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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, September 14, at 12:30 p.m.

Senate

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2009

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

PRAYER

The Assistant Chaplain, Dr. Alan Keiran, offered the following prayer:

God of justice and righteousness, teach our lawmakers to mobilize our national might for Your glory. May their labors bring deliverance to captives, sight to the ethically and morally blind, and comfort to those who are bruised by life's thorns. Give them a spiritual vitality that will enable their faith to survive life's trials and tribulations. In deep humility of spirit, may they seek to know Your will and demonstrate the courage to choose Your way and purpose. When the choice is between honor and self-interest, may they never hesitate to do right.

O God, we pause this day to remember all the victims of 9/11, their families and the firefighters and police officers whose lives were sacrificed in heroic efforts to rescue those in need. Bless our Nation with renewed commitment to face today's challenges with tenacity and vigilance.

We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK R. WARNER led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 11, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNER thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN REMEMBRANCE OF 9/11

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a moment of silence. (Moment of Silence.)

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, there will be a period of morning business. It is my understanding that the distinguished Republican whip wishes to have control of the first half hour and that the second half hour would be controlled by the Democrats.

Following that morning business, which will last for 1 hour, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3288, the Transportation and HUD appropriations bill. As previously announced, there will be no rollcall votes during today's session of the Senate.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

PROGRESS MADE SINCE 9/11

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, following this moment of silence, I think all of us on this morning are reflecting on where we were and what we were doing on the morning of September 11, 2001. In this body, we are reflecting on the things that occurred thereafter that enabled us to respond to that heinous terrorist attack.

I wanted to read some comments I wrote for the Arizona Republic that were printed this morning:

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Eight years have passed since al Qaeda terrorists attacked the United States. Today, we remember the thousands who lost their lives and are reminded of the brutality and evil of our enemy.

Terrorists have not struck on our soil since 9/11 because we gained useful intelligence and have been able to thwart attacks. This is due in part to intelligence improvements implemented after a bipartisan commission investigated the terrorist attacks and provided recommendations to protect against future attacks. Known as the 9/11 Commission, it described in detail a lack of cooperation among the Justice Department and members of the intelligence community prior to 9/11 that made the United States more vulnerable to attack. It also described how second guessing of intelligence operations had caused intelligence agents to be risk-averse and overly cautious in carrying out their duties.

Following the release of the commission's report, Congress and government agencies made critical changes to improve intergovernmental cooperation and pushed the agencies to be bold in acting to protect the American people. The result was an intelligence community that was aggressive in tracking, capturing, and interrogating terrorists, and devising other technical means of gathering key intelligence.

The interrogation techniques employed during the post-9/11 period produced information that saved lives. For example, interrogations of Khalid Sheik Mohammed, the mastermind of the September 11 attacks and the man the CIA has called its "preeminent source" on al Qaeda, revealed plans to carry out a September 11-type attack on the West Coast and attack landmarks in New York, such as the Brooklyn Bridge.

But, the passage of time since 9/11 seems to have dimmed memories of important lessons learned, as demonstrated by Attorney General Eric Holder's recent decision to appoint a prosecutor to reopen a previously closed investigation into the techniques intelligence officers used to interrogate terrorists. There is little doubt that this step, which could lead to criminal charges against intelligence officers, will drive a wedge between the Justice Department and the intelligence community and discourage the intelligence community from acting aggressively.

Intelligence officers will not be able to focus on their critical responsibility if they are worried that actions they take today will be subject to legal recriminations when the political winds shift. Indeed, CIA director Leon Panetta has sounded a similar warning—that he's become increasingly concerned that this focus on what happened in the past will distract intelligence officers from their core mission of protecting America. It will also spur distrust between the Justice Department and the intelligence community and return us to the days when a virtual "wall" separated government agencies charged with fighting terrorism.

The attorney general's decision to reopen this investigation will have serious repercussions—and it is wholly unnecessary. When he announced the appointment of the prosecutor, the attorney general failed to acknowledge that the Justice Department has already investigated the alleged interrogation abuses that are the subject of this new probe. One individual was prosecuted and convicted for abuses. Three former attorneys general and numerous career prosecutors have examined the evidence and determined that it does not support further prosecution of intelligence officials.

The president himself has repeatedly said that he wants to look forward, not backward on this issue. But, the actions of his administration (over which he has control) are in-

consistent with his stated intent. I believe the nation would be better served if the administration focused more on supporting the intelligence community as it continues every day to do the hard work of intelligence gathering, rather than distracting it from its duties and chilling its activities.

REFLECTIONS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I wish to reflect on the speech President Obama gave on Wednesday evening. We have had time to reflect on its meaning, time to have the pundits give their views on it, time to see some reaction by the American people, and time to visit with colleagues about their reaction to answer the question of whether it moved us further along to a bipartisan solution to the health care challenges that we all acknowledge face our Nation.

I must report this morning, with some disappointment, I do not believe it achieved that purpose. During the month of August, when we were back home talking with our constituents, they spoke to us about their concerns and their fears about the plans that have been put forth by the House of Representatives and Senate committees, and we brought those ideas back to Washington. I had hoped, with the thought that there could be a readjustment—a pressing of the restart button, as it were—to have these bills in the House and Senate more accurately reflect the will of the American people.

The public opinion surveys are virtually unanimous that public opinion does not favor the plans that have been presented to the Congress. In fact, by roughly 52 to 42, the surveys say the American people disagree with or disapprove of those proposed solutions. But rather than reflecting on what the public has been saying, which the President did not do on Wednesday evening, it seemed he simply recharged the same program he has been pushing for all these many months now and criticized those who disagreed with him and effectively threw down the gauntlet and said it is going to be this way or no way.

I don't think that is the way to reach a bipartisan consensus or reflect the will of the American people. I am especially disappointed because, in the President's comments, there seems to be no room for honest disagreement. I must tell you, after working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle for months, there are honest disagreements and some honest disputes about some of the facts. There has to be room for that honest debate, rather than simply calling each other by pejorative names or condemning anything they say.

Let me quote some of the words the President used: "partisan spectacle." The opposition's "unyielding ideological camps"—trying to "score short-term political points." He talked about the "bogus claims spread by those whose only agenda is to kill reform at

any cost." Maybe some people believe that, but that is not the people in this body or in the other body.

In order to reach out to those with whom there are disagreements, I think the President has to use a different phraseology than suggesting the only reason people disagree with him is to "kill reform at any cost." He talked about lies from prominent politicians and arguments that were false and said: "To my Republican friends, I say that rather than making wild claims about a government takeover of health care, we should work together. . . ." And so on.

Well, I talked to my constituents, and they are very concerned about the role of government in their health care decisions and the decisions of their families and their doctors. When you read the legislation, I don't think they are wild claims to say the role of government would be much greater than it is today and, to many people, to an extent that causes great fear and concern.

The President talked about the "demagoguery and distortion" and said: "So don't pay attention to those scary stories." Of course, he had some pretty scary stories in his speech. There is nothing wrong with pointing out serious problems in order to spur people to action. But if it is OK for one side to do that, it ought to be OK for the other side—for those who disagree with him.

Finally, he said he is not going to "waste time with those who have made the calculation that it's better politics to kill this plan than improve it." Certainly, that isn't the motivation of the people in the other body or this body with whom we disagree. He also said: "If you misrepresent what's in the plan, we will call you out." That is a threat and the kind of Chicago-style politics that I don't think has a place in the presentation in the House of Representatives, where I have heard five Presidents give speeches. Far and away, this was the most political. Therefore, I think it was the least effective in bringing people together for a bipartisan solution.

Also, the most disappointing thing was what I would say is an inability to confront honest differences of opinion and have an honest debate about those disagreements. The President is very good at what I have called setting up a straw man. He sets up an argument that nobody has made and then knocks it down and declares success. That is a disingenuous way to make an argument.

I will illustrate this with maybe five different points he covered in his speech. You have heard the President say for months that if you like your insurance, you get to keep it. How many times have you heard that? The problem is, it is not true—under either the House or the Senate bills. I will explain why in a moment. But it is not true. Eventually, I think the President's advisers must have told him you cannot

say that. Let's reform the way you say it so that what you say is legally and technically true. Wednesday night, here is what the President said:

Nothing in this plan will require you or your employer to change the coverage or the doctor you have.

Then he repeated that. Well, nobody ever said there was anything in the bills that required you or your employer to change. We simply read the bills and observed that, as a result of the legislative language, they would change because their plans would no longer exist. Naturally, if your plans no longer exist or if your employer said: I am not going to cover you anymore because it is cheaper to go to the public option, then you would lose your coverage. So the President changed the language to be technically correct, leaving the impression that what he said before is still true when, in fact, it is not. Both the CBO and the Lewin Group—a totally objective analysis—demonstrate that for two separate reasons, it is still true if you like your insurance, you are not going to be able to keep it. Most people are not.

The Lewin Group notes that of the over 100 million Americans—probably close to 120 million Americans—who will go to the public option or government-run plan, as the President proposed, 88 million of those will lose their employer-sponsored insurance because it is cheaper for the employer to drop their coverage, pay the fine, and allow them to enroll in the government program—88 million.

For senior citizens—and this is especially important in my State of Arizona—7 million seniors, according to CBO, will lose their private Medicare plan coverage, and that is because the President's plan, these bills, drastically reduces the support that is provided to insurance plans called Medicare Advantage, where their primary purpose is to serve people in more rural and less populated areas, but they exist in urban areas as well.

Over 10 million seniors are enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans. In my State, we have one of the highest rates of enrollment, with about 39 percent of Medicare beneficiaries in the Medicare Advantage plans.

The President and the Democrats who have written this legislation would like to do away with those Medicare Advantage plans. As a result of the language of the bills, according to the CBO, at least 7 million seniors will be moved off Medicare Advantage because those plans will no longer be available.

The point being that while, of course, the President is correct that nothing in the plan requires you to leave your coverage if you like it, the reality is that over 88 million people who have insurance through their employer and 7 million seniors who have Medicare Advantage plans will lose their coverage because of the provisions of the bill.

The fact remains it is still not true, if you like your insurance, you are

going to be able to keep it—at least for almost 100 million; to be totally accurate, about 95 million Americans.

The President made another argument. He said: I know you Republicans have been interested in medical malpractice reform, so I am going to do something about that.

I have to characterize it as a very disingenuous proposal. Everybody knows there is a huge amount of money that could be saved in health care delivery if we did something to reform this jackpot-justice system that requires physicians to pay, by one estimate, about 10 cents of every health care dollar spent for their premiums for malpractice insurance.

Another study demonstrated that over \$100 billion a year is wasted in physicians and hospitals practicing defensive medicine in order to protect themselves from these liability suits, these malpractice suits.

We have been pushing for malpractice reform for years. What was the President's response? He is going to ask the Secretary of HHS, Kathleen Sebelius, to look into an idea that the Bush administration was promoting after the Senate rejected, on almost partisan lines, medical malpractice reform proposed by Republicans.

Secretary Sebelius was the director of the Kansas Trial Lawyers Association from 1978 to 1986. Some kind of encouragement to the States to develop some kind of alternative dispute resolution mechanism is hardly tort reform.

Given the fact that this is a huge problem, a lot of money could be saved if we have meaningful tort reform. We believe it would be better to develop real tort reform and include it in the legislation rather than simply direct the Secretary to look into something I think is bound to result in virtually nothing.

A third point I think is highly misleading—and this received a lot of publicity because of the unfortunate comments by a Member of Congress in a very uncourteous comment to the President—the President said:

The reforms I am proposing would not apply to those who are here illegally.

