The high illiteracy rates reported by the National Institute for Literacy help to underscore my long-held contention that our schools need to get back to the basics! It is time for all parents to get informed and get involved.

May 27, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

America's Children Are Flunking History

Cicero, a great Roman Senator, said: "To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born, is to remain always a child."

Recent studies suggest that we are failing in our efforts to teach our children history. If so, we may soon hand over the reins of leadership to a generation that is ill prepared to steer the nation to continued success.

Since time immemorial, individuals have entertained and instructed one another by passing on stories about past events and people. It has long been understood that knowledge of the mistakes and successes of the past enhances the ability to understand the present and set goals for the future.

According to a 1994 study, however, only 17 percent of fourth graders, 14 percent of eighth graders, and 11 percent of twelfth graders, nationwide, are proficient in U.S. history. Half of the twelfth graders surveyed lacked basic history skills, as did one in three of the fourth and eighth graders.

A more recent report by the Fordham Foundation may help to explain why so many American students know so little about history. According to that report, which graded states on the quality of their history standards, thirteen states appeared to have no standards at all, and nineteen more states earned an "F" for their

poor standards. West Virginia, with a "C" rating, was ranked among the 10 best states.

How can we ensure that our children learn history? First, we need to prevent history from being lumped into a mishmash of different disciplines and served up under the name "social studies."

Second, states need to develop intelligent and comprehensive standards for teaching history, and to ensure that sufficient resources are provided to attain those standards. Teachers, however dedicated, cannot be expected to teach history effectively without adequate resources and support.

Parents, too, can play a key role in ensuring that their children get a solid grounding in history by finding out whether their state has history standards, and, if so, whether those standards are up to the task. They should also monitor their children's textbooks. To my dismay, I have seen a great many history textbooks in recent years that are pure junk. The great heroes of our past are often relegated to mere footnotes, buried in the pages of books aimed at entertaining, rather than informing.

Children must know and understand the past, else they will never be able to lead this country successfully into the future.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Paving the Way for a Better Future

For too long, the federal government has underinvested in our nation's highways. Now, with enactment of a new highway reauthorization bill, known as TEA-21, an important step has been taken toward fixing past mistakes and assuring Americans of safer, more modern highways.

Thanks to an amendment I authored to the highway bill, a portion of the federal gas taxes which had previously been allowed to accumulate, unspent, in the Highway Trust Fund will now be spent on highways. As a result, all of the federal taxes Americans pay at the gas pump will now be spent for the purposes they are collected; namely, the upkeep and expansion of our national highway and transit systems.

Also as a result of my amendment, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Corridor Highway system stands to receive \$2.25 billion over the next six years. My amendment not only provides an infusion of funding to the Corridor Highways over the course of TEA-21, but it also serves as an all-important foot in the door to help ensure that a consistent and reliable source of funding will be available in future years to bring to completion the 13-state system. Of the total ARC funding, West Virginia will receive about \$345 million for continued

construction of Corridor H in Eastern West Virginia and Corridor D in the Parkersburg area.

The struggle to build the Corridor Highways, first authorized in 1965, has been as uphill as the mountains of Appalachia, but my amendment has given renewed momentum to the effort to complete the 3,025-mile ARC system.

Working with U.S. Representative Nick Rahall -- who, as the ranking member of the House Surface Transportation Subcommittee, was a driving force during conference negotiations on the bill -- I also pressed for the inclusion of funds for other important highways in West Virginia. These include \$22.69 million for the Coalfields Expressway; \$50 million for West Virginia Route 10 from Logan to Man; and others throughout the state.

In addition to highways, TEA-21 provides funds for transit programs in our state. For example, at my request, the bill contains \$10 million to improve bus service throughout the state and authorizes funding for the modernization of the Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) system at West Virginia University in Morgantown.

With enactment of the new highway bill, West Virginians can take comfort in the knowledge that the future promises better, safer travel.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Acknowledging Academic Excellence

Every year at this time, high schools across West Virginia and the nation hold graduation ceremonies, heralding the successful completion of many years of academic training for our students. Many of them are preparing to continue the journey in colleges and universities, building on the foundation of knowledge they have gained from kindergarten through the twelfth grade.

Because of my own experiences, I have a special interest in encouraging others to make the necessary sacrifices to earn a college diploma. Toward that end, I have initiated two programs that reward students who exhibit scholastic excellence.

The first of these programs reached an important milestone this year. The Robert C. Byrd Scholastic Recognition Award program annually confers a \$50 U.S. Savings Bond upon each valedictorian of the graduating classes of West Virginia's public, parochial, and private high schools, and the Schools for the Deaf and Blind at Romney.

This is the thirtieth year for the Robert C. Byrd Scholastic Recognition Award. In that time, I have awarded 8,133 West Virginia students more than \$186,000 from the private trust fund that I established.

Another program I established to provide encouragement and financial assistance to studious young people is the national Robert C. Byrd Honors Schol-

arship program. Too many scholarship programs often overlook our nation's brightest students, because the reward of academic excellence is not always the priority of such programs. When I started the program in 1985, it awarded one-year, \$1,500 scholarships to students who demonstrated outstanding academic achievement and who had been accepted for enrollment at an institution of higher learning. My Senate colleagues named this scholarship in my honor. In 1993, the program expanded to provide four-year scholarships, making students who receive the first-year scholarship eligible to apply for stipends for the following three years.

This year, 40 West Virginia high school seniors have been selected to receive the national scholarship, bringing to 520 the number of West Virginia students who have been awarded the scholarship since it was first established.

Too often, scholarships are awarded on the basis of excellence on a playing field, and not enough priority is given toward excellence in the classroom. Through the Byrd Scholarship and the Scholastic Recognition Award, students who succeed in the classroom receive the acknowledgment they deserve.

I congratulate all of this year's winners, and I wish them every success in the pursuit of their education in the years ahead.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Helping Business Reach the Cutting Edge

Many of America's factories have been slow to incorporate computers and robotics into their manufacturing processes, lagging behind some foreign competitors. Today, that is changing, as American industry increasingly goes high-tech. But, thus far, most efforts in that direction have come from the nation's big manufacturers. Smaller manufacturers, with an equal need to harness new technology, have not kept pace, lacking the resources to make the leap to cutting-edge production.

The Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI) for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing, a unique blend of academia and industry working together, is helping small-and medium-sized manufacturers to harness high-tech change.

Since it was launched at Marshall University in 1989 with \$2.9 million in funding I added to an appropriations bill, the RCBI has aided a growing list of companies in making the high-tech transition, with an emphasis on defense-related manufacturing.

Today, the Byrd Institute's four West Virginia locations are "teaching factories," where a manufacturer and its employees can obtain low-cost, hands-on experience and training with the automated equipment that they need to be competitive.

Now, in a dramatic step toward the future, the RCBI has invested \$11 million in funding I added to appropriations bills for new state-of-the-art equipment at its four locations, bringing cutting-edge technology within easy reach of more West Virginia

manufacturers.

The Byrd Institute's downtown Huntington facility is in the final stages of a \$1 million renovation and expansion.

The RCBI Charleston Technology Center, operated in partnership with the Marshall University Graduate College, serves manufacturers throughout the Kanawha Valley.

Meeting the needs of North-Central West Virginia's growing aerospace industry is the primary goal of the RCBI Bridgeport Technology Facility. With funding that I have provided through the federal appropriations process, Bridgeport has evolved into a center of aerospace and aviation activity, and the new RCBI facility is dedicated to helping promote that industry's continued growth in the region.

The Byrd Institute's Rocket Center Technology Facility in Mineral County addresses the needs of manufacturers in West Virginia's rapidly growing Eastern Panhandle. Housed at the Allegany Ballistics Laboratory -- a Navy-owned, contractor-operated plant -- this fourth RCBI location focuses on metals manufacturing and fabrication.

The future of our state and nation depends upon the ability of our private sector to compete economically in the global arena. The Robert C. Byrd Institute for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing exemplifies how government and academia can help industry to prepare our nation for the economic challenges of the approaching millennium.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Expanding Preventive Care for Seniors

Health care costs have risen sharply, often placing quality care out of the budget for senior citizens, delaying checkups and preventive care. To reverse this trend, I supported efforts in last summer's budget resolution to provide Medicare coverage for preventive care for the 331,000 West Virginians who rely on the program.

In January, Medicare started covering annual mammograms for women aged 40 and over. The program also expanded coverage for colorectal screening. Beginning this month, preventive coverage will include the cost of bone mass measurement screening for certain Medicare-eligible women at high risk for osteoporosis.

Also this month, Medicare will begin to pay for certain training, education, and testing services to help diabetics learn to manage their disease, and will extend its coverage of self-testing equipment, currently provided to juvenile diabetics, to include Type II diabetics.

This new step is especially important for the 100,000 West Virginians who have diabetes, of whom only about half have been diagnosed. Many learn of their diabetes only after developing one of its many devastating consequences.

That is why preventive care is so important. The American Diabetes Association reports that more than 4,000 West Virginians die every year from diabetes and its complications. If those cases were diagnosed

earlier, doctors might be able to save many lives. A diagnosis of cancer in an early stage of that disease also helps to increase the chances of survival.

Preventive Medicare coverage complements programs already in place in West Virginia. For example, the annual mammogram coverage is an excellent partner for the statewide breast and cervical cancer prevention, education, and screening project. This initiative, launched in 1990 with \$5 million I added to an appropriation bill, offers screenings to West Virginians who otherwise might not have access to such tests.

In addition, researchers at the Robert C. Byrd Cancer Research Laboratory, part of the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center at West Virginia University, are constantly looking for new cancer treatments. The Center is West Virginia's first statewide cancer research and treatment facility, and was established in part with \$13.3 million I added to appropriations bills in 1985, 1986, and 1987.

When medical problems are identified early, they can be handled more easily and usually at lower cost. However, if the problems are not diagnosed early, the treatment often becomes more costly and complex. By expanding Medicare's coverage of preventive care and treatment, we help to improve the health and quality of life of our citizens.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Be Aware When Rebuilding From Floods

Once again, West Virginians are cleaning up from a round of severe flooding that has exacted a heavy toll from our people and our state. I know from past disasters that as families begin to put their lives back together, they will need the support and assistance of their friends and neighbors throughout West Virginia, as well as individuals from across the country.

Unfortunately, sometimes there are unsavory individuals who offer help only to help themselves to the hard-earned money of unsuspecting people in need. Posing as skilled laborers, these scam artists will promise to repair damage to homes and businesses, but never deliver on those promises. Their only real skill is knowing how to bilk disaster victims in their time of trouble.

To protect yourself, as you hire a contractor to repair or rebuild your home, keep these thoughts in mind.

Check the contractor's background and reputation. Call the West Virginia Attorney General's Consumer Protection Hotline at 1-800-368-8808 to determine the contractor's complaint history. You can also contact your local builders' association or building trades council as sources of information.

Always ask for references. Contractors who want to work on your home should be willing to provide you with the names and phone numbers of previous

customers.

Make sure the contractor is insured. Be sure the contractor you hire has workers' compensation and disability insurance. You could be liable for accidents on your property if the contractor is not properly insured.

Ask for a written estimate. Make sure your request and the estimate include everything you expect the contractor to do.

Ask for a contract. It might be worthwhile to get legal advice before you sign.

Do not pay in advance. Hold all or a substantial portion of your payment until work is completed and accepted by you.

Having witnessed the devastation caused by numerous floods over the years, I have observed that flood protection and prevention are key priorities. In recent weeks, I have secured more than \$23 million for flood control and prevention initiatives throughout West Virginia. Ranging from dam repair to statewide flood prevention planning, these efforts will help to save lives and protect property for West Virginians living along flood-prone creeks and rivers.

It is my hope that, through these and other measures I have supported with federal funding, West Virginians will be better protected from flooding in the future.

July 8, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Insuring Against Flood Losses

As West Virginia is heavily involved in rebuilding and recovering from this latest round of severe flooding, we are all reminded of the need for flood insurance. Homeowners' insurance policies do not cover flood damage. Too many people learn this fact only after the floodwaters have ripped through their homes, which is why it is so important to carry flood insurance.

In the spring of 1997, when heavy rains caused destruction in 16 West Virginia counties, more than 3,700 people applied for disaster assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Of those claimants, fewer than nine percent had flood insurance.

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) licenses insurance agents and companies which then make flood insurance available to people living in communities that adopt and enforce flood plain management plans. In West Virginia, 262 communities participate in the NFIP. Residents can purchase flood coverage through any licensed property insurance agent who is in good standing with the West Virginia Department of Insurance.

Premiums vary according to the property's flood risk, the amount of coverage purchased, the deductible selected, and the type of building being insured. Across the country, the average premium is about

\$300 a year for about \$98,000 in coverage. The policies can cover homes, apartments, and other types of residential and commercial property.

Until the late 1960's, most property owners could not purchase insurance against flood damage. Private insurance firms, afraid of the potential for catastrophic losses, did not want to assume the financial risk alone. In 1968, Congress took steps to lift that burden by creating the NFIP to provide affordable insurance to people who live in areas with the greatest risk of flooding.

In 1996, the Flood Insurance Program almost ended. However, I cosponsored an amendment to a federal funding bill that extended the program's authorization. Since then, the NFIP has been able to move ahead and provide affordable insurance coverage to people living in high-risk areas.

I have seen the destruction caused by flooding in West Virginia. In many cases, victims never imagined that a flood would strike their home, and the damage is often not severe enough to warrant a federal disaster declaration. Flood insurance is the best way to ensure that you will be compensated for any losses that occur, no matter what the strength of the floodwaters.

July 15, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Supreme Victory over the Line-Item Veto

All Americans should breathe a sigh of relief that the U.S. Supreme Court, in its recent ruling, has found the Line Item Veto Act unconstitutional, because the Court, in so finding, has spared an American birthright for yet awhile longer.

When the Framers of the Constitution met in Philadelphia in 1787, they painstakingly crafted one of the simplest, yet most enduring documents ever printed -- its central notion being that the power of the United States government ultimately rests in the hands of its citizens. Thanks to their familiarity with history and philosophy, the Framers knew that power concentrated in the hands of one individual or one branch of government poses a direct threat to personal liberty. Accordingly, they devised a complex system of divided powers in the expectation that future generations would understand and respect the intimate link between the organization of government and the protection of their own liberties.

Essential to that system of divided powers, the Framers realized, was the vesting in Congress -- the people's branch -- of the power over the purse. That power, they recognized, would provide the Congress, and through it the people, with an important check on the executive and judicial branches of government.

I believe that Justice Kennedy put it well when, in concurring with the majority opinion of the Court, he wrote, "By increasing the power of the President beyond what the Framers envisioned, the [line-item veto] statute compromises the liberty of our citizens, liberty which the separation of powers seeks to secure." His words echo those of the 18th century philosopher Montesquieu, who wrote, "When the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person, or in the same body of magistrates, there can be no liberty...."

The Framers took seriously the tyrannical threat posed by vesting too much power in one man or one body, and they took pains to guard against that threat.

Our Constitution embodies their vision, their dream of freedom, supported by the genius of practical structure which has come to be known as the checks and balances and separation of powers. If the fragile wings of that structure are ever impaired, then the dream can never again soar as high.

For me, a long, difficult journey is happily ended. The wisdom of the Framers has once again prevailed, and the slow undoing of the people's liberties has been halted, at least for now.

July 22, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Bringing Families Back Together

Summer's glorious skies and longer days bring with them vacations, picnics, and that most American of traditions: the family reunion. Reunions provide an opportunity for family members to come together in celebration of their common roots and heritage and to preserve the traditions that make our state unique.

Throughout the summer months, legions of native West Virginians, many now residing out of state, journey back to the old home place, making the annual reunion the centerpiece of their family vacations. On almost any summer weekend, West Virginians perched on old porch swings witness the passing by of family cars, following familiar country roads, drawn to fellowship, fresh air, and down-home cooking.

From vans and trucks and cars pour giddy children, glad to be free, at last, to roam and romp in cool mountain air. Tables scattered under the graceful branches of old sycamore, oak, and maple trees overflow with lovingly prepared casseroles, steaming baked beans, creamy potato salads, flavorful home-grown tomatoes, and, of course, that favorite pie from the old family recipe, a closely guarded secret.

Before anyone lifts fork to lips, a family elder calls on the Creator, offering thanksgiving for the blessings of the past and asking for future blessings.

Well fed adults doze in the warm afternoon sun, while the unofficial family historian takes a seat on an old oak stump to tell once more the oft-repeated family tales. These shared stories, passed down from generation to generation, help to instill in the children a respect for their forebears and for the "old values" that are the cornerstones of a good and happy life.

Later, revived by the breeze and the spray of a cool brook, cousins choose sides for a baseball game. Sack races and water balloon tosses keep the youngest entertained. The sound of laughter and happiness echoes around the mountain.

When shadows grow long on the verdant hills, the packing begins for the journey home. Those gathered depart, each with the certain knowledge that, as West Virginians, they are specially blessed. Fond memories of the day spent reminiscing and rejoicing with kith and kin will linger throughout the year.

This summer, as hundreds of Mountain State families reunite to give thanks for their blessings and to share the stories of their forebears, let us also take time to reflect upon our own family's beginnings, and to celebrate the special way of life enjoyed by those who are fortunate to call West Virginia home.

July 29, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Back to School

Classrooms around West Virginia soon will be buzzing with activities as another school year gets underway. In these waning days of summer vacation, it is a good time to take stock of the many achievements of our students and educators, and to consider the steps that may need to be taken to meet the challenges that lay ahead.

During the 1997-98 school year, West Virginia, for the second year in a row, posted the highest marks for education of any state in the nation in the "Quality Counts" report released annually by Education Week magazine. West Virginia tied only with Connecticut for top honors in the study, which grades states on standards and assessments, quality of teaching, school climate, and adequacy, equity, and allocation of resources. In another impressive achievement, West Virginia was one of just seven states reported to have made significant gains in the national fourth grade mathematics test.

The National Geographic Society, earlier this year, recognized West Virginia as a national model in geography education. National Geographic Chairman Gilbert Grosvenor hailed the state as "one of the best examples in the country of putting essential geography into a statewide system." Moreover, the Fordham Foundation, a private organization committed to quality-based school reform, recently listed West Virginia

as one of only six states to receive honor grades for adopting clear, comprehensive, and rigorous standards for geography education.

These are impressive successes that deserve high praise. But West Virginia, like every state, continues to face a number of challenges in the effort to provide the best possible education for our children.

In today's global environment -- where technology has bridged the once-imposing barriers between countries and continents -- students in Weirton, or Moorefield, or Spencer are not merely competing with students in neighboring counties or states. They are competing with students in Osaka, Japan, and in Stuttgart, Germany, and other cities around the world, and that means they need world-class educational programs.

Improving education is not a matter of throwing more money into the education pot, or trying the latest education gimmick, or lowering standards so that all students can devolve to the lowest common denominator. It is a matter of getting back to the basics, instituting real discipline, setting high standards, and encouraging excellence.

West Virginia's students and educators deserve a pat on the back for their recent achievements. Now they must take that progress and strive for even greater successes.

August 5, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Cracking Down on Deadbeat Parents

Instead of the traditional two-parent, "Ozzie and Harriet" family of thirty years ago, many families today are often led by a single parent. In an age when divorce is far too prevalent, it is not uncommon to see a single parent struggling to raise children while working full time. Unfortunately, many of these single parents must bear an additional burden created by the other parent who has deserted his or her responsibility to contribute to the children's well-being.

In June, I supported legislation, which was recently signed into law, to crack down on delinquent parents. The Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act closes loopholes which had previously allowed parents to slip across state lines to avoid paying child support. Specifically, the new law creates a first-time felony offense for parents owing \$10,000 or more in child support payments, or being delinquent for two years. In addition, it is now a felony for a parent to cross a state border with the intent of evading child support when the amount owed is \$5,000 or more, or is more than one year past due.

The new law toughens legislation I supported that passed the Congress in 1992. The Child Support Recovery Act made it a misdemeanor to purposely avoid making child support

payments to a child in another state. In the five years since that law was enacted, child support collections have increased by nearly 50 percent.

Delinquent parents should not be allowed to neglect their responsibilities to their children. Too often, the lack of full and timely child support can place families in financial jeopardy. It can cause the responsible parent to have to choose between paying a month's health insurance premium or paying the rent. In many cases, it can leave the family in dire economic straits. On occasion, the parent raising the children is forced to work overtime hours or get a second job to make up for the financial shortfalls the family faces, only to forfeit the precious time needed to supervise children's activities and provide emotional support and moral guidance.

The Congress cannot force a person to be a loving, involved parent, but it can strengthen the government's ability to make parents fulfill their minimum legal responsibility to provide financial support for their children. The deliberate evasion of this basic obligation ought not to be tolerated. Delinquent parents, not their children, should be punished for the deplorable decision to avoid paying child support.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Political Incorrectness

America has always had an uncanny ability to absorb people of different races, religions, nationalities, and abilities, and to inspire them to embrace the ideals of freedom and work toward the common good of the nation, without destroying their individuality.

But today's trendy, misguided urge to vigorously emphasize in contemporary thought and speech, not the value and worth of individual differences, but the inoffensive security of "sameness," seems to me to be going against the time-honored grain that has fostered the successful development of a richly diverse, yet united, nation.

In order to avoid offending anyone in any way, we have come up with such linguistic acrobatics as Chair to replace the title of Chairman. I hear this expression repeatedly as people struggle in vain to find a politically correct way to address the person who chairs a committee or the person occupying the Senate President's chair at the front of the chamber. Carried to its logical conclusion, the absurdity of political correctness becomes abundantly apparent.

For instance, what, in perfectly politically correct phrasing, do we conjure up to replace such expressions as "manhole cover", "manhood", "man-hour", "manhunt", "man overboard",

"manhandle", or "fireman"?

We should all stop this unhealthy preoccupation with political correctness and seriously consider for a moment what effect it has had on the content of public dialogue in general. In order not to risk offending anyone, we tend to ignore all of the truly valuable and important aspects of each individual, such as brainpower, level of achievement, talent, or quality of character.

On a more subtle level, political correctness has encouraged us to become much less honest with one another and with ourselves and, as a result, much less willing and able to come to grips with the troubling problems which beset our land. Often, in our tortured efforts not to offend anybody, we in public life mentally partition our population, obscuring the inarguable fact that we are all citizens of the United States of America and that our fates -- and therefore the fate of the entire nation -- all hang together.

Personally, I hope that political correctness will soon go the way of high-button shoes or the lace-up corset. It is shopworn window dressing, far too constricting for a fast-moving, difficult age, crying out for courageous leaders, frank discussion, and innovative solutions.

August 19, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Blessed Are the Hands of Toil!

Every September, Americans celebrate Labor Day, a homage to the working men and women who helped to build the United States into the economic powerhouse that it is today. We honor the backbreaking toil that laid the first railroad track, dug the harbors and the ports, channeled the rivers, welded the steel-girded backbone of skyscrapers, and constructed so many more marvels that have forever changed our lives.

In West Virginia, back-breaking toil and labor have never been strangers, whether in steel or glass production, logging, timbering, or manufacturing. The bedrock of West Virginia's economy has long been rooted deep in coal seams, reaching below the earth's surface where men toiled in hard and dangerous jobs. Labor unions were critical in helping to bring about humane working conditions in the deep abysses of these mines. Thanks largely to the efforts of labor organizations, the pay and benefits have come to more nearly reflect the skills and courage needed to perform the job.

West Virginia's past is written across the surface of her mountains as well, in the roads that wind through narrow hollows where the settlers scratched out small homesteads, in the wakes of laden barges coursing along her rivers, and in the rail lines that loop along steep valley walls. Quiet, deter-

mined men and women helped to make all this possible.

Technological advancements are shaping West Virginia as well. We do not have Silicon Valley, but we have Software Valley, an initiative aimed at helping West Virginia companies to better compete in the global high technology arena. Mountaineer Doctor Television enables doctors in rural areas to consult across the miles via computer links with medical specialists in Morgantown and Charleston. West Virginians are harnessing new manufacturing techniques, exploring alternative energy uses, and developing more efficient and environmentally friendly methods of producing the foods that Americans put on their tables.

I am proud to honor the workers of the United States and of West Virginia. By their sweat, skill, and intellect, they have helped to make this country a land of prosperity and of promise. Here, it is still possible for a good idea and sheer hard work to pay off, both for an individual and for the economy. That possibility, that opportunity, has kept the flame of optimism alive through good times and bad, and is at the core of our national belief that any problem, any challenge, can be met and overcome by hard work.

August 26, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Hanging Up on Telemarketing Scams

For many years, telemarketing fraud has been a problem for citizens in West Virginia and across the country, especially for seniors. One of the most prevalent white-collar crimes in the country, telemarketing fraud robs honest people of an estimated \$40 billion a year. As one telemarketing con artist explained to The Washington Post recently, the scams are not very difficult to create: "People are so lonely, so tired of life, they can't wait for the phone to ring. It's worth \$300 to \$400 to them to think that they've got a friend. That's what you play on." But now, seniors are fighting back!

In a unique partnership, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) have teamed together in an operation called Senior Sentinel to catch these fraudulent telemarketers in the act. Retired law enforcement officers and volunteers, recruited by the AARP, go undercover to record the "sales pitch" of the scam artist. In the last five years, the senior volunteers have taped about 11,000 conversations with scam artists. These tapes and other law enforcement efforts have resulted in the criminal prosecution of more than 1,000 people on federal charges.

The Senior Sentinel volunteers have helped to

identify a wide variety of phony telemarketing approaches ranging from fake charities and investment schemes to the so-called premium promotions in which people are guaranteed one of four or five valuable prizes. Once enticed by the prospect of a prize, the victim is pressured to buy an overpriced product in exchange for some cheap gadget. Despite their promises, all that the scam artists deliver is disappointment.

This summer, I supported legislation, which was recently signed into law, increasing the penalties for con artists who purposely target senior citizens. In addition to longer jail terms, the new law requires convicted offenders to forfeit any real or personal property they obtained from the scam. The law also enhances the penalties for those people who mastermind the phony telemarketing scheme.

West Virginians who suspect they may be the target of a fraudulent marketing scheme might wish to call the West Virginia Attorney General's Consumer Protection Hotline at 1-800-368-8808. In addition, the National Fraud Information Center at 1-800-876-7060 can offer assistance or information. Fraudulent telemarketers must not be allowed to bilk honest citizens out of their economic security.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Protecting Patients' Rights

Managed care -- be it called a health maintenance organization, preferred provider organization, or point-of-service plan -- is a growing reality in the health care industry in West Virginia. In these plans, a patient chooses a primary care physician from a list of doctors covered by the plan. That physician then coordinates all of the patient's health care. Across the country, 85 percent of all insured employees have moved out of traditional fee-for-service health plans and into managed care programs. This change has, at least in part, been positive, resulting in increased numbers of children receiving vaccinations, more women having mammograms, and lower costs for many services. Simultaneously, however, concerns are growing about who is truly responsible for making medical decisions.

In a typical managed care plan, many decisions that would have been made privately between a doctor and patient are shifted to an insurance company office. In too many cases, people are denied care or are forced to navigate a maze of bureaucratic red tape before receiving needed treatment.

For this reason, I am cosponsoring Senate Bill 1890, the Patients' Bill of Rights, which would provide patients with basic protections when medical decisions are being made. This legislation would (1) guarantee patients greater access to information and

care, including access to specialists and emergency rooms, (2) help to create a fair appeals process when health plans deny care, (3) expand choice, (4) ensure that medical decisions are made as part of the traditional doctor-patient relationship, and (5) hold managed care companies accountable for decisions that result in patient harm.

In West Virginia, the Patients' Bill of Rights would make a difference for all privately insured people and those covered by health plans funded through employer-employee contributions. It would provide protections currently not guaranteed, including referrals to health care providers not covered by a managed care plan, permission for a patient to continue to see his or her primary care physician even after the doctor leaves the plan, and the creation of an independent ombudsman for consumers who encounter difficulties with their managed care system.

Too often, patients find that the biggest challenge to getting well and staying well is a health care system which has profits, rather than patients' needs, as its focus. As more West Virginians move into managed care systems, they deserve basic patient protections. The Patients' Bill of Rights will help to ensure that people receive the medical care they need, when and where they need it.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Ending a Deadly Trend

Over the years, the culture of colleges has, unfortunately, changed from one of academics and study to one consumed too much with partying. Gathering at the library to prepare for an exam has taken a backseat to swilling beers at a party or ordering a round of shots at the closest bar. Surveys show that more than 85 percent of all college students, most of whom are under age 21, imbibe alcohol, whether it be a beer, a glass of wine, or some other potent concoction. More than 40 percent of the students are binge drinkers, consuming five or more drinks at one sitting within a two-week period.

The risks associated with these trends are enormous. In the past two years, there have been several incidents in which students have died due to alcohol poisoning or excessive inebriation. In Virginia, for instance, five students died within a one-month time span in alcohol-related accidents. Alcohol is a factor in the three leading causes of death for 15- to 24-year-olds — accidents, homicides, and suicides. Links have been identified between alcohol use and teen pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

To address these troubling statistics, I added an amendment to the Higher Education Act of 1998 aimed at reducing alcohol use at the nation's colleges and universities. My amendment establishes a program to annually recog-

nize ten schools across the country that have developed innovative and effective alcohol prevention policies.

Through this program, each eligible institution, in recognition of its efforts to combat alcohol abuse, will receive a grant of \$50,000 to help maintain and improve each respective program. In addition, the U.S. Department of Education will distribute a publication to prospective college students and their parents through high school guidance counselors highlighting these schools' efforts.

Already, West Virginia's colleges and universities are taking steps to combat the problem of alcohol abuse. At West Virginia University (WVU), for example, the school's administration and student leaders have been working with Morgantown officials to find ways to avoid the problems related to binge drinking. WVU also provides late-night activities for students who might otherwise have considered drinking. In addition to offering alternatives, WVU provides an integrated program of alcohol abuse prevention, including the recent hiring of two drug and alcohol educators.

Schools that excel in combating alcohol abuse on campus deserve special recognition. It is my hope that these schools will move others to take a stronger stance against underage drinking by students.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Protecting West Virginia's Steel Industry

West Virginia businesses and industries are developing strong abilities to compete in the global marketplace. In fact, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce, our industries are doing so well that, since 1994, international exports by West Virginia companies have increased by more than 41 percent.

