

Our "Child Support Distribution Act," just like my "Children First Child Support Reform Act," attempts to address this problem. The legislation reforms child support policy so that families working their way off—or just off—public assistance, keep more of their own child support payments. With this bill, the federal-state child support partnership will embark upon a new policy era with a mission focused both on promoting self-sufficiency, rather than cost recovery, and on making child support payments truly meaningful for families.

We know that creating the right incentives for non-custodial parents to pay support and increasing collections has long-term benefits. People who can count on child support are more likely to stay in jobs and stay off public assistance.

Delivering or passing through child support directly to families would simplify the job for states as well. The states currently devote six to eight percent of what they spend to run the entire child support program—\$250 million per year—on distributing collections. This has created an administrative nightmare. Right now, the states divvy up child support dollars into as many as nine pots. Under my proposal, states would have greater freedom to adopt a straightforward policy of collecting child support and delivering it to families, without costly and burdensome regulations.

Moving towards a simpler child support system that puts greater emphasis on getting funds to families is the right and most fair approach—for fathers, mothers, and children, and for all of us interested in making the child support program work. I urge my Senate colleagues to support this legislation this year, and I look forward to our working to deliver more child support resources to the children to whom they are owed so that all our communities benefit from healthier, happier children and stronger, more stable families.

Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, I would like to express my strong support for the Child Support Distribution Act of 2000 introduced today in the Senate. I would also like to commend my colleagues on their efforts to reconcile the House-passed Child Support Distribution Act, H.R. 4678, with similar bills introduced in the Senate. I agree that it is imperative for the Senate to join the House in passing strong bipartisan legislation to strengthen the child support system and assist low income families by allowing them to retain child support payments. I also believe that it is important to encourage noncustodial fathers to take responsibility for their children's well-being and I am pleased that this legislation includes funding to states to develop programs promoting responsible parenthood.

I feel so strongly about this legislation because of the significance of child poverty in the United States, and particularly in my own State of Lou-

isiana. According to the Children's Defense Fund, there are almost 366,000 children living in poverty in the State of Louisiana, almost 30 percent of the state's children. Over 33 percent of families in Louisiana have no father in the home and 40 percent of babies are born out-of-wedlock. Studies show that children who are raised with no father are five times more likely to live in poverty and twice as likely to commit a crime or commit suicide, as well as more likely to use drugs and alcohol or to become pregnant. It is time to break this cycle of child poverty. Strengthening the child support system, ensuring that money gets into the hands of the families that need it, and supporting programs that encourage responsible parenthood are important steps in addressing child poverty. I am pleased to cosponsor the Child Support Distribution Act and encourage the Senate to act on it this Congress. Thank you for this opportunity to voice my support for this important legislation.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 206

At the request of Mr. ASHCROFT, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 206, a bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to provide for improved data collection and evaluations of State Children's Health Insurance Programs, and for other purposes.

S. 768

At the request of Mr. SESSIONS, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. MILLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 768, a bill to establish court-martial jurisdiction over civilians serving with the Armed Forces during contingency operations, and to establish Federal jurisdiction over crimes committed outside the United States by former members of the Armed Forces and civilians accompanying the Armed Forces outside the United States.

S. 1159

At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. FRIST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1159, a bill to provide grants and contracts to local educational agencies to initiate, expand, and improve physical education programs for all kindergarten through 12th grade students.

S. 1536

At the request of Mr. DEWINE, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. ALLARD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1536, a bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to extend authorizations of appropriations for programs under the Act, to modernize programs and services for older individuals, and for other purposes.

S. 1969

At the request of Mr. CRAIG, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. STEVENS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1969, a bill to provide for improved management of, and increases accountability for, outfitted activities by

which the public gains access to and occupancy and use of Federal land, and for other purposes.

S. 2773

At the request of Mr. FEINGOLD, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. JEFFORDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2773, a bill to amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to enhance dairy markets through dairy product mandatory reporting, and for other purposes.

S. 3009

At the request of Mr. HUTCHINSON, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3009, a bill to provide funds to the National Center for Rural Law Enforcement.

S. 3050

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3050, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make improvements to the prospective payment system for skilled nursing facility services.

S. 3101

At the request of Mr. ASHCROFT, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3101, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow as a deduction in determining adjusted gross income the deduction for expenses in connection with services as a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States.

S. 3119

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mr. GORTON) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) were added as cosponsors of S. 3119, a bill to amend the Act entitled "An Act to provide for the establishment of Fort Clatsop National Memorial in the State of Oregon, and for other purposes."

S. 3131

At the request of Mr. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KYL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3131, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure that the Secretary of Health and Human Services provides appropriate guidance to physicians and other health care providers that are attempting to properly submit claims under the medicare program and to ensure that the Secretary targets truly fraudulent activity for enforcement of medicare billing regulations, rather than inadvertent billing errors.

S. 3147

At the request of Mr. ROBB, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3147, a bill to authorize the establishment, on land of the Department of the Interior in the District of Columbia or its environs, of a memorial and gardens in honor and commemoration of Frederick Douglass.

S. 3152

At the request of Mr. ROTH, the names of the Senator from Georgia