In one sense, that is a true statement because there is not a provision that says we are going to cover illegal immigrants. By the same token, on repeated occasions when Members of the House of Representatives sought to ensure that illegal immigrants would not be covered, amendments to ensure eligibility requirements and confirmation of eligibility by assuring only U.S. citizens would receive the benefits of the program, those amendments were defeated.

So it has been proposed that maybe we can just resolve this question of who is right by agreeing to a simple amendment that says illegal immigrants will not have the benefits of this program, and there is going to be enough confirmation of their eligibility or noneligibility to ensure that

is the case. That is how we could resolve it.

We could do the same thing with regard to funding of abortions. There is an argument, are they or are they not? There is a very simple answer. Instead of rejecting the Hatch amendment, which was done in committee, adopt the Hatch amendment that simply says no funding of abortions.

I think we are going to know pretty clearly if there is an intent to deceive, to have the language seem to prevent illegal immigrants or funding for abortions but in reality it ends up that they get the coverage or that abortions are funded.

There is a very simple solution: adopt the Republican language that makes it very clear. But, no, that has not been done, and we will see whether it will be done.

I thought one of the most unfortunate phrases the President used was, in speaking to America's seniors:

Not a dollar of the Medicare trust fund will be used to pay for this plan.

The President acknowledged in his speech that about half of the cost of the almost \$1 trillion expense of this plan will be by virtue of cuts in Medicare. I think he used the word "savings" in Medicare. The question is, what exactly are those cuts? What is that savings? What the President said was, "Not a dollar of the Medicare trust fund will be used to pay for this plan," as if that answers the questions and seniors should not be worried.

First of all, nobody said the trust fund is going to be used. Does anybody know how much money is in the trust fund? I will tell you. Zip. The trust fund is broke. Medicare is in big financial trouble. There isn't any money in the trust fund to pay for anything. Nobody ever suggested that was the problem.

Here is the problem, twofold: One, they are going to get somewhere a little less than \$200 billion by reducing the allocations to the plans that provide Medicare Advantage. I talked about that earlier. They don't like Medicare Advantage because it is a private alternative, so they want to get seniors off Medicare Advantage. That is why seniors who like Medicare Advantage are out of luck because they reduce the support for those plans by almost \$200 billion. That is where part of it comes from. The rest of it, \$300 billion or so, comes from getting rid of waste, fraud, and abuse. That is when I heard some laughter in the Chamber because we have been trying to get rid of waste, fraud, and abuse for years, and it is very hard to do.

The President provided absolutely no specifics. None of the bills have any specifics about this point. Nobody knows how this is going to be done. It is very unrealistic to expect it will occur in any way except what some have acknowledged, which is that the payments to providers—that is to say, doctors, hospitals, nurses, and others—will be reduced. That is how we will

“save” that money. Bear in mind, these are providers who today receive on the order of 70 percent of reimbursement from Medicare, 70 percent of what it costs them to provide the services. That is why those who buy private insurance have to pay more than 100 percent. They have to subsidize the other 30 percent or thereabouts that Medicare does not cover.

What happens when that is reduced even further, when that is cut down to 60 percent, let's say, or 50 percent? It is going to raise the premiums of everyone else who has to increase their subsidy for the government program, and it ends up reducing the care available for seniors. There are not as many doctors, the waiting lines get longer, the care that is available decreases, and we end up with rationing. That is what seniors are concerned about.

This is not a wild charge. This is not a falsity. It is in the bills. The President attempts to distract attention from it by saying we are not going to spend any money in the trust fund to pay for this. So what. There isn't any money in the trust fund.

The question is, are you going to hurt seniors' care by cutting physician and hospital payments under Medicare and eliminating the support for Medicare Advantage bills? That is what is in the two bills. That is what is going to hurt seniors.

There are a lot of arguments that do not really match up to the claims made. They set up a straw man and knock down the straw man, but still standing is the fact that the bills that are in the Congress will give the government a much greater role in our health care decisions, will increase premiums for millions of people, will result in rationing of care, and will put the government in charge of decisions with respect to treatment. All of these are concerns people expressed during the month of August and some before that need to be addressed.

Instead of simply doubling down, as some folks said, and saying: It is going to be my way or else we will call out those who disagree with us—I think we ought to listen to the American people. What I hear they have said is the following: First of all, rather than taking on a massive new spending program of close to \$1 trillion, adding several trillion to the debt over the next couple of decades, rather than increasing our debt, rather than having another government takeover following all those that have occurred so far, let's focus on the most pressing problems facing Americans, and that is putting America back to work, getting the economy going again, reducing our debt, and making sure we don't have new taxes. That is what we would like to have you focus on.

To the extent there are specific problems with health care, deal with those as well, but you can do that on a step-by-step basis in a way that targets specific solutions to specific problems.

I mentioned the problem of defensive medicine costs, over \$100 billion a year

in money we should not be spending but doctors force us to spend it, in fact, to protect themselves from this jackpot-justice system.

All right, the way to resolve that is with real medical malpractice reform. We do not need a demonstration project. I will give you a couple—Texas and Arizona. By passing modest malpractice reforms in those two States, significant progress has been made in reducing medical costs, reducing premiums, and attracting doctors. I am told that something like 7,000 doctors have moved into Texas in the last 4 years pretty much as a direct result of the more benign climate in which they can practice medicine as a result of this malpractice reform. Premiums have been cut to—I forget precisely—I think it is 21 or 23 percent.

We know what works. Let's target a specific solution to a specific problem. We don't have to worry about taking over the whole private sector system of health care delivery, putting at risk the insurance people already have that serves them well.

Finally, I note that there is some discrepancy between what the President said about his plan and the bills that are pending in Congress. My colleague, Senator CORKER, has written to the President and asked if we could get a copy of his bill because some of the things he described are not in either the House or Senate bill. At least they do not accurately describe those two bills.

I will give one example. He said:

I will not sign a plan that adds one dime to our deficits—either now or in the future. Period.

That is great. Unfortunately, the House and Senate bills, according to the CBO, add to the deficit: the HELP Committee in the Senate about \$750 billion worth, and in the House committee about \$239 billion worth. Clearly, these two bills are not what the President is talking about. Obviously, he has something else in mind. If he is going to be selling that to the American people, we need to see it. So I encourage the White House to send up the legislation they have so we can see what it is they are talking about that is different from these other two bills.

I said finally, but one final point. The President did not talk about how he was going to pay for it except for Medicare cuts. He did not mention the taxes on small businesses, the taxes on jobs, the taxes on employers, the penalties individuals would have to pay if they do not buy insurance as mandated here, even a tax on the chronically ill. Senator BAUCUS is proposing to limit flexible spending account contributions to \$2,000, which would raise about \$18 billion. What it would do is penalize those who have significant illnesses and would like to make larger contributions to their flexible spending accounts.

Americans have a right to be concerned about the cost of this, the way it is paid for, the effect on their health

care, and the effect on their family's future. I think we need to debate it in an honest and forthright way. I am not pulling any punches this morning, but I am hoping we can bring people together to recognize what the American people are asking for is a step-by-step approach that targets solutions to specific problems and does not try to do it in the kind of comprehensive way that results in a 1,300-page bill that, frankly, nobody will read except some staffers, and we won't know what is in it until well after the fact and which is very hard for Congress to get right.

The unintended consequences of that kind of legislation are always enormous. The costs are always far greater than anybody predicted, and the impact on the American people can be very deleterious.

So my hope is that we will listen to the American people on this, take our time to do it right, do it in a step-by-step approach, target our solutions, get away from this massive government intrusion—which is reflected in both of the bills that have been considered by the House and Senate—and, most importantly, focus first and foremost on what is most on the minds of the American people domestically; that is, the economic situation here that will be made worse if we impose new taxes on small businesses, for example. It will be made worse if we take on massive new debt. We need to focus on putting people back to work, not spending as much money, not adding to our debt, and then decide what kinds of solutions we can afford with respect to health care. If we do that, I think we will have complied with the request of our constituents, which, after all, is what we are here to do. We will have done something good for the American people, and we will not have violated that first principle of medicine, which is, of course, to first do no harm. I think the American people were pretty clear over the month of August that they wanted us to start with that proposition, and it would be a good place for us to start in the so-called health reform we are about to take up over the next several weeks.

I thank the Chair.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

SURGE THE AFGHAN ARMY

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, today we mark a solemn anniversary. Eight years ago this morning, our Nation was attacked by terrorist extremists motivated by hatred and bent on destruction. It is always appropriate to reflect on the shock of that day, the innocent lives lost, and the efforts our Nation has made since that day to ensure that Afghanistan, the nation that hosted those terrorists, cannot again become a safe haven for terrorists seeking to attack us. But today is an especially appropriate occasion to take stock of those efforts and consider how best to continue them.

I recently returned from a trip to Afghanistan where I was joined by my colleagues, Senators JACK REED and TED KAUFMAN. The situation in Afghanistan is serious. Security has deteriorated. But if we take the right steps, we can ensure Afghanistan does not revert to a Taliban-friendly government that can once again provide a safe haven for al-Qaida to terrorize us and the world.

The Obama administration's new strategy focusing on securing the Afghan population's safety and partnering with the Afghan security forces in that effort is an important start in reversing the situation in Afghanistan. The change in strategy has led our forces, in the words of General McChrystal's Counterinsurgency Guidance, to:

... live, eat and train together [with the Afghan security forces], plan and operate together, depend on one another, and hold each other accountable ... and treat them as equal partners in success.

The general's guidance goes on to say that the success of the Afghan security forces "is our goal."

To achieve that goal, we should increase and accelerate our efforts to support the Afghan security forces in their efforts to become self-sufficient in delivering security to their nation before we consider whether to increase U.S. combat forces above the levels already planned for the next few months. These steps include increasing the size of the Afghan Army and police much faster than presently planned; providing more trainers for the Afghan Army and police than presently planned; providing them with more equipment than presently planned; and working to separate local Taliban fighters from their leaders and attract them to the side of the government, as we did in Iraq.

While the security situation in Afghanistan has worsened, we still have important advantages there. The Afghan people hate the Taliban. Public opinion polls there show support for the Taliban at about 5 percent. In addition, the Afghan Army is highly motivated and its troops are proven fighters.

Despite those advantages, we face significant challenges. General McChrystal believes—and I agree—that we need to regain the initiative and create a momentum toward success. General McChrystal worries, and rightly so, about the perception that we have lost that initiative and the impact of that perception on the Afghan people, their government, al-Qaida, and the Taliban. By contrast, if we can dispel that perception, we have a chance to convince local and lower level Taliban fighters to lay down their arms and rejoin Afghan society.

I believe the most effective way to retake the initiative in Afghanistan is with a series of steps to ensure that the Afghan Army and police have the manpower, equipment, and support to secure their own nation.

First, we should increase troop levels for the Afghan Army and police faster than currently planned. There are approximately 90,000 troops in the Afghan Army now, and that number is scheduled to go up to 134,000 by October of 2010. The Afghan police are scheduled to reach a level of 82,000 by the same time. For a long time, many of us have urged the establishment of a goal of 240,000 Afghan troops and 160,000 Afghan police by 2013. The Afghan Minister of Defense has strongly supported those numbers. It now appears that our government and the Afghan Government are prepared to accept those goals. But the need for additional Afghan forces is more urgent. I believe it both possible and essential to advance those goals by a year, to 2012.

Our own military in Afghanistan has repeatedly pointed to a need for more Afghan forces. In one sector of Helmand Province we visited last week, our marines outnumbered Afghan soldiers by five to one. A marine company commander in Helmand Province told the New York Times in July that a lack of Afghan troops "is absolutely our Achilles' heel."