West Virginia companies can successfully compete internationally when there is a level playing field. Unfortunately, domestic steel makers have been forced to contend with foreign subsidies that tip the playing field, change the rules, and make steel trade unfair for American companies. One significant problem for domestic steel companies, like Weirton Steel, has been the subsidies provided by the South Korean government to its second largest steel manufacturer, Hanbo Steel.

Because of these subsidies, Hanbo has been able to severely undercut the worldwide average market price of steel and, thereby, gain the upper hand in selling its steel, including here in the United States. In the first four months of 1998, U.S. steel imports from South Korea have increased by almost 45 percent over the same period of time in 1997. Much of those imports are in the form of pipe and tube, cold-rolled steel, and galvanized sheet metal -- all products that companies like Weirton Steel produce. The result: Hanbo is

literally taking money out of the pockets of West Virginia families and putting it into the South Korean government bank account.

On behalf of the thousands of families in West Virginia's Upper Ohio Valley and throughout the country who rely on the steel industry for their livelihoods, I recently added an amendment to a federal appropriations bill calling for a report by the United States Trade Representative on trade subsidies provided by South Korea to its domestic steel industry. This amendment follows on another I offered earlier this year, which was adopted by the Congress, to ensure that resources from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are not used to undermine the U.S. steel industry. After the approval of the IMF-related amendment, the South Korean government temporarily stopped its steel subsidies. My latest effort is aimed at increasing the pressure on South Korea to end the subsidies for good.

I have long stood with the working families of West Virginia, keeping watch for unfair foreign trade practices and policies that might rig the game against them. I will continue to work for fair trading practices and to prevent this kind of subsidy from harming West Virginia families and industries again.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Striving for Classroom Excellence

Plato long ago wrote, "Excellent things are rare." Indeed, excellence is uncommon, and excellent acts, because of their remarkable nature and the effort they require, earn respect and admiration.

Earlier this year, I took an opportunity to speak in the Senate about some bright spots in education in West Virginia. In those remarks, I recognized two West Virginians who have been honored for their outstanding educational achievements -- Heather Wilson from Jefferson County and Susan Lee Barrett from Nicholas County. Wilson, a student at P.A. Mowery Elementary School in Shenandoah Junction, was selected as a National Runner-Up in the Reading is Fundamental 1998 National Reading Celebration. The Reading is Fundamental program annually challenges students to meet or exceed specific age-based reading goals.

Barrett, a teacher at Richwood's Cherry River Elementary School, was named the West Virginia Teacher of the Year for 1998 in recognition of her leadership in education reform. Even the most driven and ambitious students can falter in the hands of an unqualified, incompetent teacher. Educational success depends upon quality teachers. Susan Lee Barrett is a fine example of the kind of teacher we want in all of our classrooms.

In the United States today, one of the commodities most in demand is excellence in education. Unfortunately, too many American school systems employ teachers who lack the basic skills necessary to teach even at the most fundamental level, and classrooms abound with undisciplined students who close their minds to learning before ever opening the covers of their textbooks. As a consequence of these and other factors, the United States lags behind many other countries in student achievement.

If this country is to have any real hope of forging ahead in the realm of education, we must produce better teachers and students. Susan Lee Barrett and Heather Wilson have proved that good teachers and students do exist. They also underscore the basic fact that a strong educational system relies on the quality contribution of both teachers and students.

While the gift of intelligence may be planted upon birth, it requires cultivation to blossom into culture and wisdom. It is the inspiring teacher and the dedicated student who, together, possess the magic to make brilliance. In the early days of another school year, I encourage West Virginians to follow in the footsteps of these two pacesetters, and strive toward excellence in education.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Early Detection Key to Cancer Survival

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time of year when doctors and breast cancer survivors speak out, urging women to take time to learn about the disease. Programs offering education, cancer screenings, and other special services will mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month events across the country.

In West Virginia, the American Cancer Society estimates that this year 1,200 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer while nearly 300 women will die from the disease. Across the country, one of every nine women will develop breast cancer in her lifetime, up from a risk that was just one in 14 in 1960. More than 43,500 women will lose their battle with the disease this year, while 178,700 will begin their fight.

However, breast cancer does not always result in death. When a breast tumor is found in its earliest stages, a woman has a better than 90 percent chance of long-term survival. Advancements in treatments and prevention give women a better chance of surviving breast cancer and leading a happy, active life. But finding the disease early is the most important step.

The easiest way to detect breast cancer is through a combination of regular self-exams and clinical mammographies. Doctors can provide instructions on how to properly administer the self-exams. A mam-

mography is a simple and fast procedure available at many of the clinics and hospitals across West Virginia.

For many years, I have supported increases in cancer research funding and the development of new facilities. The statewide breast and cervical cancer prevention, education, and screening project, launched in 1990 with \$5 million I added to an appropriation bill, offers screenings to West Virginians who otherwise might not have access to such tests.

In addition, scientists at the Robert C. Byrd Cancer Research Laboratory, part of the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center at West Virginia University, are constantly searching for new cancer treatments. The Center, established in part with \$13.3 million I added to a series of federal appropriations bills, is West Virginia's first statewide cancer research and treatment facility.

These efforts, combined with research underway across the country, will hopefully one day lead to a cure for cancer. That will be a glorious day. But, until there is a cure, the battle against cancer must also take place in every home across West Virginia. Loved ones should be encouraged to take the necessary steps to look for the signs of the disease. Early detection is the key to survival.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

"You Know" Must Go

Much has been said about the so-called "lost art" of writing. The ubiquity of telephones and, more recently, electronic mail, as well as the growing acceptability of alternative presentations -- posters, pictures, plays -- in lieu of written essays in schools, can all be cited as contributors to the growing inability of many people to compose and edit well-organized and effective written documents.

Further, the speed of today's electronic communication with its instant responses inhibits the kind of thoughtful consideration of messages and care in editing that are the hallmarks of good letters and great literature. This trend means that the future's historical archives are likely to be littered with sentence fragments, incomplete thoughts, and embarrassing misspellings.

The Framers of the Constitution were certainly well read and good writers, characteristics that enhanced their speaking performance. Doubtless, their ability to organize the spoken word was key to their ability to reason and to convince one another of their views as they struggled to lay out our form of government.

Today, however, it often seems that we are awash in all-too-common fillers that plague common conversation today, especially "you knows" that are uttered

by those unaware of how their mouths are filling the time between words while their mind is still struggling to complete the thought.

There is almost nothing more irritating than suffering through countless "you knows" while trying desperately to discern what message the speaker is attempting to convey. Perhaps it is the television age, characterized by the seamless reading from scripts, that makes us unable to tolerate listening to pauses of any length, and, therefore, unconsciously we try not to allow even a few seconds of quietude to fill the air.

Clearly, a moment of silence is preferable to a string of "you knows." Imagine, if you can, the great speeches of history filled with "you know." Would the Gettysburg Address have so inspired us had it been littered with such space keepers? Would Shakespearean characters so enchant us? Would Roosevelt's call to arms after the attack at Pearl Harbor have so motivated us?

Ridding a person's speech of such verbal trash may not make an individual a leader of nations or of men -- that requires great thoughts as well as a clear and stirring delivery -- but resorting habitually to such verbal litter can surely blight the path to greatness.

October 14, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

On the Cutting Edge of Medical Research

Through funding I added to a federal appropriations bill this year, planning and design will soon begin on a new world-class education and technology center to be based at West Virginia University (WVU). This new facility will expand the work of WVU's existing Positron Emission Tomography (PET) center, allowing scientists and physicians around the world to share research results, to better train health care workers, and to deliver improved patient care at a lower cost.

PET scanning is a highly accurate and noninvasive procedure, providing information that cannot be gathered through other techniques such as MRI or CT-scan. In a PET test, patients are injected with small quantities of a radioactive tracer material, which breaks down quickly after the test without harmful side effects. The tracer is carried in the bloodstream to the organ the doctor wants to study. A scanner maps the tracer, recording data about the organ which is analyzed and used by doctors to more accurately diagnose often dangerous medical conditions.

Though tremendously beneficial, PET is still too expensive for many smaller hospitals, clinics, and laboratories. This new national center will greatly enhance the ability of medical institutions throughout the country -- through the use of

communications technologies like Mountaineer Doctor Television -- to offer patients this diagnostic technology while filling a critical need for a national education center to support the development of PET.

This is perhaps the most important aspect of this new clinic. By putting PET technology within reach of clinics and hospitals in rural areas, West Virginia doctors and technicians will be able to diagnose many medical problems like brain cancer or heart disease at earlier stages while they are highly treatable. Since early detection is the key to patients' survival in many illnesses, PET possesses tremendous life-saving potential.

Throughout my career of public service, I have strived to ensure accessible medical care for West Virginians. From providing funding for rural clinics and supporting home health programs, to launching screening, testing, and research initiatives, I have tried to help meet the medical needs of West Virginians, many of whom live several miles from the nearest hospital. This new PET center will provide yet another means for improving the accessibility of state-of-the-art health care to all West Virginians, while putting West Virginia at the forefront of a critically needed, cutting-edge medical technique.

October 21, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Moving Ahead with School Safety

Every morning, children pack their school bags and leave their homes for another day of lessons at school, confident that they will return home safely that evening. Regretfully, we as parents, grandparents, educators, and legislators realize that, just a few months ago, some of our nation's schools resembled war zones, stained with blood and the tragic loss of life. We now face the formidable challenge of rebuilding the safer and more serene school environment that every student deserves.

In an effort to provide West Virginians with an up-to-date school safety resource, I have created a new branch of my web site (www.senate.gov/~byrd/schl-main.htm) which contains the latest information on school safety. This web site is designed to be an electronic resource book, complete with descriptions of initiatives underway in West Virginia, updates on federal funding available for violence prevention efforts, and some of the latest information on legislation moving through Congress.

I have also introduced legislation to provide for the establishment of school violence prevention hotlines. Such a hotline would provide parents, students, and teachers with a means of reporting potentially threatening situations and dangerous individuals to authorities. Once alerted, authorities can work to prevent a disturbed individual in need

of help from taking that next, possibly fatal, step.

To help address school safety problems, the Congress recently approved more than \$335 million in new school safety programs in an omnibus appropriations bill. Of that funding, more than \$167.5 million has been set aside to increase community policing in and around schools. Officers and educators alike believe that having a familiar police presence in the hallways and a cruiser in the parking lot helps to reduce violence at school. Another \$151 million is devoted to a variety of community efforts, which include providing alternative education settings for students who are expelled for bringing a gun to school, providing specialized training for teachers and school security officers, and responding to disruptive and violent behavior by students.

Our nation has been grappling with the issue of improved school safety for years, and I find it alarming that American school children continue to face increasing crime and violence. In recent years, I have supported federal efforts aimed at solving this problem. But I would like nothing better than to see these programs grow obsolete as horrible incidents of school ground violence dissolve into distant memories.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

On Guard for Our Veterans

Fifty years ago, the Soviet Union attempted to enforce a blockade of all the overland and air routes to Berlin. The Soviets wanted to cut Berlin's ties to the rest of the world and take control of Germany, but America and the other Allied Forces stood firm against this effort. For months, through the Berlin Airlift, the Allies kept the city's people, and their hope for freedom, alive. The airlift became a symbol of the Allies' determination not to yield to communism.

West Virginians were part of that effort, just as they have been a part of every fight to protect the nation's interests abroad. Our state's sons and daughters have always been prepared to fight for our country, whether in Berlin or in other trouble spots around the globe.

We owe a great debt to our veterans for their service. In my work in the U.S. Senate, I have striven to help repay that debt. Recently, I became a member of the Senate's VA/HUD Appropriations Subcommittee, in part, because I felt it would better position me to fight for veterans' needs. In an appropriations bill this year, I supported the addition of \$42.5 billion for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). That legislation provided \$17 billion for veterans' health care, \$249 million above last year's level.

I also added language

to the report accompanying that bill urging the VA to accelerate efforts to establish outpatient clinics in Grant and Pendleton counties. Other language I added directs the VA to continue the specialized, local health services demonstration program operated by the Clarksburg Veterans Affairs Medical Center and the Ruby Memorial Hospital in Morgantown. These initiatives are intended to bring modern medical care within easy reach of West Virginia veterans.

I have also taken the lead to secure health care benefits for veterans who served in the Persian Gulf War. Since that conflict's end, thousands of veterans have suffered from a range of diseases and medical complications. However, the government has not provided them with the care that they deserve. Recently, I won approval of legislation guaranteeing that these veterans will finally receive the care they need.

West Virginia has sent record numbers of men and women to fight for our nation, never wavering in answering the call of their country. As we celebrate and commemorate Veterans Day this year, may God bless all West Virginians who have fought and sacrificed to preserve our freedom and interests throughout the world.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Character Counts

When I was a young lad growing up in West Virginia, I was, what I suspect would be labeled today, "a victim of poverty." At times I did not have socks or shoes or adequate clothing to keep warm.

I did not have money, but I was rich in so many other ways. The old couple who raised me instilled in me a sense of the "old values," such as honesty, integrity, and loyalty. They encouraged me to work hard and to use my mind in wholesome pursuits. I had teachers who inspired in me a love for learning. And I had heroes — public figures who showed, by their example, the way to achieve important goals.

Although I was faced with a ladder of life from which the bottom rungs were missing, I learned that I could reach the upper rungs on the shoulders of those public and private heroes who showed me the way to a fulfilling and successful life.

A national organization, the Character Counts! Coalition, recently released an unsettling report on the ethics of America's youth. The coalition reported that nearly half of the high school students surveyed claimed to be active thieves, and 70 percent admitted to cheating on an exam at least

once in the last 12 months. An astonishing 92 percent of surveyed teenagers admitted to having lied to their parents at least once in the last year! How shocking! According to that report, we are raising a generation rife with cheaters and liars. What a cause for despondency!

Is it any wonder? We live in a time where the noise of the bizarre and the spectacle of aberrant behavior are blasted at our young people. Too often, our children get the impression that it is the cheaters who prosper, and the unscrupulous who gain. Public heroes are in very short supply.

But, in the absence of public heroes, private heroes — good parents, good teachers, and those men and women who quietly set a good example and who give of their time to help young people formulate character and encourage excellence — are acutely important.

We all have a responsibility to guide and inspire young people. We need to teach them, by deed as well as word, that character does count. Not only is it one of the most important things any of us can do, it is also one of the most rewarding. It is not too late to save a foundering generation.

November 11, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A New Approach to Classroom Safety

Nearly five years ago, the Congress approved a wide-ranging anticrime bill containing an amendment I authored to establish the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund. That amendment, which earmarked \$22 billion for the trust fund, provided for the expansion of major crime-fighting initiatives.

As a result of the resources made available through the trust fund, a variety of new anticrime initiatives have been created, all sharing the same goal -- to make our neighborhoods safer. One of the more well known of those initiatives is the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, which provides grants to local communities to hire more police officers. To date, this program has helped more than 150 West Virginia communities to put a total of nearly 540 officers on the beat.

Now, the COPS program is adapting to meet a growing concern of many parents -- school safety. Last year, tragically, the nation was shocked by high-profile acts of violence in schools across the country. These acts were not restricted to typically higher crime inner city schools, but they reached into idyllic, rural communities as well. The fatalities and injuries that resulted served as a startling reminder that, even though the majority of our

schools are free from major violence, we should take steps to make all schools even safer.

The new COPS initiative provides grants to help communities hire School Resource Officers (SRO). These fully trained and sworn officers are assigned to a school on a full-time basis. In addition to providing security, SRO's teach substance abuse prevention, mentor troubled students, and build respect for law enforcement among children.

Some West Virginia schools already have these officers on the school grounds, and reports about their presence are positive. Educators and officers alike generally agree that having a police presence in the schools helps to reduce violence in the classrooms. The new SRO program serves as an important new tool for school efforts to solve some of the problems that lead to juvenile crime and violence.

There is no single answer to the problem of classroom violence. Ensuring that our children have the opportunity to learn in a safe environment is a responsibility that parents, educators, officers, and lawmakers all share. By working together, we can take steps toward ensuring that schoolyard violence does not strike other innocent families.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Putting a Cork in College Drinking

With alcohol abuse permeating college campuses nationwide, I recently included \$750,000 in the fiscal year 1999 omnibus appropriations bill to develop and implement a national program to reward institutions of higher learning that implement innovative and effective alcohol and drug abuse prevention programs.

In 1997, the Harvard School of Public Health surveyed a number of colleges and universities across the country to find out how many students were drinking alcohol and how much they consumed. The results revealed that two of five students were binge drinkers and one in five was an abstainer. Moreover, the study found that four of five residents of fraternity or sorority houses were binge drinkers.

Binge drinking, or heavy episodic alcohol use often defined as five or more drinks at one sitting within a two-week period, is one of the most serious problems at our nation's colleges. Just last year, precious lives were prematurely lost as a result of alcohol poisoning or excessive inebriation. In Virginia alone, five college students died within a one-month timespan in alcohol-related incidents.

I have long been concerned by youth alcohol abuse, and to address this matter, I secured authori-

zation and funding for the National Recognition Awards program. Through this program, ten eligible institutions of higher education, in recognition of their efforts to combat alcohol and drug abuse, will receive a grant of \$50,000 to help maintain their respective programs. In addition, the U.S. Department of Education will make available to prospective college students and their parents, through high school guidance counselors, a publication highlighting the award-winning programs of these colleges and universities.

Incorporated into the set eligibility guidelines for a National Recognition Award is language to discourage colleges from promoting the alcoholic beverage industry in campus publications and at campus sporting events. Both U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher and U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala have endorsed these fundamental priorities.

Just as the schoolhouse should be a safe haven for students of all ages, so should the college campus. I commend those schools that have put a cork in the college drinking scene. It is now time for all institutions of higher learning to follow these leaders.

November 25, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Taking a Stand for Steel

Thousands of West Virginia families are watching closely as the United States and several nations are engaged in a trade dispute about steel. Domestic steelmakers charge that some countries, like South Korea and Japan, have been dumping their products at below-market prices that domestic companies cannot match. During the first half of 1998, the U.S. Department of Commerce reports that Japanese steel imports jumped 114 percent and South Korean imports increased 90 percent over the same period one year ago. In the first half of this year, imports of hot rolled steel increased 27 percent over the first six months of 1997.

Unfair trade practices by foreign steelmakers affect entire communities. The city of Weirton, for example, depends on the steel mill for about 60 percent of its tax base and about a third of the residents' jobs. Hard times at the steel mill affect grocery stores, movie theaters, restaurants, and more. I know the importance of the mill to Weirton. I supported the establishment of an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) that has helped the plant to continue operating during tough times. I also added \$9 million to federal appropriations bills to support development of an automated manufacturing system that allows Weirton Steel to track steel products throughout the manufacturing pro-

cess, helping the plant to produce steel more cost-effectively. But even these improvements cannot adequately shield Weirton Steel from the damage caused by unfair trade practices.

On behalf of the thousands of U.S. steel families, I have urged the Clinton Administration to crack down on the unfair trade practices being used by the foreign steel manufacturers.

In addition, as a member of the Senate Steel Caucus, I introduced and supported a number of pieces of legislation this year aimed at stemming the rising flood of steel imports. Most recently, the omnibus appropriations bill included a provision I added that calls for the U.S. Trade Representative to submit a report to Congress regarding subsidies reportedly provided by the government of South Korea to its largest manufacturer, Hanbo Steel. This provision simplifies the job of U.S. trade negotiators as they work to prove a link between an increase in imports and the harm those imports cause to domestic industries.

West Virginia steel companies deserve a level playing field. But the dumping by foreign steel manufacturers has tilted the playing field and made it impossible for U.S. companies to compete. It is time to put the "fair" back in fair trade.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Cutting Student Loan Interest Rates

The Senate recently passed a five-year reauthorization of the Higher Education Act to expand federal assistance to college students. This legislation, which was signed into law on October 7, 1998, reduces college student loan interest rates to the lowest level in seventeen years, representing perhaps the single most important education bill passed during the 105th Congress.

I am pleased to inform all West Virginians of a time-limited opportunity for college graduates to reduce the interest rates on their student loans. As included in the Higher Education Act reauthorization, borrowers who have student loans can apply for a consolidation loan from the Direct Loan program before January 31, 1999, to receive a lower interest rate for the life of the borrower's loan. The Department of Education estimates that, under this lower interest rate, most students will save approximately \$50 per \$1,000 of debt over the life of their loans. A typical student borrower at a 4-year college, who graduates with \$13,000 in debt, will save about \$700 over a ten-year repayment period.

Through loan consolidation, students are able to combine some or all of their outstanding student loans

into one consolidated loan, possibly extending the repayment period, reducing interest costs, and eliminating the hassle of dealing with multiple lenders. Loan consolidations are available through the Department of Education's Direct Loan program and through lenders participating in the Federal Family Education Loan program (FFEL), or the government-guaranteed loan program. Individuals interested in applying for a loan consolidation through the Direct Loan program may wish to contact the Direct Loan Origination Center at 1-800-557-7392, or download an application form from the Internet at "www.ed.gov/Directloan".

The federal government has played an integral role in helping to ensure that all students, regardless of their socioeconomic status, are granted the opportunity to further their education at the postsecondary level. The reauthorization of the Higher Education Act is another testament to the dedication and commitment of Congress to improving our nation's education system. I encourage individuals with college loans to explore this unique window of opportunity to lower their interest rate and save a considerable amount of money over the life of their loan.

December 9, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

An Investment for New Jobs

The state's economy has long been rooted deep in the coal seams that stretch below our mountains. Our residents have traditionally found work in steel and glass production, timbering, and manufacturing. But today, while much of that bedrock remains, we are expanding our economic base to create new opportunities for the future. Numerous women entrepreneurs have contributed to this evolution, bringing with them a keen business sense, self-reliance, ingenuity, and dogged determination.

Women-owned businesses are increasing in number, range of products, diversity, and economic impact. As the numbers of women business owners grow, they contribute to the success of West Virginia's economy. According to the National Foundation of Women Business Owners, as of 1996, there were 40,400 women-owned businesses in West Virginia, employing 62,800 people and generating \$7 billion in sales. Between 1987 and 1996, the number of businesses owned by women in the state increased nearly 64 percent.

Recognizing the growth in the number of women entrepreneurs, the Congress recently approved legislation fully funding two important programs. The legislation provides \$8 million in funding for the establishment of Women's Business Centers nationwide. Already, 35 centers are open across the country, includ-

ing one in Charleston, and this additional funding will help to open another 25 centers in the coming year, resulting in one center in each of the 50 states. These centers, run by the Small Business Administration, provide entrepreneurial training to the women business owners of today and tomorrow.

In that same appropriations bill, the Congress provided \$600,000 for the National Women's Business Council, which serves as an independent source of advice to the federal government on issues affecting women business owners.

It takes a great deal of courage to start something new, to carve a reality out of a dream, often with few resources, sometimes in adverse surroundings, and in an economy that demands much of its participants. But federally supported resources like Women's Business Centers and the National Women's Business Council can help women to make the successful move into small business ownership.

As more and more families are finding it difficult to make ends meet on one salary, greater numbers of women are joining the ranks of small business owners. Ensuring the success of these women entrepreneurs is an investment in the economic well-being of the nation, and in the quality of life of West Virginia families



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

1998: A Year of Accomplishments

Over the past year, I was able to advance a number of initiatives that are important in strengthening the foundation for our state's future. As Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, for example, I added funding for a variety of initiatives -- many that I have shepherded to our state -- to help expand West Virginia's economic base and provide good, well-paying jobs for future generations.

During 1998, I also achieved a major victory in the authorization of funding for infrastructure -- the roads and bridges -- that are so critical to West Virginia's economy. I added an amendment to the six-year highway authorization bill guaranteeing that all of the federal taxes paid at the gas pump, which had previously been allowed to accumulate unspent, will now be used for the upkeep and expansion of our national highway and transit systems.

As a result of my amendment, the 13-state Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Corridor Highway system stands to receive \$2.25 billion over the next six years, including \$345 million for West Virginia. My amendment not only provides an infusion of funding to the Corridor Highways over the course of the highway bill,

but it also serves as an all-important foot in the door to help ensure that a consistent and reliable source of funding will be available in years beyond the next six years to complete the Corridor system.

On another front, this past summer, I joined in a U.S. Supreme Court case opposing the Line Item Veto Act. Fortunately, the Court ruled, as I have long argued, that the line item veto was unconstitutional. The Framers, in drafting the Constitution, vested in the Congress -- the people's branch -- the power over the purse as an important check on the executive. When the Congress willingly shared that power with the executive branch, it handed away an important check on the executive and weakened our Constitutional system of separation of powers. Thankfully, the Supreme Court in its ruling preserved, for yet a while longer, the separation of powers and the fragile system of checks and balances that the Framers crafted to ensure that the liberties of the American people would be protected.

Just as the past year has been one of challenges to our state and our nation, so will the coming year. I look forward to working to meet those challenges as I continue my service to West Virginia.

December 23, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Hopes for a New Year

Each January brings a sense of hope and optimism for the new year. This January, as we in West Virginia embark on a new year, we are also preparing to step into the 21st century armed with a firm knowledge of where we have been, and energized with the sense of where we are going.

If West Virginia had much to offer those who ventured into her steep terrain and followed her coursing streams in her early days, she has so much more to offer today. In addition to her natural beauty, this lady state of the mountains offers the brawn, brain, and talents of her hardworking and thoroughly modern populace. In towns and cities dotted with institutions of higher learning, West Virginia produces the intellectual firepower to combine with the fabled brute strength of her coal miners of old. The transportation system -- including interstate highways and connectors, rail, air, and even river routes -- is increasingly interconnected and modern. West Virginia also offers an extensive fiberoptic telecommunications network that allows today's cyber workers to combine high technology jobs with an uncrowded pastoral setting, a

low crime rate, and great family life.

Since the moment of her birth, West Virginia has undergone great change; yet, as I so often like to boast, she has never lost her grasp on those "old values" that continue to set her apart among the fifty states. Today, faith resides in her hills just as surely as it did when I was a youth living in her southern coal mining communities and in the hills of Mercer County. Faith is what has kept us going when hope has been in short supply. But it is hope that shapes our vision of the future, and drives us to achieve our dreams.

While she may adapt and modernize, and enjoy the fruits of economic prosperity, I hope that West Virginia will always be the sort of place that fills her native sons and daughters with a longing to be home. I see an energy and optimism throughout the state as new opportunities, new roads, and new buildings rise alongside the gentle reminders of the great and historic legacy of West Virginia's earlier settlers. I know that God's blessings have shone down on her people and her mountains, and that I have been blessed to be a part of securing for her a bright future.

December 30, 1998



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

COPS: A Partnership for Safer Communities

Every day in West Virginia, more than 540 police officers are on the job protecting homes, schools, and businesses because of a very successful program called Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS). Since 1994, the COPS program has invested millions of dollars in law enforcement efforts in West Virginia, helping nearly 160 communities to strengthen their police forces.

The COPS program is one of several approaches developed to put more officers where they are needed most -- on patrol, not behind desks filling out paperwork. The Omnibus Crime Bill of 1994 included an amendment I added to establish the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund, ensuring that programs such as COPS would be funded. In that bill, the Congress partnered national resources with local strategies. By building the cooperation between all levels of law enforcement and expanding police and prevention efforts, more criminals can be taken off the streets.

Police departments from across West Virginia credit the COPS program with giving them the flexibility they need to implement innovative crime fighting strategies and to build stronger partnerships within the community. These departments are not

required to follow a mandated program, nor do they have to rely on a one-size-fits-all approach to reduce crime in their neighborhoods. COPS gives these police departments the ability to tailor their crime fighting efforts to the specific needs of the local community.

In an effort to expand the COPS program to meet a greater range of needs, the Congress last fall approved funding for police departments in partnership with schools and other community-based organizations to develop programs to improve the safety of elementary and secondary school children and educators, including the hiring of school resource officers. A number of West Virginia schools already have these officers in place, and students, teachers, and officers agree that the effect has been positive. I have supported this initiative, believing that teachers cannot teach and students cannot learn in an undisciplined, unsafe environment.

West Virginia has traditionally boasted one of the lowest crime rates in the nation, a fact of which everyone should be especially proud. By strengthening crime fighting efforts, the COPS program has become an effective tool in continuing that tradition.

January 6, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Ensuring that Patients Come Before Profits

As the Congress begins its new session, one of the top priorities is expected to be passage of a Patients' Bill of Rights. This legislation is aimed at protecting people from some of the abuses that have been associated with managed care operations. While there is general agreement that managed care has helped to reduce medical costs in recent years, there is also evidence of a troubling and growing trend of health insurance plans to move medical decisions out of the doctor's office and into an accountant's office.

Over the past decade, the number of Americans enrolled in a managed care plan has risen rapidly. In 1987, only 13 percent of people with employer-provided health insurance were in a managed care plan. Today, 161 million Americans -- almost 60 percent of the U.S. population -- are insured through managed care plans.

A Patients' Bill of Rights would provide basic protections for people enrolled in managed care plans. This legislation has wide support in both the House and Senate, and also is endorsed by more than 180 different organizations, including the American Medical Association and the American Nurses Association.

Basically, the Patients' Bill of Rights would ensure that patients with a serious illness are allowed access to

a specialist without having to get the permission of an accountant who does not have medical training. The legislation would give patients the power to go to any emergency room during a medical emergency, when every minute is critical, without waiting for pre-approval by their health insurance company. The Patients' Bill of Rights would give women direct access to their obstetrician/gynecologist and also would allow them to designate that physician as their primary care doctor. Finally, the legislation would ensure that patients who are denied care by an insurance company can appeal the decision to an independent reviewer and receive expedited decisions that are binding on the managed care plan.

The protections included in this legislation are not radical ideas. In fact, many health plans already provide these guarantees. This legislation is aimed at those plans which choose to put profits before patients and interfere with decisions that should be made by a doctor and patient.

As more West Virginians enroll in managed care plans, they deserve basic guarantees of protection. The Patients' Bill of Rights is the best way to ensure that health care is based on a medical diagnosis, and not on a business bottom line.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Coal for the 21st Century

Since the state's beginning, West Virginia's economy has been rooted deep in the coal seams. From one end of the state to the other, thousands of families have depended on coal-related jobs to put food on the table, to pay the doctor bills, and to send children to college. I am proud to say that much of what I am today and the values and beliefs that are the underpinnings of my character are the result of my roots in West Virginia coal mining communities.

