

line to metro Denver. But any of the plans would cost billions of dollars and create ecological woes.

If Colorado's population continues growing, our state someday will claim its share of Colorado River water. When it does, California and Nevada could rights demand that Colorado and other upper-basin states—Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico—follow the pact's strict limits, too.

The law of the river must be enforced, for everyone. And water conservation must become a way of life in the West.

Mr. ALLARD. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONGRATULATING THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY BUCKEYES NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP WINNER

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I rise today as an alumnus of Ohio State University and a Senator filled with pride for our 2002 national champions, the Ohio State Buckeyes.

I congratulate my home team and their outstanding coach, Jim Tressel, on a spectacular win and the best season ever in the history of Ohio State University—14 wins and no losses. Throughout the season, the Buckeyes showed a remarkable spirit of determination, cooperation, and the best teamwork that I have seen in a football team, frankly, during my lifetime.

The Buckeyes have good people and a great leader who inspired his team to do their best—as athletes and young men with character, determination, pride, and loyalty to each other and to their alumni.

On the night of the game, some of the sports pundits said that the other team had more talent than the Ohio State Buckeyes. But throughout this season, we utilized our talent more fully than any other opponent.

The Buckeyes have that special ingredient—sticking together and working together—a true symbiotic relationship. They understood that the more they cooperated on behalf of the team as a whole the better off all of them would be. That is the spirit that shone through during the whole season—unselfish determination and genuine teamwork. That is what it was about.

Their lesson is a good one for us in the Senate. It is the same kind of spirit that we are going to need on the floor of the Senate and in our country if we expect to win the war on terrorism and to become national champions for our hard-working citizens who put their trust in us. We would all do well to emulate the 2002 Ohio State Buckeyes. I congratulate our 2002 national champions and again underscore that if we

can maintain the spirit they have of working together, teamwork, and bipartisanship, we are going to have an outstanding season here in the 108th Congress.

I suggest the absence of quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. DOLE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, are we in morning business?

Mr. CRAPO. The Senate is in morning business for another 23½ minutes.

Mr. DORGAN. I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 20 minutes.

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

HOMESTEAD ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, there has been a great deal of discussion in recent days about the American economy. The President was in Chicago the middle of this week and proposed a new plan talking about tax cuts in order to stimulate the economy. Others in the Democratic Caucus in the Senate and the House have talked about various plans for tax cuts to stimulate the economy. While all this discussion about the economy is important, I wanted to mention something else that is happening in the American economy that gets precious little attention.

There is an economic blight that is occurring in our country that is out of sight and therefore it is not very well understood by most Americans. I want to talk about it for a moment.

In the last Congress, with Senator Chuck Hagel from Nebraska, I introduced legislation called the New Homestead Economic Opportunity Act. I visited briefly yesterday with Senator HAGEL and we are going to be talking about reintroducing that legislation very soon in this Congress. I wanted to make a couple of comments about it and alert colleagues that this legislation is something we are going to work very hard to try and get approved by this Senate.

There is a problem in this country with the economy. This is not a problem about the American economy in its entirety. It is a problem about the economy in the heartland of our country. This map shows the rural counties of high out-migration in the country, that is, counties in which people are moving out, not in; counties that are losing population.

If we draw an egg shape from North Dakota down to Texas in the middle part of our country, we have the heartland of America being depopulated.

This is the heartland of America, which is North Dakota, South Dakota,

Nebraska, Kansas, right on down to Texas, including some States on both sides. This is the part of the country that we populated a century and a half ago with something called the Homestead Act. My great-grandmother, named Caroline, with her six children—her husband having died, she was an immigrant widow from Norway—decided to move to the prairies of North Dakota. She pitched a tent, built a house, started a farm, and raised a family. She had a son, who had a daughter, who had me, and that is how I come from Hettinger County in North Dakota.

A century and a half ago, we populated the middle part of our country through something called the Homestead Act, saying to people: move there, build there, and create a family there. We will give you some free land. It is called the Homestead Act. So they did. In covered wagons they came to the middle of our country. Now a century and a half later, people are moving out in a relentless depopulation. In every one of these States—North Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, South Dakota, Wyoming—people are moving out of the rural counties. The percentage of out-migration is shown on this chart. In North Dakota, about 90 percent of the counties are losing population. I grew up in a county in southwestern North Dakota. My home county is bigger than the State of Rhode Island. When I left there were 5,000 people who lived there. Now there are 2,700 living there. In the year 2020 the demographers say there will be 1,700 living in my home county, a county larger than the State of Rhode Island.