What do we need to do to increase the size of the Afghan Army and police? According to Afghan Defense Minister Wardak, there is no lack of Afghan manpower. We have been assured it is available. But we will need significantly more trainers. We asked General Formica, who is in charge of the American effort to train Afghan security forces, whether such an increase is possible. He indicated he would make an assessment of what would be necessary in order to meet the earlier timetable. In the meantime, we should press our NATO allies with much greater forcefulness to provide more trainers. If our NATO allies are not going to come through with the combat forces they pledged, at least they could provide additional trainers.

Larger Afghan security forces will also require more mid-level Afghan officers. In addition to supporting efforts to graduate more Afghan officers from army academies, we should consider the recommendation of Defense Minister Wardak that previous midlevel officers who fought the war against the Soviets return to service on an interim basis. Minister Wardak emphasized that those men are well qualified and well motivated. And while they may not be trained in the most current tactics, they nonetheless could temporarily meet the need of the enlarged army while the new group of officers is trained.

A larger Afghan force will need supporting infrastructure, such as barracks. While the available infrastructure may not be the most modern, it is adequate and exists in sufficient amounts.

Larger Afghan security forces will require additional equipment. There must be a major effort to transfer a significant amount of the equipment that is coming out of Iraq to the Af-

ghan Army and police. Such a significant commitment to equip the Afghan security forces would also help demonstrate U.S. determination to take the initiative and create momentum in the right direction. There is an enormous amount of equipment coming out of Iraq. Our military is calling it one of the greatest transfers of military goods in world history. A significant part of it could be transferred to the Afghan forces, increasing their capability without weakening our own readiness. Yet there does not seem to be that kind of a crash effort in place to do just that. We need to obtain, on an urgent basis, a list of the basic equipment needs of the Afghan forces and a list of how those needs could be met in a major program to transfer equipment leaving Iraq.

Rapidly expanding Afghan's military and police forces would address one of the major problems and risks we now face. General McChrystal told us he worries that waiting until 2013 for a larger Afghan force creates a gap in capabilities that brings significant risk of failure. But if we accelerate the training and equipment of Afghan forces by a year, we address his concern. Depending on additional capability from Afghanistan, rather than U.S. forces, also addresses a major problem of public perception in Afghanistan. The larger our own military footprint there, the more our enemies can seek to drive a wedge between us and the Afghan population, spreading the falsehood that we seek to dominate a Muslim nation.

Finally, we should make a concerted effort to separate the local Taliban from their leaders. In Iraq, large numbers of young Iraqis who had been attacking us switched over to our side and became the Sons of Iraq. They were drawn in part by the promise of jobs and amnesty for past attacks and in part by the recognition that the status quo was creating horrific violence in their own communities. In their own interests and the interests of their nation, they switched sides and became a positive force.

That same prospect exists in Afghanistan. Afghan leaders and our own military leaders say that local Taliban forces are motivated largely by the need for a job, loyalty to the local leader who pays them, and not by ideology or religious zeal. They believe an effort to attract these fighters to the government side could succeed if they are offered security for themselves and their families and if there is no penalty for previous activity against us.

General McChrystal himself has emphasized the potential for such reintegration to accomplish the same result as was achieved in Iraq. Here is what General McChrystal said on July 28:

Most of the fight materials we see in Afghanistan are Afghans, some with foreign cadre with them. But most we don't see are deeply ideological or even politically motivated; most are operating for pay; some are

under a commander's charismatic leadership; some are frustrated with local leaders. So I believe there is significant potential to go after what I would call mid- and low-level Taliban fighters and leaders and offer them reintegration into Afghanistan under the constitution.

But this game-changing possibility was apparently not factored into General McChrystal's assessment. There is no plan yet to put in place a Sons of Iraq approach in Afghanistan. It is urgent that we lay out the steps that need to be taken to involve local and national Afghan leaders in that effort. They alone can accomplish this crucial job, but first we and our Afghan allies must draft such a plan on an urgent basis, and the potential positive impact of such a plan should be taken into account as we consider the need for any additional U.S. military resources.

Afghanistan's people are grateful for our aid but also eager to assume responsibility for their own future. In a tiny village in Helmand Province, we were invited to meet with the village elders at their council meeting—called a shura. A group of 100 or so men sat on the floor and chatted with us about their future and their country's future. When asked how long the United States should stay, one elder said: "Until the moment that you make our security forces self-sufficient. Then you will be welcome to visit us not as soldiers but as guests."

Helping Afghanistan achieve self-sufficiency and their own security is everybody's goal. On that, there is little difference of opinion in Afghan's village councils or in the corridors of this Capitol. Can we help Afghanistan reach self-sufficiency in security fast enough? Can we get there in a way that regains the initiative and creates the momentum we need? Can we encourage those lower level Taliban to abandon an insurgency headed by terrorists whose fanaticism they do not share? I believe we can, by supporting a far more rapid growth in the Afghan Army and police, by providing more trainers more quickly, by a rapid infusion of two Afghan units of equipment no longer needed in Iraq, and by rapidly adopting a plan for the reintegration of lower level Taliban fighters into Afghan society. In other words, we need a surge of Afghan security forces. Our support of their surge will show our commitment to the success of a mission that is clearly in our national security interest, without creating a bigger U.S. military footprint that provides propaganda fodder for the Taliban.

I believe taking those steps on an urgent basis, while completing the previously planned and announced increase in U.S. combat forces, provides the best chance of success for our mission—preventing Afghanistan from again being run by a Taliban government which harbors and supports al-Qaida, whose goal is to inflict additional catastrophic attacks on the United States and the world. I believe we should implement those steps before

considering an increase in U.S. ground combat forces beyond what is already planned by the end of the year.

I yield the floor and thank the Senator from Ohio as well.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank the chairman for his leadership.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, excuse me. I thought I would have time at 10:30.

Mr. BROWN. I will speak no more than 10 minutes, so you will be free to have the floor by 10:30. I will yield the floor well before 10:30.

Mr. BOND. The Senator said 2 minutes?

Mr. BROWN. No, up to 10 minutes, I was told.

Mr. BOND. May I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended? I need 15 minutes. I ask that morning business be extended for an additional 10 minutes to accommodate my colleague from Ohio.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection? The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, if the Senator would amend that to include the Senator from Florida as well?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask that the Senator from Ohio be recognized for 10 minutes, that I be recognized for 15 minutes, and that following that the Senator from Florida be recognized for 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, 2 nights ago the President of the United States spoke in the Chamber down the hall on the other side of the Capitol. He did what he needed to do. As I have been in the House and Senate—the House for 14 years and the Senate now for 2½—it was the best speech I had ever seen in my time, sitting and listening to the last three Presidents. Most importantly, it explained why this health care bill is so important and why it works for those who already have insurance as it builds consumer protections around those insurance policies—

no more preexisting conditions, no more cutting people's care off because they have been too expensive, no more discrimination based on gender or disability or age or geography. It explained why this legislation makes sense for people who do not have insurance, who have been without insurance or who have inadequate insurance. It really explained well why this legislation is so important to small business.

I have come to this floor almost daily when we were in session the last few months, to share stories of Ohioans. I know the Presiding Officer, as he traveled in his State, in Northern Virginia and Richmond and Roanoke, has heard these stories and gets these letters, too, showing the depth of the problem. So many people don't have health care, and so many who do have insurance have seen significant problems. They have paid their premiums month after month. Then they get very sick, they may have to take biologic drugs, they may have long hospital visits, their health care may have cost \$100,000 or \$200,000, and their insurance company simply cuts them off. How is that fair?

Let me share some of these letters today for 7 or 8 minutes and then make some comments about them.

Yvon from Wakeman in Huron County in northern Ohio writes:

My husband, a union carpenter, was out of work for 7 months straight. He just went back to work in June on a week-by-week basis.

My husband must get 130 hours of work per month to get insurance. Otherwise, we have to keep paying for COBRA, which expires at the end of the year.

It is also expensive.

In June he earned 129½ hours and we were told that because it was not the required 130 hours, we had to pay out of pocket. We offered to pay for the ½ hour and were told no, we could not.

There is no way in the world we can afford to pay for private insurance. If my husband does not have enough hours, we will have no insurance. It goes month to month like that. I am a wife, mother, sister, cousin and aunt. I want to live.

She loses her insurance and can't get her insurance out of a technicality. These things will simply not happen under this health insurance legislation we are considering over the weeks ahead, where insurance companies can deny care for a whole host of reasons, where somebody might not qualify for health insurance. Yvon and her husband will be able to go in the health care exchange. They will be able to get into private care. They can get insurance, if they choose, from Aetna or BlueCross. They can work with their union plan that her husband apparently has as a carpenter or they can go into public option. She would have those choices.

Bob from Cleveland has been an owner of a steel processing firm since 1990 and has had to grapple with deteriorating health benefits over the last 5 years. His firm employs 30 employees, 20 of whom depend on the company's depreciating health care coverage

while the remaining 10 have had to use alternative forms of insurance—perhaps a spouse who works has a good insurance plan. He is hoping that the reform will address the burden shouldered by small businesspeople and that Congress will craft legislation that protects small businesses from high insurance deductibles and premiums.

The Presiding Officer was in business before he was Governor of Virginia and understands this as a business person. When you have a small number of employees, you pay a lot more per employee for insurance than if you are a larger company. Even worse, if you have 20 or 30 employees and 2 or 3 of them get very sick and get very expensive care, that small businessperson—the owner, the company—sees their premiums, their costs go way up or they sometimes get cut off entirely.

This legislation will allow Bob and his business to take his entire business, if he so chooses, into the exchange and go to Signa or go to Medical Mutual in Cleveland—it is a not-for-profit Ohio company—or go to Aetna or go to BlueCross or go into the public option. Bob would have that choice in his business. He also would be eligible for significant tax credits as a small businessperson.

Ricky from Garfield Heights, OH, writes:

My doctor tried to order a MRI for my back pain. The insurance company declined the request, saying I had to try therapy which only worsened [my condition]. Finally, insurance approved an MRI.

But shortly after that, my employer could no longer afford that insurance and had to switch to a new provider, which also meant I had to find a new doctor.

Still suffering from back pain, the new doctor told me I needed another MRI. I asked about using the first MRI, but the new insurance company told me I had to get another one. So I am back to square one, with a bulging disk in my back.

One of the important things in this legislation is you can keep what you have. If you have a physician, you will not be forced into another plan and have to choose another physician or another hospital or another physical therapist, as happened in Ricky's case, or another occupational therapist.

Sharon from Springboro, OH, between Dayton and Cincinnati, in Warren County.

My husband had a stroke in June 2009 and was released from the hospital a few weeks ago. That's when the real problems started. Our private insurer increased co-pays to \$560 a week for the therapy my husband needs. I also learned insurance will stop by the end of the year.

There's been a lot of worry. We need help now.

That is the point. This legislation, some people have said—I had townhall meetings, meetings all over my State, as many did here. Typically, more people were supportive, who showed up—more were for the bill than against, but there was certainly a significant number of people against it. But a lot of people said: You have to slow down; we don't want to take this too fast.

As President Obama said the other night, Teddy Roosevelt wanted this 100 years ago. Harry Truman, President Kennedy, President Johnson, President Nixon, President Clinton—so many people tried to do this. We have been working on this legislation intensively all year. The Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee that Senator Kennedy chaired, on which I sit, had 11 days of what is called markup, intensive debate, vetting—I have never seen a committee have that long a period of examination of a bill like that. We accepted 160 Republican amendments, and I voted for most of those amendments. This bill has a lot of bipartisan aspects in it. On the big questions, there are philosophical disagreements to be sure. The point is, every day we wait, 30 people in my State lose their insurance—30 people every single day.