The coal industry has changed greatly since I was a boy. Advancements in mining equipment have made it easier to pull coal out of the ground. Improved transportation methods move the coal more quickly to market. Safety advancements have been spurred by partnerships involving the entire coal industry. While fresh challenges to the coal industry await, experience should show that they can be met and conquered.

One promising strategy for harnessing change to the benefit of the coal industry is a program that I introduced in Congress in 1984. In that year, I proposed, and the Congress adopted, a \$750 million Clean Coal Technology (CCT) program. Originally, the program was designed to achieve long-term, real reductions in acid rain. Since

then, the program has expanded thanks to a joint government-industry investment of more than \$6 billion. This investment has led to 40 first-of-a-kind projects in 18 states, including an array of high-technology ideas that can spearhead a new era of clean, efficient power plants which will continue to burn our nation's abundant coal resources.

In addition to the benefits at home, the CCT program can also prove beneficial environmentally and economically on the international market. Developing nations are searching for cost-effective ways to upgrade their older, higher-polluting power plants and to expand their power production capacity. These nations can learn from our experiences and utilize our new technologies to combat these problems.

My life has spanned great changes in technology, in energy production and consumption, and in the global economy. Through all of this, coal has been a constant, in all its forms and uses. If the partnerships that have proved so valuable already are continued and if the investment in new technologies is expanded, I believe that the challenges of the coming age can be met, and light the way to a new millennium for coal as well as for environmental and energy policy.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia's Role in Impeachment

The last time the House of Representatives impeached a president was 131 years ago, when the bitter feelings that stemmed from the Civil War gave rise to the impeachment of Andrew Johnson in 1868. At the heart of the Johnson case were issues far larger than those individuals involved; instead, the case was centered on policies concerning Reconstruction. When Johnson became President in 1865, his reconstruction policies ran counter to those of the majority of the members of Congress. It was Johnson's decision to replace the popular Secretary of War Edwin Stanton that sparked a series of events that led the House to approve 11 Articles of Impeachment against Johnson.

At the time of the Johnson trial, U.S. Senators were elected by state legislatures, while the House of Representatives' members were elected directly by the people. The West Virginia Legislature had chosen Waitman Willey and Peter Van Winkle as the state's two Senators, and in February, 1868, approved a resolution urging them to vote to convict Johnson and, thereby, to remove him from office.

In March, the Senate voted on the eleventh Article of Impeachment, the charge that those House members handling the prosecution of Johnson thought was most likely to produce

a conviction. With 36 votes (two-thirds) needed to find Johnson guilty, the Senate tally on that article was 35 to convict, 19 to acquit -- falling one vote short for conviction and removal. Senator Willey voted to convict, while Senator Van Winkle, even though it meant his political career would come to an end, voted to acquit. Van Winkle thought that the constant fighting between the President and the Congressional leadership placed too great a strain on the fabric of the nation, a fabric that had already been stretched thin from the Civil War. The West Virginia Senate did not like Van Winkle's reasoning, however, and voted 18 to 3 to condemn his vote to acquit.

In the presidential impeachment trial of today, as in the day of Johnson, Senators have taken an oath, to "do impartial justice according to the Constitution and the laws: So help me God." Senators cannot be guided by political affiliation or political partisanship and keep faith with this oath. Senators must have the courage to weigh the evidence, search their own consciences, and render a judgement that is fair to the President and to the nation, one that reflects the gravity of the responsibility placed upon the Senate by the Constitutional Framers.

January 27, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Primer on Impeachment

The U.S. Senate is engaged in one of its most serious of Constitutional responsibilities: deciding whether to convict or acquit an impeached president. The Framers of the Constitution struggled in the crafting of the impeachment powers but, in the end, created a delicately balanced tool that has served the nation well.

In crafting the Constitution, the Framers drew heavily upon their knowledge of English history and their experience with impeachments in the colonies and the newly formed states to carefully write the impeachment provisions that guide us today. In Article I of the Constitution, the Framers vested in the House of Representatives "the sole Power of Impeachment." In that same Article, the Framers gave the Senate "the sole Power to try all Impeachments." The language for impeachment and conviction was left purposefully vague so that it could reasonably be applied on a case-by-case basis in the future to meet whatever facts and circumstances might arise. The Framers intended that Senators bring their accumulated experience and wisdom to bear when called upon to determine whether the charges presented against the accused -- whether that person be President, Vice President, judge, or other civil officer

-- merit the very substantial consequences outlined in the Constitution.

The Framers deliberately set the bar high for the vote on articles of impeachment, first by requiring a supermajority of two-thirds of the Senate to convict, and second, by fusing the penalty -- removal from office -- into the question of guilt. In voting on articles of impeachment, Senators must answer not one but two questions: Is that President, Vice President, or civil officer guilty or not guilty of committing "high crimes and misdemeanors," and, if he is guilty, do his actions warrant removal from office? This coupling was not a casual step by the Framers. They wanted to force Senators to set aside personal prejudices and passions and focus, instead, on the best interests of the nation. Party politics should play no part.

For me, this vote will be the most difficult of the more than 15,000 that I have cast in the Senate. I have heard the views of my constituents, watched the deliberations of the House, reviewed volumes of evidence, and listened to the arguments by the House prosecutors and White House defense team before the Senate. But, in the end, it is not what a lawyer tells me that I may do; it is what my own clear conscience tells me that I ought to do.

February 3, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Free Trade -- Fair Trade

Throughout my career of public service to West Virginia, I have found reason to be skeptical about the ability of administrations -- Democratic and Republican -- to negotiate and monitor international trade agreements. In my experience, U.S. trade policies have been influenced far too heavily by diplomatic interests and concern for the welfare of our trading partners. Too little consideration has been given to domestic needs and the jobs of Americans, too much to the economies and political problems of other nations.

West Virginia is feeling the pinch of ill-conceived trade policies. Our steel industry, for example, is currently suffering cutbacks and layoffs. The community of Weirton has been particularly hard hit. Hundreds of employees of Weirton Steel have been laid off as a result of the dumping of low-priced foreign steel on our shores, leaving many hardworking families in tenuous circumstances in the new year.

But steelmakers are not alone in suffering the consequences of poorly conceived trade policies. Numerous other West Virginia industries have experienced similar trade-related adversity. The glass industry, clothing manufacturers, the makers of leather goods, and even apple growers, have seen their share of trade-induced difficulties. In too many cases, businesses have closed their

doors and the jobs that they once provided have been shipped overseas. Moreover, the communities that once were built around these industries have seen significant losses of revenue, decreases in population, and a decline in their ability to provide basic services for their citizens.

My disappointment in previous U.S. trade negotiations led me to vote against GATT and NAFTA, and spurred me to draft legislation establishing a commission to study and recommend steps to reduce our nation's growing trade deficit. Further, the evidence of the failings of our trade policies has hardened my opposition to fast-track negotiating procedures that would severely limit the Senate's ability to influence trade policies.

There is something to be said for free trade. But in my experience, free trade has rarely been fair trade where American manufacturers and American jobs are concerned.

Trade wars have scarred a long list of businesses, and currently the battle lines are drawn for skirmishes involving steel. This is a battle we cannot afford to lose, but, thus far, I am unimpressed by the Administration's pallid remedies. So, as the Administration considers further steps to address the steel crisis, I will keep up the pressure to ensure that our steel industry and our steelworkers keep working to forge the future of our nation.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Tax Credits for Education

As taxpayers begin the annual process of filling out their tax returns, they may notice that two new education tax credits are now available. These credits -- the HOPE Scholarship credit and the Lifetime Learning credit -- offer many people the opportunity to reduce the cost of their postsecondary education.

The HOPE Scholarship credit provides Americans with assistance for their first two years of postsecondary education. Available since January 1, 1998, the HOPE credit is equal to 100 percent of the first \$1,000 in qualified tuition and fees and fifty percent of the next \$1,000 that taxpayers pay for themselves, their spouse, or their children. In other words, a student with at least \$2,000 in postsecondary education expenses would be provided with a \$1,500 tax credit. To be eligible for this credit, which may be claimed for two taxable years for each student, students must be enrolled in a degree, certificate, or other program leading to a recognized educational credential and must carry at least one-half the normal full-time work load.

In addition, the Lifetime Learning credit provides additional postsecondary educational assistance. While the HOPE credit has received more publicity, the Lifetime Learning credit, available since July 1, 1998, offers po-

tentially greater tax benefits. This credit is equal to twenty percent of the first \$5,000 in qualified tuition and fees for individual taxpayers or their family members. Thus, for taxpayers with at least \$5,000 in postsecondary education expenses, the Lifetime Learning credit provides a tax credit of \$1,000. The credit can be claimed for any number of years for postsecondary education expenses and can apply to students enrolled in a single course or in a program to acquire or improve job skills.

It is important to note that both of these new credits cannot be claimed for the same student in the same year -- taxpayers must use one or the other. However, a taxpayer with two dependents in postsecondary education could claim the HOPE credit for one and the Lifetime Learning credit for the other in a particular year. Finally, both of these credits are only fully available to taxpayers with adjusted gross incomes up to \$40,000, or \$80,000 for married couples. The credits are gradually phased out for taxpayers above these income limits.

Anyone interested in obtaining more information on either of these two new credits can order a copy of IRS Publication 970 by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM or by going to the IRS Internet page at www.irs.ustreas.gov/forms_pubs/.

February 17, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Budget Priorities for West Virginia

I have long worked to ensure that West Virginia's needs are addressed as Administrations craft their annual budget requests. Consequently, the fiscal year 2000 budget includes funding for a number of initiatives important to West Virginia.

Education is fundamental to preparing our young people for the challenges of adulthood. In addition to increased funding to put more teachers in the classroom, the budget, at my request, includes full one-year funding of \$39.9 million for the merit-based national Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship program. This scholarship recognizes many of the nation's best and brightest students for academic excellence. Since the program began in 1984, 520 West Virginia students have been named Byrd Scholars and benefited from this national scholarship.

Improving West Virginia's network of highways is crucial to the state's continued economic development. Last year, I helped to craft a six-year highway authorization bill that will improve our ability to address the nation's infrastructure needs in the next century by effectively using the funding available from gasoline taxes in the Highway Trust Fund. As a result of those efforts, the budget for the coming fiscal year contains approximately \$304 million for West Virginia highway construction, including \$69 million for continuing construction of West Virginia's Ap-

palachian Regional Commission Corridor Highways.

The budget proposal also contains \$311 million for operations of the FBI Criminal Justice Information Services Division in Clarksburg. This complex, which was constructed with \$185 million I added to an appropriations bill in 1990, is a cornerstone in the national effort to fight crime and make our communities safer places in which to live and work.

Mindful that international competition is making high technology an essential component of any state's economic plan for the future, several high-technology initiatives, with my support, are also slated to receive funding in the proposed budget. For example, three NASA initiatives based in West Virginia -- the National Technology Transfer Center and the Classroom of the Future, both located at Wheeling, and the Independent Verification and Validation facility at Fairmont -- are proposed to receive a total of \$25.8 million.

While West Virginia has reason to be pleased with many points in the budget request, that proposal is just the first step in the annual federal budget process. Ultimately, the Congress will craft the budget and appropriations bills that will serve as a blueprint for the nation's priorities over the coming year, and I shall continue to work to see that West Virginia's needs are addressed within existing budgetary constraints.

February 24, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Keeping Schools In Check

Today, we are living in an information age. With the click of a computer key, a screen is illuminated with charts, graphs, and research detailing the latest statistics in almost any given field. Data are literally at one's fingertips. Yet, when parents attempt to gather information on the public schools in their district, they often are met with little success.

Recently, the publication Education Week, in partnership with two public opinion research firms, published an issue entitled "Reporting Results" that discusses the new buzzword of 1999 -- accountability. In an effort to uncover its true meaning, a 50-state study was conducted to assess what it is that parents and educators most want to know about their local schools.

Against the backdrop of growing pressure for school choice and greater competition among educational institutions, Education Week reports that schools are slowly beginning to unearth statistics representative of their academic performance. Education Week expects that 36 states will have "report cards" on the performance of individual schools this year. However, less than half of these states will include the kind of information that parents most want and need, and only 13 of

the states, including West Virginia, ensure that the "report cards" are sent home to parents.

Making the decision where to send a child to school is perhaps one of the most difficult and thought-provoking decisions a parent can make, and parents should not have to rely on word-of-mouth to make these important choices. Parents want documentation of test scores and graduation rates. They want to know what is happening behind the schoolhouse doors. Their concerns are as fundamental as curriculum, the qualifications of the teachers instructing their child, and the safety of their child.

After decades of measuring schools by how many books are in the library or how many computers are in the classrooms, parents and policy makers alike are seeking yardsticks better equipped to gauge academic results. The road to achieving greater accountability on the part of schools is a long one, with many obstacles ahead. But I commend West Virginia's education community for striving to shed more light on the performances of schools in the state. I encourage parents to take advantage of the statewide school-report-card program as they navigate this challenging territory.

March 3, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Taking Steps to Save Social Security

In 1935, President Roosevelt signed the law creating the Social Security system, saying that the program was designed to "give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against poverty-ridden old age." From modest beginnings, Social Security has become an essential facet of modern life. Today, one in seven Americans -- some 42 million in all -- receives a Social Security benefit, and more than 90 percent of all workers are in jobs covered by Social Security.

Because of the changing face of America, reforms are needed to ensure that Social Security is solvent for many years to come. When the so-called "baby boomers" begin to retire, the number of retirees is projected to grow much faster than the number of workers paying into the program, placing a great strain on the system. Currently, three workers pay into the Social Security trust fund for every beneficiary, but, by the year 2030, that ratio is expected to drop to only two workers per beneficiary. Without Congressional action, the Social Security trust fund will begin to run a deficit in 2013, and will be depleted by 2032.

Everyone has a stake in the future of Social Security. It provides a safety net for families, for people with disabilities, and for children who have lost a parent. To millions of elderly citizens in West Virginia and across the country, Social Security can be the difference between living in dignity or living in poverty. In fact, across the country, Social Security is the primary source of income for two-thirds of all senior citizens. In the last 40 years, Social Security has helped to cut the elderly poverty rate from 35 percent to less than 11 percent.

The Congress is beginning to examine a number of proposals that would extend the financial solvency of Social Security. A number of Congressional committees, including the Senate Finance Committee, the House Ways and Means Committee, and both the Senate and House Budget Committees, are working to find a bipartisan solution to ensure that the safety net of Social Security is not pulled away. Protecting the viability of Social Security is a high priority, and a solution must be crafted that works for all of America over the long term.

March 10, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Fingering Criminals

Technology is a driving force in every occupation, from manufacturing to medicine to mining. In all fields, technology has left its stamp, including the effort to make West Virginia's streets and neighborhoods safe from crime. This year, at its new Fingerprint Identification Center in Harrison County, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) will initiate its automated system to speed local law enforcement agencies' access to data, keeping repeat criminals off the streets.

The Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System (IAFIS) is a major step forward from the old, paper-based fingerprint identification process. Using computer links, the system will allow any police agency with the proper equipment to submit electronically scanned prints directly to the FBI database, which will then process the material to find out whether the person in custody has a criminal history, poses a threat to the community, or is wanted in another jurisdiction. The IAFIS will provide our nation's 72,000 law enforcement agencies with a rapid, ultramodern, computerized system for checking fingerprints, confirming criminal backgrounds, and tracking lawbreakers.

The revitalization of the fingerprint identification system was launched in 1990, when, in response to the failing conditions of the FBI's antiquated system, I added \$185 million to an ap-

propriations bill for construction of a new computer complex. Since then, I have obtained more than \$700 million to develop the highly advanced system.

While the multifaceted network promises faster, more efficient identification of criminals for law enforcement agencies, it cannot be fully effective if local, state, and federal authorities do not have the proper equipment to communicate with the new system. That is why, this past fall, I added \$1.5 million to an appropriations bill to help accelerate the process by which police departments in states like West Virginia create their own automated databases and purchase the computer equipment necessary to take advantage of the IAFIS.

When the IAFIS comes on line later this year, the nation's investment in the new FBI complex and its revolutionary computer system will bear fruit in the form of a better integrated national crime-fighting network, and, in turn, in safer communities for American families. West Virginia, which traditionally boasts one of the lowest crime rates in the nation, makes a fitting location for the FBI's new fingerprint identification complex, and all West Virginians have reason to be proud of the fact that their state is home to a world-class initiative geared toward helping other states realize a better, safer quality of life.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Saving for College

As the costs of higher education continue to soar, the affordability of a college degree continues to grow as a concern for students and their families. To help alleviate the hefty burden of college bills, students and parents increasingly have been drawing upon financial assistance from a variety of sources. A recent study by the General Accounting Office revealed that 60 percent of seniors who graduated from a four-year public college or university in the 1995-96 school year had borrowed money at some point during their educational pursuit, a figure that is up from 42 percent in the 1992-93 school year.

To help students meet rising college costs, I am co-sponsoring legislation that takes a different approach to easing the sticker shock associated with higher education. This legislation would encourage saving for college by making state-sponsored savings plans entirely tax-free, provided that these monies are used for education. Under current tax law, distributions from these plans are partially counted when calculating a student's taxable income. Several states, including West Virginia, have established state-sponsored savings plans for higher education, and this legislation would help to make those programs more family

friendly.

The West Virginia Prepaid College Plan, which was launched last October, is one example of the state-operated programs that have recently been established throughout the country to help families save for college. Like programs elsewhere, West Virginia's Prepaid College Plan enables families to save for college while receiving special tax benefits. It also allows the family to lock in today's tuition prices for the date when the child actually enters a West Virginia college or university. Additionally, the plan provides flexibility in the event the student chooses to attend a private institution or a college or university in another state. Details about this option are available at the West Virginia Prepaid College plan Internet site at www.wvtreasury.com or by calling 1-800-307-4701.

As a firm believer in the importance of education, I can think of few investments as worthwhile as those that can make the dream of a college education become a reality. Prepaid college savings plans provide one option for families to reduce the burden of the high costs of college, and I am glad to support a piece of legislation that can help to make such programs more economically advantageous.

March 24, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Linking Up: Online Safety for Children

As more families, schools, and public libraries acquire computers, more children gain access to the Internet. At the same time, the use of the web by unsavory individuals attempting to lure children into threatening situations has also grown.

For parents, monitoring a child's Internet access and providing important safeguards can prove challenging, especially when that child, as is often the case, is the most computer savvy member of the family.

To help steer children toward positive experiences on the Internet and away from sites that parents may find objectionable, or even dangerous, the nation's largest Internet-service providers and leading education and children's advocacy organizations have joined together to develop commonsense tips and strategies that may prove valuable for busy families. The joint effort, called "America Links Up," has resulted in a wide-ranging campaign to deliver information and provide guidance to parents and others responsible for children, including the following recommendations.

Take time to be online with your children. When a parent or teacher is directly involved with a child's Internet activity, the potential for danger is greatly reduced.

Teach children to never give out personal information to people they

encounter while online. This type of information can be used to target the child or the family for criminal activity.

Instruct a child never to plan a face-to-face meeting alone with an online acquaintance. News accounts from across the country have highlighted the dangers of arranging meetings with strangers. While a child may think that an online acquaintance has become a friend, a computer can often mask the true intentions of a criminal.

Establish clear ground rules for Internet use by your children. As an added precaution, parental controls and protective software are available and can be installed, often at little or no cost, to help prevent a child from wandering into dangerous cyberterritory when an adult is not directly supervising Internet activity.

The Internet has rapidly become one of the most valuable learning tools available. People of all ages use the Internet everyday for research, for communicating with friends, and for entertainment. However, parents, teachers, and other caregivers need to recognize that, with all of its benefits, the Internet poses very real dangers.

That old maxim, passed down through generations of parents, still holds true in today's high-technology age; "Children need limits."

March 31, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Power of Poetry

Each year, I give a great number of speeches. During many, I recite from memory a poem that captures the spirit of the moment. To me, a poem is one of the best ways to learn about humanity. Whether they are as long as the "Aeneid" by Virgil, or as simple as the verses of Emily Dickinson, or whether they are written by a Greek, Scotsman, or American, the lines of a poem contain the timeless power of concentrated thought. Poetry is the language of the soul. Through words, it expresses what links us, troubles us, and makes us fully human.

Every day, the power of poetry is all around. It speaks of love, death, disappointment, and elation. Poetry is the laughter of children, the gentle breeze of spring, and the soft golden rays of the sunset.

April is National Poetry Month, a time that brings together poets, literary organizations, libraries, and schools to celebrate poetry and its place in American culture. Among the activities scheduled this year, the Children's Book Council will launch a new event called Young People's Poetry Week to highlight the value of poetry for young people and to encourage

more librarians and educators to present poetry to children. Public libraries throughout the nation will have information about local poetry events.

Over the years, I have cultivated the potential of my mind by memorizing prose, dates, names, quotations, and, particularly, poetry. During my frequent drives between Washington and West Virginia, I would memorize line after line, trying to capture the words, rhythms, thoughts, and lessons of the verses. Over time, my repertoire became quite lengthy. As a matter of fact, I came to be able to recite poem after poem for the entire length of my trip without repeating a single poem.

National Poetry Month presents an opportunity for parents and teachers to work with children and encourage them to take the time to read and truly understand good poetry, not just to see words on paper, but also to dig for the emotions, spirit, and core thought of the author. For adults, this is a good time to step away from the hectic pace of daily life and revisit the words of the soul. Through their words, poets give a voice to that which is great within every human being.

April 7, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Economic Wealth and Environmental Health

April 22 marks the national celebration of Earth Day, an annual event that first occurred in 1970. In the nearly three decades since that initial nationwide observance, Americans have learned much about the need to protect our precious natural resources and how to balance economic development with environmental stewardship.

Since the founding of Earth Day, America's public and private sectors have taken numerous steps to ensure that economic growth and natural resources conservation could occur simultaneously and cooperatively. From cleaning up our rivers and streams, to protecting forests and public lands, to developing technologies that can improve energy efficiency, the achievements of the last thirty years have proved that a prosperous, industrialized nation can also be an environmentally responsible nation.

With these principles in mind, I have worked to ensure that West Virginia has the resources to achieve the kind of balance that provides for a strong economy and well-paying jobs, while protecting and preserving the wonders of nature for future generations.

For example, I authored the Clean Coal Technology program, a federal initiative that supports research and development into cleaner, more efficient uses of coal, our nation's most abundant

energy resource.

I have also obtained funding in appropriations bills to establish the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge and the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge. Further, funding I have added over recent years has supported and strengthened the New River Gorge National River and the Monongahela National Forest, which hosts some of the state's most dramatic and sensitive lands, like Seneca Rocks and the Cranberry Glades. The federal designations of these lands not only ensure a special status for the resident flora and fauna, but also allow for recreational opportunities that benefit West Virginia's booming tourism industry.

Additionally, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center, constructed at Shepherdstown with \$138 million I obtained in appropriations bills, is dedicated to educating professionals and the public about the value and methods of conserving our natural resources.

This Earth Day, as the nation renews its commitment to safeguarding the environment, we in West Virginia can rightfully celebrate the numerous ways in which we have improved our state's environmental record while enhancing our economic well-being. We are proving that economic wealth and environmental health can coexist.

April 14, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Ending Downtown Decay

In cities in West Virginia and across the country, many downtowns are suffering from a great blight. Empty buildings spread like mushrooms, hinting at the decay within. After five p.m., downtowns grow quiet and lonely, haunted only by shades of their former bustling grandeur, while commerce and nightlife shift to the outer suburbs. Like a great old tree, a rot hollows out the center trunk even as the suburban branches flourish. This urban decay is a hard disease to fight, for it feeds upon itself. The less life there is in a downtown, the more life is driven away.

Reversing this trend is a great challenge, but many West Virginia communities are finding the answers. They are creating a vaccine against urban decay and downtown death. No miracle drug, it is penicillin distilled from caring and dedicated individuals who fight back -- first with dreams, then with plans, and finally with action.

One example of this drive and determination can be found in Wheeling, where a group of community leaders provided a spark of life by designing what has become the Wheeling National Heritage Area initiative. This joint federal government/local government/private sector initiative enables the Wheeling community to showcase its singular

qualities to attract increased numbers of tourists. Wheeling, the former state capital and gateway to the West, is particularly well-suited for this national initiative. I have been able to add \$15.4 million to federal appropriations bills to begin the work of preserving and showcasing Wheeling's historic treasures and clearing the way for even greater private investments. Today, private investors are staking out prime downtown real estate for various ventures, all designed to complement and build upon the vision for the downtown planned in the Wheeling National Heritage Area. The \$17 million in private investment within downtown Wheeling since 1994 is a tribute to the success of local proponents in bringing the vision of the Wheeling National Heritage Area to reality.

Just as life is repelled by empty and decaying buildings, it is drawn to the growth and energy of renovation and construction. Wheeling has proved, through its successes, that the blight of downtown decay can be reversed and the vibrancy of a community can be reborn. I applaud the efforts of Wheeling's citizens who are setting an example for others in creating a blueprint of growth and revitalization during the coming century.

April 21, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Honoring Rosa Parks

In the long line of our nation's heroes there stands a small-framed woman, who, through a simple act of conscience, proved that every person can make a difference. On December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, 43-year-old Rosa Parks took the bus home after a long day in the department store where she worked as a seamstress. She was glad to finally be off of her feet when a white man boarded and demanded that Parks give him her seat.

In an act that today would seem quite unremarkable, Parks refused his demand, even though the segregation laws said she must. She was arrested, but challenged the segregation law in court. During the court battle, Parks was harassed, threatened, and lost her job. In the end, though, Parks won when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the segregation law unconstitutional.

Rosa Parks' actions were not staged for the television cameras. They were not part of a grand scheme to create a test case in the courts. On the contrary, they were the actions of a single individual determined to preserve her dignity as

best she could. They were the actions of a simple lady who, at that moment in her life, decided that enough was enough. She demonstrated the power of conviction and quiet dignity in pursuit of justice.

The U.S. Senate recently approved a resolution awarding Rosa Parks the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest honor that the Congress can bestow upon a private citizen. I cosponsored that resolution which, I believe, pays proper tribute to a woman who sparked an important change in this country. She displayed courage and a lifelong commitment to the Jeffersonian ideal that "all men are created equal."

Across the country, equality is the law of the land, but, in too many places, it is the law in name and not in spirit. Reports of violence against a person simply because of the color of his skin or personal beliefs dominate newspaper headlines far too frequently. I hope that all Americans can learn from the lessons of Rosa Parks, and work together to erase hate and discrimination from this nation.

April 28, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Celebrating the Strength of Mothers

I recently participated in a celebration in the small community of Webster in Taylor County, the birthplace of Anna Jarvis, the woman who founded Mother's Day. My wife, Erma, and I were invited to attend the Mother's Day festivities by a community group called "Thunder on the Tygart," which had named Erma its 1999 Mother of the Year. The organization is devoted to the preservation of the Anna Jarvis birthplace and home, a site that is especially important to West Virginians. At the home, visitors learn of the strength, determination, and devotion that Anna's mother, Ann, displayed throughout her life, qualities that she would need when faced with tragedies that would overwhelm most people.

In the first six years of her marriage to Granville Jarvis from 1850 to 1856, Ann lost four of her six children to childhood diseases so successfully treated today that we seldom hear of them. Rather than giving in to despair, she recognized the now widely understood link between sanitation and disease and took action. She organized Mother's Work Groups to improve the health of children throughout her community.

When the Civil War tore at the community, Ann Jarvis used her Mother's Work Groups as a force for

good, keeping relations between warring neighbors from spilling into violence. This woman sought to reconcile her embattled neighbors by organizing a successful community picnic that she called Mother's Friendship Day. She made a special point of inviting veterans from both armies with their families. For all of these acts, she deserves the accolade of hero.

There are mothers like Ann Jarvis across the nation. They know what their children are doing, and what their children's friends are doing. These mothers understand and respect their role as supervisors. If they see signs of trouble in their own children, or in their children's friends, they will act. They will talk to the parents of their children's friends, to seek help in identifying the cause of the problem and warning other parents of the danger signals. This is not being nosy or intrusive. It is being a good parent.

Let us honor the spirit of Ann Jarvis that lives on in all good mothers. I hope we can find ways to foster the caring, compassion, observation, and energy that infused the Mother's Work Groups of old in more of today's mothers -- and fathers, too -- for a parent's work never ends while a child still lives that needs protection and nurturing.

May 4, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Renewing the Gift of Life

Thanks to advancements in medical science, diseases that were once thought to be untreatable are so readily treated today that we seldom hear of them. However, those same advancements have brought with them new challenges and complications that doctors are working to overcome. One such challenge involves organ transplant recipients. Often, when a patient receives an organ transplant, special medicines are needed for the rest of his life to prevent his immune system from rejecting the transplant. But if the patient relies on Medicare for health insurance, the system will only pay for these drugs for the first 36 months after the surgery, even though they are needed for the rest of the recipient's life. To help address this problem, I am cosponsoring legislation that would ensure that patients receiving Medicare-covered transplants would be able to receive the drugs necessary for the rest of their lives to prevent their bodies from rejecting the new organs.

The Immunosuppressive Drugs Coverage Act of 1999 would provide for life-long coverage of needed immunosuppressive medicines for Medicare patients. In addition, the legislation contains a built-in safeguard to protect taxpayers' dollars.

The Act would ensure that, for those Medicare transplant recipients who also have private insurance coverage, the private insurance plan -- not Medicare -- would cover the cost of the immunosuppressive drugs. This legislation would help patients who cannot afford to pay for the life-preserving medicines, and, at the same time, would help Medicare to avoid the huge additional costs currently incurred when organs are rejected and a new surgery is then required.

In West Virginia, this legislation would make a difference. I have received letter after letter filled with individual stories decrying the Medicare system for its lack of foresight. These letters effectively make the argument that it is a senseless mistake for Medicare to cover expensive transplant operations, but then cut off payments for the medicines necessary to ensure that the transplanted organs work. The Congress can address that mistake by approving the Immunosuppressive Drugs Coverage Act that I am cosponsoring.

Each successful organ transplant carries with it a renewed gift of life for the recipient. That gift should not be jeopardized because of bureaucratic shortsightedness.

May 12, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Putting an End to Domestic Violence

Five years ago, the Congress approved one of the most far-reaching pieces of federal legislation ever devised to fight crime in the United States. That legislation sharpened the focus of the federal role in assisting law enforcement on the state and local levels -- the front lines of the war against crime. To help support the bill's many innovative programs, I created the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund, which authorized more than \$30 billion for such priorities as putting more officers on the beat, developing comprehensive community-based approaches to combat crime and violence, and involving citizens in crime-prevention efforts.