In this county, there is a town called New England, ND, a wonderful little community. Donna Dorman is the minister at the Lutheran Church in New England. She said that as a minister she presides over four funerals for every wedding. Think of that: Four funerals she officiates at for every wedding. This is a Lutheran minister. What does that say about the towns, where the population is getting older, people are moving out, young couples that stay are not having children. It is the opposite of the movie "Four Weddings and a Funeral." Four funerals per wedding. That is a description of what is happening up and down the middle part of the country with this steady depopulation.

Then we have people in other parts of the country who are trying to recreate what we have in the middle: Great schools, good places to live, safe neighborhoods, good places to raise children. They are trying to recreate that in other population centers of the country.

We have people leaving the middle of America, in the heartland. The question is, What do we do about this? Can we do anything? William Jennings Bryant said destiny is not a matter of chance; it is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for; destiny is a thing to be achieved.

The question is, What kind of an economy do we want in this country? Do we care about the heartland? Do we want to do something about the depopulation of the heartland? When America's cities were in deep trouble several decades ago, with the decay of America's cities and the economic blight affecting America's metropolitan areas, guess what the Congress did. The Congress said, let us help; let us develop an urban renewal program, a model cities program. And we did. We invested in America's cities. And America's cities are doing well. We turned around the major metropolitan areas of this country with programs deciding that the cities are too good, too important, to be allowed to fail. So we had model cities and urban renewal programs.

What about America's heartland? Is that important enough to save? Is it important enough to care about? Senator HAGEL and I introduced a piece of legislation called the New Homestead Economic Opportunity Act. We do not have land to give away to people who would come out and homestead anymore. We did a century and a half ago. We gave them free land. We do not have land to give away. What we do have is tax and other financial incentives to offer to encourage people to stay there, to come there, to live there, to grow there, to build there, and to do business there. We have the capability to say to them: If you are going to run a business in a rural county that has lost more than 10 percent of its population in the last 20 years, you may benefit from investment tax credits. You are a new student who has graduated from school and are employed in a high out-migration rural county, you will get some help paying off your college loans. There are tools we can develop and use to do that.

Senator HAGEL and I have written a piece of legislation that has now been joined by 10 other members of the Senate, Republicans and Democrats, saying this country owes it to itself to save the heartland.

Let me describe why I think this is important to do. Some would say, well, whatever is, is; whatever happens, happens, and do not pay too much mind to it. If for some reason the incentives for life in America in the year 2003 do not provide people some inertia or encouragement to settle in Hettinger County, ND, that is just the way it is. I suppose you could have said that a century and a half ago and we would not have the wagon trains taking the pioneers out to go homestead. They did not say it then. They said it is important to populate the heartland of our country for a number of reasons.

I will discuss the value system in rural America that nourishes and refreshes the values of our country. I come from a wonderful State of 640,000 people. I grew up myself in a very small town. There were 400 people when I was living in that town. Now there are fewer than 300 people in that same

community. I graduated from a senior high school class of nine students. In my State, in communities like that, there are wonderful people and they are great places in which to live. In my State, there is a small town called Sentinel Butte, ND. They have one gas station. The man and his wife who run the gas station are nearing retirement age and do not want to work all day long, so when they close the gas station in early afternoon, they hang the key to the gas pumps on a nail in the front door. If you want gas and they are not open, take the key, unlock the pump, pump gas, and write your name on a tablet that is right below the key.

That is a value system that is important. It works in rural America. There is a place called Marmarth. They have a hotel in Marmarth that is a very small town but no one works at the hotel. If you need a bed, go take a bed and get some rest. And there is a cigar box tacked on the inside of the door when you leave. When you are done sleeping at that hotel, when you leave, please put a little money in the cigar box.