Sharon from Springboro doesn't want us to wait any longer. We waited. We worked on this. We need to do this by the end of the year.

I will conclude with this one because I know Senator BOND wants to take the floor in a moment.

Vondolee from Franklin County:

We need health insurance reform. My stepfather has Medicaid, without which he would have died some time ago. As a young man, he had routine shoulder surgery but was transfused with blood that was contaminated with Hepatitis C. He subsequently suffers from other health problems, including deep bone ulcers. Thank goodness he had Medicaid because he would not have been able to pay for his care and recovery.

Please help the people, not the insurance or pharmaceutical companies.

Mr. President, your comment on the insurance and pharmaceutical companies—I was here in the House of Representatives when the Medicare partial privatization legislation was written 5 or 6 years ago. By and large, it was written by the drug and insurance companies. It provided a lot of private dollars that went to both of those industries.

Frankly, there is a very strong insurance lobby here in this Congress today. The insurance industry is spending up to \$1 million a day lobbying against it. Insurance companies don't like this legislation.

A lot of the myths we hear in our town meetings, the myths about illegal immigrants getting coverage under this plan, getting subsidies—not true; the myths about death panels—not true; the myths about euthanasia—not true. A lot of that comes from the insurance companies in this town. They have a lot to lose. If this legislation passes, the insurance companies will not do quite as well as they have been doing, but this bill is in the public interest, not in the special interests.

Those are some of the letters I have received. I know many in this body receive letters just like this from people all over their States.

This legislation is necessary. We need to work hard and move forward on this in the weeks ahead.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri.

SUCCEEDING IN AFGHANISTAN

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, 8 years ago today, terrorists based in Afghanistan carried out the deadliest attacks on American soil since Pearl Harbor. It was on that horrifying September morning in 2001 that America's worst fears were realized. No longer was terrorism something that only happened on the other side of the globe. Instead, those terrorist killers had struck the very heart of America here at home.

Long before 9/11, there were deadly warnings, warnings that for the most part went unheeded. For over two decades, al-Qaida and other terrorists attacked our Nation, from the marine barracks bombing in Beirut in October 1983 to the Pan Am 103 bombing in 1988, from the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993 to the Embassy bombings in 1998, to the USS *Cole* attacks in 2000. While al-Qaida declared war against the United States a long time ago, it took the tragedy of September 11 and the loss of thousands of lives before America decided to fight back.

Today, as we reflect on the anniversary of 9/11 and the lives lost that day, we can honor the victims and their families by finishing the job in Afghanistan and defeating the terrorists who are bent on death and destruction.

I agree with the comments of my colleague, the Senator from Michigan, who said that we need to build the Afghan Army to 240,000. We need to build and strengthen the Afghan police. But we also must support President Obama's chosen general, GEN Stanley McChrystal, in his request for needed troops and resources.

President Obama has called Afghanistan an "international security challenge of the highest order." I agree. When the President stressed that "the safety of people around the world is at stake," he did not overstate the importance of succeeding in Afghanistan.

President Obama used even starker terms when he spoke to our veterans at this year's VFW convention and said:

Those who attacked America on 9/11 are plotting to do so again. If left unchecked, the Taliban insurgency will mean an even larger safe haven from which al-Qaida would plot to kill more Americans. So this is not only a war worth fighting, this is fundamental to the defense of our people.

I could not agree more. While the President has used this week to pitch health care reform, I hope after reflecting on the anniversary of the September 11 attacks, he will refocus his attention and that of the American people on achieving victory in Afghanistan.

To repeat, terrorism is the premiere challenge of our time. If we fail to conquer this challenge, nothing else will matter much, not even health care reform. As Vice Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, I can tell you that al-Qaida and other radical Islamic

terrorists have not stopped trying to strike Americans at home and our allies around the world.

It is critical that my own party, Republicans, support President Obama in the fight against terrorists. We Republicans must demonstrate that politics ends at the water's edge and strongly support the strategy the President has laid out with his generals for victory in Afghanistan.

Let's avoid the politics we too often saw in Iraq, declaring defeat where our troops in theater were fighting for their lives and our freedom; undercutting our President while he tried to help rally allies to join us in the battle.

For my Democratic colleagues, I hope they follow the stirring words of the leader of their party at the VFW and do not give in to the pundits peddling pessimism. Do not give in to the leftwing that has prematurely declared defeat in Afghanistan, as they so readily declared in Iraq; much, I might add, to the grave concern of our troops in harm's way, which I heard firsthand by e-mail from my son in Fallujah.

Many of the naysayers are saying that victory in Afghanistan is not possible. We hear the refrain over and over: It has been 8 years. Why have we not left? Unfortunately, our country has a history of abandoning Afghanistan.

Earlier this week in an interview, Defense Secretary Robert Gates acknowledged what a serious strategic mistake our Nation made turning our backs on Afghanistan after Soviet forces were defeated there two decades ago. Sadly, under administrations of both parties America has repeatedly ignored the lessons of history, repeatedly turned our backs on Afghanistan. It is no wonder the people of Afghanistan doubt our commitment to their defense.

The problems we face in Afghanistan today are in many ways more complex than those we faced on September 12, 2001. We know al-Qaida has found sanctuary in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas. The Taliban government is gone, but the Taliban insurgency has risen and has grown in strength. This insurgency has prevented the new Afghan Government from establishing its writ throughout Afghanistan and threatens Afghanistan's long-term stability.

If not stopped, this insurgency could once again allow a terrorist safe haven, whether for al-Qaida or other terrorist groups, to flourish in Afghanistan. We cannot let that happen. President Obama's new strategy, being implemented by General McChrystal, is our best chance of success.

Now, do not get me wrong. While we are on the right path to long-term victory in Afghanistan, the road will not be easy. In fact, it is going to get worse before it gets better. We have seen evidence of this already. The fighting has been tough in Afghanistan the last few months, and too many of our brave troops have been wounded or killed in action. Those recent casualties should

not come as a surprise, however, to anyone who has been following events in Afghanistan. U.S. Marines recently began clearing rural areas in southern Afghanistan that have served as Taliban safe havens for years.

Before these operations began, our military commanders very clearly warned Congress and the American people that taking southern Afghanistan back from the Taliban would be costly. As the father of a marine who served two tours of duty in Iraq, I did not take this news lightly. But many of my colleagues in the Senate and I agreed then and agree now that defeating the militants is a job that must be done.

Our brave marines will no doubt succeed in clearing these areas in southern Afghanistan of terrorists, the same terrorists who brazenly throw acid in the faces of young girls on their way to school and coldly murder mullahs who have the audacity to disagree with their brand of hatred. But even after this is accomplished, much work will still need to be done in a country recovering from decades of war.

Key to our success is General McChrystal's recognition of the importance of building sustainable security in Afghanistan through the use of "smart power," combining military power with economic development, education, and diplomatic strategies.

While we need military forces to build security in the short term, sustaining long-term security requires smart power. Before Afghans can choose peace and the democratic process, they need enough food to eat and a stable community in which to live. That is exactly what "smart power" seeks to do. This same strategy is already proving successful in Afghanistan's Nangarhar Province.

During a visit to Afghanistan in 2006 with General Eikenberry, I heard from him and President Karzai of the need to improve and rebuild the agricultural sector in Afghanistan. I tried to do so through the creation of a land grant university consortium that would set up an agricultural extension service through USAID. Unfortunately, USAID lacked the capacity to implement this vision.

So I turned to my friends, the soldiers and airmen in the Missouri Guard who, in their civilian lives, were farmers and possessed other agricultural expertise to empower the Afghans. For over a year, the Missouri National Guard's Agricultural Development Teams, ADTs, have been helping Afghans harvest high-value alternatives to opium poppies and build irrigation systems and wells for clean water.

Decades of war in Afghanistan have left most of the country mired in 18th century practices. These ADTs provide agricultural specialists to help the Afghans rebuild their agricultural know-how and literally sow the seeds of peace in Afghanistan. Thanks to the ADTs' dedication and hard work, poppy production in Nangarhar has been vir-

tually eliminated, where it was the second most prolific producer of poppies before.

The first of these teams started to work in Nangarhar in February of 2008. The second rotation is underway. I just joined friends and family back in Missouri to celebrate the send-off of the third rotation of the ADTs. By showing a consistent commitment to the people in Nangarhar, these citizen soldiers have built relationships and trust at the local level, influencing hearts and minds to reject the deadly influence of the radical extremists.

Like "The Show Me State" motto, Missourians have shown the way forward. Thanks to their leadership, 10 other States are now sending specialized Agricultural Development Teams to provinces throughout Afghanistan.

These successes make it clear that we need to increase the investment in smart power strategies through these agricultural teams. Ten other State National Guards are now committed to the vital mission of building sustainable economies, protecting them with military force province by province. We need appropriate military protection in every province in Afghanistan. The Guard is uniquely suited to this mission. But we also need Federal military and economic efforts.

In addition to smart power, General McChrystal also understands that a counterinsurgency strategy is key to success in Afghanistan. I have been disappointed to listen to the talking heads in Washington advocate recently for an alternative approach, a mere counterterrorism strategy.

It is easy, of course, to play arm chair general from thousands of miles away. But these talking heads seem to have forgotten that a counterterrorism strategy alone failed in Iraq. Not surprisingly, it has failed so far in Afghanistan.

Counterterrorism by remote control does not cut it. The so-called surgical strikes, whether by air or ground, increase civilian casualties and only allow insurgents, from the Taliban to the drug lords to al-Qaida, to filter back in once the attacks are over. This approach leaves the people in the country subject to retaliation if they do not cooperate with the terrorists, which, not surprisingly, they do.

Conversely, the counterinsurgency strategy will ensure the violent insurgents are defeated and do not come back. I also agree with the administration that part of this strategy must allow some of the "day fighters," those who are hard-core al-Qaida supporters or Taliban ideologues, to lay down their weapons and to return to peaceful lives.

If we are getting the job done right, we will naturally lure desperate young men away from the false promises of extremism. A viable and appropriately resourced counterinsurgency strategy is not only essential for success in Afghanistan, it is pivotal in the future of Pakistan.

Driving terrorist safe havens out of eastern and southern Afghanistan is crucial, but not if al-Qaida and Taliban militants continue to find sanctuary in the remote border regions of west Pakistan. The threat these transplanted terrorists pose has become even more real over the last 6 months as the world watched Taliban militants creep closer to Pakistani nuclear facilities.

We must support the Pakistan Government and its newly aggressive military action to take out the terrorists threatening their country and Afghanistan.

The horrors of nuclear-armed terrorists would be put at risk and put at risk freedom-loving people everywhere. This is not a risk we or the world can take. The stakes of turning our backs on this conflict could not be higher. America ignored the fact that Afghanistan became one giant camp for terrorists in the 1990s, and thousands of Americans died on 9/11 as a result. And thousands of our brave troops have died in defense of our Nation since then.

We face a similar threat today, 8 years after 9/11. Al-Qaida has shifted their terrorist sanctuaries from Afghanistan to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, FATA, of Pakistan. The Taliban, the same people who sheltered Osama bin Laden and defied U.S. demands to hand him over, now fight efforts by the international community to bring stability to Afghanistan.

Our U.S. withdrawal, in whole or in part, from Afghanistan now would be a tacit yet unambiguous approval for the return of Taliban control over Afghanistan. In turn, this would lead to the establishment of safe havens for many of the world's most violent and feared terrorists. American abandonment of Afghanistan now could possibly hand over the keys to a nuclear-armed kingdom to violence-loving terrorists.