The Trust Fund also included funding for the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which expanded women's and children's access to shelters where they can find immediate protection from violence and receive help in making the kinds of life changes that may be necessary to permanently break away from an abuser. It also supported training to better enable police officers to identify abusers and assist abuse victims. The VAWA instituted a fundamental change in the criminal justice system's response to violent crimes committed against women.

Since passage of the VAWA, the number of vic-

tims of domestic violence has been declining. In 1993, the year before the VAWA became law, more than one million women reported being a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault. By 1996, the last year for which complete statistics exist, that figure fell by 25 percent. In 1996, the number of women killed by someone with whom they had been in an intimate relationship saw a sharp reduction, down 60 percent when compared with 20 years earlier.

However, the news is not all good. In a nationwide survey of women in late 1995 and early 1996, a disconcerting 25 percent of respondents said that they had been raped or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, someone whom they dated, or a cohabitating partner at some point during their lives.

To help address this continuing problem, I am cosponsoring the second Violence Against Women Act, which would extend the program's funding and give law enforcement officials an expanded array of legal tools to help protect victims of domestic violence and improve legal services for victims.

Given the prevalence of violence in our culture today, working to end violence against women is an uphill battle, but it is a battle well worth waging.

May 19, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Preparing for a High-Tech Future

Recognizing the need for economic diversification to compete effectively in the worldwide marketplace, West Virginia is enhancing its high-technology resources and identifying new ways to attract and expand the promising high-tech industry. Toward that end, I have been promoting infrastructure investment in West Virginia to help lay a solid foundation for high-tech growth.

Today, West Virginians are harnessing new manufacturing techniques, exploring alternative energy uses, and developing more efficient and environmentally friendly methods of producing the foods that Americans put on their tables. These and other cutting-edge advances have been made possible, in large measure, through partnerships between the private and public sectors, and I have helped to ensure that those partnerships can flourish through my work on the Senate Appropriations Committee.

However, while West Virginia is expanding its high-tech horizons, a recent report from the American Electronics Association (AEA) found that students across the country are losing interest in high-tech degrees. According to the AEA report, the number of students pursuing a high-tech degree -- including engineering, mathematics, physics, and computer science -- fell five percent between 1990 and 1996. Pre-

liminary data from 1997 and 1998 show that trend is continuing. Further, according to the AEA report, a significant proportion of the declining numbers of high-tech degrees being awarded in the U.S. are going to foreign nationals. In fact, 45 percent of the doctoral high-tech degrees in 1997 and 1998 were awarded to non-U.S. citizens. This is a disturbing trend which indicates that we may well be shipping our technological knowledge overseas, and failing to adequately cultivate it in our own young people.

Ensuring that West Virginians are educated to fill those jobs is critical to the continuing success of our state's high-tech endeavors. Knowing that, I have supported a number of initiatives which are answering that need and helping to more firmly implant high-tech enterprises in West Virginia's economic landscape. Through efforts like the Robert C. Byrd Institute for Flexible Manufacturing, headquartered at Marshall University in Huntington; the NASA-sponsored Classroom of the Future at Wheeling Jesuit University; the Science and Technology Center at Shepherd College in Jefferson County; and the Aviation Training Center at Bridgeport, operated by Fairmont State College, I will continue to build the necessary foundation to promote West Virginia's high-tech growth.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Opening the Tap on Clean Drinking Water

Across the country, in hundreds of rural communities, there is a serious lack of safe, reliable drinking water. Since 1995, federal data outlining the sorry details of the safe drinking water crisis have been available and, yet, year after year, adequate funding for water and wastewater projects that would solve this crisis is not provided. That is why I recently added, and the Senate approved, \$30 million to a federal appropriations bill to boost such projects. This money would benefit the neediest of rural communities that are affected by extreme conditions that increase the cost of constructing water and wastewater systems, that have a high incidence of health problems related to water supply and poor sanitary conditions, or whose residents are suffering from a high rate of poverty.

Most Americans take safe drinking water for granted. Most Americans simply assume that, when they turn on the faucet, clean water will automatically flow out. The terrible truth is that, in the United States, the health of millions of men, women, and children is made vulnerable by their reliance on a possibly contaminated water supply.

According to statistics from 1998, approximately 2.2 million rural Americans

live with critical quality and accessibility problems related to their drinking water, including an estimated 730,000 American citizens who have no running water in their homes. An additional five million rural Americans are affected by grave, although less critical, water problems, such as water sources that are over-taxed or poorly protected, and by antiquated distribution systems.

The funding provided in my amendment is desperately needed to address conditions in much of Appalachia and other rural areas like the Mississippi Delta or outlying Alaskan villages. In West Virginia, families in towns such as Pageton, Belington, and Crum are forced to deal with water that must be boiled before consumption, or with water that flows -- when it flows -- like opaque brown sludge from their taps. This is water that is not fit for washing a car, let alone for cooking or mixing with baby formula. That simply should not be, in a nation as rich in resources as the United States.

This \$30 million I added for clean water systems gives hope to rural Americans that a brighter future lies ahead, a future flowing as bright and clear as the water out of their taps.

June 2, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Rural Aging: A Global Challenge

A recent Census Bureau report labeled West Virginia the nation's "oldest" state, with more than 15 percent of its population being at least 65 years of age, a percentage that is expected to increase over the next several years. Population studies estimate that, between 1998 and 2025, the number of 65-year-olds will more than double worldwide. Such statistics underscore the need to take a closer look at how the needs of an aging population may affect West Virginia, the United States, and nations around the world.

To help address the challenges associated with aging, delegates from around the globe are slated to converge in Charleston next June for the international "Rural Aging: A Global Challenge" conference. Recognizing the special needs associated with a growing senior population, I secured \$500,000 from the National Institute on Aging to help fund that conference, which is being sponsored by West Virginia University (WVU) in collaboration with the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and the International Association of Gerontology.

The rural aging conference is planned to direct special attention toward

meeting the needs of the elderly residing in some of the least developed areas of the world. Organizers hope that the event will result in a stronger commitment to senior citizens by both the public and private sectors.

West Virginia University's role in this conference may seem surprising to some, but the University possesses valuable expertise in this field. WVU's Center on Aging has been focusing on rural aging issues for the past decade, examining the differences between aging populations in rural and urban communities. It is the only such center in the world devoted to studying these issues.

I have long sought to provide resources to aid West Virginia's seniors, safeguarding programs like Medicare and Social Security and providing funding for expanded health care and other special services for the elderly in our state. But I believe that the upcoming conference can help to identify new strategies, shape major policy, and promote programmatic enhancements that will better enable society to cope with the challenges it faces as the population of senior citizens living in rural communities continues to grow.

June 9, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Celebrating West Virginia Day 1999

This year marks West Virginia's 136th birthday. Since those early days, as the nation healed from the long and bitter struggle of the Civil War, our state has made great strides. I have been fortunate, over the course of my life, to witness many of these advancements first-hand, and I look forward to the opportunities presented to us as the new century draws closer.

I lost my mother when I was about a year old to the influenza pandemic of 1918 that killed an estimated 20 million people around the world. Today's medicines and medical technologies were hardly dreamed of then, and, indeed, some of them I can still barely believe possible. West Virginians are a tough and hardy people, but credit must go to the quality medical care available throughout the state for keeping so many of us healthy as the years add on. I have taken special pride in my efforts to help the state's teaching hospitals and medical centers to stay on the cutting edge of the health care revolution.

I have also been connected to coal my whole life, having been raised the adopted son of a coal miner and having also married a coal miner's daughter. I

have long been a supporter of clean coal technologies that will allow us to burn coal with increasing efficiency and less environmental impact. Most recently, I have been working on a package of targeted tax incentives to bring these new technologies into more widespread use, and I have been urging the Administration to look into ways to spread the use of these technologies abroad.

One area of life that has not, I fear, seen improvement over the course of this century is the notion of values. The erosion of strong family and moral values before an advancing sea of senseless violence and materialism can, however, be stemmed by a concerted effort on the part of each of us. We all must not only be mindful of our own children and what they see and learn, but we must also set an example that we would like our children and our neighbor's children to emulate.

As we prepare to enter a new century, we must not be beguiled by good times into letting down our guard. With an eye toward future possibilities, and our feet firmly planted in our values and history, we can meet the new century with confidence and security.

June 16, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Taking Time to Read

One of the most important, and most basic, skills a man or woman needs in order to succeed is the ability to read. As we race toward a new century, high-tech skills will be increasingly in demand. But how can a person be expected to understand high-tech information without a basic ability to read?

A recent report by the National Institute for Literacy paints a very disturbing picture. The organization studied the literacy level of men and women across the country, and estimated that more than 40 million adults, including nearly 281,000 in West Virginia, have minimal literacy skills. Although many of these adults could perform some tasks involving simple texts and documents, all of them displayed difficulty using certain reading, writing, and computational skills considered necessary for functioning in everyday life.

Without basic reading skills, the task of understanding a map, filling out the information on a job application, or comprehending a doctor's written instructions for prescription medicine can be very difficult, if not impossible. Activities that are taken for granted by a majority of the adult population can prove major obstacles for the more than 20 percent of the adult Americans who lack basic reading skills.

Addressing this prob-

lem requires a comprehensive approach. To help, many local organizations pair literate adults with those who are illiterate in programs designed to teach reading skills. At the Literacy Volunteers of America West Virginia Chapter, for example, nearly 700 volunteers partner with about 675 adults to increase their literacy skills. The federal government has also been a partner in the effort to increase literacy. Last year, the government devoted \$360 million to adult education and literacy programs. Millions more were spent on adult education at state and local levels.

But we should not wait until a person reaches adulthood before we begin to address illiteracy. A love of reading must be nurtured in childhood. As I was growing up, my parents did not buy a toy pistol or a cowboy suit for me; instead, they bought books and encouraged me to read. They wanted me to learn and to develop my mind. That kind of encouragement is still needed today.

This July 2nd is National Literacy Day. I encourage West Virginians to mark this day by taking the time to read a book to a child. Educating children about the importance of reading establishes a firm foundation for their future. Share with them the joy of reading, and open their minds to the world of knowledge and wisdom.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Finding Ways to End Youth Violence

Across the country, parents, teachers, students, law enforcement officials, and church and community leaders are struggling to get a handle on the growing problem of youth violence. In light of the shootings at Heritage High School in Georgia and at Columbine High School in Colorado, and the statistics showing a dramatic rise in violent youth crimes, I recently introduced, and the Senate approved, legislation to establish a National Commission on Youth Violence. This Commission calls upon experts in parenting, school administration, and law enforcement to open their ears, listen, and begin to identify and reconcile the root causes fueling this epidemic of terror and violence rocking our nation's schools.

Given the breadth of this challenge, a Commission, consisting of a panel of men and women with broad experience and seeking input from an array of interests, seems a requisite component in the quest for a solution to school violence. No viewpoint can be summarily dismissed as we search for ways to protect our children.

Likewise, no player should be given a pass. The makers of video games, producers of movies, musicians, parents, teachers, administrators, civic groups, church leaders, and public officials all bear some of

this burden. But organizations like the National Rifle Association and law-abiding gun-owners throughout the nation must recognize that they, too, bear some of the responsibility to end this madness. This is no time to take to the sidelines.

Part of the cure, I believe, can only be found by digging deep into the soul of America. Talk of a lack of morals and values and of the way things used to be has long been cynically brushed off as old-fashioned and out of step with the world today. But the experiences of my long life have convinced me that something in our society is seriously wrong. We are missing something that used to be a basic component in our society, and we desperately need to rediscover it.

It is my hope that, in working together with a National Commission on Youth Violence, we can identify and implement many essential steps for ending the terror besetting America's school system. It is high time to restore the peaceful schoolhouse we once knew so well -- a school setting which fosters creativity and inspires learning, and, most importantly, which provides each student with a safe haven for obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary to lead America into the 21st century.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Giving Small Businesses Y2K Help

In these complex times, our society increasingly relies on computers. From the scanners at grocery store check-out counters to the radars that monitor airplane traffic, computer technology plays a significant role in our daily lives. Unfortunately, because of the dominance of computers throughout our society, computer errors can have widespread, expensive, and potentially dangerous consequences. In recent years, a computer problem known as Y2K, for the Year 2000, has gained international attention.

The Y2K problem stems from the fact that, until very recently, computers and computer programs were designed, primarily for cost-saving reasons, to process date information by using just two digits, instead of four, to represent the year. For example, in many computers, "97" is used to represent 1997. Using this two-digit format, though, makes the year 2000 indistinguishable from 1900, and the year 2001 can be mistaken for 1901. Such a simple mistake could cause entire computer systems to shut down, with potentially catastrophic consequences for the programs, services, individuals, and businesses that are dependent on those systems. Fixing this problem can be very expensive, and for small businesses that operate on tight budgets, the

cost to repair the problem could prove prohibitive.

To help small businesses prepare for Y2K, legislation was recently enacted, with my support, authorizing the Small Business Administration (SBA) to provide loans to help companies become "Y2K ready." Two types of loans will be provided. Under the first, small businesses can borrow money to purchase the systems, software, and services they need to become Y2K compliant. These loans -- known as Y2K Action Loans -- are available now. After January 1, 2000, the SBA will make loans available to assist small businesses that suffer economic injury as a result of a Y2K-related problem.

Additional information on the SBA loan program can be found on the agency's Internet site at www.sba.gov/y2k. In addition, this site offers general Y2K information and guidance for small businesses. The SBA Answer Desk can be reached at 1-800-U-ASK-SBA for information on the SBA office nearest you.

Businesses, large and small, in West Virginia should take the Y2K problem seriously and examine their own readiness. The consequences and costs of ignoring the problem could be far more devastating than the expense of upgrading outdated systems.

July 7, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Guaranteeing Steel's Future

Recently, the Senate approved a key measure intended to address the steel import crisis caused by the illegal dumping of foreign steel into U.S. markets. As a result of the flood of steel imports from late 1997 through the end of 1998, 10,000 steelworkers across the nation were laid off from their jobs. Several domestic steel plants have closed or declared bankruptcy. With no assurances that steel imports would abate in the near future, financial institutions have been unwilling to restructure most U.S. steel producers' debt. Without financial aid, weakened steel producers are increasingly threatened by closure.

Clearly, American steel companies are reeling. Foreign steelmakers have not been fighting fairly. Those companies have been ignoring international trade laws, and the Administration has failed to intervene decisively to stop those low blows. To address this crisis in a short-term manner, I offered an amendment to a federal appropriations bill that would create a guaranteed loan program for steel companies adversely affected by this steel dumping crisis. The legislation states that the maximum aggregate amount of a loan that could be available to a single company would be \$250 million. The total amount of all guarantees would not exceed \$1 billion. All loans would have to be repaid within six years, with

interest. This loan guarantee program would give steelmakers access to an infusion of capital that could help them to recover from those unfair punches and fight back.

Opponents of this loan guarantee program claim that it is an excessively costly solution to a non-existent problem. It is neither. The federal government would not be making the loans. The loan guarantee program outlined in this bill would provide qualified steel producers access to loans through the private market that are guaranteed by the federal government in the same way that the federal government now guarantees loans made to homebuilders, farmers, and even to foreign nations like Mexico, Israel, and Russia. Similar federal programs have been implemented in past years for New York City, Lockheed, and Chrysler -- and have worked.

I am proud that the Senate has approved this program, and I hope that the House of Representatives will act on this legislation soon to provide important relief for thousands of steelworkers and their families who continue to face an uncertain future. Further delay by the Congress and the Administration will only lead to cold blast furnaces and fading hopes in steel towns across the country. This is an emergency. It requires urgent action.

July 14, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Commitment to Clean Water

West Virginians are benefiting from new drinking water systems and a better protected environment because of a very successful program at West Virginia University (WVU) called the National Onsite Demonstration Project (NODP). One of four nationally recognized environmental services and training programs housed at WVU, the NODP helps small communities to finance, implement, and demonstrate technologies to treat wastewater, prevent pollution, and protect public health. In 1993, I helped to initiate the NODP by providing funds in federal appropriations bills for the program. Since then, millions of dollars have been invested to help improve water quality.

Thousands of West Virginia residents, especially those in remote regions of the state, depend on on-site wastewater treatment systems. The NODP designs unique systems to meet the individual needs of each residence -- making clean and safe water both accessible and affordable. For instance, the NODP's Monongalia Management and Maintenance District will soon oversee systems for nearly 50 percent of the county's residents. Effective on-site systems will soon be installed in McDowell County as well, ensuring that the mountains of Southern West Virginia are no obstacle to the highest water quality for its citizens.

Because West Virginia is at the forefront in wastewater management and technology, experts from across the country, and as far away as South Africa and Uruguay, are traveling to NODP sites seeking solutions to their own wastewater problems. In addition to successes in McDowell and Monongalia counties, WVU has joined with Shepherd College, in Jefferson County, to establish a demonstration and training site at the Freshwater Institute in Shepherdstown.

Small communities far beyond our state's borders also benefit from the NODP. The program has additional sites in 12 other states, as well as a widely distributed research publication and toll-free hotline.

Throughout my career, I have worked diligently to prepare West Virginia for economic growth. To be competitive in attracting new business and industry, we must have the proper infrastructure in place. Like improved highways and bridges, effective wastewater management systems are vital to the continued expansion of West Virginia communities. The NODP is making development possible in regions of West Virginia where a central waste management system is not affordable or feasible. Due in part to the NODP's efforts, our communities are cleaner, safer, and prepared to move forward into the next century.

July 21, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Meeting Education's Needs Through Flexibility

Local education officials have often complained that restrictions on the use of federal funds are often short-sighted, making it difficult for schools to meet the special needs of their students. To address this problem and give the states greater latitude to develop competitive educational programs, the Congress recently approved, and the President signed into law, the Education Flexibility Partnership Act of 1999, or "ED-FLEX." This measure extends to all qualifying states throughout the nation the same privileges currently available to just twelve states now participating in a pilot project. For West Virginia, this presents an opportunity for greater flexibility in exchange for increased accountability in school performance, a concept that I strongly support.

Through this new law, states and school districts will have expanded options in implementing programs that serve underprivileged children, train elementary and secondary teachers, and make schools safer. The legislation delegates greater authority to parents, teachers, and principals who are directly involved in the daily operation of schools.

ED-FLEX focuses on the important role of accountability at the state level to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to develop and implement challenging standards for educational content and student performance. In many circum-

stances, the details of running a school program can best be decided at the state and local levels. Increased flexibility, in these instances, can yield positive results. But in waiving federal education requirements, the impact that such action will have on student achievement must be taken into account so as to ensure that our nation's educational system is not weakened further.

ED-FLEX has received favorable reviews in states that currently participate. The flexibility the program provides has allowed those states and communities to pursue innovative initiatives for elementary and secondary education. For example, Maryland, a current ED-FLEX-designated state, has used its broader authority to provide one-on-one tutoring for reading students who have the greatest needs in the elementary grades, giving young students a firmer foundation for success in later educational pursuits. Other ED-FLEX states have been successful in reducing the average student per teacher ratio in mathematics and reading classes.

While preserving the intent of federal education programs and delegating greater flexibility to localities, ED-FLEX will help federal education dollars to be better targeted to meet the needs of particular schools and to prepare our nation's young people for the challenges of tomorrow.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Saving for a Rainy Day

Imagine going to work one day and being told by your boss that you will be receiving a bonus in each of the next ten years. What would you do with all that extra cash? You could wait until you actually receive it, then put some in the bank for retirement, and use the rest to pay off your bills. Or, you could throw caution to the wind, call the travel agent now, and start packing for that once-in-a-lifetime vacation extravaganza.

Believe it or not, that is essentially the predicament facing the Congress ever since government forecasters projected surpluses in the federal budget of almost \$3 trillion over the next ten years. Even setting aside the \$2 trillion that comes from overpayments to the Social Security system, and which everyone agrees will be needed to secure the long-term solvency of that system, Congress is still left with the question of what to do with nearly \$1 trillion. Before breaking out the suitcases and suntan lotion, though, let me offer two caveats.

First, the nation does not have an extra trillion dollars. Rather, what we have is a rosy prediction of an extra trillion dollars. And that is a whole different animal, particularly in light of the fact that, over the past 19 years, congressional budget forecasters have been wrong in their annual deficit/surplus esti-

mates by an absolute average of \$54 billion per year. Extend that average over the next ten years, and one can see that \$540 billion of the \$1 trillion projected surplus could melt away faster than a snowball in July.

Secondly, the projected surplus is not simply the result of additional treasury revenues arising from a growing economy. In reality, \$595 billion -- or 60 percent -- comes from draconian -- and as yet unspecified -- spending cuts in such things as crime prevention, veterans' health care, education, and airport improvements, to name just a few. Throw in the additional \$80 billion that experience teaches us will be needed to address natural disasters over the next ten years -- such as floods, hurricanes, and droughts -- and one can again see that the so-called surplus could be far less than anticipated.

This is not to say that the forecasters will not be right, or that the budget cutters will not prevail. But before we get too far along with grandiose plans, I hope that we in Congress can put aside our rose-colored glasses, provide for Medicare and Social Security, pay down the national debt, provide for the nation's investment needs, and put the welfare of our children and grandchildren ahead of our own self-indulgent inclinations.

August 4, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Disaster Relief for Farmers

As a result of the many months of drought that has gripped West Virginia, President Clinton has, at my request, designated every county in the state a federal agricultural disaster area. This designation opens the door to farmers to receive short-term financial help through low-interest USDA loans and other programs to help cover losses that resulted from the drought.

In West Virginia, this drought has devastated the lives of hundreds of family farmers, and I am deeply concerned about the fate of West Virginia's last 17,000 surviving small family farms. Recently, I had the opportunity to visit a farm in Jefferson County and to meet with farmers. I stood in what should have been a fertile cornfield with corn above my head, but the tassels barely reached past my knees. Ears of corn snapped too easily from the stalk and were no bigger than two rolls of quarters placed end to end. I saw the conditions of the cattle and pastures in West Virginia. I saw the dry, cracked fields. I heard the heartbreaking stories of farmers and their wives.

The federal disaster designation is a first step in helping farmers to survive financially during this drought. In addition to the low-interest loans, farmers can apply for assistance

from the Emergency Conservation Program, which provides emergency cost-share funding for water conservation measures; federal crop insurance; and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, which provides compensation for crops for which crop insurance is not available.

Farmers have eight months from the date of loss to apply for the loans to help cover part of their actual losses. To be eligible, producers must have suffered at least a 30-percent loss of normal production in a single enterprise, be able to repay the loan and any other loans, be unable to obtain credit elsewhere, and have adequate security or credit history. Farmers and ranchers should contact their local USDA Service Center or Farm Service Agency county office for further information.

While this drought is primarily an inconvenience for most people in the mid-Atlantic region, it has stolen the life from much of the land and the livelihoods of many of our farmers. It is my hope that this federal disaster declaration, and the financial assistance that comes with it, will help farmers throughout West Virginia stave off devastation and survive until the rains return to the hills and fields.

August 11, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Back to School

With the new school year just around the corner, students are stocking up on school supplies for their upcoming classes and teachers are putting the final touches on their lesson plans. Yet, despite the excitement that accompanies the first day of school, there is an anxious feeling that parents, educators, and community leaders also share this time of year.

Just a few months ago, our nation witnessed the most tragic school shooting of all time. While Littleton, Colorado, continues to cope with the devastating reality of what transpired there last spring, our nation as a whole must work together to ensure that a recurrence of this event does not happen in another American schoolyard. Every step we take in this regard brings us closer to restoring the old-time serene schoolhouse that our children deserve.

West Virginia is one step ahead in creating targeted violence prevention programs. From the West Virginia State Police's "Operation Safe Schools" program to the West Virginia Safe Schools program that provides ongoing training for principals, teachers, and school personnel on crisis intervention and management, our schools and communities are working to maintain a peaceful environment in which teachers can teach and

students can learn.

However, there is no single cure-all to the problem of school violence, and it is important to remember that prevention should not solely begin and end on school grounds. The problem is pervasive, and protecting our nation's children ought to be a team effort of schools, families, communities, and churches, not simply a matter of public policy. Parents and educators are youngsters' role models, and often their greatest confidants. So, teach children the "old values" of integrity, honesty, respect, loyalty, and religious faith that will carry them through the highs and lows of life. And heed unusual behavior and warning signs before a bad day progresses into a violent outburst.

One's education is a lifeline to a strong and prosperous future. It begins at home as a child and should never truly end. It saddens me to think that the critical years of elementary and secondary education have been stolen from students caught in the line of fire. Bright futures as scientists, writers, teachers, entrepreneurs, and community leaders are within reach for many of our nation's children. Let us all work together to keep our schools safe, and to watch these visions and aspirations blossom into a reality.

August 18, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Opening the Workforce to All Americans

Despite the overwhelming growth and prosperity of our nation's economy in recent years, men and women with disabilities continue to struggle to live independently and become integral contributors to the workforce. According to a 1998 Harris survey, 72 percent of disabled Americans want to work, yet nearly three-quarters of the disabled adults in the country are unemployed. Given these staggering figures, I joined in cosponsoring S. 331, the Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, which would make significant strides toward reforming federal disability programs and removing unfair barriers facing disabled persons who desire to enter or return to the workforce.

The Senate recently passed this important legislation by a unanimous vote, opening more workplace doors to greater numbers of disabled Americans and unleashing the creativity and talent of this dynamic population. For too long, men and women with disabilities have suffered from unfair penalties if they go to work. They have been caught between the option of accepting a paying job at the risk of losing medical coverage, or simply sitting idle so that they can retain their vital health care benefits.

Through the Work Incentives Improvement Act, disabled citizens would no longer have to contend with this difficult and unfair choice. This legislation would help to remove existing health care barriers and would bring the goal of independence within the reach of many disabled Americans. It would give adults with disabilities greater access to health care coverage once they enter the workforce, including opportunities to buy into Medicare and Medicaid at affordable rates. Moreover, it would phase out the loss of disability cash benefits as income levels rise and would broaden access to vocational-rehabilitation and the employment services necessary for disabled persons to become successfully employed today.

For too long, disabled Americans have been unfairly barred from the workplace by unrealistic restrictions. President Franklin Roosevelt once said, "No country, no matter how rich, can afford to waste its human resources." This legislation lives up to President Roosevelt's objective. As a result of this initiative, a brighter future is on the horizon for our nation's disabled community, and our nation stands ready to benefit from an infusion of capable and motivated workers.

August 25, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Protecting Seniors from Exploitation

Turning 65 years old is supposed to mark the beginning of a new stage in life, the "golden years," with more time for family, hobbies, and relaxation. Sadly, too many Americans in their "golden years" fall victim to gold diggers who seek to exploit senior citizens for personal gain.

Far too many Americans work hard for years, only to find that their retirement "nest egg" has been plundered through theft or fraud. Other senior citizens fall victim to telemarketing scams, in which con artists take advantage of their victims' often trusting natures. And, too often, seniors fall prey to health care fraud and nursing home abuse.

To protect older Americans from those who profit at their expense, I am co-sponsoring a bill that would crack down on a host of crimes which disproportionately target senior citizens. This bill -- the Seniors Safety Act of 1999 -- would direct the Attorney General to study crimes against seniors and to report back to Congress with suggestions on ways to reduce and prevent such crimes. It also would provide criminal and/or civil penalties for defrauding a pension, retirement, or medical savings plan, or engaging in bribery or corruption in administering such plans.

The Act would set up a

"Better Business"-style hotline to collect and provide information on complaints of telemarketing fraud, and would call for a computer database to be set up with information about companies that engage in telemarketing scams. These provisions would help senior citizens to make sure that the friendly voice on the other end of the telephone offering special deals or gifts is not just a smooth "con man" plying his craft. Upon notification by the Justice Department, telephone companies would have to discontinue or refuse service to perpetrators attempting to swindle seniors.

In addition, the bill would allow the Attorney General to bring actions in court against false claims or illegal kickback schemes involving federal health care programs. And it would penalize nursing homes that exhibit a pattern of health or safety violations which abuse the physical or mental health of residents.

I hope that the Congress will move forward with the legislation and create this important safety net to protect our older citizens from the unsavory criminal activity which so often afflicts them. The Seniors Safety Act would help older Americans to enjoy their golden years without fear. They deserve nothing less for their years of hard work.

September 1, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Digging Out of the U.S. Trade Deficit

The U.S. Department of Commerce recently released trade deficit figures for the first six months of this year. Unfortunately, those statistics were not encouraging. According to the report, for five of the first six months of the year, the gap between what U.S. companies and consumers spent on imports and the amount that foreign countries spent on American products reached record levels. This report is further proof that U.S. trade policies need serious examination and readjustment.

For too long, American industries have battled unfair trade practices by foreign competitors. This and past Administrations -- both Democratic and Republican -- have allowed the nation's trade deficit to soar. As a result of Administration policies that reflected State Department concerns about the economies of foreign nations, American industries and American workers have suffered.

To address this situation, and to find ways to reverse the trade deficit, I authored legislation last fall to create the Trade Deficit Review Commission. Recently, this 12-member, bipartisan body began the process of studying the causes and consequences of, and looking for solutions to, U.S. trade deficits.

Clearly, growing and persistent trade deficits have reached the point of requiring this kind of examination. Furthermore, conventional wisdom has been placed into question re-

cently concerning the trade deficits. For instance, the widely held assumption that trade deficits would disappear or become inconsequential when the national budget was put into balance is clearly wrong.

The Trade Deficit Review Commission, which has a one-year lifetime and is required to hold at least four field hearings outside of Washington, D.C., consists of an excellent mix of men and women, including business, labor, and investment executives. These men and women bring to the Commission a variety of perspectives. The members include academic figures of national repute, former Cabinet and Federal Reserve officials, and former Senate and House staff members who have been central architects of virtually every trade bill in the last 20 years.

The intersecting issues that this Commission will examine have been marching across the front pages of America's newspapers. Those issues include such topics as China, steel, technology, agriculture, trading blocs, foreign subsidies, and so on. These are important issues on which the country needs clear and thorough guidance. I have every confidence that this Commission, if it can forge a strong consensus on future policies, will perform a very valuable service. For the sake of our economic future, our immense trade deficits must be reversed.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Building Safe Schools and Healthy Communities

A new school year is underway, with all its bright potential for learning. And while most students welcome the chance to again immerse themselves in the business of learning and growing, we, as parents, educators, and legislators, cannot help but reflect upon the memories of sudden, violent death that have visited several American schools.