Is that a big business? No. Is it important to Marmarth? Sure. In a town called Tuttle, the grocery store closed. That little community understood you need to have a grocery store. No one would come in and build a grocery store. So the city government built it. The city council decided we have to build a grocery store. And I was there the day they cut ribbons on the grocery store in Tuttle, ND. They blocked off Main Street and had the high school band play. What was that about? Cutting the ribbon on a new grocery store in Tuttle, ND, that was developed by the city council of Tuttle, ND.

In Havana, ND, they cannot keep a cafe open, unless they have people in town sign up for the time they are going to work for nothing to keep the cafe open. When is it your turn to work in the cafe? That is the way the community keeps the cafe open.

All of these things represent a value system that I think is important to this country—wonderful small communities making do for themselves, great places in which to live, great places in which to raise children, safe streets, good neighbors. We are going to lose all of that unless the Congress decides the heartland is worth saving. The New Homestead Economic Opportunity Act is a piece of legislation Senator HAGEL and I will reintroduce in the next couple of weeks. My hope is that Senators, Republicans and Democrats, up and down the heartland, will join us as co-sponsors once again this year and that we can work together creating tools by which these States, these counties, these small cities that are losing population, can begin once again to build a future home and opportunity for themselves.

There are some who say, well, this is just the way things are, just a force of life that is not going to change. People are moving from rural areas to the cit-

ies. My State is also an agricultural State with a lot of family farmers. I know there are some who look at that and say, Why would someone farm? I suppose you have to live on a farm to understand the values and the forces that make you believe it is a wonderful way of life.

I notice that there is a television network that is going to do a reality show which I read about yesterday—and shook my head once again, as is so often the case with modern television shows. They are looking for a poor farm family somewhere in this country. They are going to take that poor farm family, they said, and put them in a mansion in Beverly Hills and then do reality television to see how they react, a poor farm family in a Beverly Hills mansion, kind of like "The Beverly Hillbillies." They are doing what I think they call their "hick search" now, looking for these people who would not fit in. Then they would send them out to a mansion in Beverly Hills so they can do a television show and make fun of them. There is precious little to make fun of, in my judgment, about the value system of life on the family farm in this country. It is about struggling against the odds. It is about perseverance, sometimes against hope, almost. It's about developing survival skills.

These are people who put a seed in the ground and then have to pray and hope the seed comes up to a plant, so that it grows into a plant and perhaps it will rain, so it grows and perhaps it won't rain too much so it doesn't drown out, maybe the insects won't come in and eat it, maybe it won't get crop disease, maybe it won't hail, maybe you won't get a windstorm that knocks the crop over. But, in any event, in the fall when you have grown that seed into a crop, having put all your money into it in the spring to try to get the seed into the ground, then if you are lucky enough to get a crop, then you have to hope that the price is decent in August, September, October, because if you lost the crop you lost everything, and if you get a crop and don't get a price in the fall you have lost everything.

Those are the odds these farmers have faced, those who have elected to go to the prairies in the heartland of our country and begin to farm. They produce America's food. But they do more than that. They produce communities. They are a seedbed of values that, as I said, nourishes and refreshes the value system of our country.

My fervent hope is that we will find a way in this Congress to understand, just as we did in dealing with the blight of America's cities, that we have responsibility to deal with the relentless out-migration that is crippling so many rural counties up and down the part of America's heartland that you see marked in red.

I think there is a tendency for some to think what is between California and New York is simply 6 hours in an

airplane seat. That, of course, is not the case at all. What is between California and New York is a wonderful part of America and a part of America that we should care a great deal about, a part of America that is suffering a great deal at this point with the out-migration of people. You see it in red on this map.

As we proceed, there will likely be things that are very partisan here on the floor of the Senate, and perhaps properly should be because the political parties come to this debate on a range of issues believing in different things—not different goals, but dramatically different ways to achieve the same goal, in many cases. But my hope is that even as we have those debates which can and perhaps will be partisan debates from time to time, there will be some issues on which Republicans and Democrats can say: Sign us up together. This is not about getting credit. It's not about forcing the other side to lose or demanding that we win. It is about doing together that which needs to be done for the preservation of this country, for the preserving of values in this country, and for the nourishing of hope for certain people in this country who have lost hope, especially those living in the heartland and living in circumstances where their neighbors have left, their community is shrinking, family farmers are leaving.