I returned this past August from Denmark and Greece, two relatively small countries but steadfast allies in their resolve to support the NATO mission and stabilize Afghanistan. Declaring defeat in Afghanistan today would signal to our allies that Americans no longer have the resolve to defeat terrorists. Declaring defeat in Afghanistan today would signal to our allies that simply by waiting us out, violent extremists can triumph over the combined military and economic might of the international community. Finally, declaring defeat in Afghanistan today would signal to the families of those who died on September 11 and the troops who have fought since then in the years since in service to their country that their loved ones died in vain. These are not signals our great Nation should ever send.

Instead, we must declare unequivocally our courage, resolve, and patience to provide needed resources and more troops to allow the smart power strategy of General McChrystal to succeed. This alone is the signal America should send.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

9/11 REMEMBRANCE

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, before I make some comments about our departed colleague, Senator Kennedy, I must comment on the gravity of the remembrance of this day in history several years ago.

There is not a person living who was old enough at the time on that fateful day in 2001 who does not remember exactly where they were when the tragedy occurred and this Nation was struck by terrorists, struck from within.

Our Nation had grown up in its history of always having been protected in the homeland, protected by geography, with two big oceans that kept us insulated from attack from without. Then suddenly we were shocked into the realization that we could be attacked on our own homeland. Of course, what America has done in reaction to that, in perfecting our defenses, in increasing our intelligence apparatus, so that we get the information before the terrorists can carry out their dastardly deeds.

That has been significant in the protection of this Nation and its people. Of course, we remember exactly that fateful day, every one of us. This Senator was only a few yards from this Chamber on the west front of this U.S. Capitol building in a meeting with leadership. We were aware that the Twin Towers had been struck with the first and second planes. Somehow we wanted to continue our meeting, even though our minds couldn't stay on the subject matter of the day, when someone burst in the room—I believe it is S-219—and said the Pentagon had been hit. We leapt to the window overlooking the Mall in the direction of the Pentagon and could see the black smoke rising.

It is interesting the reactions you have at a time such as that. My wife and I had, a few days before, moved into an apartment overlooking the southwest corner of the Pentagon. It is called Pentagon Row. Of course, I leapt to a telephone to try to get a message to her to get out of the apartment and get into the basement garage. Being unsuccessful to reach her, I came back into the room everyone had deserted and out into the hallway, seeing the hallway crowded with people going down the stairs and hearing the Capitol policeman at the bottom of the stairs saying: Get out of the building, run, run, get out of the building. Of course, the report had come in that the fourth airplane was inbound for Washington.

It was a day that brought Senator ROCKEFELLER and me together, as he beckoned to me to get into his car and, as we drove away from the Capitol complex, scrambling with our cell phones, trying to get office staff to tell them to get out of the buildings and

get to a location where they could inform us away from the Capitol complex. Senator ROCKEFELLER and I wound through streets in Washington until we got to a location where we could wait to try to get additional information. Since then, of course, our Capitol police force and the Department of Homeland Security have come through with procedures and instructions that are much more definitive than we had on that day.

I will never forget on that day when Senator ROCKEFELLER and I decided we needed to move away from the location we were—we wanted to get to a place we could get news; we went to his home—hearing not a sound in the sky since all air traffic had been ceased on order of the Secretary of Transportation, but then hearing that silent sky being pierced by the sound of F-15s overflying the Capitol. It was a day that we not only can remember but that we can take great lessons and instruction from to prepare not to let it happen again, one we remember today and those people who sacrificed, those people who were the victims.

REMEMBERING SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, it is equally a solemn subject on which I rise to remember our friend and colleague Ted Kennedy who died at the young age of 77. I say "young age" because it was another one of our colleagues, Senator John Glenn, who flew on a 10-day spaceflight at age 77. Today, 11 years later, he still looks as young as he looked back then. So 77 is way too young an age for cancer to take our friend Ted Kennedy.

From the funeral and the remembrances, we know that he was the youngest of nine children. He had four brothers. He was born in 1932 and elected to the Senate in 1962. He spent 46 years in the Senate, longer than all but two of our colleagues. He loved this institution, and he loved his fellow Senators. Of course, so many pieces of major legislation affecting the well-being of the American people if they don't have his name on it, certainly bear his fingerprints. Many of those pieces of legislation reflect the work of his pen.

He fought tirelessly for the sick, the poor, the disabled, the children, the old. He was the driving force behind efforts to guarantee rights to the disabled, to provide family and medical leave, and to ensure a fair minimum wage. He also remembered individuals, both his colleagues, his staff, and his constituents. He was the first person to call during hard times. Why do you think that yesterday, our most esteemed colleague, Senator BYRD, in his bent-over, physically disabled condition now, was wheeled to this floor in his wheelchair, and his voice rose to the occasion in memorializing his friend. I remember Senator BYRD telling me how thoughtful Senator Kennedy was on a major birthday in his

80s, when Senator Kennedy had sent him the requisite number of roses.

Of course, no matter what your political persuasion, you could see Ted Kennedy as an example of public service. He devoted his entire life to public service. He did so despite his easy financial condition. He did so despite numerous opportunities elsewhere. He did so despite seeing his three brothers sacrifice their lives in service to their country.

I want to quote from our colleague Ted Kennedy, a quote from April 2006. He said:

The defining aspect of our country is opportunity—the hope that you can do better, that your children can do better. But you need an even playing field. To do that, you can't be sick and in school. You've got to have health care. You've got to have an economy working to give people a chance to get ahead. It is not guaranteed. But you do have to have an opportunity. Our country is big enough and strong enough and wealthy enough to give that kind of opportunity to everybody. That's what I work on every day.

What an example for all of us. There is something else I wish to say about our colleague, because much has been made of his flaws. But who among us does not have flaws? Maybe Senator Kennedy realized so much his flaws that he decided despite those, he was going to do the best he could do for his fellow humankind. So he dedicated his life to the poor, the sick, the young and old, and the disabled. He fought against discrimination of all types. Indeed, he stood up for the least among us. Who cannot admire that, in being a champion for the least among us.

Godspeed, Ted Kennedy.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I join my colleagues today in remembering the amazing life of Senator Edward Kennedy, a man beloved in the Senate and beloved in America.

My thoughts and prayers are with his wife Vicki, his children, and his whole family.

Like so many others, I consider myself lucky to have worked with him. He was more than a colleague, he was a mentor and a friend.

I remember that he used to send me a message, "The lantern is lit," when we would have late night votes. It was his way of beckoning me and a small group of Senators—Senator SCHUMER, Senator CANTWELL and maybe one or two others—to his office in the Capitol where he would regale us with stories as only an Irishman would.

Ted Kennedy's wit and stories, his passion for a cause and his country and his love for the Senate made me want to go to work every day. He never gave up and he had a fiery zest for the legislative battles that was always tempered by a bipartisan pragmatism.

I remember last year when we were working on the Medicare improvements bill, which was absolutely critical to Medicare recipients across the country.

Seniors were counting on us to pass this bill, but we were just one vote short of the 60 we needed. But HARRY

REID knew how to find that last vote. The afternoon of the vote, the doors of the Senate swung open and in walked Senator Kennedy.

I will always remember watching him walk onto the Senate floor with then-Senator Obama and his son PATRICK on either side of him. Every single Senator had made their way to the floor, and the gallery was full. Applause erupted as he walked out, even though it is against the Senate rules. Each of us gave him a tearful hug and kiss as he made his way to cast his vote.

His very presence seemed to open the floodgates. Suddenly, a bill that was about to fail by one vote passed by nine as Republicans who had spent weeks blocking the bill suddenly switched their votes after Senator Kennedy.

His presence was so persuasive that day because his colleagues knew these were issues he believed in deeply, and had spent his life fighting for. He never gave up on the good fight.

Ted Kennedy, with his booming voice, gave a voice to the voiceless and stood up for those who had no one standing with them. As he said, "We are all part of the American family and we have a responsibility to help members of that family when they are in need."

Ted Kennedy did more than just speak these words, he lived them. Day in and day out on the Senate floor, he fought for justice and equality and opportunity for all Americans.

I will give you just one example, after we tragically lost our friend and colleague Paul Wellstone, Senator Kennedy picked up his torch and helped get the Mental Health Parity Act through the Senate.

His many achievements will be etched in the history books and his legacy will live on in the hundreds of laws that bear his name.

But Ted Kennedy will be remembered for more than just his legislation, he will be remembered for his heart and his humor and his zest for life.

On a snowy winter day in Washington, DC, one year, one of my friends took his family to go to sledding and who should he see? Senator Kennedy and Senator DODD across the way, sledding down by the National Cathedral.

This is the Ted Kennedy I will remember, a man who made the most of life, a man who loved his friends and his family and a man who worked each and every day to make this country stronger.

While he will no longer walk onto the Senate floor, he will remain with us through the lessons he taught us and the memories he blessed us with.

Today, let us honor his life by picking up his torch and continuing to fight the good fights, while also respecting those on the other side of us.

Let us fulfill his dream of "an America where we can all contend freely and vigorously, but where we will treasure and guard those standards of civility which alone make this nation safe for both democracy and diversity."

Ted Kennedy loved this country and was willing to work with anyone and find common ground in order to open the doors of opportunity for all Americans.

He carried the weight of history on his shoulders, but rose up to become the lion of the Senate and one of the greatest legislators in the our country's history.

Although he is no longer with us, he will continue to inspire us.

Mrs. MURRAY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, September 11 is a day of the year that has special resonance for all Americans and always should. Earlier this week I was honored to stand with some of the family members of those who died 8 years ago this morning on flight 93. They were here to mark the establishment of a memorial to those brave men and women who gave their lives that day over a field in Pennsylvania and who in the process may very well have saved the lives of many of us here. Their role in history will now be forever memorialized here in the Capitol, ensuring that we never forget their sacrifice nor the sacrifice of the thousands of other innocent men and women who were taken from us on that terrible day. This is just as it should be, because as I said during the ceremony earlier this week, there are some moments in the life of a nation that are worth remembering. There are others that are impossible to forget. September 11, 2001, is both.

All of us who lived through that day know this to be true. We know that with each passing year, the day itself may become more distant in time but the memories do not. And yet it is important we mark that day each year with sadness for those whom we lost; with solemn pride in the heroes of 9/11; and with renewed determination to confront terrorism wherever it is found. The memory of the fallen impels us.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, like all Americans, I will never forget where I was on September 11, 2001, and I will never forget the way our country responded. In the face of great tragedy,

Americans came together with courage and unity.

Eight years later, we continue to face great challenges. As a government—and as a nation—we are working to improve our safety and tackle the many difficulties facing us today. The safety of all Americans remains priority No. 1 for everyone in government. We still have troops working hard to protect and defend our Nation. At the same time, we continue to recognize that our diversity is also America's greatest strength. Despite our many differences, in times of need we are always one nation united.

This year, for the first time, 9/11 has been designated a National Day of Service and Remembrance. It is with a heavy heart that I stand on the floor of the Senate today marking this day with a cloak and white roses on the desk of our departed colleague, Senator Ted Kennedy.

Ted worked to designate this day as one of service, and in April the President signed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act making that goal a reality. Ted would be proud of each and every American who took up that call.

The mission of this new designation is:

[T]o honor the victims of 9/11 and those who rose to service in response to the attacks by encouraging all Americans and others throughout the world to pledge to voluntarily perform at least one good deed, or another service activity on 9/11 each year. In this way we hope to create a lasting and forward-looking legacy—annually rekindling the spirit of service, tolerance, and compassion that unified America and the world in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

I cannot think of a better way to honor the memory of those who were lost than by taking a moment today to remember, and then performing a good deed or act of service.