I consider school violence to be one of the most critical problems facing our nation. School violence can happen again, and it can happen anywhere. That is why I recently hosted a statewide forum with West Virginia University to further enhance our collective knowledge of the efforts underway throughout the state to prevent youth violence. Moreover, it is my hope that this symposium will spark an open, active discussion across the state about what more needs to be done to better protect our teachers and children from classroom violence. Results from the forum, as well as presentations made throughout the day, are being posted on my Internet site at <http://byrd.senate.gov>.

At the symposium, several ideas were presented by panelists and participants alike. Among those ideas were expanding after-school programs to all children, restoring art classes that have been subject to budget cuts,

and teaching conflict-resolution and peer-mediation skills beginning in the early grades. Parents, teachers, and students also proposed reducing class size as a way to make young people feel that they are receiving more personal attention from teachers, and, therefore, are more a part of the school community. The idea of engaging students in their school and community was the single concept that resonated with most symposium participants. Too many children feel like they are just a faceless number moving through school. By involving a student in extra-curricular and community activities, a student may feel a greater sense of self-worth and pride, and may be less likely to commit an act of violence in school.

I do not have the answers to preventing youth violence, nor does any single individual. None of us, alone, possesses the magic answer that will solve the complex problem of preventing youth violence before it starts. But across this great state of ours reside the dedication, the devotion, and the innovation to find solutions that work. The recent statewide symposium spurred that effort forward. We must continue to work together, and we must draw others to our task. The future of our state and our nation depends on it..



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Celebrating the VFW Centennial

This year marks the 81st anniversary of Armistice Day, designated to celebrate the signing of the armistice that ended the fighting of World War I. A generation later, 16-million Americans again answered their nation's call against aggression in World War Two. Since then, our nation's sons and daughters have served in Korea, Vietnam, Panama, the Persian Gulf, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo. They have fought to protect our nation's interests and to ensure the freedom of others across the globe. Through the turmoil and change of the 20th century, one thing has remained constant: the dedication and commitment of our veterans to the survival and strength of this nation.

There is a unique opportunity this year to pay tribute to the men and women of the Armed Services with the 100th anniversary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) on September 29. This centennial anniversary presents an opportunity to recognize and honor the more than two million veterans of the Armed Forces represented by the VFW.

The VFW began when groups of veterans of the Spanish-American War of 1898 banded together in Ohio, Colorado, and Pennsylvania. These first VFW members aimed to secure

veterans' medical care and pensions, benefits for which I continue to work today. In addition to its national leadership on veterans' issues, the VFW supports America's Armed Forces by sending letters, holiday cards, and gift packages to servicemen; by sponsoring USO shows; by contributing to memorial funds; by helping servicemen to obtain benefits; by assisting with job placement; and by holding "welcome home rallies" for servicemen. Whether at home or abroad, VFW members are committed to improving the lives of veterans and their families.

In West Virginia, there are approximately 26,500 members of the VFW who attend meetings at 133 posts around the state. The VFW Ladies Auxiliary adds another 20,000 members to support veterans issues and community projects to which the VFW dedicates time and energy.

I am proud to say that I cosponsored a resolution that passed the Senate earlier this year recognizing the VFW's centennial, and providing that September 29, 1999, be designated as "Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Day." I hope that West Virginians will mark this occasion by thanking a veteran whose sacrifices helped to secure the blessings of freedom in America.

September 22, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Turning an Ear to the Cosmos

Early next year, the final pieces of West Virginia's new eye on the universe will be put in place, and astronomers will begin the task of testing the world's largest fully steerable radio telescope, located in Pocahontas County. The new Green Bank Telescope will be an important resource to enhance our knowledge and understanding of the Milky Way galaxy, and beyond.

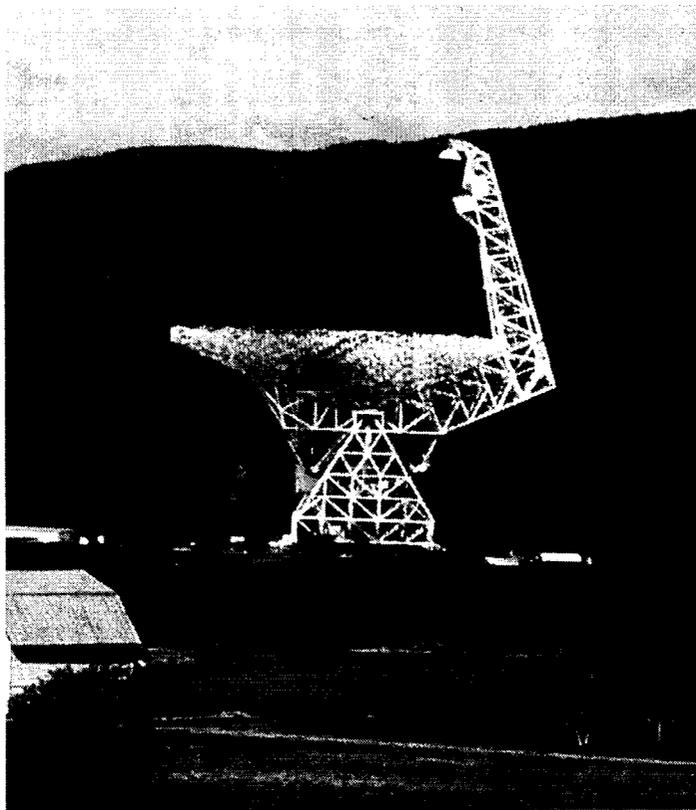
The new telescope replaces the 300-foot telescope that collapsed in 1988 after 26 years of service. In 1989, I added \$75 million to a federal appropriations bill for construction of the new telescope and, in 1991, I added another \$5.4 million to build the joint Navy-National Science Foundation Operations Center at the observatory.

The 300-foot Green Bank Telescope specialized in discovering pulsars. While comets are remnants of the beginning of a star and its planetary system, a pulsar is all that remains after the star suffers a massive explosion that removes most of its surface in a phenomenon called a supernova. Pulsars emit regular pulses of radio waves that act as a type of "celestial lighthouse." These waves can be detected by a very large radio telescope, like the Green Bank Telescope, and may some day be used by space explorers as light-

houses to navigate our galaxy. The telescope will allow astronomers to search for pulsars in the very center of the Milky Way, a region so distant from the Earth that any pulsars there are too faint to be found by existing telescopes.

Working with the original telescope, astronomers made many significant discoveries. For example, it was the second telescope ever to detect a group of pulsars, and through its detection of another group of pulsars, astronomers realized the association between supernovas and pulsars. Additionally, a significant number of all pulsars detected to date were found with the original Green Bank Telescope. With all of that success, the doors that scientists and astronomers will be able to unlock with the new telescope are beyond imagination.

Because of its unique design, astronomers will be able to position the telescope with an incredible degree of accuracy, even though it is larger than a football field and taller than the Statue of Liberty. Scientists will begin aligning and adjusting the telescope later this year, and expect to dedicate it officially next spring. I look forward to the day when astronomers map the vast reaches of our galaxy and others after traveling no further than Green Bank, West Virginia.



GREEN BANK, W.Va.... The world's largest fully steerable radio telescope is now under construction at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory's site in Green Bank, Pocahontas County. Early next year, astronomers will begin the task of testing the new telescope.

September 29, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Victory for American Steel

Two of West Virginia's largest private employers, Weirton Steel and Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel, are locked in a battle for survival. These companies, like so many other American steel producers, are fighting against a wave of illegal, below-cost, imported steel that has the potential to permanently cripple an industry that is vital to this country's economic base and national security.

The force of this wave can be seen in some disturbing figures. According to U.S. Department of Commerce data, in 1998, the U.S. imported more steel tonnage than ever before. In fact, last year's import levels were 83 percent higher than the annual import average for the previous eight years. Across the country, at the height of the import crisis, more than 10,000 steelworkers were forced off the job. At least six steel companies have filed for bankruptcy. Much of this damage can be linked directly to illegally dumped steel imports.

To help Weirton, Wheeling-Pitt, and other steel mills, I created a \$1 billion loan guarantee program specifically designed to provide some short-term relief to the American steel industry. Most recently, the President signed into law my initiative that will help domestic steel producers by providing access to an infusion of

capital to keep their furnaces burning and keep their employees on the job. The maximum aggregate amount of a loan available to a single company is \$250 million, and the loans will be guaranteed up to 85 percent of their total. My legislation establishes a three-member oversight board, consisting of the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, who heads the loan guarantee board, the Secretary of Commerce, and the Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The loan guarantees will not solve the steel crisis, however. There must be a long-term, permanent solution to this crisis to prevent waves of illegal steel imports from drowning the U.S. steel industry.

For 50 years, I have fought for American workers, for the men and women who earn their livings by honest, hard work, and who are playing by the rules as they seek to achieve the American dream. The U.S. steel industry has made the sacrifices and investments necessary to increase efficiency and compete effectively against foreign makers. Our companies are willing and able to play by the rules. As a nation, we must protect the viability of our steel industry. To do so, we must insist that foreign competitors are held to that same set of rules.

October 6, 1999



WEIRTON, W. Va... Members of the Independent Steelworkers Union thank U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd, D-W. Va., for his work on the Emergency Steel Loan Guarantee Act. Byrd's legislation, which was recently signed into law, creates a \$1 billion loan guarantee program specifically designed to provide some short-term relief to the American steel industry that has been struggling to compete against record levels of illegally dumped foreign steel.

October 6, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Fighting for West Virginia Farmers

In the last year and a half, the worst drought in recorded history has struck at the mid-Atlantic region. Stretching from Tennessee to West Virginia to Vermont, farmers have been devastated by months of unrelenting drought, which dried up wells and ponds and left grazing lands parched and bare. Some farmers have had to make the painful decision to sell off their livestock or to give up farms that have been in their families for generations. This is nothing short of an emergency.

Recognizing the great needs of our farmers, I set to work, in my capacity as Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, to boost funding in the Agriculture Appropriations bill this past summer for drought relief. Recently, that appropriations bill was amended in a Senate-House conference to provide more than \$1.2 billion in broad relief for farmers who have experienced losses due to natural disasters in 1999.

Moreover, since state agriculture officials identified aid for livestock losses as the West Virginia farming community's greatest area of need, I pressed for and won \$200 million specifically to help livestock farmers recover from drought losses. It was especially important to me that this aid be provided not as loans, but as direct cash

assistance, which would be of greatest help to financially strapped farmers, many of whom are already in debt. The bill also provides \$125 million for dairy farmers who have suffered losses.

Further, drought-stricken West Virginia farmers are eligible for other forms of aid in the bill, including revegetation and feed assistance; emergency cost-share funding for water conservation measures; federal crop insurance; and compensation through the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program.

In West Virginia, there are approximately 21,000 small family farms. Yet, because of this record drought, more than half of these farms have been put at risk. Clearly, the funding contained in the Agriculture Appropriations bill is badly needed, now. But, it is also evident that the level of funding is not sufficient to address all of the needs of drought- and hurricane-stricken farms. Therefore, the legislation also contains language that I supported to lay the groundwork for additional emergency farm aid in the future.

Saving our small farms not only preserves an honorable way of life for thousands of families, but it also ensures that our nation can continue to enjoy the fruits of their labor for generations to come.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Protecting Miners' Health Care

In 1946, President Harry Truman and the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) struck a deal that opened the way for greater mechanization of coal mines in exchange for cradle-to-grave health care coverage for miners and their families. The deal created a health care fund paid for by a tax on coal mined by UMWA members. But gradually, as more and more coal companies employed nonunion miners, the fund's resources have declined.

In response, the Congress, in 1992, approved the Coal Act, requiring coal companies to cover retiree health benefits, even if the companies were not bound to union contracts, or had gotten out of the coal business altogether. But, because of rapidly rising health care costs and adverse court decisions impacting the Coal Act, the fund's trustees recently determined that the money coming into the benefits fund would not be sufficient to cover anticipated health care costs over the next year.

After I learned of the situation from Congressman Nick Rahall and UMWA President Cecil Roberts, I set out to find a short-term fix for the system in the Interior Appropriations bill. With the help of Congressman Rahall, who lobbied key House Members, I fought hard for and won a \$68 million transfer of fund-

ing to the retired miners' health care fund. This short-term fix is needed to ensure a continuation of health care benefits for the more than 66,000 retired miners and their dependents, including more than 19,500 West Virginia men and women who are mostly elderly and on limited incomes. In fact, according to the fund's trustees, the typical beneficiary is a widowed spouse with an average age of 78, and whose monthly income is the \$140 UMWA pension check, supplemented by a social security check.

My efforts have provided some breathing room. The solution that I was able to win is a short-term "Band-Aid" for the retired miners' health care fund. However, the problem requires a long-term solution -- the kind of fix that ensures that retired miners and their dependents will not have to worry from month to month whether their benefits will soon lapse.

It is now incumbent upon the House and Senate authorizing committees of jurisdiction, on which I do not serve, to work with coal companies and the UMWA to craft a fair, balanced, long-term solution. There needs to be a plan in place that will ensure that retired miners and their dependents will not again face a funding shortfall and looming benefits cuts.

October 27, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Standing Firm for Veterans Health Care

On November 11, 1919, our nation observed the first anniversary of the end of World War I. In 1926, Congress proclaimed that day Armistice Day, and passed a resolution that called for an annual observance of "thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through goodwill and mutual understanding between nations." In 1954, Armistice Day became Veterans Day, the holiday on which Americans now annually recognize the sacrifices that our nation's soldiers, sailors, and airmen have made to protect our freedoms.

Largely through the might of our Armed Forces, the United States enjoys an unprecedented position of international leadership. Yet, the promise of lifelong health care that this country made to our veterans has been threatened, not by the aggression of a foreign power but by inadequate funding. Across the country this year, veterans have been concerned about the Clinton Administration's proposed budget for veterans health care services. In fact, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) predicted that the Administration's proposed funding level of \$17.3 billion would result in significant reductions in medical care.

In response to these concerns, I worked to raise

the level of funding for veterans' medical care in an appropriations bill. During consideration of the bill by the Senate Appropriations Committee, on which I serve as Ranking Member, I added \$1.1 billion for veterans' health care, bringing the total funding level to \$18.4 billion. When the appropriations bill came to the Senate floor, recognizing that even \$18.4 billion was still not sufficient for veterans health care, I offered an amendment that added another \$600 million for their medical care. My amendment was adopted, and brought the total funding for veterans' medical care for Fiscal Year 2000 up to \$19 billion. This level of funding will enable the VA to continue to provide quality health care to veterans, and will prevent the kinds of cuts in services that many veterans feared would place their eligibility for care in question.

Throughout America's history, our sons and daughters have always been ready to answer the call to duty. In particular, West Virginians have a proud and enviable record of service to our country in perilous times of war and conflict. It is a matter of simple honor that the nation stand behind its promise to provide quality medical care for our veterans.

November 3, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

West Virginia National Guard Named Best in Nation

I have always been proud of the men and women who serve in the West Virginia National Guard. These soldiers and airmen are ready to serve whenever they are needed, whether in response to floods or blizzards in the state, or in support of our Armed Forces around the globe. Regardless of the hour, the West Virginia National Guard is prepared to live its motto, "Always Ready, Always There."

The West Virginia National Guard is a community-based defense force. Our state's 32 armories and two air bases provide facilities for 1,200 full-time and 5,800 part-time National Guard personnel, with an annual economic impact of \$110 million on the West Virginia economy.

Recently, the West Virginia Army National Guard marked another impressive achievement. For the third year in a row, in each of four specific categories selected by the U.S. National Guard Bureau, West Virginia was ranked number one. Those four categories -- percentage of assigned personnel, percentage of available personnel, percentage of personnel who are qualified in a military specialty, and the number of units that are ready to be activated -- are designed to rate the overall readiness of National Guard units across the country. Through the

efforts of the West Virginia Adjutant General, Major General Allen Tackett, and the efforts of the dedicated personnel, West Virginia once again proved that its National Guard is the best in the nation.

To help the Guard keep this record for many years to come, I am working on a number of initiatives designed to maintain this high state of readiness. Of particular note, this summer, the West Virginia National Guard awarded a contract for construction of the new Regional Training Institute at Camp Dawson, Preston County. Last year, I obtained \$15.2 million for construction of the Regional Training Institute, which, when complete, will fill an important role in preparing members of the National Guard, Reserve, and active duty forces. Staff at this specialized complex will provide training in Special Forces, Engineering, selected Combat Arms, and basic leadership training to more than 2,000 men and women each year. It will be the only center of its kind in the Eastern United States.

It is through dedication and effort that the West Virginia National Guard is the highest rated Guard unit in the country. I applaud the Guardsmen for their commitment and hard work, and I know that they will always be ready to answer the call to duty.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Reaching Out to Autistic Children

One of our state's most exceptional educational resources is the West Virginia Autism Training Center at Marshall University. The men and women who work at this center provide education, training, and treatment programs for West Virginians who suffer from autism.

An estimated one in every 500 children born today will be diagnosed with autism or one of its related disorders -- mysterious diseases that affect brain and nerve development. Autism generally manifests itself in children in the first two years of life, severely impairing language and communication skills, and impeding social development. But its effects have implications for the whole family unit.

The Autism Training Center is a valuable resource for autism sufferers and their families. Through commitment, creativity, and a team approach, the center's staff helps families to provide autistic individuals with quality life experiences. Since its inception in 1983, more than 600 families of autistic children have benefited from the center's efforts. The demand was so great, in fact, that a satellite center was established in Fairmont so that services would be more readily available to families in Northern West Virginia.

Unfortunately, despite the fact that autism tragically leaves its victims pervasively disabled for an en-

tire lifetime, research into this disease has lagged. To help address that oversight, I am cosponsoring the Advancement in Pediatric Autism Research Act. This legislation would expand, intensify, and coordinate the various efforts underway to prevent and cure autism. The bill would authorize \$3.3 million for autism research and \$7.5 million for work by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that focuses on the incidence and distribution of autism, as well as ways to control it. Additionally, the legislation would authorize \$33 million for five National Institutes of Health centers of excellence to conduct extensive research into autism. The legislation must still win the approval of Congress, which I hope will occur next year.

At the core of the West Virginia Autism Training Center is the philosophy that individuals with autism can lead happy lives, and that they deserve to have the same quality of life as people without disabilities. By pairing these efforts with the research underway at the federal level, we can better understand the causes of autism, how to treat it effectively, and, hopefully, how to prevent it. In this age of such extraordinary progress on preventing, treating, and curing so many serious and debilitating illnesses, we cannot afford to miss this opportunity to make progress in the elimination of autism.

November 17, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Striking a Balance between Jobs and the Environment

Throughout West Virginia in recent weeks, much attention has been focused on a federal court decision in a lawsuit involving mountaintop mining. That decision, which found that some of the practices common in both surface and deep mining are illegal under two federal laws, sent shockwaves throughout the coalfields of West Virginia and beyond.

Immediately after the court issued its ruling in October, in which the judge pointed to Congress as the source of a remedy for the situation, the West Virginia Congressional Delegation set to work to address what the court saw as misinterpretations of federal law. Together, we crafted an amendment that struck a delicate balance between the environment and jobs.

After several weeks of diligent negotiations and working against the odds to have the amendment included in an appropriations package, I finally pressed for a vote on this amendment in the Senate during the waning hours of the session.

The Senate, approving the amendment by a vote of 56-33, sent a clear message about congressional intent in interpreting laws governing mining. Even though the House Leadership was unwilling to give the matter a vote, the Senate vote lays a strong foundation for action on this matter in the next session of Congress, which begins in January.

I appreciate the work of the other members of the West Virginia Congressional Delegation, who have been firmly committed to resolving this crucial issue. Senator Jay Rockefeller and the three House members -- Nick Rahall, Bob Wise, and Alan Mollohan -- worked tirelessly to win support of a legislative remedy to the mountaintop mining problem. Their determination was unflagging to the end.

Coal mining is a matter of striking a balance between environmental conservation and the nation's economic and energy needs. Both ends can be achieved -- implementing strict environmental controls on mining activities, while also protecting jobs that are vital to West Virginia -- if we work together.

West Virginia's coal miners respect the environment; they want clean air and clean water for their children and their children's children. I am equally confident that West Virginia's environmental leaders want to pass along to their children and grandchildren a strong and vibrant economy, fueled by abundant and affordable energy.

The recent court decision has presented this nation with a challenge: Can we be creative enough and wise enough to harmonize economic growth with environmental protection? I believe that we can and we must.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Ensuring an Environmental Legacy

One of the greatest challenges facing our nation is the effort to balance the needs associated with protecting the environment while also protecting jobs. Over the years, I have worked to address this challenge by promoting initiatives that preserve the state's natural treasures, while advancing research to better utilize our resources in an environmentally sound manner.

The crown jewel of this effort is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) in Jefferson County. This center combines state-of-the-art technology and a professional staff to train men and women charged with protecting our nation's natural resources. This year, I obtained \$15 million for operations at the NCTC, which I initiated in 1989 and have, over the ensuing years, secured \$138 million for its further development.

Continuing my support of programs that protect West Virginia's natural treasures, I sought funds for land acquisition, operations, and improved facilities at the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge and the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge. Specifically, this year I added \$400,000 for land acquisition at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge, and \$150,000 for improved public facilities at the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

In 1989, when West Virginia was the only state without a national wildlife

refuge, I added the first funds in an appropriations bill for the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge, clearing the path for the purchase of 13 islands to serve as the core of the refuge. The Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, which I started by adding the initial investment of \$2 million to an appropriations bill in 1993, was the nation's 500th federal wildlife refuge. The establishment of these wildlife refuges stands as tangible evidence of my strong commitment to the safeguarding of West Virginia's natural resources while also further developing the state's economy.

Moreover, funding I added to appropriations bills this year has supported and strengthened the New River Gorge National River and the Monongahela National Forest, which host some of the state's most dramatic and sensitive lands, like Seneca Rocks and the Cranberry Glades. The designation of these lands as federally protected not only serves to ensure a special status for the resident flora and fauna, but also allows for recreational opportunities that benefit West Virginia's tourism industry.

Over the years, I have greatly improved our state's environmental record while enhancing our economic well-being. The challenge in the years ahead will be to continue to expand on that record of preservation, even as we build a dynamic economy.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Fulfilling Obligations to Our Veterans

In West Virginia, we are proud of our sons and daughters who have gone into battle to protect the freedoms and values that make America great. But the promise of lifelong health care and benefits for veterans has been too often jeopardized by funding shortfalls. Before adjourning this year, Congress approved two key measures designed to ensure the continuing availability of health care benefits to our veterans.

Congress approved an appropriations bill containing \$1.7 billion that I added for medical care provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Last spring, West Virginia veterans began contacting me with concerns that the Clinton Administration's proposed VA budget was inadequate, and that, as a result, the VA would have to cut back the health care services it provides. It was, therefore, very important to add funding to an appropriations bill. With \$1.7 billion added by my two amendments, the enacted bill contained a total of \$19 billion to guarantee that Americans who have served in the defense of our nation would continue to have access to the range of medical services that the VA provides.

While ensuring that basic health care is available to our veterans, Congress also recognized that veterans' health care needs are

changing with the times, and with those new needs in mind, Congress passed and the President signed into law, the "Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act." The aim of that legislation is to enhance extended-care services for the expanding population of aging veterans by improving access to long-term care for severely disabled veterans and broadening the VA's authority to provide nursing home care alternatives for veterans.

Additionally, that legislation authorizes the VA to pay reasonable emergency care costs for services not provided in VA facilities. That new authority answers a critical need for veterans who require emergency services at a non-VA hospital or clinic.

Finally, the legislation provides the VA with the ability to move toward establishing six new cemeteries across the country, something that veterans groups have been seeking for many years.

Abraham Lincoln said very clearly that the nation has an obligation "to care for him that shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan." My efforts to protect medical care services at VA facilities, and the work of Congress to enhance many benefits for veterans and their families, are aimed at meeting those obligations.

December 8, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Water -- A Basic Element of Growth

Signs of economic growth are evident throughout West Virginia. Our state's unemployment rate is down. Its construction rate is up. But while we applaud progress and eagerly anticipate increased prosperity, we must recognize that brisk economic development brings its own set of problems -- notably, an increased burden on our aging infrastructure.

As new businesses spring up and new homes are built, for example, the strain on our already overburdened and outdated water and sewerage systems increases. When one considers the viability of a thriving tourism industry or a more diversified commercial base -- not to mention the potential consequences of unsafe water on the health of our citizens -- the need for such basic elements as modern water and sewerage systems is obvious.

One area of particular need is the network of "combined" sewers in West Virginia and across the country, which serve as some communities' single collection system to transport both sewage and storm water. During heavy rains, these systems may overflow, leading to the discharge of untreated or partially treated waste into rivers, streams, parks, and even backyards, an occurrence that poses potential health risks.

For affected communities, the effort to control these discharges will likely

constitute one of the largest public works projects they have ever undertaken. For example, the City of Wheeling estimates a need of \$400 million for such projects. In total, the estimated cost for upgrades of combined sewers in West Virginia over the next 20 years is at least \$1 billion, and could easily reach the \$3 billion range.

To help our state address this problem, I am co-sponsoring the "Combined Sewer Overflow Control and Partnership Act." This legislation would help communities to overcome the cost of improving combined sewers by authorizing \$1.5 billion in competitive grants for discharge control projects nationwide. Admittedly, this amount falls short of the anticipated need, but it does signal a growing awareness of the magnitude of the problem, and provides a solid foundation from which to tackle this challenge. In addition, the legislation would advance cost-effective, technology-based controls and would help communities to avoid installing unnecessary controls.

If left unaddressed, this problem of outdated, overburdened sewerage systems will only become a bigger financial burden for our state. This legislation, therefore, is a good fundamental step toward helping West Virginia continue to attract new businesses and develop its economy in the years ahead.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Don't Believe This E-Mail Hoax

In this age of information and technology, one of the most powerful and manipulated tools is the Internet. As Internet access has increased, more and more people have begun to rely on the service. But, unfortunately, some of the information disseminated over the Internet is inaccurate.

For several months, I have received constituent letters and e-mails regarding the so-called "Bill 602P," supposedly introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by a "Congressman Schnell," that would impose a 5-cent tax on every e-mail transmission, as well as a \$20- to \$40-per-month surcharge on all Internet e-mail activity.

According to the so-called legislation, the money would be collected by Internet Service Providers, and then turned over to the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) to assist with recovery of any financial losses that the Postal Service may incur due to a growing preference for e-mail rather than hard-copy letters.

In reality, no such legislation has been proposed in Congress. As a matter of fact, no "Congressman Schnell" exists. Furthermore, the USPS has no authority to charge for e-mail messages sent over the Internet. Nor, according to Postal officials, would they

support such legislation. In fact, the USPS actually operated with a budget surplus last year.

The 602P tax is a hoax that has been propagated by a widespread e-mail chain letter. The origins of this chain letter are unknown, but it is speculated that it was first circulated throughout Canada, targeting the Canadian Parliament, and was subsequently modified to reflect agencies within the U.S. government.

The Internet is an amazing device that has the ability to quickly and easily disseminate needed information. Conversely, it can spread false information just as quickly and easily. The high volume of inquiries to my office about the so-called 602P bill is an interesting commentary on the tremendous influence that the Internet has come to have in our modern lives. While the Internet serves as a valuable communication tool, it is disconcerting that such hoaxes are being perpetrated on West Virginians.

I hope that West Virginians have suffered no adverse consequences as a result of this widespread hoax, and I urge all Internet users to view with a healthy skepticism future such e-mail chain letters. To find out more information about this Internet hoax, visit the USPS Internet site at www.usps.com.

December 22, 1999



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Successful Year for West Virginia

Throughout 1999, I continued my efforts to advance a number of ongoing appropriations initiatives that are improving the lives of West Virginians. But much of my time and energy this year was also devoted to responding to three emergencies that threatened the livelihoods and well-being of thousands of West Virginians.

The first of those emergencies came in the spring, when one of our state's core industries -- steel manufacturing -- was reeling from the unfair actions of foreign steelmakers. Because record levels of foreign steel were being illegally dumped on our shores, domestic steel prices had plummeted, threatening thousands of jobs and leaving American steel companies in dire need of short-term relief. In response, I authored the \$1 billion Emergency Steel Loan Guarantee Act to provide immediate assistance to American steelmakers who have had to cut jobs and close mills in the wake of the illegal dumping.

On another front, this past summer, when record drought conditions gripped West Virginia and the mid-Atlantic region, I worked for passage of a package of emergency aid for farmers. With my support, Congress approved \$8.7 billion in relief for farmers who had experienced losses due to natural disasters or depressed markets in 1999. Further-

more, because the West Virginia Department of Agriculture identified assistance to cattle farmers as the state's greatest drought-related need, I added \$200 million to that package specifically to help livestock farmers recover from drought losses.

In the fall, another emergency surfaced when I was alerted that retired miners and their dependents faced the possible loss of health insurance next year unless monies were added to a special federal health benefits fund. To help ensure continued health care coverage, I added an amendment to an appropriations bill that transferred \$68 million to the retired miners' health care fund. This short-term fix will continue health care benefits to more than 66,000 retired miners and their dependents, including more than 19,500 West Virginia men and women who are mostly elderly and on limited incomes, providing some time for the committees of jurisdiction to craft a long-term fix.

These three emergencies made this year perhaps one of the most challenging of my career of public service for West Virginia. But winning expeditious solutions to these emergencies also made 1999 one of the most rewarding. Fresh from the fray, therefore, I enter my 42nd year of service to West Virginia in the United States Senate with enthusiasm, prepared to tackle the new challenges that lie ahead.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Millennium Mirage

There is good news for procrastinators who crossed the threshold of the year 2000 with trepidation, contemplating the long list of goals that had been set for the new millennium but left unfulfilled. And what is the good news? The third millennium does not start for another year!

That's right! In the midst of all the hype and the flying corks, celebrants seemed to have neglected the fact that the true beginning of the next century does not come until January 1, 2001.

I can understand the confusion many Americans must feel at the moment. Throughout 1999, our nation was immersed in a wave of advertising and public relations messages, generated by corporate giants and quoted by members of the media, who conveniently ignored historical and factual accuracy as they pushed Year 2000 products and futuristic messages in the hope, perhaps, of profiting from a manufactured millennium mirage.

