Mr. President, late on Sunday evening, the world was told

of news we had been waiting to hear for almost 10 years. Osama bin

Laden was a murderer who devoted his life to the destruction of

freedom, democracy, and our way of life. His death is an important

milestone in the fight against global extremist violence and a relief

to the millions of Americans and others around the world who have felt

his murderous destruction.

I, first and foremost, wish to thank the military and the

intelligence professionals who carried out this daring

mission, which was executed flawlessly and will go down in our history

books as to how we should do our work.

I wish to take a moment to compliment all of our military and

intelligence people who were involved in this effort. I take great

pride in representing the State of Maryland and our intelligence

agencies that are located at Fort Meade. They do incredible work for

our national security and for our Nation. They do a lot of work that

keeps us safe, but they can never issue a press release because of the

nature of their work. Many times I believe their work goes basically

unappreciated by the vast majority of Americans. But I wish to take a

moment to congratulate all the men and women in our intelligence

agencies and in our military who have devoted their lives to keeping us

safe. This mission demonstrates the type of work they do in order to

make this a safer nation.

This successful interagency operation illustrates intelligence

sharing at its best and the commitment of the men and women of our

Armed Forces as well as our political leadership. As you know, after

the attack on our country on September 11, we had commissions do work,

we had a lot of congressional investigations, and there was one theme

that came out very clearly in regard to the way we collected

intelligence information to keep this Nation safe; that is, there was

too much stovepiping and not enough sharing of information. Information

that could have been shared, that could have been used in a way to keep

us safe was not. This effort demonstrates the advantages of sharing

information. Our intelligence agencies acted upon information that was

made available through various sources and using that to be able to

conduct this mission.

Truly, bin Laden was brought to justice as a result of President

Obama's deliberative planning, coordination, and communication, his

leadership, partnership, and dogged persistence. Because of that, we

were able to accomplish this mission.

I wish to congratulate President Obama. He had to make a tough call.

The intelligence information was not conclusive. Much of it was

circumstantial. Yet he evaluated the best information we had to

determine that bin Laden was at this location. He then had to make

another tough choice, as to what type of mission to use--whether to use

a sophisticated bomb in order to destroy the property, which would have

caused the loss of some innocent life, or whether to use a higher risk

mission of sending our SEALs into Pakistan. The President made the

right call. He made the right decision, and I congratulate him on his

leadership.

All Americans were affected by bin Laden's evil actions. We all

remember that fateful day in September of 2001. I was on the other side

of the Capitol as a Congressman in my office in the Rayburn Building. I

remember receiving information that we thought there was a plane that

could be heading to our own building. The Capitol Police ushered us out

of the building so we could try to get out of harm's way. We all began

to understand our Nation was under attack and the world was changing.

While we are still living in that changed world, this event reminds

us again the strength of America is freedom and that its persistence

can prevail. As a lifelong proponent of human rights, I know we do not

rejoice in killing, but this death rids the world of a man who was

committed to intolerance, destruction, hatred, and the desecration of

human dignity. Bringing bin Laden to justice helps heal the wounds of

those who lost their loved ones and to a nation who lived through 9/11.

We must remain vigilant as the fight against al-Qaida and other

extremists goes on. While al-Qaida is increasingly marginalized--

particularly as we see so many in the Arab world exercise their desires

for change--the threat posed by terrorist organizations will remain

with us. We must remain on our highest guard, working with our allies

around the world, in order to fight these extremists.

Once again, I wish to congratulate the tremendous efforts of our

President, our military, and our intelligence community, especially as

their hard work continues, and may this event bring some sense of peace

to the families affected by bin Laden's evil, as well as to all in the

world who love freedom and peace.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time spent in quorum

calls be equally charged against the majority and the minority.