September 11 is not just a day of national loss but of personal loss. My thoughts and prayers go out to everyone who lost a friend or loved one. Your loss is our loss, and you are forever in our hearts.

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise on this most solemn of occasions as our Nation pauses to commemorate the horrific September 11 terrorist attacks that were perpetrated against our country 8 years ago. With utmost reverence for the unimaginable loss experienced on that fateful morning at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and in a field near Shanksville, PA, we remember with the heaviest of hearts all of those tragically taken too soon. And in my home State of Maine, we join families who pay tribute to victims they knew and loved—Anna Allison, Carol Flyzik, Robert Jalbert, Jacqueline Norton, Robert Norton, James Roux, Robert Schlegel, and Stephen Ward. Their lives were deplorably cut short, but they will be eternally etched in our memory.

Indeed, this is a heartbreaking anniversary—one of inconsolable sorrow and anguish that recalls vicious and inhuman attacks against our fellow citi-

zens and our nation. But this is also a time when all that may divide us is set aside to focus on everything that unites us as we coalesce together as a single and unconquerable voice against the forces of treachery and terror that sought to destroy us and break our spirit.

We share in the grief borne by those with family and friends who perished in these heinous acts of cowardice, and we join with them in paying homage to their memories and the legacies they leave behind. And we recognize that even the march of time can never fully diminish the litany of emotions we experience as we strive to comprehend how such malice could exist in the world and could be committed so ruthlessly against innocent people.

Yet amid the trials and tribulations that this date in our history evokes, we take solace in the sacred truth that none of us grieves alone, that there are no strangers among us—only Americans.

We recall that, during one of the darkest days in our Nation's extraordinary and storied history, we also witnessed our Nation's mettle and solidarity, the inexhaustible courage and undaunted bravery that provided us with boundless inspiration and hope that sustained us then and inspires us today. And nowhere was that more evident than with the first responders who, in the face of unspeakable adversity and peril, heroically ran toward the very dangers others were desperately trying to escape, placing their lives in harm's way in the most courageous and valiant of endeavors to save others without regard for their own safety.

The noble devotion of the firefighters, police officers, and rescue workers has forever established a selfless example of seemingly ordinary Americans performing extraordinary deeds in the service of others. Those men and women of valor illustrated the lasting and powerful truism that the benevolent forces that seek to uplift humankind will ultimately prevail over those base elements that would conspire to bring it down.

We also honor all who, in the days following September 11, searched for survivors and worked in the devastation at Ground Zero, the Pentagon, and in the wreckage of United flight 93. Many—indeed, far too many—of these fearless responders paid with their own lives or now live with the indelible effects of having worked so closely to the rubble and ruin. They gave their all so that we could heal as a Nation and we will never forget their exceptional contributions.

Their service and sacrifice are also a vivid reminder of the exceptional men and women who have donned our country's uniform to safeguard and defend our Nation. Whether on our shores or soil here at home or around the globe, their steadfast sense of duty and love of country are an inspiration to us all, their commitment fortifies our deter-

mination, and their professionalism steadies our hands in an uncertain world.

Like every American, the details of the morning of September 11, 2001, are powerfully seared in my mind from how it originated with beautiful and clear blue skies to its conclusion with a grief-stricken Nation in mourning and stunned disbelief. I watched the images on the television along with the rest of the world, and later that day as the Sun set over the National Mall—still capped by the billowing smoke from the wound in the side of the Pentagon—I joined my colleagues in the House and Senate on the U.S. Capitol steps in singing, "God Bless America." It was an unmistakable message of unity and one that demonstrated to the country and to the world that we would never be deterred—that our freedoms could never be crushed by the blunt and tortuous instruments of terror that are no match against a resilient people certain in the knowledge that good ultimately triumphs over evil.

The unending pain of loved ones lost does not ease with the passing of years, and yet out of the horrors of these atrocities emerged heroes who were then and will forever be shining testaments to the very best of who we are as a nation. And so, today, we memorialize those whose lives were stilled on September 11, and at the same time, we cannot help but extol the unbounded courage and indomitable spirit exhibited on that day and during the aftermath that continues to be the hallmark of this great land.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3288, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3288) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, we are now on the floor considering the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill. This is an extremely important measure to everyone here and to the country, with important investments in our roads, bridges, highways, airports, housing, and infrastructure across the country. My ranking member, Senator BOND, and I are here ready to go and ready to work. We are waiting for our colleagues to come to the floor to offer their amendments, and I encourage them to do so.

The majority leader has asked us to move this bill as expeditiously as possible. We need to finish all of our appropriations bills by October 1 of this year in order to make sure people have the funding they need and so they know where we are going.

So we again ask our colleagues to come to the floor, and if they do have amendments, offer them, or if they do not, allow us to continue to finish this bill.

If there are no Members here seeking recognition at this point, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask the Senator to withhold the suggestion of an absence of a quorum.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I withhold.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I add to what the Chair, Senator MURRAY, has said. We are open. We are ready to do business. We have, I believe, close to two dozen amendments that have been filed. This would be an ideal time for people to come in and discuss their amendments, to bring them up. We are scheduled, I believe, to have votes on pending HUD amendments on Monday afternoon when we return, and it would be good for people, without time constraints, to come in and explain why they wish to amend the bill, and to allow us to debate those amendments and be ready for votes.

But we know there is interest. We know amendments have been filed, and we will have at least this morning to consider those amendments. I assume the majority leader will bring us in Monday afternoon. So I urge my colleagues, if you have an amendment to be seriously considered, whether it is on this side or the majority side, please bring it forward and let us have an opportunity to look at it, review it, debate it, discuss it, and prepare it for a vote.

With that, Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICA'S WAR ON TERROR

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, today marks the eighth anniversary of America's war on terror—the day we began to fight back. But 9/11 was not the day the war began. Radical Islamic terrorists were at war with the United States long before that harrowing morning 8 years ago. That is crucial to remember now as the terror and tragedy of that day recedes into the past.

This war did not begin with the 9/11 attacks or when we sent troops to Afghanistan and it will not end when we defeat terrorists on any battlefield. Our goal cannot be merely to end one war but to win the war on terror. We will not win by trying to appease the grievances of our enemies. They do not hate our policies—they hate us, our freedoms, and our way of life.

The 3,000 on 9/11 were the consequence of a broad bipartisan failure of American leadership to understand that hate. The consequences of forgetting now will be far worse. Our enemies' strategy is based on what they see as our short memory. As the terrifying images of 9/11 fade, our enemies believe we will lose our nerve and retreat back into the false sense of security they exploited with those four jetliners on 9/11.

We cannot let that happen. If we lose our resolve and surrender our vigilance, the next attack might not be in airplanes but something far more devastating and lethal. Their plan depends on us forgetting, and so our challenge is to never forget.

We have sacrificed in blood and treasure. Thousands of families have lost what can never be replaced. From the men of Flight 93 to the mountains of Afghanistan to the sands of Iraq, heroes have fallen. Today we mourn their loss, honor their memory, and recommit to finish the work they began, not just in foreign theaters of war but here at home. The challenge of 9/11 is not just to win a war but to prevent the next one. We will do that by remem-

bering that our enemies are still hating and still planning. We must never forget.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator is recognized.

AMERICAN CHALLENGES

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, there are a lot of things happening in the United States and the world today. There are many issues and challenges we face. Obviously, the issue of health care reform has dominated the news and our attention. We had a somewhat interesting joint session of Congress the night before last.

But there are also other issues facing the Congress and the Nation. One of them, of course, is our strategy in Afghanistan. My colleagues have been discussing and debating that, and we will, as has the President, continue to debate and discuss as the President makes some very tough decisions concerning Afghanistan.

I have the greatest respect and regard for my colleague and friend, the distinguished chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. He and I are in agreement on many issues. It is very clear that Senator LEVIN wants a larger Afghan National Army. I have long maintained we need a larger Afghan Army. But I believe it is a false choice to try to grow the Afghan National Army while holding back on any additional U.S. combat troops.

I remind my colleagues that the lesson of Iraq, and the one General McChrystal wants to put into place in Afghanistan, is we do not get very far merely by putting individuals through a training course and releasing them into combat. As a matter of fact, when we examine the history, the very unhappy history of our engagement and involvement in Iraq, there was a time when the Iraqi Army was built up to a very large size—as I recall, around a couple hundred thousand—and then it basically collapsed, totally collapsed in the face of attacks from both Shia and Sunni extremists.

I think the buildup of the Afghan Army is an important component but remember, the lesson of Iraq was that our troops went out and fought and lived and spent 24/7 with the Iraqi military and gradually, over time, they became a far more capable fighting force and one of which all of us can be proud. It is mentorship at every level, including partnership in joint operations with U.S. forces, that will build a robust and capable Afghan military and pave the way for our eventual successful exit from Afghanistan. To do this

we need more U.S. combat troops in Afghanistan.

There is a lot more I would like to say about it, but there are vital areas that are controlled by the Taliban and its allies today. It will require U.S. military force to shape, clear, hold, and build in those areas. If we await the day when the Afghan National Army is increased in size and is capable of carrying out all these operations fully on its own, it may well be too late. We are reaching a decisive moment in Afghan history and our own. I believe the United States must commit the decisive force levels to bring about a significant change in the security environment in Afghanistan with the aim of seeing real change over the next 12 to 18 months.

This issue will continue to be an issue of mounting concern and importance to the American people. But I also want to point out, in the face of mounting reports of fraud and abuse carried out during the recent Afghan Presidential elections, I have real concerns about the integrity of the electoral process there. Yesterday, the Electoral Complaints Commission, a body backed by the United Nations, threw out votes from 83 polling stations across three provinces due to fraud. It also ordered recounts at hundreds of other polling stations and is due to examine irregularities in other areas of the country. These and other serious allegations of fraud undermine the perceived legitimacy of this election. I believe that perception is key to Afghan's political future. I believe we must urge the Electoral Complaints Commission to complete its work as soon as possible and to present a full report with its assessment of the fairness of the election in its entirety.

The Afghan people desire and deserve a fair electoral process and a leader who is elected legitimately. This election must be breakthrough for Afghanistan in terms of better governance, more competence, and less corruption. They have suffered from poor governance for far too long. We should desire no less and take the necessary steps to ensure that the government we are backing in Kabul is legitimate and has the support of the Afghan people and the international community.

I recall when it was fraud and an unfair election in Ukraine and the United States of America lent its weight and support of the then Orange Revolution and a free and fair election was held. We will wait until the electoral commissions issue their findings, but I am very concerned already about the information that we have concerning significant voter fraud. That may have called for a runoff election between President Karzai and his leading opponent, Abdullah Abdullah.

While all Americans take occasion today to commemorate the terrible attacks of 2001, each of us also has cause to reflect on some of the lessons our Nation learned in the wake of 9/11. Its often hard to think clearly about the

days before those attacks, when the world seemed at once a safer and more distant place, and our country a superpower in a secure neighborhood. We saw before 9/11 that America had interests across the globe, and we believed that our actions must be motivated by the ideals that have made us great. Yet we also often assumed—wrongly—that the volatility that spilled across distant shores would never wash over ours; that instability and repression in remote and obscure places was cause for tragedy but not for alarm.

We have learned a lot since that day. We have learned that history is often made in the very remote and obscure places that draw so little of our attention. We have learned that the degree of freedom and stability in other countries is connected to the security we enjoy at home. And we have learned that we must remain the authors of history, or face becoming its victims.