In truth, it was 99 years ago, in 1901-- not 100 years

ago, or 1900 -- that newspapers across the country recognized the beginning of the 20th century. From the Chicago Tribune, to the Evening Times in the Nation's Capital, to West Virginia's own Charleston Gazette, editors nationwide marked the start of January 1, 1901, with reflections on the 1800's and predictions of technological advances and societal changes in the "new" century, which they recognized had just begun.

To call the year 2000 the beginning of the new millennium is a bit like marking a foot at 11 inches. Accuracy is far too important to miscount history by a whole year in the hunger for a good party or big profits.

Annoying as it has been to watch respected individuals falling all over themselves trying to find more and more ingenious ways to mark the turning of this particular calendar page, I have to admit that I will enjoy watching just what these creative minds might dream up next year to whip the nation into a second frenzy over the real beginning of the third millennium.

January 5, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Renewing America's Soul

Something is missing in America today. We seem to have lost touch with some fundamental underpinning of our national soul, and it has never been more apparent than it is today.

All too many Americans now, more than ever before, seem to lack an appreciation or even comprehension of the spiritual aspect in our daily lives. In fact, we appear to have gone so far afield in our quest to avoid offending anyone that we have all but banished any reference to religion from any public forum.

Moreover, rampant materialism, the likes of which we have become accustomed to seeing in recent holiday seasons, underscores the sad reality that, in our nation today, what one has too often defines our view of success, rather than what one is. In many circles, the state of one's bank account means more than the state of one's soul.

Despite this rather discouraging state of affairs, I believe that the flame of spirituality can be rekindled in America.

I sense in our land a deep hunger for something more than prosperity, something more than technology, something deeper than deep pockets -- something that sustains the human soul, that lifts it up, that transcends our baser natures. I hear the clanging of alarm

bells from parents who cannot come to grips with the state of our schools and the violence threatening our children.

I note a growing recognition of the dangers posed by a society which has evolved from a collective avoidance of religion and moral teachings.

These signals I see as evidence that the time is ripe for a return in America to the religious values that call forth the best of human nature.

I believe that we are experiencing a growing demand for a return to religious beliefs, and I echo the call to all of us who believe in a Supreme Being to put God back into the daily life of our nation.

West Virginia has, to its credit, managed to preserve its religious and moral underpinnings, but that foundation may be weakened if we who believe do not re-dedicate ourselves to the task of putting the Creator first in our daily lives.

Such a simple act -- putting God first -- may be difficult. It may demand courage. But faith has always had courage at its core.

So, as we stand at the crossroads of a new year, contemplating the path ahead, let us be guided by a Divine Providence to a future of renewed spirituality in America



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Challenge of China

The unlikely dateline of Shepherdstown, West Virginia, on worldwide news dispatches concerning the recent round of Middle East peace talks between Israel and Syria is but the latest example of how international events frequently have local consequences.

Indeed, it does not require the occurrence of peace negotiations on West Virginia soil to remind us that events occurring in far-flung corners of the Earth can have a direct and immediate impact on our daily lives.

In the last 50 years, it was the Soviet Union that preoccupied U.S. military leaders and foreign policymakers. Whether the coming years will produce a similar regional or global superpower remains unknown, but one nation that bears watching is China, a country with which the United States has a complex, and potentially pivotal, relationship.

Trade is a major component of that relationship. The U.S. trade deficit with China reached a record \$57 billion last year. As long as such deficits exist, domestic manufacturers, including West Virginia companies, are hampered in their efforts to participate in the budding global economy. Opening China to U.S. imports is central to correcting the trade imbalance between the U.S. and

China, and to developing a healthy, mutually beneficial trading partnership.

National security is another major point of contention between the U.S. and China, particularly in the wake of last year's discovery that China engaged in espionage to steal sophisticated nuclear weapons technology from the U.S. Not only does China possess limited numbers of nuclear weapons capable of reaching the American mainland, but U.S. intelligence also indicates that China is selling its nuclear technology to rogue nations such as North Korea and Iran, both of which pose potential national security threats to the United States.

Additionally, the national security concerns provoked by China are helping to fuel the push for a U.S. National Missile Defense system, a costly new program that will require a major investment of tax dollars -- dollars that will not be available to address local concerns, such as education, highways, health care, and the like.

West Virginia may never play host to high level government meetings concerning U.S.-China relations, but we would be well advised to watch China carefully, and to be mindful that we in West Virginia frequently have a personal stake in the actions of other nations.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Tax Help Hitting the Highway

Once again, tax season is upon us. As tax forms arrive at the libraries and post offices, and the reminders spring up that tax filing deadlines are nearing, the unease that so many citizens feel about dealing with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) returns. But, in response to customer suggestions, the IRS is trying to simplify the system and make it easier for taxpayers to file their returns.

The IRS, recognizing the need to cut red tape, is attempting to put the days of confusing forms and directions in the past. A keystone to this effort, and one with particular appeal to rural West Virginians, is the new "Highway 1040" initiative.

"Highway 1040" is designed to provide taxpayers who live in remote areas with first-hand assistance in the preparation of their federal income tax returns and the opportunity to sit and discuss their tax concerns face-to-face with IRS representatives. On February 5, 2000, at sites in Bluefield, Lewisburg, Logan, Sutton, Morgantown, Moorefield, and Romney, IRS officials will be available on a first-come, first-served basis to answer questions concerning the preparation of Form 1040, Form 1040 Schedules A, B, and R, Form 1040EZ, Form 1040A, and the Earned Income Tax Credit application. Those interested in participating should

call 1-800-829-1040 to learn about the location and times for the "Highway 1040" program closest to their home. Anyone interested in taking advantage of this outreach program should bring all of their tax documents with them, including W-2 forms, Social Security numbers, documentation of child care expenses, itemized deductions, and bank statements.

In addition, the IRS operates seven free, walk-in assistance centers across West Virginia, as well as toll-free assistance over the telephone at 1-800-829-1040. Five of these IRS centers -- in Bridgeport, Charleston, Huntington, Parkersburg, and Wheeling -- are open year round, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. The Martinsburg center is open from 8:00 to 4:30 on Wednesdays, and the Sophia center is open on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, also from 8:00 until 4:30.

Tax time can be frustrating. The forms and instructions can be confusing and difficult to follow. But, by offering free assistance and working with taxpayers on a one-on-one basis, the IRS is working to make the tax season as pain-free as possible. West Virginians who have questions or concerns about their taxes may wish to take advantage of these free IRS initiatives.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Protecting the Future of Social Security

For more than 60 years, Social Security has been instrumental in easing the financial burden on elderly citizens with limited incomes, and in protecting families after the death or disability of a breadwinner. But the system faces a financial challenge. By the year 2030, there will be twice as many Americans 65 years or older as there are today. Once the baby boomers begin to retire, the number of Social Security recipients will exceed the number of people paying into the program. If no action is taken to deal with this problem, the Social Security Trust Fund is projected to be exhausted by 2034.

Recognizing this, many West Virginians have written to me to ask about various alternatives to shore up Social Security's long-term solvency. Common sense suggests that the government should set aside the Social Security surplus -- which last year totaled about \$124 billion -- to pay future benefits. But this misunderstands how Social Security is financed.

Putting the Social Security surplus on a shelf would be the equivalent of hoarding cash in a mattress instead of putting it into a bank. If the Social Security surplus is not invested in bonds, stocks, or even a traditional savings account, it loses its earning power.

Social Security surpluses are, by law, invested

in Treasury bonds so that the money can grow and be used to build businesses and create jobs. These bonds are placed into the Social Security Trust Fund as government "IOUs." In 2014, when the number of beneficiaries is projected to be larger than the number of workers paying into the system, the federal government will have to buy back the bonds to pay benefits. The current debate among those interested in ensuring Social Security's long-term solvency focuses on how best to prepare for this eventual financial crunch. Debt repayment will help to ease the fiscal pressures, but that, by itself, may not provide the government with adequate funds to pay all of the anticipated beneficiaries.

In 1935, when President Roosevelt signed the law creating Social Security, he said that it would "give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against poverty-ridden old age." As the various Congressional committees of jurisdiction continue to craft a plan for Social Security, I hope that they will keep that ideal in mind. The viability of the Social Security system -- one that works for all Americans over the long term -- relies on a sound plan for the future demands which will be placed upon it.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Dreams of Riches Turn to Rags

Every day, it seems as if another sweepstakes entry arrives in the mail containing another attractive promise for the recipient to "get rich quick." While many companies may use sweepstakes offers responsibly, others have used such offers as a ploy to bilk millions of dollars from consumers in West Virginia and across the nation.

One common approach of such companies is to falsely imply that a purchase is necessary to qualify for the sweepstakes or to increase one's odds of winning. Frequently, companies use clever typefaces, incorporate official-looking symbols and gimmicky labels, or personalize the mailing to make the addressee believe the solicitation is a genuine letter of congratulations for winning.

A recent survey by the American Association of Retired Persons revealed that the elderly are particularly vulnerable to sweepstakes fraud. Among other results, the survey found that 40 percent of seniors polled believed that there was a connection between purchasing a product and winning the sweepstakes.

In response, Congress recently approved, and the President signed into law, legislation to crack down on these deceptive tactics. This new law prohibits companies from using certain misleading language. A company's mailings, for

example, cannot tell the addressee that they have won a prize unless they really have. Sweepstakes companies will, by law, be prevented from printing envelopes with, "You are our next million-dollar winner," or "You have already won \$10 million," unless you truly have won.

In addition, the new law requires companies to clearly point out that no purchase is necessary to enter a contest, and that a purchase will not increase the chances of winning. The law also gives the U.S. Postal Service the power to impose tougher civil penalties on those companies that do not follow the new regulations.

Finally, the new law provides consumers with the opportunity to remove their names from a sweepstakes company's mailing list. Information on how to request removal of a name must be included in every mailing sent out by the company. Once contacted, the company has 60 days to remove the consumer's name from its mailing list.

Sadly, too many people are vulnerable to promises of fame and fortune, when all that is actually being delivered are false hopes and empty promises. I hope that this new law will eliminate much of the misleading information that West Virginians receive from sweepstakes companies.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Working to Simplify Tax Filing

Tax season is never fun. No one enjoys the annual ritual of filling out tax forms, and signing a big check can be downright painful. But, as tax deadlines approach, there is some good news for West Virginia's taxpayers.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS), to its credit, is working to make the filing process as smooth and as simple as possible. One way that the IRS is trying to speed the filing and refund process is by allowing citizens to file their tax returns electronically. There are three ways that a citizen can file electronically: through a tax professional, through a personal computer, or over the telephone.

According to the IRS, filing electronically is the fastest and most accurate way to file a return, and it cuts the processing time in half. Additionally, for anyone simply more comfortable with real mail than with e-mail, federal tax forms and publications are available over the Internet at www.irs.gov.

West Virginians can find free tax-filing assistance at offices in Bridgeport, Charleston, Huntington, Martinsburg, Parkersburg, Sophia, and Wheeling. West

Virginians can learn the exact location and hours of operation of these offices, or receive free tax help over the telephone, by calling 1-800-829-1040.

On another tax note, thousands of West Virginians can benefit from the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which is intended to offset some of the increases in living expenses and Social Security taxes. EITC eligibility is based on income. A working taxpayer is eligible for the EITC if that person earns an adjusted gross income of \$10,200 and has no children. If the taxpayer has children, that income level increases to a ceiling of \$30,580. The maximum amount of the tax credit ranges from \$347 for taxpayers with no children to \$3,816 for taxpayers with two or more children.

Taxpayers should take some comfort in knowing that free help is available from the IRS for citizens who are trying to wade through the sometimes complicated filing process. I hope that West Virginians will take advantage of these IRS services, and will avail themselves of information that can help them make the most of their filing options.

February 16, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Taking Count of America

In Article I, Section 2, the U.S. Constitution mandates that, every ten years, the federal government undertake a count of the people, called the census. The first census, in 1790, counted just under four million people living in the United States. This year, the government will once again take on the arduous task of counting America's population, one by one, house by house, community by community, and documenting vital information about each person.

One of the first things learned from the census is how many people live in the United States. But there is much more to this process than merely counting heads. The census is the cornerstone of knowledge about the United States, and the demographic information provided by the census lays the foundation for much of the nation's future governance.

The census results will help to determine where roads, hospitals, and libraries are needed. The statistics will give municipal planners the ability to select the best locations for schools, senior citizens centers, and playgrounds. The information will help the government determine how best to serve the needs of the people on the local, state, and national levels. Every year, billions in federal dollars, and a significant percentage of state resources, are allocated by

formulas that are based on the information gathered during the decennial census.

In addition to the public uses, census statistics are also used by private-sector businesses to help locate potential markets and to reduce financial risks. Thus, the information gathered by this year's census can lead to economic opportunities, job creation, and the greater availability of goods and services.

In the spring, the Census Bureau will mail each household a census questionnaire form. Ideally, the census would be complete when 100 percent of these forms are returned. Unfortunately, the national response rate has fallen for the past three census counts, dropping from 78 percent in 1970 to 75 percent in 1980 to 65 percent in 1990. In an attempt to reverse this trend, the Census Bureau is carrying out an aggressive public information effort to heighten awareness about the 2000 census and encourage participation in the process. In addition, census takers will visit local neighborhoods to count those people who have not mailed back their forms.

Participating in the census is a civic responsibility with broad ramifications. I encourage West Virginians to take the time to complete a census form and return it to the Census Bureau. We all have a major stake in ensuring that every West Virginian is counted.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Keeping the Promise to Retired Coal Miners

Last year, the United Mine Workers Combined Benefit Fund, which pays for the health care of retired coal miners and their families, faced a significant financial shortfall that, without immediate action, would have resulted in benefit cuts this spring. That shortfall, which resulted from rapidly rising health care costs and adverse court decisions impacting the fund, meant that there might not be sufficient funds to cover anticipated health care costs through the end of this year.

With the help of Congressman Rahall, who lobbied key House Members, I fought hard for and won a \$68 million transfer of funding to the retired miners' health care fund. This funding is critical because it means that there will not be any benefit cuts this year. But this solution is a short term remedy for the crisis facing the retired miners' health care fund. The problem requires a long term solution -- the kind of remedial action that would ensure that retired miners and their dependents would not have to worry from month to month whether their benefits would lapse after this year.

In its budget request of Congress, the Administration included \$346 million over the next ten years to ensure that retired coal miners and their families main-

tain the health benefits they have been promised. The funding would ensure the long term solvency of the Combined Benefit Fund. Retired miners and their dependents certainly deserve the security and peace of mind that would be provided by a more permanent fix.

Today, the typical beneficiary of the Combined Benefit Fund is a widow of approximately 78 years of age, whose monthly income is a \$140 UMWA pension check, supplemented by a social security check.

Now that the Administration has signed on to a long term solution, it is time for the Congress to follow through with necessary legislation. The committees with jurisdiction over this issue, on which I do not serve, need to move forward to craft a fair, balanced, permanent solution to the problems encountered by the Combined Benefit Fund.

In 1946, President Harry Truman and the United Mine Workers of America reached an agreement that opened the way for greater mechanization of coal mines in exchange for cradle-to-grave health care coverage for miners and their families. The federal government needs to act to ensure that the assurances provided to miners more than five decades ago are preserved.

March 1, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Hearing from Students On School Safety

On April 8, high school students from across West Virginia will gather for the "Robert C. Byrd Youth Summit 2000," an event designed to give young people a voice in the effort to craft common sense ways to help end youth violence. This summit will be an opportunity to hear directly from students about an issue that directly affects them, and to gain a better understanding of their views and concerns.

The Youth Summit will be held at West Virginia University, and, through interactive televised links, at seven other sites across the state. The need for this type of event, and for a renewed effort to break the cycle of violence that has permeated our nation's schools, was made frighteningly evident recently when a six-year-old boy took a loaded gun to his school near Flint, Michigan, and shot and killed one of his classmates. This tragedy begs some very basic questions.

First, and perhaps most importantly, what has gone so wrong in our society that our young people are turning to guns as a way to solve their problems? How is it that so many children are finding easy access to guns? And what can be done to end

this cycle of violence?

In the time since the tragedy at Columbine High School last year, school violence has not stopped. The tragic scene of students and teachers pouring out of a school in fear has repeated itself in Atlanta and, most recently, in Michigan. For some reason that we cannot seem to get our arms around, children continue to injure and to kill one another.

That is why I think the upcoming Youth Summit is important. It is a chance to hear directly from students and get their thoughts on what is contributing to violent acts among their peers. It is an opportunity to listen and to learn about how such issues as drugs, alcohol, and violence in the media affect their lives. Student participation is a necessary component in any effort to curb school violence.

Putting an end to school violence will require broad participation from all sectors. No one can be given a pass. I hope that this nation will finally commit itself to take the difficult steps that are needed to break this cycle of violence, and to rebuild that serene school environment that every student and teacher deserves.

March 8, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Educating Consumers On Credit Card Dangers

At one time, credit cards were considered a luxury item, a symbol of the wealth and success enjoyed by a select few. But that is no longer the case. Banks and credit card companies have become more competitive as they try to attract new customers, and credit cards are now available to everyone from CEO's to college freshmen. As the credit card industry finds new ways to reach the consumer, the Internet and electronic mail are poised to play a greater role in soliciting consumers to become cardholders.

Federal law requires that consumers be properly informed of interest rates, fees, and consumer protections when credit card solicitations are sent through the postal system. But credit card companies can circumvent these disclosure requirements by sending their solicitations through electronic mail. Accordingly, a consumer who receives a solicitation on the computer may not even be aware of basic consumer protection information, although such information is often buried in a separate Internet site.

Consequently, I recently offered an amendment, which was unanimously adopted by the Senate, that would help to educate consumers, empowering them to act as responsible financial managers. My amendment would re-

quire that every credit card solicitation or advertisement that is electronically mailed to a consumer be accompanied by an electronic pamphlet, or an Internet link to a pamphlet, that provides consumer-friendly information on choosing and using credit cards.

This pamphlet, currently published by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), defines the various credit card interest rates and miscellaneous fees that may apply, explains how monthly statements are calculated, and outlines consumer rights. The pamphlet also provides a telephone number, mailing address, and an on-line form for consumers who wish to file a complaint with the FTC regarding a credit card solicitation.

Credit card companies give consumers all the information they need on the benefits and prerequisites of a credit card, but those companies need to balance that information with the costs and responsibilities of having a card. I hope that my amendment will help to better educate West Virginians who receive these Internet credit card solicitations. I urge consumers to read the information provided in the pamphlet and to make an educated and responsible choice when it comes to credit cards.

March 15, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Rocky Road Toward Peace in Kosovo

It was just one year ago, in March 1999, that NATO forces launched the first air strikes against Yugoslavia to stop the murderous assault of Slobodan Milosevic on Kosovo and the ethnic Albanians who live there.

The war ended 78 days after it began, but not before claiming thousands of Albanian victims, many of them killed by the Yugoslav soldiers and many more uprooted from their homes and forced across the borders into refugee camps in neighboring countries. The end of hostilities brought the beginning of a massive NATO peacekeeping effort. Currently, 37,000 soldiers from an array of NATO nations - including nearly 5,500 men and women from the United States -- are stationed in Kosovo in an effort to secure the region, resettle the people, and prevent the rekindling of hostilities.

The U.S. went into Kosovo with the best of intentions. Our men and women in uniform performed brilliantly. Although it was a joint NATO operation, America provided the military might and leadership to bring the campaign to a quick and decisive conclusion, without the loss of a single soldier in combat.

But now that the dust has settled, it is time to take a hard look at the future of the U.S. commitment to

keeping the peace in Kosovo. The Clinton Administration is seeking \$2.6 billion for U.S. peacekeeping operations in Kosovo this year. Meanwhile, the situation there remains tense, with regular flare-ups of violence between Albanians and Serbs.

The United States, along with our NATO allies, is finding that winning the war in Kosovo was a lot easier than winning the peace.

It is my hope that the Administration will closely examine the situation in Kosovo with an eye toward protecting our troops, accomplishing our mission, and bringing the American forces home. It may take time, but that must be our goal. America does not need another open-ended commitment of U.S. troops to peacekeeping in a troubled corner of the world that shows little sign of reconciling the deep-rooted differences among its own citizens.

West Virginians have always answered the call to duty and have served with distinction in U.S. military operations throughout the world, including in Kosovo. Our men and women in uniform are a priceless asset to this nation, and the President has a duty to make sure that America's military might is employed wisely.

March 22, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Commitment to Clean Power

America is the greatest nation on Earth, with power and influence almost without historical parallel. But the nation's continued strength ultimately depends upon the robust health of our domestic capabilities in technology development, manufacturing, communications, and transportation.

While the United States currently enjoys the benefits of an expanding economy, this sustained growth demands ever-increasing amounts of energy.

Over the years, the nation has wisely invested in the research and development of innovative, clean, and efficient technologies that will help to meet those growing energy needs. Much of the work to reach that worthy goal has long been underway at the Morgantown Energy Technology Center (METC) in West Virginia. In recent years, that facility joined a Pittsburgh Center under the umbrella name Federal Energy Technology Center.

Together, these facilities were recently renamed the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL), becoming the fifteenth national lab in the country.

That action signaled a recognition by the federal government that fossil fuels -- especially coal and natural gas -- must continue to be an important part of the national and international energy reservoir. The scientists who work at the NETL are helping to light a

pathway for the new era of energy use that will be important to ensuring that a comfortable standard of living exists for generations to come.

As the work at this laboratory is proving, economic growth does not have to mean environmental retrenchment. We can both expand our job base and protect our planet.

Thanks to the laboratory's research into clean coal technologies, and through the demonstration and deployment of these technologies at power plants and factories, coal can continue to be a viable "cleaner and greener" fuel for power generation. Furthermore, such American-made clean coal technologies pack a twin punch because they not only can provide a variety of positive benefits for the U.S., but they can also provide other nations which may acquire these technologies with the resources to develop in more environmentally friendly ways.

If we are to continue to find new and better ways to strengthen our economy and protect our environment, we must also find ways to use fossil fuels cleanly. Skeptics may say that it cannot be done, but I believe that it can. Through the talent, dedication, and know-how in place at the National Energy Technology Laboratory in Morgantown, we can work to solve the nation's energy-ecology conundrum.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Ending the Social Security Earnings Test

During the Great Depression, when jobs were scarce, Congress put in place an earnings test on Social Security benefits that reduced the size of a person's Social Security check if that person's earnings exceeded a designated level. This earnings test was designed to encourage older Americans to retire and, thus, to open more jobs for younger men and women during a time when jobs were difficult to find. While that may have been the situation across the country during the Depression, it certainly is not the case today.

In this economy, where jobs are more plentiful, many Americans are choosing to work well beyond their 65th birthday. However, because of the Depression-era Social Security earnings test, seniors who choose to work have one dollar in Social Security benefits deferred until retirement for every three dollars earned over \$17,000 on the job.

In response to this situation, I supported, and Congress recently approved, the Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act. This Act eliminates the earnings test, and also allows Americans who have reached retirement age to continue to work without

a deferral assessed on their Social Security benefits.

Once this bill is signed into law, it will be retroactive to January 1, 2000. Refund checks will be issued by the Social Security Administration to affected seniors as early as this May. Beneficiaries will receive a mailing that will explain the changes in the regulations. The Social Security Administration predicts that this measure may add as much as \$6,700 to the income of each affected senior this year. The changes will help to ease the burden on seniors who supplement their fixed incomes with part- or full-time employment.

The Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act will help workers who are not receiving their full Social Security benefits. It will also help those seniors who want to work but are not doing so because they fear the earnings test would consume most of their earned benefits. As the baby-boomer generation moves closer to retirement, it is especially important that older Americans who want to work have the opportunity to do so. I am pleased that Congress has finally taken appropriate steps to remedy this problem to better protect working senior citizens.

April 5, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Getting Beyond Gas Prices

Across the country, gasoline prices have been on the rise. Primarily as a result of our nation's increased dependence on foreign fuel, the United States has been left vulnerable to the whims of other nations as they decide what level of crude oil to pump from the ground. I do not want the U.S. to be at the mercy of any nation, let alone those on which we rely for oil. That is why I believe it is long past time to renew the effort to implement a comprehensive national energy strategy, one that provides for the strategic uses of all our domestic energy resources, including the fossil fuels of oil, natural gas, and coal. The nation needs to explore the opportunities before us to increase America's energy independence.

Meeting this goal requires a strong commitment not only to research and development of new energy efficient and environmentally sound technologies, but also to their widespread commercial application. This can be an expensive endeavor. That is why I have coauthored the Energy Security Tax Act. The legislation would help to turn technological breakthroughs achieved in the laboratory into realities installed in the marketplace. Additionally,

the legislation would provide targeted tax incentives to encourage the demonstration and commercial deployment of many energy efficient technologies, some of which are under development at labs in West Virginia. Targeted tax incentives would help to capitalize on American research and development, and would remove a portion of the financial risk involved in the commercial use of energy efficient technologies.

An efficient, clean, and stable supply of energy is essential to the future growth and health of the American economy. The time has come for our nation to readdress our national energy strategy, taking a multipronged approach that looks at the whole range of available fuels and encourages the development and deployment of new technologies and conservation practices. America should not tremble each time foreign oil producing nations flex their muscles. The Energy Security Act will help to meet this challenge, serving as an underpinning for a new energy strategy that recognizes the importance of economic development and environmental protection at the same time.

April 9, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Earth Day 2000

April 22, 2000, marks the 30th anniversary of the celebration of the first Earth Day. Earth Day was established in 1970 and was intended to raise the consciousness of Americans to the plight of the environment. Since then, Earth Day has been celebrated annually by increasing numbers of Americans and is now observed in more than 140 countries around the world. The wonders of nature are truly amazing, and I have worked throughout my career to protect and preserve the beauty of West Virginia.

Growing up in Southern West Virginia, I was surrounded by all the blessings that the mountains of West Virginia can bestow. I remember fondly those long summer afternoons when I would traipse through the thick green undergrowth of the forests. I remember the sweet taste of mountain spring water and the call of the whippoorwill among the mountain laurel. I believe that there is nothing quite so extraordinary as the natural beauty that is the Creator's handiwork.

Consequently, I have worked tirelessly to preserve the flora and fauna of West Virginia. I initiated the appropriations a few years ago to construct the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) in Jefferson County. This cen-

ter trains men and women to protect our nation's natural resources and is dedicated to educating the public about the importance of environmental conservation. In fact, just this month, I secured the support of Department of the Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt for a new, three-story dormitory at the NCTC to utilize more fully the facility's capabilities.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I added funds to establish the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge, and the New River George National River. The federal designation of these lands not only ensures the protection of some of our state's greatest natural treasures, but it also provides for recreational activities that allow visitors to enjoy West Virginia's scenic wonders.

This Earth Day, as the world once again renews its commitment to the preservation of the environment, West Virginians can be proud of the efforts we have undertaken to protect the grandeur and beauty of our state. We have proved that economic prosperity and environmental preservation can coexist. The challenge for the years ahead is to ensure that this delicate balance continues.

April 19, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Students Speak Out on School Violence

In today's reality, it is unfortunately true: school shootings can happen anywhere, at any time. The challenge is in preventing them. Recently, West Virginia high school students took up that challenge during the Robert C. Byrd Youth Summit. Held at West Virginia University and seven other sites throughout the state, the summit was designed to include young people in the discussion on how to reduce youth violence.

When asked about the causes of youth violence, students pointed to peer pressure, a strong feeling of isolation, and an eroding home and family life. They said that too many parents fail to set strong examples for their children and do not play an active role in their child's life.

Delegates focused on the taproot of the problem. In this fast-paced society where family members often only meet when they pass at the front door, the sense of family and of belonging has been lost. There is a strong undercurrent of isolation among young people. Replacing this feeling of isolation with one of belonging is crucial.

Instead of parents setting their children's value structure, it seems as if the media have taken over that role today. When they come home from school, the first step for students seems to be clicking on the com-

puter or television. By stepping away from family and community, the media takes over. As family relationships disappear, the media further isolate our children.

When asked what would best prevent youth violence, student-delegates identified the need for safe places where young people could gather after school. Delegates endorsed conflict resolution programs and peer mediation efforts as strong prevention initiatives. The students also felt that there should be a greater restriction on access to weapons in the home. They said that weapons should be locked up and kept away from children.

Part of the cure for youth violence, I believe, can only be found by digging deep into America's soul. Talk of morals and values has long been brushed off as old-fashioned and out of step. But, as the student-delegates pointed out, we are missing something that used to be a basic component in our society, and we desperately need to rediscover it.

For the sake of our young people, it is high time to restore the peaceful schoolhouse we once knew so well, a schoolhouse which fosters creativity, inspires learning, and, most importantly, provides each student with a safe haven for obtaining the skills necessary to lead America in the 21st century.

April 26, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Answering the Call of Our Firefighters

Fire is one of man's oldest friends, providing warmth, security, and comfort. Yet, fire also presents a constant source of danger if not kept in check and guarded against.

In much of rural America, the only protection against fire and other disasters is the local volunteer fire department. The men and women who make up these volunteer organizations are always ready to answer the call, whether it comes in the dark of night or in the middle of the workday. The front line of community protection has always been, and will always be, the vigilance and commitment of the involved citizens of the community. Yet, this vigilance carries a price tag that is growing too quickly for many rural communities to meet.

Volunteer fire departments are struggling to pay for the equipment and training that make the dangerous job of fighting fires safer. Too many volunteer fire departments cannot afford adequate protective clothing, safety devices, and proper training. At the same time, firefighters are asked to be prepared to respond to terrorism, hazardous materials accidents, and natural disasters, while also educating their communities on safety and fire prevention. These men and women who are always ready to answer the alarm bell cannot rely

solely on small fundraising efforts. Pancake breakfasts, bingo nights, and spaghetti suppers are good, but they are not enough. A greater commitment at the federal level is needed to help local departments provide vital emergency services.

That is why I am co-sponsoring the Firefighter Investment and Response Enhancement Act, which would authorize \$5 billion over five years for grants to local fire departments. These grants could be used for just about any purpose that is related to firefighting, including community education and prevention programs, firefighter training, equipment purchases, or hiring additional firefighters. This funding would be a significant investment in the effort to make rural communities safer places to live.

The work of volunteer firefighters takes grit, determination, courage, and energy. It also requires support. The Firefighter Investment and Response Enhancement Act would provide that support, enabling local fire departments to equip and train their firefighters. The legislation would be an important step toward helping to provide those men and women who stand on the front lines of community protection with the resources necessary to do their jobs better and more safely.

May 3, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Throwing Out the TV Trash

Concerns about the declining standards of broadcast television, and the effect that this slide is having on our children, have been voiced for some time by parents across the nation. Parents are fed up with the rising tide of glorified violence and increasingly explicit sexual depictions flooding into their homes through the television set. Despite the calls for restraint, the broadcast industry continues down a path that includes more, rather than less, unsuitable programming.

My concern about television programming hinges on the effect that it has on children. America's young people are being brought up in front of a television set, too often left alone to soak up the images of gratuitous sex and violent acts. Opinion surveys make clear that the overwhelming majority of Americans continue to recognize the risk that inappropriate television programming poses to children. A 1996 poll found that 90 percent of Americans believed that the glut of sex and sexual references on television contributes to the alarming number of children who are sexually active. Since that time, as indecency on television has grown more graphic, a number of leading child development experts have voiced concern about the way in which television, in conjunction with the rest of the electronic media, is con-

tributing to increased sexual activity of children at younger ages.

When presented with this evidence and the concerns of parents, many broadcasters have routinely denied that a problem exists. In fact, some television network executives have admitted that their strategy is to increase the sex and vulgarity on television to compete with racier shows on cable channels. These responses raise real questions about the commitment of broadcasters to serve the public interest.

Consequently, I have sent a letter to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) chairman to urge him to reconsider whether, by airing such material, broadcasters are meeting their legal obligations. Broadcasters are granted licenses to use the public airwaves. But these licenses carry with them a responsibility to provide educational and informational programming for children. Steps should be taken to protect against the further erosion of broadcasting standards.

I hope that the FCC takes these concerns to heart and rededicates itself to this purpose. Children are impressionable; they can be easily led astray. We must work to ensure that tasteless television programming does not further contribute to the pollution of their minds and the moral decline of our nation.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Keeping Graduation Parties Safe And Alcohol-Free

In the coming weeks, high school seniors throughout West Virginia will complete final examinations, don cap and gown, and head off to college or career. But there is one important lesson that our students should be taught before graduation night: a few drinks can demolish years of effort in school, and erase whatever promising future may lie ahead.

All too often, it seems that the joy of high school commencement is marred by alcohol-related injuries and fatalities. At this time of year, newspapers too frequently print photographs of commencement ceremonies on their front pages, while also carrying tragic accounts of traffic accidents involving young people and alcohol.

Unfortunately, West Virginia is no stranger to this deadly combination. Our state has been ranked twelfth in the nation in the number of alcohol-related traffic fatalities of individuals under the age of 21. But, with a concerted effort, such tragedies can be prevented.

As an essential part of this effort, parents should discuss with their children the dangers of alcohol. Nothing can replace a serious, heartfelt talk between parent and child. While this may seem obvious, a 1999 nationwide survey found that only 25 percent of parents talk with their children about the complete avoidance of alcohol. That statistic is much too low, es-

pecially considering the fact that alcohol is a major factor in the three leading causes of death among adolescents-- accidents, homicides, and suicides.

Also disturbing is the fact that underage drinking has been linked to date rape, teen pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases. Furthermore, it has been established that students who binge drink in high school are three times more likely than non-drinkers to engage in serious alcohol abuse while in college.

Parents are key, but they cannot successfully battle this combination of children and alcohol alone. Underage drinking is a community-wide concern that deserves a community-wide effort. School administrators, teachers, religious leaders, community leaders, restaurateurs, and others should be diligent in their efforts to keep graduation parties safe and alcohol-free. Instituting alcohol-free contracts, or planning safe and supervised events for young people to celebrate their graduation are options that have been found to work.

West Virginia's young people hold the keys to the state's future. It will be their vision and their initiative that will carry West Virginia through the next century. We all have a stake in ensuring that the promise of our young people is not destroyed by alcohol.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Talking Turkey in West Virginia

Over the past few years, the economy of West Virginia has been expanding. More jobs have been created and more people are working. Nevertheless, the economy can be improved. But to do so, we must continue to look toward new horizons for opportunities that may result in increased prosperity in the years ahead. For that reason, I recently kicked off a new trade initiative to strengthen ties between West Virginia and the other Appalachian states, and the Republic of Turkey.

The U.S. Department of Commerce has designated Turkey as one of the world's ten "Big Emerging Markets." Over the past decade, the Turkish government has fostered a fast-growing market economy and strengthened regional stability. It is my hope that this new Appalachian-Turkish trade initiative will take advantage of these advances. My goal is to foster a trade relationship that is mutually beneficial and that builds on the great economic potential of both the Republic of Turkey and the State of West Virginia.

According to an analysis by the Commerce Department and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, West Virginia products best suited to export to Turkey include coal, building materials, auto parts, and high-tech information systems. Other West Virginia business sectors that might benefit from a relationship with Turkey in-

clude general industrial equipment, mining machinery, specialty metal products, and industrial chemicals. In energy projects alone, an area in which West Virginia is a leader of fossil fuel production, as well as in research and development, the Commerce Department estimates potential market opportunities in Turkey at \$3 billion over the next 10 to 15 years. The prospects for investment, particularly from West Virginia companies, are impressive.

In an effort to spur this project forward, the Commerce Department, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and the West Virginia Development Office plan to hold a trade seminar late this year in West Virginia to highlight Turkish market opportunities. In addition, the West Virginia Development Office is examining the possibility of a trade mission to Turkey next year.

The economic landscape in West Virginia and the Appalachian region is changing dramatically, and, with it, the prospect for increased growth and prosperity. Likewise, the Republic of Turkey is moving forward with its economic plan to create new opportunities for the future. The Appalachian-Turkish Trade Project offers a chance to expand trade, advocate West Virginia business interests, and build a lasting and beneficial relationship between West Virginia and the Republic of Turkey.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Making Prescription Drugs Easier to Swallow

One of the major challenges facing the elderly of West Virginia is the ever-increasing cost of their prescription drugs. Many of these senior citizens live on fixed incomes, and many are unable to afford these high priced, but necessary, medicines. In fact, many senior citizens have been forced to make the troubling choice between paying for their medicine or paying for food, heat, or other necessities. To address this disturbing trend, I recently cosponsored the Medicare Expansion for Needed Drugs Act (MEND), a plan to offer universal voluntary prescription drug coverage to all Medicare beneficiaries.

Originally established in 1965, Medicare was designed to provide health care benefits to the most vulnerable segments of the population, the elderly and the disabled. Today, 38 million Americans, including 335,000 West Virginians, rely on Medicare to help provide for their medical needs. However, Medicare, as currently formulated, does not provide prescription drug benefits. Moreover, statistics show that three in five Medicare beneficiaries lack adequate, affordable prescription drug coverage.

MEND would change all of this. Under this plan, Medicare beneficiaries who do not currently receive prescription drug benefits

through a private insurer would be eligible to enroll in a voluntary prescription medicine benefit plan. Americans who have adequate, private coverage would not be required to participate. Those who lack such coverage could choose to pay a low monthly premium to receive prescription drug benefits and coverage of catastrophic drug costs.

The legislation calls for the federal government to subsidize 50 percent of the program's cost to ensure adequate participation and affordability. It is estimated that the monthly premium in 2002, the year the plan would take effect, would be \$25 a month. In addition, participants who have an annual income of approximately \$15,000 or less would be eligible for full assistance and free prescription drug coverage.

Seniors should not have to choose between paying for medicine or paying for other necessities. Statistics and studies show that the current Medicare program does not provide the coverage that Americans need today. The Medicare Expansion for Needed Drugs Act would help to address these shortcomings and fortify the Medicare program, allowing elderly and disabled West Virginians to rest assured that their prescription drug needs would be met.

May 31, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Preparing for the Worst, Hoping for the Best

Last year, West Virginia and other states in the mid-Atlantic region were hard hit by drought. Months of lower than normal rainfall and higher than normal temperatures dried up wells and parched grazing lands. Many farmers were forced to sell off their livestock or risk losing farms that had been in their families for generations.

On the heels of last year's disaster come the predictions of continued drought this summer. A lack of winter snow and spring rain have failed to raise the water table, and weather forecasts do not offer much hope for significant rainfall in the coming months.

Recognizing the potential consequences for West Virginia farmers for another drought, I have met with U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman to discuss how federal aid might be expedited should another disaster materialize. I outlined for Secretary Glickman an initiative that I think would help to prevent a repeat of some of last year's drought-related losses.

Because of the mechanics of the budget process, the federal government, unfortunately, has a limited ability to deal with disasters, like drought, quickly. Last year, we found that despite our best efforts to press for expedited funding to

help farmers, in too many instances, aid came too late.

My initiative this year is really an ounce of prevention. It would set aside funding to be made available only if a drought occurs, but as soon as a disaster is declared. Secretary Glickman agreed that such a plan would be helpful in addressing drought more rapidly and, ultimately, reducing losses.

My plan would provide \$450 million for emergency livestock assistance this year. These funds would only be available for counties that receive an emergency designation by the President or the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. In the event that no emergencies are designated, none of these funds would be spent.

We have all heard the old saying, "Hope for the best, but prepare for the worst." That is my guiding philosophy as I work on this emergency fund. While no one can control the powers of nature, Congress can prepare to deal with the consequences of natural disaster. By providing the federal Department of Agriculture with the resources it needs to respond to severe drought, I am working to provide relief to our farmers in the most effective manner possible. We should not delay in preparing for what could be another summer of drought and disaster.

June 7, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Making Progress on Corridor H

For many years, I have worked in support of the construction of Appalachian Corridor Highway H from I-79 at Weston, in Lewis County, to Wardensville, in Hardy County. In 1994, the section from Weston to Elkins was finished. But, since then, the remaining 114 miles have been the subject of studies and court challenges that have delayed further construction.

Recently, however, I joined Governor Underwood, Congressman Wise, and hundreds of West Virginians in Hardy County for the groundbreaking of a new 14-mile section of Corridor H, stretching between Moorefield and Baker. The resumption of work on Corridor H serves as reassurance that construction of this road is again on track, and that the economic and safety benefits promised by it are going to be realized.

Corridor H has, for too long, been unfairly derided by some critics. But this road, which is intended to connect the Washington, D.C., area with North-Central West Virginia, is a passageway for opportunity. It is an avenue for economic diversity. It may bring change, but I believe that, with vision and courage, we can manage that change and fashion it to meet our own demands.

It is expensive to build roads in mountainous Appalachia, but the effort is certainly worth every dollar. Since 1989, I have added \$270.5 million to appropriations bills for construction of Corridor H. In addition, I authored an amendment to the 1998 highway reauthorization bill to provide the entire 13-state Appalachian Corridor Highway System with a reliable and consistent source of funding through the federal Highway Trust Fund.

Of that funding, our state is expected to receive approximately \$410 million over the six-year course of the bill for construction of Corridor Highways in West Virginia.

When it comes to highway needs, the Appalachian states deserve to be treated equitably compared with the other states. Construction of these highways is a national responsibility.

Since 1965, much of Corridor H has been left only penciled in on the national highway map. It is now time to ink it in, to firmly and indelibly add it to the vast web of roadways that unite our fifty states into a single nation. It is the right thing to do for the nation, and it is the right thing to do for West Virginia. It is a road to progress.

June 14, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

The Challenges of an Aging Population

Recently in Charleston, delegates from around the world gathered for the first-ever International Conference on Rural Aging. These delegates worked to identify new strategies, shape major policy, and promote programmatic enhancements that will better enable society to cope with the challenges it faces as the population of senior citizens living in rural communities around the globe continues to grow.

The conference, sponsored by West Virginia University in collaboration with the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and the International Association of Gerontology, advanced an important discussion on how to meet the many challenges that come with a growing rural senior citizen population.

I had the opportunity to attend the conference, and to offer my thoughts on how, in many areas, the needs of West Virginia's rural senior citizens mirror the needs of rural senior citizens throughout the world. For example, around the world, seniors in rural areas may simply lack access to quality health care close to home. The problem of access is acute even in the most affluent nations. We know first-hand about the need for accessible health care in West Virginia.

With 60 percent of the world's elderly population living in rural and remote areas, there is a pressing need for medical personnel who are willing to leave the comforts and higher salaries of the big cities for rewarding work in smaller towns and communities. It is simply too difficult and too costly for many elderly people, particularly the frail elderly, to travel long distances for frequent medical appointments.

In addition, a rapidly aging population poses a great challenge to a society which is focused heavily on youth. While most of popular culture today focuses on the wants and aspirations of the young, a fresh appreciation of the not-so-young is beginning to emerge. There is a growing realization that the youth-centered society, and all of the material things that are paired with it, may benefit greatly from the insight and experience of our more mature population.

I applaud the work of the delegates at the International Conference on Rural Aging. Following their lead, we must rise to the challenges for our aging global population. They are a precious resource. Their contribution to the richness of all of our lives can be immeasurable, but their needs must be carefully tended.

June 21, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Ensuring Local Satellite TV for West Virginians

For many months, West Virginians who rely on satellite dish receivers for their television signals have been concerned that they may no longer be able to receive network programming because of a dispute between local broadcasters and national satellite companies. At issue was whether these satellite companies could beam in network signals from faraway cities, or whether they should retransmit the broadcasts of local television stations.

In an effort to craft a compromise, Congress last fall approved legislation allowing satellite companies to retransmit local television station programming into homes in a local broadcast station's viewing area. This is called "local-into-local" service. This issue was particularly important in West Virginia, where 23 percent of the households have satellite services, but no West Virginia television station is available on a satellite system.

The legislation approved last fall allows a satellite company to carry the local broadcasts in any market the company serves, ensuring thorough local-into-local service. But convincing satellite companies to carry these local broadcasts is difficult because of the costs involved. It is costly for a satellite company to pick up the local station's signal and then retransmit that signal to the satellite receivers of area viewers.

For that reason, I re-

cently voted to create a loan guarantee program to facilitate the transmission of local broadcast signals to unserved and underserved areas. These loan guarantees would offset the cost to satellite companies as they install new equipment capable of delivering local programming to satellite service customers.

West Virginians would reap the benefits from this legislation because their satellite service would remain intact, while they also would be able to receive local and regional information. Access to local programming is important. Local broadcast stations provide weather warnings to the communities they serve. Broadcasters are an immediate source of information and instruction during local emergencies. Local news and public service programs help citizens participate in their government, assist their neighbors in need, and build stronger community bonds.

In West Virginia, high mountain peaks can make even the best efforts of local broadcasters and cable companies to reach rural residents very difficult. For households that are beyond the reach of cable and broadcast signals, satellite service has provided a reliable alternative. With the help of loan guarantees, I hope that more rural West Virginians will soon be able to rely on their television sets for local news, weather, and emergency information.

June 28, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Going from Sci-Fi to Reality in West Virginia

Imagine walking to your front door to unlock it but, instead of reaching for a key, you look into a scanner that recognizes your eye pattern before allowing the door to open. In the future, drivers may simply place their fingertips on a pad that, by examining their fingerprints, will verify their identity and start the engine. These may seem like impossibly futuristic technologies for daily life, but they have the potential of being put into place soon as part of new security protections for critical Department of Defense (DoD) computers. And the most exciting part of this story is that much of this development could happen in West Virginia.

Last year, recognizing the growing threat to important government computer systems by "hackers" or "cyber-terrorists," I started working with the DoD to develop a plan to combat a potential computer catastrophe. Realizing that the nation's most sensitive military and national security secrets could be accessed by an enemy nation or organization through covert computer attacks, I thought it was crucial that improvements be made to protect these computer systems. The DoD plan would replace the current computer security system of passwords and cards with the cutting-edge science, called biometrics. To date, I have added \$22 million to appropriations

bills to assess those biometrics efforts that are already underway and to create a prototype system for the Defense Department. Eventually, this biometrics technology could also benefit private companies which might adopt computer security systems for other non-military uses.

Biometrics utilizes unique individual "signatures," such as a fingerprint, the pattern of veins in one's wrist, or the network of nerves in the iris of one's eye. When a computer network has a biometric security system, the system authenticates the user's identity from previously saved patterns or distinguishable traits.

I have worked to put West Virginia at the forefront of this effort. Soon, the Defense Department plans to open an interim Biometrics Fusion Office in North-Central West Virginia. This office should provide West Virginia an opportunity to get in on the ground floor of a promising technology.

Not too long ago, biometrics was strictly the stuff of science fiction movies. But what some people can dream, others can invent. Biometrics is quickly moving from fiction to fact. West Virginia has demonstrated the foresight to embrace this state-of-the-art technology, and the Mountain State is well positioned to lead in its development.

July 5, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Catching Criminals on the Loose

In Harrison County, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) high-tech fingerprint identification system is proving to be a valuable tool in the nation's crime-fighting effort. Through the Clarksburg complex, the FBI is working with local police departments to make our communities safer places to live and work.

More than a decade ago, the FBI realized that its antiquated paper-based system of matching fingerprints was simply not working in the modern age. The FBI had 32 million cards on file -- enough that, if stacked one on top of another, they would be 13 times as high as the Empire State Building. Matching a local suspect's fingerprints with one of those cards was a daunting challenge that often resulted in the suspect's going free before the FBI determined that the suspect was wanted in another jurisdiction.

When the FBI approached me about the problem, I added \$185 million to an appropriations bill to construct an ultramodern FBI complex. Since that time, I have obtained more than \$750 million for computers and equipment. The return on that investment is impressive. Today, when a local police department submits a set of fingerprints to the FBI, more than 97 percent of the time the FBI can,

within two hours, determine if the suspect has a criminal history. That speed can make a big difference.

For example, a man who had been living in Louisiana for 20 years was arrested and fingerprinted for failing to pay a court fine. After his fingerprints were electronically submitted to the FBI, the FBI informed local police that the man had escaped from an Alabama prison in 1979, while serving a sentence for a teenage boy's murder.

The FBI system is also solving what, up until now, have been unsolvable cases. Through its modern technologies, the FBI has been processing latent fingerprints taken at a crime scene and matching them to suspects with prior criminal records, finally providing closure to some victims and families who have been haunted by long unpunished crimes. The State of New York, for example, has used the FBI center to solve eight homicide cases, seven burglary cases, and a number of other cases that otherwise may have sat on the books unsolved forever.

The Harrison County FBI Complex is revolutionizing our nation's crime-fighting effort. West Virginians can be proud of the fact that our state is home to a world-class initiative geared toward helping the entire nation to realize a better, safer quality of life.

July 12, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Cure for Mental Health Benefits

When discussions are held on the major health issues of the day, the conversation often focuses on physical ailments and life-threatening illnesses such as cancer or heart disease. But mental illness, which affects about 20 percent of Americans -- 55-million people -- often goes undiscussed. Recent medical breakthroughs have shed light on mental illnesses, showing them to be just as diagnosable and treatable as diseases like high blood pressure and diabetes. Despite this research, however, sufferers of mental illnesses continue to suffer from the stigma of old stereotypes and to be treated differently, even when it comes to health insurance benefits.

Many insurance policies unfairly limit doctor and hospital visits for mental health treatment while at the same time allowing patients to seek treatment for their physical health needs without restrictions. Private health insurers, in many cases, take advantage of loopholes in the present system by denying treatment, restricting benefits, and imposing higher co-payments for mental health services than for general medical care. Furthermore, since many insurance plans lack adequate mental health benefits, a substantial financial burden is placed on these victims. Instead of being able to invest in education and retirement, these pa-

tients too often find themselves having to remortgage their homes in order to pay for needed treatment.

To address this inequality, I have cosponsored the Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act. This measure would ensure greater parity in the coverage of mental health benefits by prohibiting limits on the number of covered hospital days and outpatient visits for all mental illnesses, and requiring greater parity with physical health benefits in terms of co-payments and deductibles. The legislation would inject a measure of fairness in the insurance industry, and prohibit discrimination against those people who require treatment for mental illness.

Untreated mental illness can be very costly, both to the individual and to society. Those who suffer from mental illness but who do not seek treatment often end up dropping out of society, becoming homeless, or resorting to crime. Moreover, patients who do seek treatment are too often overwhelmed by heavy financial burdens resulting from insurance policy gaps that continue to exist despite the advances in the understanding and treatment of mental illness. The Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act would break down the barriers to mental health insurance coverage and would allow patients to seek the medical help they need.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Learning from the Past

"To be ignorant of what happened before you were born," admonished Cicero, "is to remain always a child." If Cicero were to look at history lessons for America's schoolchildren today, he might conclude that they will never grow up.

Once again, a recent test of young people's knowledge of history -- in this case, the history of our own nation -- has demonstrated a sorry ignorance. What is particularly disconcerting about this most recent report is that it reflects the knowledge base of college seniors from some of the best colleges and universities in the nation, not younger children with many years of learning still ahead of them.

The test, sponsored by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, was given to college seniors at 55 top colleges and universities and consisted of questions from a high school-level American history test. I was very sorry to read that nearly 80 percent of those tested earned a grade of only a "D" or an "F." A mere 23 percent could identify James Madison as the principal Framers of the Constitution. More than a third of those asked did not know that the Constitution established the division of powers in American government. Just

60 percent could correctly select the 50-year period in which the Civil War occurred -- not the correct years, or even the correct decade, but the correct half-century! A scant 35 percent could correctly identify Harry S. Truman as the President in office at the start of the Korean War.

In light of such a dismal display of knowledge of our national history, in June, I added an amendment to an appropriations bill to provide a total of \$50 million in grants for schools that teach American history as a separate subject within school curricula.

Too many schools today are lumping history together with other subjects and offering them as courses broadly titled "social studies." This conglomeration certainly does not provide the kind of focused study that history deserves and requires. Moreover, it shortchanges our young people who will some day be the leaders of our nation.

It is my hope that my amendment and the funding it provides will encourage more schools to develop, implement, and strengthen classes in American history. If they are to have any hope of being prepared to lead in the future, America's students need a deeper understanding of our nation's past.

July 26, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Parents and Teachers: Education Partners

As teachers put the final touches on another school year's lesson plans and as students look ahead to the crackle of new textbooks and classroom adventures, it is important that parents take the time to become involved in their child's education. The start of the school year is an excellent time for parents to meet their child's teachers and principal, and to make the commitment to play an active role in their child's school activities.

Too often, parents see the teacher as the sole party responsible for their child's education. But parents play just as important a role as teachers play. Parents can reinforce the lessons from school and make sure that homework is completed. Parents can exhibit the importance of schoolwork by showing a sincere interest each evening in what their child did at school that day. Perhaps most importantly, parents can, through consistency, reinforce the values and lessons taught at school and those practiced at home. In essence, parents and teachers are partners in a child's education.

Earlier this year, West Virginia University President David Hardesty and I hosted a Youth Summit that brought together more than 250 students from across the state to discuss the causes

of youth violence and to provide a general snapshot of opinions about their schools. When asked, as part of that summit, "What do you feel are the main causes of youth violence in America today?" students pointed to a lack of guidance and attention from their parents. This opinion is echoed by a significant amount of national research.

Research also shows that parents can make a real difference in the importance that their child places on education. One analysis found that there are three factors over which parents have enormous control--student absenteeism, the variety of reading materials in the home, and excessive television watching.

From the local to the federal level, policymakers are working to find ways to improve our students' education. But one means of helping to achieve this goal has existed for generations. Parental and family involvement complements every initiative underway in schools to improve student learning. The task of connecting families and schools is formidable, yet attainable. Already, many families actively engage in their child's education and, with encouragement and help, I hope that many more parents will do the same.

August 2, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

A Decade of Progress for the Disabled

Ten years ago, disabled men and women who wanted equal access to buildings and public services commonly found their way blocked by such physical barriers as stairs, street curbs, and narrow doorways. Because of such structural impediments, disabled Americans missed out on job opportunities and day-to-day activities that so many of us take for granted, like going to the movies, shopping for groceries, or relaxing in the park. In 1990, responding to the long-time needs of disabled men and women, Congress, with my support, approved the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The passage of the ADA brought about numerous changes throughout the nation -- from advanced technology allowing for greater public accommodation at business and commercial establishments, to state and local government services and activities, to transportation and telecommunications technology for disabled Americans. For many disabled Americans, the Americans with Disabilities Act has meant a little more ease and comfort. For example, the ADA has facilitated easier access to restaurants and public restrooms, modifications to the aisles and entrances of supermarkets to allow for wheelchair access, assistive listening systems to help the deaf and hard of hearing, and large-print publications

for those with vision impairments.

Not only has the legislation reconfigured the way we think about architecture and our physical environment, it also has changed the way policies are formulated, helping to guarantee that our nation can benefit from the talent of all citizens. The Americans with Disabilities Act acknowledges that it costs our nation much more to allow the potential of millions of people to be lost than to make the modest accommodations that can allow all members of society to contribute fully. In a word, the ADA is about independence.

President Franklin Roosevelt once said, "No country, no matter how rich, can afford to waste its human resources." The Americans with Disabilities Act lives up to President Roosevelt's objective. For ten years now, this momentous, landmark legislation has opened new doors to disabled Americans. It has allowed handicapped individuals the opportunity and the access to have their potential recognized in the workplace and in the community. It has brought the American dream within reach for the millions of disabled citizens who, up until a decade ago, found that dream blocked, not so much by their own physical impairments, but by structural and societal barriers that the ADA is now tearing down.

August 9, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Turning Off Entertainment Violence

I have long been concerned about the effect that entertainment violence has on children. Whether through television programs featuring gun play and car crashes, or through video games that make killing humans a rewarding experience, I believe that such constant repetition of violence desensitizes children, and even makes such action in real life seem to be a more acceptable option for them. Consider these facts: by age 18, the average American child will have viewed about 200,000 acts of violence on television; and while still in their formative years, before they leave elementary school, children will see about 20,000 murders and more than 80,000 assaults.

Given these statistics, and the sheer volume of time that America's young people spend watching television -- 15,000 hours by the time they graduate from high school versus 12,000 hours in formal classroom instruction -- one might think that its influence would be a forgone conclusion. Yet, the entertainment industry has maintained that children can separate entertainment violence from reality.

But now, four major public health organizations -- the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Psychological

Association, and the American Medical Association -- have come together to document the negative impact of entertainment violence. Specifically, these groups have written a joint statement highlighting the link between entertainment violence and aggressive attitudes and behavior in young people. Notably, the statement says that children who see a lot of violence are more likely to view violence as an effective way of settling conflicts; that viewing violence can lead to emotional desensitization toward violence in real life; and that children exposed to violent programming at a young age have a higher tendency for violent and aggressive behavior later in life than children who are not so exposed.

There is no more denying the fact that entertainment violence does have a detrimental effect on children. More than 1,000 studies point to a causal connection between media violence and aggressive behavior in some children. I hope that the entertainment industry will take these findings into consideration. The best way to address youth violence is through strong families and parental involvement, but a more responsible entertainment industry that no longer glorifies violence would go a long way toward making that job easier.

August 16, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Keeping Doors to Rural Hospitals Open

Health care is one of the most important services that a community can provide for its citizens. Whether for routine check-ups or for more complex procedures, health care facilities that are close to home are important resources for local residents.

For many years, I have strived to help provide West Virginians with greater access to health care. From obtaining federal funding for clinics and outreach programs, to supporting federal policies important to the very special needs of rural medicine, I have tried to ensure that West Virginians have easy access to basic health care services.

In fact, I have recently supported legislation to correct the unintended funding challenges that resulted from the cutbacks in Medicare reimbursements made in the 1997 Balanced Budget Act (BBA). Originally designed to curb the uncontrolled growth in the Medicare system, the Act had unforeseen financial repercussions for many small, rural health facilities.

As designed, the BBA was supposed to tighten Medicare spending by approximately \$100 billion over five years. But the Act has not worked as intended. Instead of making small, incremental reductions, it resulted in Medicare cuts totaling more than \$200 bil-

lion. As a result, many rural clinics and hospitals are just barely surviving financially.

To soften these harsher-than-anticipated cuts, Congress last fall passed legislation containing the Medicare Beneficiary Access to Care Act, which I cosponsored, to restore \$27 billion to health care provider payments. That legislation addressed the most significant problems resulting from the BBA policies and focused payment adjustments on areas in which there were demonstrated problems.

But more work needs to be done. That is why I am cosponsoring the Health Care Access and Rural Equity Act, which I hope will further alleviate the financial crunch facing rural health care systems. The new legislation would restore inflation adjustment payments under Medicare to rural hospitals, and would provide rural hospitals with the chance to receive capital planning grants to be used for health infrastructure and technology improvements.

I hope that this legislation will be passed before Congress adjourns this year so that more rural clinics and hospitals will be better able to meet financial demands and, therefore, continue to provide health care service to West Virginia families.

August 23, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Ending the Marriage Penalty Tax

Throughout the annals of human experience, in dozens of civilizations and cultures of varying value systems, humanity has looked to the permanent relationship between man and woman as a keystone to the stability, strength, and health of human society. Unfortunately, an anomaly in the U.S. tax code known as the "marriage penalty" undermines this principle by penalizing individuals who have vowed a lifelong commitment to each other through the sacred institution of marriage.

In the U.S. tax system, a marriage penalty occurs when married couples pay more in taxes than they would if they filed individual tax returns. In general, married couples whose joint income is split evenly between both spouses will suffer a marriage penalty. But married couples whose joint income predominantly comes from one spouse will typically benefit from a marriage bonus, which exists when a married couple has a smaller tax liability than they would if they filed as two singles.

I do not believe that our tax code should punish married couples. At a minimum, I think our tax code should be marriage neutral. However, the concept of marriage neutrality in the tax system has, thus far, proved to be an elusive goal.

The Marriage Penalty Relief Reconciliation Act of 2000, which was recently passed by Congress, correctly addressed this seemingly unattainable objective. That legislation, which I supported, was designed to expand the 15-percent marginal tax bracket and increase the standard deduction for all married couples, thus eliminating the most egregious marriage penalties in the tax code. Additionally, the legislation would have increased marriage bonuses and expanded an economic incentive for families who make the difficult choice to forego a second income or career so that one parent is able to stay at home with the children. Families in this situation ought to be extended tax incentives just the same as those families with a limited income or a child in the child care system.

Many West Virginians have contacted me to voice their opposition to a tax on married couples. I could not agree with them more. Although the Marriage Penalty Relief Act was recently vetoed, I continue to believe that it was legislation with an admirable objective. I voted for that Act because I believe in the institution of marriage, and that our government should do more to support the basic values exemplified by marriage.