Today I would like to spend just a few moments discussing recent events in one of those places which, I would bet, seems like a peripheral concern to most Americans. Few of us wake up in the morning scouring the papers for the latest news from Lebanon, or follow the ins and outs of politics in Beirut. Yet in recent days we, have seen the portents of new political crisis in Lebanon and, while all of us must hope that it will be resolved easily and peacefully, we know from the history of that country that it very well may not be.

Yesterday, Prime Minister-designate Saad Hariri stepped down, unable to form a national unity government some 2¼ months after his election in June. After his moderate and relatively pro-Western party won the largest number of seats in the Lebanese parliament, Mr. Hariri proposed the formation of a broad based government that would even award a share of the cabinet posts to Hezbollah.

Yet Hezbollah has been intent on thwarting these efforts to form a cabinet.

Despite the fact that the Lebanese constitution confers on the President and Prime Minister the power to make cabinet appointments, and irrespective of Mr. Hariri's repeated attempts to form a government, talks have broken down over the demand by a Hezbollah-allied party that it retain the Telecommunications Ministry. This may appear to be a small and insignificant point of contention, and surely not one that would prompt an incoming Prime Minister to abandon his post, until we consider that Hezbollah badly wants to retain control over telecommunications and surveillance in Lebanon.

Hezbollah, of course, not only possesses a surveillance capacity and an independent communications and broadcasting system, but also retains vast weaponry befitting its status as an independent militia. Along with its Syrian and Iranian sponsors, Hezbollah continues to both exert influence outside the constitutional process and in-

vite foreign meddling in Lebanese affairs.

I believe that the United States should take a strong stand in favor of respecting the outcome of the June democratic elections, and urge the parties in Lebanon to form a government in a manner that respects the constitutional process. Over the longer term, it is abundantly clear that there can be no durable peace in Lebanon, nor any long-term stability in the political process there, so long as Hezbollah continues to act freely as an armed, independent militia. According to some reports, Hezbollah remains today the best armed force in the country, better armed, indeed, than even the Lebanese Armed Forces. Such a situation invites further fighting at some point between Hezbollah and Israel and suggests that Hezbollah will continue to use its military power to induce cooperation with its demands at home. Sooner or later, one way or another, and as the U.N. Security Council has demanded, Hezbollah must be disarmed.

We should also make perfectly clear to Syria that better ties with the United States will require an end to its malign interference in its neighbor's affairs. The administration has made a major effort this year to reach out Syria, sending a number of delegations to Damascus and making clear that better ties with the U.S. are possible if Syria changes its ways. Yet we should recall that it has been just 4 years since Mr. Hariri emerged onto the political stage after his father, Rafik Hariri, was murdered in a bombing. Reports indicate that suicide bombers continue to cross the Syrian border into Iraq. And Syria maintains its hostility to Israel and its close ties to the government of Iran. We must be clear that there must be real change on these issues in order for Syria to enjoy significantly warmer relations with the United States.

Some Americans might reasonably ask why. Why should we care about the freedom and democratic aspirations of the Lebanese people? What matter is it of ours? Don't we have enough problems here at home, without spending our time and attention on the affairs of a small country far from our shores?

In answering this, I would return to the theme with which I set out these brief remarks. We have learned since the attacks of 9/11 that instability in such places is not often confined to its borders. In lands where repression and despair are rife, intolerance and extremism grows in the hearts of some, and violence in the minds of a few. In Lebanon, as in so many other places around the world, the population aspires to something better than to be pulled from side to side by a thuggish and cruel militia. The vast majority of the Lebanese people want only that which we here in America desire, the freedom and security to build, through their talents and industry, a better life for themselves and their children. As Americans, we must demonstrate that

we stand beside them in this hope. As we commemorate today the terrible acts of a small group dedicated to extinguishing this very ideal throughout the world, we should, I believe, rededicate ourselves and our policies to advancing this noble goal.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, are we in a period of morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

TRIBUTE TO THE LOGAN COUNTY LITTLE LEAGUERS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the remarkable accomplishments of the Logan County Little League All-Star team. While I remember fondly the years I played America's pastime in my youth, none of my experiences can compare to those of these 10 Little Leaguers as they competed in this year's Little League World Series.

Despite its small-town feel, Logan County has produced a number of notable individuals, from astronauts and governors to NBA players and Major League Baseball pitchers.

So it is not surprising that a community that has already produced such notable figures would rally behind a group of 11- and 12-year-old players who represented the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the Great Lakes Region in this year's Little League World Series. As the first team from Kentucky to reach this level of competition in 4 years, Logan County's All-Stars demonstrated their talent in the games leading up to their World Series bid.

When four players homered in the regional final in Indianapolis, the Logan County All-Star team set its sights on Williamsport, PA. Thankfully, their vision found support in the community. In order to afford the sizable cost of travel and lodging, the Little Leaguers and their supporters raised funds in all manner of ways, from selling steak sandwiches and auctioning off signed baseballs to holding a telethon at a local radio station.

The team played its first two games of the double elimination tournament against the West Region champions from Chula Vista, CA. While the Western team proved to be overpowering, Logan County's team demonstrated remarkable sportsmanship. As the proud winning-bidder of an auctioned T-shirt put it, "Their character is impeccable, and we know a lot of them . . . they behave themselves and they represent Logan County and Kentucky perfectly."

Regardless of what the scoreboard read, Logan County's All-Stars are

winners. Moreover, this experience stretches beyond moments played out between the chalk-marked lines of the field. These youngsters were able to meet and develop bonds with other players from countries all over the world. Several players described their trip with one word—"awesome."

It is with great honor that I place the names of this year's Logan County Little League All-Stars into the RECORD. Under the leadership of manager Kevin Gettings, team members Caleb Bruner, Joe Holliday, Zack Denney, Tucker Baldwin, Daniel Beaty, Desmon Quarles, Matt Harper, Barrett Croslin, Ian Woodall, and Jacob Wood made their hometown, their State, and this Senator very proud.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

COMMENDING THE NATIONAL EXTENSION ASSOCIATION FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

• Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to inform the Senate of the importance of the National Extension Association Family and Consumer Sciences, NEAFCS, and its network of associates on its 75th anniversary. This organization educates and recognizes Extension Service professionals who work to impact the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities. These educators provide practical, research-based education to help improve the quality of life for families and individuals.

Providing adults and youth with the necessary skills and knowledge to help them achieve the best quality of life possible is paramount to creating healthy families and a healthy American economy. The Cooperative Extension System, part of the land grant university system, is a nationwide educational network funded cooperatively by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, State governments, and county governments. Extension system initiatives in nutrition, healthy lifestyles, early brain development, food safety, financial management, and building strong families enable citizens to gain knowledge and skills to lead full and productive lives.

Cooperative Extension professionals and members of the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences have been offering educational workshops, seminars, publications, media outreach, and websites to help individuals and communities for 75 years. I commend the NEAFCS on their 75th anniversary as well as the local faculty and staff who provide education that is critical to the quality of life in many rural communities.

I also urge the President of the United States to issue a proclamation to commend this organization on its 75th anniversary. The American people should become more familiar with these services and take advantage of the educational opportunities that

Family and Consumer Sciences educators offer through the extension system.●

REMEMBERING RICHARD CRITTENDEN

• Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, today, we mourn the loss of Officer Richard Crittenden, a true hero who gave his life in the line of duty. My thoughts and prayers go out to his wife, his son and stepdaughter, his grandchildren, the North St. Paul Police Department and the entire community during this difficult time.

On Monday, September 7, 2009, Officer Crittenden was shot and killed while responding to a domestic disturbance. On that day, he made the ultimate sacrifice in order to protect a citizen in danger.

Officer Crittenden was a dedicated officer who served the North St. Paul Police Department for 9 years. He is fondly remembered by those in the community as a "great cop." I join my House colleague, U.S. Representative BETTY MCCOLLUM, in saying that we are forever grateful for his service and bravery.

As we mourn his loss, let us also pay tribute to all the law enforcement officers who risk their lives every day to protect our lives. As a former prosecutor, I gained an unending respect for all members of the law enforcement community. They serve on the frontlines every day to protect public safety and our communities. Let us never forget their service and their courage.●

RECOGNIZING TEX TECH INDUSTRIES

• Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, 8 years ago today, we witnessed the horrendous attacks of September 11, 2001. Since that time, we have been engaged in a global fight against terrorism, and our Nation's military men and women have defended our country admirably and bravely. As we rely on them for our Nation's protection, they, in turn, rely on hundreds of businesses nationwide to provide them with state-of-the-art safety products. Today, as we mark this painful anniversary, I rise to recognize a small Maine company that is working every day to keep our military personnel safe by producing intricate textiles used to make body armor.

Tex Tech Industries, headquartered in Portland with an additional facility in the town of Monmouth, has been manufacturing textiles since 1902. Several years ago, Tex Tech began transitioning itself from a traditional textile mill into a dynamic, cutting edge leader in its field, and the company presently makes over 7,000 different unique products involving textiles, in part due to its remarkable research and development capabilities.

Of note, Tex Tech is the world's largest producer of tennis felt, the green material used to cover tennis balls. It

is Tex Tech's work with high-tech fabrics, however, that has been most impressive. From durable and well-engineered fireblocking protection for mattresses, aircraft hulls, and school bus seats, to small and precise components found in specialized machine parts like rollers for X-ray processing, Tex Tech's products have a functional, everyday use to them.

I am most grateful to Tex Tech for its stellar and critical work developing specialized body armor used to protect our Nation's servicemembers. Tex Tech's ground-breaking Core Matrix Technology is used to produce hard and soft armor, safety products, and hard composites for ballistic structural reinforcement. This distinctive invention effectively protects our Nation's law enforcement officers and military personnel facing danger. In particular, it is employed to create the body armor that is used on outer tactical vests worn by our country's soldiers in Iraq.

For its outstanding work and dedicated service, Tex Tech Industries has received prestigious national recognition. In particular, the Small Business Technology Council honored Tex Tech with its 2006 Tibbetts Award as a result of the company's work with the Small Business Innovation Research, SBIR, and Small Business Technology Transfer, STTR, programs, which provide critical seed funding for small businesses developing our Nation's next generation of innovations. The award specifically highlighted the company's contributions to the Maine economy and research and development field in the State. The SBIR-STTR programs are critical to the growth of thousands of companies nationwide, and I am proud of Tex Tech's success story.

Tex Tech has left an indelible mark on dozens of products we use every day; but on a larger scale, it has also contributed to improving safety for millions of Americans facing danger day in and day out. As our service men and women fight tirelessly to keep our country safe—and prevent another 9/11—I thank Tex Tech Industries for doing its part to keep them safe. Their commitment to our State and Nation are extremely laudable, and I wish them continued success in their multiple endeavors.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD) announced that on today, September 11, 2009, he had signed the following enrolled joint resolution, previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

S.J. Res. 9. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of France A. Córdova as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian.

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, September 11, 2009, she

had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled joint resolution:

S.J. Res. 9. Joint resolution providing for the appointment of France A. Córdova as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BROWN:

S. 1663. A bill to make available funds from the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 for funding a voluntary employees' beneficiary association with respect to former employees of Delphi Corporation; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. DORGAN, and Mr. CRAPO):

S. Res. 262. A resolution designating the month of September 2009 as 'National Atrial Fibrillation Awareness Month' and encouraging efforts to educate the public about atrial fibrillation; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 182

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from Colorado [Mr. BENNET] was added as a cosponsor of S. 182, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 491

At the request of Mr. WEBB, the name of the Senator from California [Mrs. BOXER] was added as a cosponsor of S. 491, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow Federal civilian and military retirees to pay health insurance premiums on a pretax basis and to allow a deduction for TRICARE supplemental premiums.

S. 593

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey [Mr. MENENDEZ] was added as a cosponsor of S. 593, a bill to ban the use of bisphenol A in food containers, and for other purposes.

S. 846

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska [Mr. JOHANNES] was added as a cosponsor of S. 846, a bill to award a congressional gold medal to Dr. Muhammad Yunus, in recognition of his contributions to the fight against global poverty.

S. 981

At the request of Mr. DODD, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 981, a

bill to support research and public awareness activities with respect to inflammatory bowel disease, and for other purposes.

S. 1076

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from North Carolina [Mr. BURR] was added as a cosponsor of S. 1076, a bill to improve the accuracy of fur product labeling, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 262—DESIGNATING THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2009 AS 'NATIONAL ATRIAL FIBRILLATION AWARENESS MONTH' AND ENCOURAGING EFFORTS TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. DORGAN, and Mr. CRAPO) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 262

Whereas atrial fibrillation is a cardiac condition in which electrical pulses disrupt the regular beating of the atria in the heart, hampering the ability of the atria to fill the ventricles with blood, and subsequently causing blood to pool in the atria and form clots;

Whereas atrial fibrillation is the most common cardiac malfunction and affects at least 2,200,000 people in the United States, with increased prevalence anticipated as the population of the United States ages;

Whereas atrial fibrillation is associated with an increased long-term risk of stroke, heart failure, and mortality from all causes, especially among women;

Whereas, according to the Journal of the American College of Cardiology, atrial fibrillation accounts for approximately 1/3 of hospitalizations for cardiac rhythm disturbances;

Whereas, according to the American Heart Association, 3 to 5 percent of people in the United States who are 65 years of age and older are estimated to have atrial fibrillation;

Whereas, according to a study in the American Heart Association journal "Circulation", atrial fibrillation is recognized as a major contributor to strokes, with an estimated 15 to 20 percent of strokes occurring in people with atrial fibrillation;

Whereas the Journal of the American College of Cardiology estimates that the treatment of atrial fibrillation costs approximately \$3,600 per patient annually, for a total cost burden in the United States of approximately \$15,700,000,000;

Whereas obesity is a significant risk factor for atrial fibrillation;

Whereas better education for patients and health care providers is needed in order to ensure timely recognition of atrial fibrillation symptoms; and

Whereas more research into effective treatments for atrial fibrillation is needed: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the month of September 2009 as "National Atrial Fibrillation Awareness Month";

(2) supports efforts to educate people about atrial fibrillation;

(3) recognizes the need for additional research into treatment for atrial fibrillation; and

(4) encourages the people of the United States and interested groups to observe and support National Atrial Fibrillation Awareness Month through appropriate programs and activities that promote public awareness of atrial fibrillation and potential treatments for atrial fibrillation.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2330. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2331. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2332. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2333. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2334. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2335. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2336. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2337. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2338. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2339. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2340. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2341. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2342. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2343. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2344. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2345. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2346. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2347. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2348. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2349. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2350. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2351. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2352. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2353. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2354. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2355. Mr. JOHANNES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2356. Mr. JOHANNES submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2357. Mr. NELSON of Nebraska submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2358. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2359. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2360. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2361. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2330. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the ARC/THE Tunnel (New Jersey Trans-Hudson Midtown Corridor).

SA 2331. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Sound Transit-University Link LRT Extension, WA.

SA 2332. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the RTD West Corridor, CO.

SA 2333. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Mid-Jordan Light Rail, UT.

SA 2334. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Northwest/Southeast Light Rail MOS, TX.

SA 2335. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Dulles Corridor Rail Project, VA.

SA 2336. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Weber County to Salt Lake City Commuter Rail, UT.

SA 2337. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Houston North Corridor LRT, TX.

SA 2338. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Houston Southeast Corridor LRT, TX.

SA 2339. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the South Sacramento Light Rail Extension, CA.

SA 2340. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Honolulu High Capacity Transit Corridor Project, HI.

SA 2341. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Metrorail Orange Line Extension, FL.

SA 2342. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Wilshire Boulevard Bus-Only Lane, CA.

SA 2343. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the City of Charlotte, Charlotte Area Transit System's (CATS) Blue Line Extension-Northeast Corridor Project, SC.

SA 2344. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the CTA Red Line North Station, Track, Viaduct, and Station Rehabilitation, IL.

SA 2345. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Draper Light Rail, UT.

SA 2346. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, Los Angeles, CA.

SA 2347. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Bellevue to Redmond Bus Rapid Transit, WA.

SA 2348. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Tennessee Statewide Bus Program, TN.

SA 2349. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the RTD East Corridor, CO.

SA 2350. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the RTD Gold Corridor, CO.

SA 2351. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Wilmington to Newark Commuter Rail Improvement Program, DE.

SA 2352. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by

him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Ann Arbor-Detroit Regional Rail Project, Detroit, MI.

SA 2353. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Stamford Urban Transit way, CT.

SA 2354. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds in this Act may be used to fund the Hoover Dam Bypass Bridge, AZ.

SA 2355. Mr. JOHANNIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 414, insert the following:

SEC. 4 _____. None of the funds made available under this Act may be directly or indirectly distributed to the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN).

SA 2356. Mr. JOHANNIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 414, insert the following:

SEC. 4 _____. None of the funds made available under this Act shall be distributed to—

(1) an organization which has a pending indictment for or has been convicted of a violation under Federal or State law relating to fraudulent voting in any Federal or State election; or

(2) an organization which employs an individual who has a pending indictment for or has been convicted of a violation under Fed-

eral or State law relating to fraudulent voting in any Federal or State election.

SA 2357. Mr. NELSON of Nebraska submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 194, after line 23, add the following:

SEC. 132. AMENDMENTS TO SAFETEA-LU.

(a) HIGHWAY 35.—Section 1702 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (Public Law 109-59) is amended—

(1) by striking the project description in item 576 and inserting “Design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of Nebraska Highway 35 between Norfolk and South Sioux City, and construction of an interchange at milepost 1 on I-129”; and

(2) by striking the project description in item 4507 and inserting “Design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of Nebraska Highway 35 between Norfolk and South Sioux City, and construction of an interchange at milepost 1 on I-129”.

(b) CUMING STREET.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law relating to eligibility under title 23, United States Code, amounts made available for the Cuming Street Transportation Improvement Project in items 4497 and 4506 of section 1702 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (Public Law 109-59) and in item 276 of section 1934(c) of such Act may be expended for—

(1) lighting, landscaping, and pedestrian enhancements on Cuming Street from 16th Street to 30th Street and on Burt Street from 31st Street to Florence Boulevard, including burial of certain overhead utilities;

(2) pedestrian safety improvements on 24th Street from Cuming Street to Davenport Street, including the incorporation of traffic circles at Cass Street and Davenport Street and adjacent lighting, landscaping, and safety enhancements; and

(3) the reconfiguration of the Dodge Street/Douglas Street transition curve in conjunction with 30th Street.

(c) KEARNEY RYDE.—Section 3044(a) of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (Public Law 109-59) is amended—

(1) by striking the project description in item 160 and inserting “Nebraska—Statewide Transit Bus, Bus Facilities, and Related Equipment”; and

(2) by striking the project description in item 586 and inserting “Nebraska—Statewide Transit Bus, Bus Facilities, and Related Equipment”.

SA 2358. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 414, insert the following:

SEC. 4 _____. None of the funds made available under this Act shall be directly or indirectly distributed to the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN).

SA 2359. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by

him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. PROHIBITION ON USING FUNDS FOR CERTAIN HOUSEHOLDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—No funds made available under this Act may be used for or provided to a household that—

(1) includes a covered offender; and

(2) resides in federally-subsidized housing in New Orleans, Louisiana.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “covered offender” means an individual that—

(A) has been convicted of an offense under Federal, State, or tribal law—

(i) that has, as an element, the use or attempted use of physical force, or the threatened use of a deadly weapon, committed by a current or former spouse, parent, or guardian of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabiting with or has cohabited with the victim as a spouse, parent, or guardian, or by a person similarly situated to a spouse, parent, or guardian of the victim; or

(ii) involving manufacturing, distributing, or possessing with intent to manufacture or distribute, a controlled substance (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802)); or

(B) is a member of a criminal street gang, as defined in section 521 of title 18, United States Code;

(2) the term “federally-subsidized housing” means any housing for which housing assistance is being provided; and

(3) the term “housing assistance” means any assistance, loan, loan guarantee, housing, or other housing assistance provided under a housing-related program administered, in whole or in part, by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

SA 2360. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect or modify the community service requirements under section 12(c) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437j(c)).

SA 2361. Mr. GREGG submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 3288, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 194, after line 23, add the following:

SEC. 1 _____. (a) This section may be cited as the "Axe the Stimulus Plaques Act".

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds made available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5) may be used for physical signage to indicate that a project is being funded by that Act.

NATIONAL ATRIAL FIBRILLATION AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to S. Res. 262.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 262) designating the month of September 2009 as "National Atrial Fibrillation Awareness Month" and encouraging efforts to educate the public about atrial fibrillation.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid on the table, there be no intervening action or debate, and any statements relating to this matter be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 262) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 262

Whereas atrial fibrillation is a cardiac condition in which electrical pulses disrupt the regular beating of the atria in the heart, hampering the ability of the atria to fill the ventricles with blood, and subsequently causing blood to pool in the atria and form clots;

Whereas atrial fibrillation is the most common cardiac malfunction and affects at

least 2,200,000 people in the United States, with increased prevalence anticipated as the population of the United States ages;

Whereas atrial fibrillation is associated with an increased long-term risk of stroke, heart failure, and mortality from all causes, especially among women;

Whereas, according to the Journal of the American College of Cardiology, atrial fibrillation accounts for approximately 1/3 of hospitalizations for cardiac rhythm disturbances;

Whereas, according to the American Heart Association, 3 to 5 percent of people in the United States who are 65 years of age and older are estimated to have atrial fibrillation;

Whereas, according to a study in the American Heart Association journal "Circulation", atrial fibrillation is recognized as a major contributor to strokes, with an estimated 15 to 20 percent of strokes occurring in people with atrial fibrillation;

Whereas the Journal of the American College of Cardiology estimates that the treatment of atrial fibrillation costs approximately \$3,600 per patient annually, for a total cost burden in the United States of approximately \$15,700,000,000;

Whereas obesity is a significant risk factor for atrial fibrillation;

Whereas better education for patients and health care providers is needed in order to ensure timely recognition of atrial fibrillation symptoms; and

Whereas more research into effective treatments for atrial fibrillation is needed: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the month of September 2009 as "National Atrial Fibrillation Awareness Month";

(2) supports efforts to educate people about atrial fibrillation;

(3) recognizes the need for additional research into treatment for atrial fibrillation; and

(4) encourages the people of the United States and interested groups to observe and support National Atrial Fibrillation Awareness Month through appropriate programs and activities that promote public awareness

of atrial fibrillation and potential treatments for atrial fibrillation.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2009

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until Monday at 2 p.m., September 14; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate proceed to a period of morning business until 3:00 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of Calendar No. 153, H.R. 3288, the Transportation and related agencies appropriations bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, rollcall votes are possible after 5:30 p.m. Monday. As previously announced, there will be no rollcall votes after 3 p.m. on Tuesday, September 15.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 2 P.M. MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2009

Mr. REID. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:42 p.m., adjourned until Monday, September 14, 2009, at 2 p.m.