August 30, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Making American Steel Stronger

In 1998, American steel companies were caught in an avalanche of cheap -- often illegal -- foreign imports. As a result, the jobs of thousands of steelworkers in West Virginia, Indiana, Alabama, and several other states were threatened.

In response, I created the Emergency Steel Loan Guarantee program to give steel companies in need of assistance access to an infusion of capital to help them dig out and keep operating until the surge in foreign imports could be controlled. While 1999 import levels did drop, the statistics for this year, so far, are not encouraging. The American Iron and Steel Institute reports that, from January to May 2000, year-to-date steel imports were 22-percent higher than for the same period in 1999, and almost 16-percent higher than in the crisis year of 1998.

With these statistics in mind, I recently met with new U.S. Commerce Secretary Norman Mineta to urge him to remain firm in his support of the American steel industry. I told the secretary of my continued concern about the future of U.S. steelmakers, and asked for his commitment to use the authority of his office to fully enforce U.S. trade laws and to protect American steel producers from unfair trade practices.

Secretary Mineta as-

sured me that he was committed to keeping America's steel industry strong. In fact, the secretary said that he intends to make foreign trading partners adhere to fair trade practices.

In addition to these personal assurances, the Commerce Department has released a 240-page action plan on global steel trade that identifies numerous factors that triggered the 1998 steel crisis and recommends steps that the federal government can take to protect the industry from future surges in foreign imports. Major elements of the plan include early warnings of import surges and of changes in industry conditions; faster relief for industries, workers, and communities when import surges occur; expedited antidumping investigations; steps to address the root causes of instability in global steel markets; and the reinvigoration of the international steel policy agenda.

Our nation learned some tough lessons as a result of the steel crisis of 1998. We have taken some corrective steps and identified protective measures, but we must remain vigilant to potential unfair trade practices by foreign manufacturers. This nation cannot afford to let down its guard and surrender the American steel industry to foreign predators.

September 6, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Making Prescription Drugs More Affordable

The high cost of prescription drugs has been a primary issue of concern for many West Virginians, especially for those men and women living on fixed incomes who rely on Medicare for health care coverage. Currently, Medicare does not pay for prescription drugs and, as a result, too many West Virginians have to decide between paying for their medicines or paying for other basic needs, such as the mortgage or groceries. That is not a choice anyone living in the greatest country in the world should have to make.

The medical industry has experienced incredible advancements in the last several years. Technology is uncovering new treatments at an astounding pace. Medicines and drug therapy are major components of those advancements. Extensive research and development efforts are helping to create new treatments for a variety of illnesses, from the most common to the most deadly. Unfortunately, the medicines that Medicare recipients need are often unaffordable.

In an effort to help offset the high price of prescription drugs, I am cosponsoring legislation that would allow Medicare to pay at least part of the bill for essential medicines. The Medicare Expansion for Needed Drugs Act would help with prescription drug costs for seniors. The ini-

tiative would be strictly voluntary and would require the participating Medicare recipient to pay a monthly fee and a copayment in order to benefit from the prescription drug coverage.

This would be an important benefit for many of the 335,000 West Virginians who rely on Medicare for their health care coverage. In our state, the average Medicare recipient has an annual income of just \$10,700. Of that amount, an estimated \$2,100 goes to out-of-pocket medical expenses. An affordable, voluntary Medicare prescription drug initiative would keep at least some of that \$2,100 in their bank accounts and available for other needs.

Medicare was designed 35 years ago to be a safety net for those who, because of age or disability, did not have access to traditional health insurance. At that time, no one could foresee how the costs of research and new medications would spiral over the years. The time has come to address this shortfall and to create a Medicare system that is more responsive to the needs of the people. That is why I am cosponsoring the Medicare Expansion for Needed Drugs Act. I hope that Congress and the Administration can work together to help ensure that Medicare recipients do not have to choose between paying for medicine and putting food on the table.

September 13, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Trade Policy Trade-Offs

Over the more than four decades that I have served West Virginia in the U.S. Congress, I have seen one Administration after another -- both Democratic and Republican -- trumpet its latest trade plan as being good for America. The trouble with these trade plans, however, is that they are based more on the needs of the State Department rather than on the needs of working families.

For example, in 1994, when Congress considered whether to approve the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), supporters made great promises of economic progress. But, according to the U.S. Labor Department, since NAFTA was enacted, more than 440,000 jobs have left the U.S. because of that agreement. According to the Commerce Department, the United States had a \$1 billion trade surplus with Mexico in 1994. From January to July of this year, the trade deficit with Mexico already totaled more than \$11 billion. In 1999 alone, the U.S. trade deficit with Mexico totaled more than \$22 billion. This is not a track record of economic success.

Unfortunately, Congress pays no attention to that track record. The Clinton Administration has convinced Congress to approve permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) with

China. I opposed this legislation for the same reason that I opposed NAFTA: this is not a plan that benefits working families. Rather, giving China PNTR, I think, will create even greater incentive for corporations to move more jobs overseas where labor is cheaper, where they do not have to contribute to Social Security, Medicare, and other benefits guaranteed to American workers, and where environmental and workplace safety regulations are not enforced.

I understand that today's marketplace is a global one, and that what happens in Beijing has as much of an effect on market conditions as do actions in Washington, D.C. But that does not mean Congress should abdicate its responsibilities to the American people and approve policies that put American workers at a disadvantage. Trade policy should not be dictated by State Department goals -- and big corporation profit margins. Rather, trade policy should be focused on the needs of the American people. Job losses in America must not be the price paid to expand job opportunities elsewhere around the globe. I will continue to push so that future trade policies take into consideration the needs of American workers, and so that profit margins are not put before working families.

September 20, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Marketing Violence to Children

I have long shared the concerns of many West Virginia parents that our young people are being exposed to far too much violence through the media -- movies, television, music, and video games. The entertainment industry, however, has generally rebuffed criticism about the content of its programs and products and about concerns that too much exposure to violence is harmful to our young people.

The industry, in fact, has repeatedly claimed to be making efforts to reduce the exposure of young people to violence, including instituting a program of labeling program content so that parents are better able to evaluate the programs, music, and video games that their children watch and play.

Now, however, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has released a report that found that the entertainment industry has been aggressively marketing violence-ridden materials directly to young people.

The FTC, the agency responsible for enforcing consumer protection laws, recently completed a year-long investigation into the entertainment industry's marketing practices. In its investigation, the Trade Commission found that movie studios advertised violent "R"-rated films during television shows with audiences primarily consisting of teenagers. Federal examiners also found that video games with violent content are regularly advertised in magazines designed

for young teenagers. And, the investigation determined, those much-heralded warning labels and content codes -- touted by the industry as evidence of its devotion to consumer protection -- are actually poorly enforced.

This investigation bears out many of the worst fears of those of us concerned about our impressionable young people. Additionally, it reinforces the fact that parents need to be vigilant when it comes to their children's entertainment options.

In an effort to address at least part of this problem, I have authored a legislative provision, currently under consideration by the Senate, that would require the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to consider imposing a new set of voluntary broadcast standards for television networks. An analysis of prime-time programming by the Parents Television Council, released in March, found that overall sexual content, foul language, and violence have nearly tripled over the past decade. I want the FCC to consider whether a new set of voluntary standards would help to improve the quality of programming that television stations broadcast.

Moreover, I hope that the Federal Trade Commission's findings will send a signal to industry executives that is strong enough to cause them to implement significant reforms, and to stop pushing violent programming on our children.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Smaller Classes, Better Schools

In the beginning of my school years as a boy in Mercer County, I attended small, two-room schools. In my graduating class at Mark Twain High School in Raleigh County, there were only 28 students. It was there, in those small classrooms, where I started to receive the education that prepared me for a long career of public service and an even longer devotion to learning.

In this new school year of 2000-2001, my thoughts turn to a meeting that I had this past spring with students from throughout West Virginia. At that Youth Summit, which West Virginia University hosted with me, students were asked to identify the main causes of youth violence. Among the responses, students pointed to large classes and schools as major contributors because they lead to a feeling of isolation and disenchantment.

Replacing that feeling with a sense of belonging is crucial to a student's well-being and academic success. With my support, Congress has appropriated funds to help school districts reduce class sizes to eighteen or fewer students in kindergarten through third grade. Providing these funds to the early grades is a good start in this overall effort to create smaller classes.

School districts throughout the nation are currently receiving funds -- a total of \$1.3 billion -- to recruit, hire, and train new teachers for the 2000-2001 school year. West Virginia's share, which is based on population, is more than \$12 million. Local school districts may use the funds to hire more teachers or to provide training opportunities to upgrade the skills of their teaching staffs.

Research shows that smaller classes offer both immediate and long-term benefits. In Tennessee, for example, researchers found that students in grades one through three who were in small classes were about half of a school year ahead of students in larger classes in their learning in reading, language arts, math, and science skills. Smaller classes also have led to increased student participation and improved behavior.

As West Virginia students have pointed out, and as the research backs up, smaller classes are important in making students feel that they have a stake in their education. I hope that West Virginia school districts will take advantage of the federal resources available, and help not only to reshape our classrooms but also to chart a brighter course for our students' education.

October 4, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Internet Safety Made Simple

October marks "Internet Safety Month" and provides parents with an opportunity to learn more about resources available to them to protect their children from inappropriate material available on the World Wide Web. With an estimated 5,000 new Internet sites coming online each month -- and with one-third of these devoted to material that is violent, obscene, or sexually explicit -- Internet Safety Month could not have come at a better time.

I recognize the valuable resource that the Internet can be for education, communication, and research. In just a few seconds, with just a few keystrokes, one can find out about medical breakthroughs, news reports, or historical events. But, at the same time, one can be exposed to pornography, vulgarity, and indecency. One way to avoid the negative material while promoting the positive is through filtering software. Often available for free or for a low price, filtering software can be a valuable tool for parents who want to protect their children from objectionable material but who cannot always monitor their children's Internet use.

Additionally, there are some basic "rules of the Web" that parents may want to consider for their children's Internet use. These commonsense tips may help set the ground

rules for children and may prevent them from accessing inappropriate material.

Take time to be online with your children. When a parent or teacher is directly involved with a child's Internet activity, the potential for danger is greatly reduced.

Teach children never to give out personal information to people they encounter while online. This type of information can be used to target the child or the family for criminal activity.

Instruct a child never to plan a face-to-face meeting alone with an online acquaintance. News accounts from across the country have highlighted the dangers of arranging meetings with strangers. While a child may think that an online acquaintance has become a friend, a computer can often mask the true intentions of a predator.

West Virginia parents need to make sure that their children will be safe while utilizing the Internet. The number of homes in West Virginia with Internet access continues to grow, and an increasing number of schools and libraries provide children with Web access. That is why it is important to set clear guidelines and utilize filtering software -- simple ways to ensure that children have positive experiences on the Internet while avoiding many of its pitfalls.

October 11, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Peace of Mind for Retired Miners

Each fall, for the last two years, more than 60,000 retired miners and their families across the country have faced the threat of significant cuts in their health care coverage. This threat is no fault of the retired miners, but rather the fault of Congress for failing to act to protect the financially threatened fund that pays for those health benefits. That is why, once again this year, I have fought to protect those benefits and to give Congress more time to settle on a long-term solution for the fund's financial problems.

As part of a 1946 agreement between the unions and the federal government, coal miners and their spouses were promised lifetime health care coverage. That agreement eventually led to the establishment of the Combined Benefit Fund (CBF), which worked well until adverse court decisions and rising health care costs began threatening the financial solvency of the health care fund.

In order to keep the CBF running despite Congress' inaction, I have, for the past two years, won major legislative battles to shore up the fund and to protect the vital health care services for retired miners and their families. In an appropriations bill recently signed into law, I offered an amendment to transfer to the Combined Benefit Fund

up to \$94.5 million in interest on the federal Abandoned Mine Land fund. That follows on a one-year transfer of \$68 million I provided last year. This latest transfer will keep the CBF fully afloat through the end of August 2001. But it is only a short-term solution. The funding gives Congressional authorizing committees additional time in which to devise a permanent solution to the fund's financial problems.

Winning the \$94.5 million transfer was not an easy step. It was a tough fight. My amendment was patterned on legislation authored by Congressman Nick Rahall. In addition to Congressman Rahall, my provision was supported by Congressmen Bob Wise and Alan Mollohan and Senator Jay Rockefeller. Our West Virginia Delegation is committed to ensuring that the promise of lifetime coverage, made to our miners more than 50 years ago, is not broken.

The challenge now is for Congress to settle on a permanent solution to protect the health benefits of these elderly citizens. Beneficiaries must not continue to be placed annually in limbo, not knowing from one year to the next whether their health care benefits will evaporate. For the security and peace of mind of these families, a long-term remedy must be found.

October 18, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Building Prosperity in West Virginia

As many West Virginians know, rural communities have difficulty funding public works projects, such as water and sewer systems, roads, industrial parks, and business incubators. A lack of infrastructure in a community can be burdensome, and, in some cases, life-threatening to its residents. West Virginians, unfortunately, are all too familiar with this lifestyle.

For decades, I have worked to address these types of problems by adding funding to appropriations bills specifically for infrastructure projects throughout our state, in an effort to provide the basic necessities to West Virginia communities. These initiatives are not extravagances. They are necessities. And, mile by mile, piece by piece, we are making significant progress.

A major resource for community development in recent years has been the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). Created in 1965, the ARC channels millions of dollars each year to economically distressed communities in West Virginia and the 12 other states in the Appalachian region. That funding supports such projects as the ARC Corridor Highway System, water treatment plants, sewer pipeline extensions, health care centers, and a variety of other infrastructure initiatives.

While critics complain that this targeted investment

in Appalachia is unnecessary, I contend that it is vital. For too long, Appalachia has faced major obstacles to economic growth and as long as Appalachia lags behind, the entire nation suffers. That is why I have worked to continue the operations of the ARC. Through my work on the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have obtained the funding necessary to allow the ARC to continue its mission of improving the economic conditions in our region. And this investment is paying dividends. A recent study found that, between 1990 and 1996, the investments made in infrastructure by the ARC alone have resulted in thousands of new jobs, millions of dollars in new wages, and a number of other benefits that significantly exceed the costs of the agency's investments.

I grew up in the coalfields of southern West Virginia. I have lived in houses without electricity and without running water. I know how difficult it can be to try to create opportunities for the future when the available infrastructure is mired in the past. In order to move forward, we need to continue to invest in those basic building blocks that constitute foundations for a brighter economy. By doing so, we will create the opportunities necessary to keep our children in West Virginia to raise families of their own.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Protecting the Doctor-Patient Relationship

In West Virginia and across the nation, the number of people in managed care health insurance plans is increasing. Today, almost 60 percent of the nation's population is insured through managed care plans, up from only 13 percent in 1987. But while many Americans chose their health plan believing that medical decisions would be based on doctor-patient consultation, that is not always the case. That is why I continue to press for Congress to approve a Patients' Bill of Rights to help protect all Americans in managed care plans.

In managed care plans, an outside third party often makes decisions about a patient's health care regimen based more on cost than on need. I firmly believe that patients and their doctors -- and not an outside accountant -- should decide the best course of medical treatment.

The Patients' Bill of Rights that I support would ensure that patients with serious illnesses are allowed access to specialists without having to receive permission from an accountant who is without medical training. The legislation would give patients the power to go to any emergency room without waiting for pre-approval by their health insurance company.

The Patients' Bill of Rights would give women direct access to their obstet-

rician/gynecologist, and also would allow them to designate that physician as their primary care doctor. Finally, the legislation would ensure that patients can appeal medical decisions mandated by an insurance company to an independent reviewer. The reviewer would then make a ruling that is binding on the managed care plan.

The Patients' Bill of Rights has the support of the American Medical Association, the American Nurses Association, and every other major health organization in the nation. It is not extreme. In fact, many health plans already provide these guarantees. This legislation is aimed at those plans which choose to put profits before patients, thereby interfering with medical decisions that should be made between a doctor and patient.

When West Virginians enroll in managed care plans they should not be forced into a system that too often is more interested in lowering costs and increasing profits than in providing quality medical care. We need a Patients' Bill of Rights that guarantees access to medical care, protects the doctor-patient relationship, and provides accountability when managed care plans deny needed services. This is the best way to ensure that health care is based on a medical diagnosis, and not on an insurance company's profit margin.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Breaking the Cycle of Domestic Violence

In West Virginia last year, there were 11,534 reported domestic violence crimes that left 31 West Virginians dead. And those are just the cases reported to police. There were likely hundreds -- if not thousands -- of other incidents that went unreported. In an effort to combat domestic violence, and to help begin the healing process for victims of abuse, Congress, with my strong support, has approved the Violence Against Women Act of 2000.

This Act is one of the most critical pieces of legislation ever to come before Congress with regard to the safety and well-being of our nation's women and children. Specifically, the Violence Against Women Act calls for \$3.3 billion in federal funding during the next five years to expand women's and children's access to shelters where they can find immediate protection from violence and receive help in making the kinds of life changes that may be necessary to permanently break away from an abuser. The Act also supports better training to enable police officers to identify abusers and assist abuse victims.

Domestic violence has been on a steady decline in

recent years. Statistics from the U.S. Department of Justice show a 21-percent drop in domestic violence since 1993. Part of the reason for that reduction is the network of coordinated response teams in place throughout the country. These teams -- consisting of police, prosecutors, judges, victims' advocates, hospitals, corporations, and attorneys -- provide victims and their children the services they need in order to escape the violence and stay alive. The Violence Against Women Act reinforces these teams, giving them additional resources to draw upon to help victims. That is why I strongly supported this legislation.

Today, too many people view violence as the best way to solve problems and vent anger. Nearly one third of the women murdered each year are killed by their intimate partners. In 1998 alone, 307,000 women were raped and sexually assaulted, and approximately one-million women are stalked each year. The challenge ahead is to find a way to break this cycle of violence and abuse that has ruined tens of thousands of lives. While this is not an easy challenge to meet, it is certainly a battle worth waging.

November 8, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Giving Thanks

Autumn's leaves are falling, the days are growing short, and the first frosts have blanketed our lawns with a lacy tracery of white. Thanksgiving is upon us. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln's Proclamation for Thanksgiving began, "The year that is drawing towards its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies." Though in the midst of the Civil War, President Lincoln was able to find something to praise. Currently, our nation is experiencing a time of peace and prosperity. This year, we must not take for granted our good fortune.

The first official Thanksgiving in America was celebrated by the Pilgrims in 1621. Those early settlers had overcome great privation and difficulty. They had built their homes from the raw materials around them, from stones pried from the earth and logs painstakingly cut from the surrounding forest. They cultivated crops from the precious stores of seed carried with them from the Old World, but the pilgrims would not have survived without the help from the local Indian tribes, who introduced the settlers to native crops such as corn and pumpkins. Even with the

help of the Indians, only half of the original settlers survived their first year in the new land. Yet, despite that first year of hardship, the Pilgrims chose to celebrate what they did have with a day of Thanksgiving. And, like today's celebrations, they shared their feast with family and friends.

I learned the history of the Pilgrims as a child, but it is only as an adult that I have come to truly understand and appreciate both the hardships suffered by the Pilgrims and the great sense of relief and thankfulness that they must have felt to have come through that first year. It is sometimes easier to wish for things that could make our lives better than it is to pause and recognize all those things, however small, that already make our lives good.

This year, as West Virginians gather around their Thanksgiving feast, I hope that everyone will savor and thank the Creator for all of the love and friendship gathered there, as well as the turkey, pumpkin pie, and cranberry sauce that recall the Pilgrim's feast so long ago. Whether it be a person, thing, or simply the rights and liberties we enjoy as Americans, each of us has blessings to count this Thanksgiving.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

New Ways to Use Old Fuels

Because the United States is heavily dependent on Middle East countries for oil, we are too much at their mercy when it comes to fuel prices. This is but one example of how such dependence on foreign fuels carries consequences for our economy as well as our national security. Therefore, if we are to gain greater control over our economic circumstances and shore up our domestic security, we need to address America's reliance on foreign fuel sources.

The United States possesses plentiful coal and natural gas reserves to heat our homes in the winter and to cool them in the summer. But the expanded use of those domestic resources has long been stymied by concerns about the impact that fossil fuels have on the quality of our air. Those concerns led me to create the national Clean Coal Technology program in 1985. That initiative matches government and industry funding to develop innovative methods to use coal in more efficient and environmentally friendly ways. To date, more than \$5.5 billion has been invested in that Clean Coal effort.

To expand this initiative, I recently included \$95 million in an appropriations bill to support the upgrade of existing power plants with environmentally friendly technologies that

would allow for the continued and expanded use of coal. Since 56 percent of this nation's electricity is generated in coal-fired power plants, it makes good sense to modernize existing plants in ways that allow us to better use our own coal supply. Such an effort will help us to trim our overreliance on foreign fuel sources while also cutting emissions of greenhouse gases, which are believed to contribute substantially to the problem of global warming.

When considering the worldwide scope of the global warming problem, it becomes obvious, then, that our clean coal technology effort should not stop at our nation's borders. Scientists have identified several developing nations as some of the world's most prolific emitters of greenhouse gases, and experts estimate that these nations -- China, Brazil, India, and Indonesia, for example -- will only increase their emissions as they continue to grow. If the United States can market clean coal technologies to these nations and others, we may well strike a significant blow for the Earth's environment.

We must continue to work to find a balance between our nation's energy needs and commonsense environmental protections. Both are vital to America's -- and the world's -- future.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

More Challenges for the Steel Industry

For three years, the steel industry in the United States has faced unrelenting pressure from foreign competitors. Much of that pressure has resulted from illegal activities by foreign companies and the governments which are subsidizing their steel production. As a result, these foreign companies are able to sell steel products in the United States at prices far below their production costs.

American companies have fought hard to stay competitive -- retraining workers, cutting costs, investing in new technology, and finding innovative ways to produce steel at a lower price. Yet, despite its efforts, the U.S. steel industry cannot match the unfair, below-cost prices offered by foreign competitors.

Since the import crisis began, at least six U.S. steel mills from across the country have declared bankruptcy. Now these imports have claimed another victim. Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel, one of West Virginia's major employers, has filed for bankruptcy protection. The company has identified unfair imports as the root cause for its bankruptcy filing.

Further evidence of the trouble facing the American steel industry came recently in a report from the U.S. Trade Deficit Review Commission, a blue-ribbon panel appointed by Congress to explore the causes and con-

sequences of the nation's trade deficit. The commission agreed that government has to do a better job of protecting U.S. industries from unfair competition. In fact, the commission's chairman stated that the government needs to deal specifically with the industries, like steel, which have been struggling as a result of unfair, and often illegal, foreign trade practices.

We cannot sit idly by and watch this continuing crisis wipe out the rest of the U.S. domestic steel industry. With several other Senators' support, I have written legislation urging the President to initiate a comprehensive review of all steel imports. This review, called a "Section 201" investigation, would comprehensively address the massive surges of steel imports into this country and give the U.S. steel industry the reprieve it needs to get back on solid financial ground.

Steel has long been a driving force in the growth and prosperity of our nation. Instead of watching illegal steel imports erode our domestic industry, we must have a U.S. steel policy that helps to protect these good-paying jobs, generates a strong tax base, and supports the national security of all Americans. It is time to give these companies the support they need to survive and to thrive so that they can compete on a level playing field.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Cutting Health Insurance Red Tape

When West Virginians enroll in managed health care plans, they should not be forced into a system that too often is more interested in increasing profits than in providing quality medical care. In managed care plans, an outside third party often makes decisions about a patient's health care regimen based more on cost than on need. I believe that patients and their doctors -- and not an outside accountant -- should decide the best course of medical treatment. That is why Congress should approve a Patients' Bill of Rights. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that such legislation will become law soon.

But that does not mean that improvements in managed care systems cannot be made. New regulations have been issued to strengthen the rights of more than 130-million Americans who have medical insurance through private, job-based health plans. These rules promise patients quicker processing of health insurance claims and grant them the right to an expedited appeal when insurance claims are denied or delayed by health plans.

The new regulations represent the first changes to the health insurance claims and appeals process since the creation of the 1974 Employee Retirement Income Security Act,

known as ERISA, which governs private health plans. Currently, insurers have up to 90 days to decide whether or not to cover a patient's medical needs. Under the new rules, when an individual asks a health insurer to cover an "urgently needed" treatment or service, that insurer will have 72 hours to make a determination. For medical procedures that need advance approval, insurers will have 15 days to make a choice, and 30 days to decide on reimbursement for medical care that has already been delivered. Additionally, if a health insurance company denies coverage, a patient will have 180 days, instead of the current 60-day allowance, to file an appeal.

These rules are important in providing West Virginians with the health care protections that they need. However, in order to guarantee every West Virginian in managed care plans with the right to see a specialist, to go to the nearest emergency room, and to hold insurance companies accountable when they cause harm, Congress ought to pass a real, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights. This is the best way to ensure that health care is based on a medical diagnosis, and not on an insurance company's profit margin.

December 6, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Holiday Blessings

The holiday season is upon us. Decorations have been hung, candles and lights placed in frost-rimmed windows, and seasonal songs drift across the chill air. In stores, billions of dollars worth of goods are being sold, wrapped, and mailed to happy recipients. Steamy kitchens along quiet streets are perfumed with the scent of crisp cookies, fragrant fruitcakes, creamy fudge, and other family specialties being prepared by loving hands. Churches and synagogues are filled with regular visitors and with those whose worship centers around the holy seasons.

This season of the spirit is a good time to count our blessings. Americans are a fortunate people, blessed with a strong economy that offers opportunities for anyone willing to work hard. We are blessed with a strong military full of fine men and women who keep us and our interests safe around the world. We are blessed with a governmental system designed with enough foresight and care to provide a defined and orderly process for the transition from one administration to the next, in even the unusual circumstances in which we currently find ourselves. The Founding Fathers who established our Constitution were truly wise men, and their document for governance has proved to be a very pre-

vious gift, indeed.

Other nations experience such turmoil with every government transition, or live in the dark shadow of religious repression and sharply curtailed personal freedoms that we Americans can hardly imagine. In the light of that perspective, our own partisan rankling over elections and Congressional majorities pales in significance. We can all take heart from the calm manner in which the public has shown its confidence in the eventual, if delayed, decision and transition to the next administration.

I hope that the spirit of good will and the laying aside of our differences that usually accompanies the holiday season can be extended into the new year, and that Americans can draw together to celebrate the coming transition to a new administration, a new Congress, and a new opportunity to enjoy the blessings of liberty that we have inherited. Those blessings are a gift to every living American from the generations before us who fought to create and preserve our system of government. Those gifts are ours to treasure, ours to exercise and enjoy, and ours to safeguard for the next generation. As we celebrate the birth of His Son, let us remember and thank the Creator for all the blessings we share.



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Unlocking the Secrets of Alzheimer's Disease

West Virginia is blessed with a number of fine colleges and universities. These institutions of higher learning are helping to prepare our students to lead the way in the new century. At the same time, researchers at these schools are seeking new ways to utilize energy sources, create new construction materials, and improve the quality of life for men and women throughout the world.

West Virginia University (WVU), is taking steps to address an illness that is both physically and emotionally taxing -- Alzheimer's Disease. Earlier this year, WVU and Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, announced plans to create the Blanchette Rockefeller Neurosciences Institute. The Institute is named for U.S. Senator Jay Rockefeller's mother, who suffered from Alzheimer's until her death in 1992. When complete, it will be one of the world's major centers for research into Alzheimer's and other neurological illnesses.

In support of this endeavor, I recently added \$20 million to an appropriations bill to design and build this center in Morgantown. As planned, the Blanchette Rockefeller Neurosciences Institute will be the largest scientific research venture in the history of West Virginia and the only major research institute in the world

to focus on human memory.

Alzheimer's is an agonizing disease both for the patient and for the patient's family. Slowly, almost imperceptibly at first, a person's mental capabilities erode. The memories of a lifetime are slowly stolen away by the illness. It is not uncommon in the late stages of the disease for the patient to fail to recognize even family members and close friends. It is my hope that, by utilizing the resources at the new Blanchette Rockefeller Neurosciences Institute, scientists and researchers will one day be able to find a way not only to control the disease but also to prevent it. I am proud to have been able to provide the Institute with its design and construction funding.

WVU is developing into one of the nation's premier medical research institutions. The work at the Robert C. Byrd Health Sciences Center includes, among other things, the development of new approaches to treat breast cancer, to avert strokes, and to make specialized treatment available through advanced technology to people living miles away from the nearest hospital. These efforts and investments are very worthwhile, and I hope that they will lead to the day when doctors are finally able to prevent debilitating diseases.

December 20, 2000



Byrd's-Eye View

By U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd

Teaching Technology to Teachers

West Virginia is fortunate to have talented school teachers, many of whom have been at their jobs for years and some even for decades. Their experience has honed their methods of instructing children to make the lessons applicable to everyday life. But so many years in the classroom can also lead to at least one distinct dilemma. Computer technologies continue to change rapidly, and many teachers are not able to keep pace. As a result, some students may never have the chance to benefit from the educational opportunities that these new high-tech resources offer.

West Virginia has spent \$95 million over the past decade to install computers and software in each of the public schools in the state. However, nearly half of our schools report that their teachers are only at a beginner's level in terms of their technological skills.

I am very concerned about this shortfall in our teachers' knowledge base. If West Virginia students are not able to learn about real-world applications of computers and technology, they will be far behind students from other states and from around the world as they enter the workforce.

That is why I recently added an amendment to an appropriations bill to start to provide every math and science teacher in West

Virginia's elementary and secondary schools with advanced training in computers and classroom technologies. The \$2.5 million that I added to the bill will allow the Erma Ora Byrd Center for Educational Technologies at Wheeling Jesuit University to begin this training program.

This initiative is ambitious. Working with the school districts, Wheeling Jesuit first hopes to train 1,000 of the state's 10,000 math and science teachers who have a significant part of their career ahead of them. These teachers will be selected for intensive technology training leading to a Master's degree. Each of these 1,000 teachers will, in turn, train nine other teachers. In the end, by matching highly skilled teachers with high-tech resources, West Virginia's students will be better equipped to move ahead in a computer-driven marketplace.

Keeping up with the dizzying pace of changing technology is challenging. But it is a challenge that our teachers must meet if they are to prepare our students to compete in the rapidly developing global marketplace. I hope that this new training initiative will provide teachers with much-needed support and help them to utilize computer technologies in the most effective manner possible.