We can do better than that. My hope is that we will find a bipartisan way in this Congress to decide this, too, is an urgent priority for our country and pass legislation of the type Senator HAGEL and I will reintroduce once again, called the New Homestead Economic Opportunity Act.

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

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

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time for morning business be extended by 10 minutes and that I be permitted to speak.

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

IN HONOR OF CAPTAIN JIM BINKLEY

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I come with a sad heart today because on January 3, the City of Fairbanks, where I started my life in Alaska, and the State of Alaska lost a great citizen with the passing of Captain Jim Binkley at the age of 82.

Jim was born in our State in Wrangell, on May 16, 1920. His parents were gold rush pioneers, and his father was a riverboat pilot on the Stikine River in southeast Alaska.

In World War II, he was a veteran who served on riverboats in Alaska and after the war he attended the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. In 1950, Jim and his wife Mary bought their first boat, the Godspeed, and began what would become Alaska Riverways, Incorporated. They ran a historic riverboat for tourists who came to Alaska.

Jim and Mary built and rebuilt many of their company's sternwheelers in the backyard of their family's home which was on Noyes Slough, which is a river that runs through Fairbanks, AK. It was a great experience to go with him on that boat. I have taken many people on Captain Jim's boat.

Alaska Riverways is Fairbanks' number one tourist attraction. Each summer, Alaska Riverways' three sternwheelers, the Discovery (I), the Discovery (II), and the Discovery (III), ferry thousands of tourists down the Chena and Tanana Rivers, following trails to the gold rush people and really letting people see what rural Alaska is like.

Along with being a successful riverboat captain, Jim served in the Alaska State House of Representatives for two terms from 1961 to 1964. In addition to that service in the Alaska legislature, Captain Jim served on numerous community boards and organizations. He received many statewide awards, including being named "Alaskan of Year" and the business leader of the year.

Jim was a proud father of three sons and daughter Marilee. I know all three sons: Johnne, Jim Jr., and Skip. They are all riverboat captains and they have continued the great tradition of their father, as have several of his grandchildren.

Captain Jim was clearly a leader in the development of Alaska tourism and of our State in general. His vision and hard work forever changed Alaska's visitor industry, and for that we are very grateful.

I am pleased to say I have asked that a flag be flown over the Capitol today so we may send it to his family, along with a copy of this statement.

(At the request of Mr. STEVENS, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to speak and honor a great Alaskan, and long time family friend, Jim Binkley of Fairbanks.

Jim, one of the State's great riverboat captains, died last Friday after a long and painful illness. I join all Alaskans in expressing my deepest condolences to his family and all of his friends across the State.

Jim was born in Wrangell in southeast Alaska 82 years ago and was raised in California after his father's death. After high school, Jim moved back to Wrangell and worked as a river guide

with him uncle, learning his craft on riverboats and gaining his love of the water. After a few years he moved to Fairbanks to attend the University of Alaska.

It was there during the long Fairbanks summers that he learned the ways of interior rivers, working on steamboats, hauling supplies to Eskimo and native villages along the Yukon River. While his schooling at the University was interrupted by a tour of duty in the U.S. military during World War II, he returned to school in Fairbanks after the war. There he met his future wife of 55 years, Mary Hall, and they were married in June 1947.

In 1950, Jim and Mary were asked to run riverboat cruises in Fairbanks by Alaska tourism pioneer Chuck West. Using the Episcopal Church vessel, "Godspeed" they began offering tours of the Chena and Tanana Rivers. As their business expanded, they needed a bigger boat. So in 1955, Jim and Mary, along with their original partner Bill English, built the first Riverboat Discovery in their backyard on the Noyes Slough in Fairbanks.

Over his 45 years in the riverboat business, Jim built two more boats, helping to launch the modern era of tourism in Alaska's interior. But he launched much more for Alaska.

He helped create Alaskaland, Fairbanks' historic major municipal park. He was a founder of the Alaska Visitors Association and the Fairbanks Convention and Visitors Bureau. And he showed his commitment to public service by serving two terms in the Alaska House of Representative in Juneau from 1961 through 1964.

He was also a pioneer in improving communications in Alaska, serving on the boards of Alascom, Pacific Corp. and later Pacific Telecom, helping switch telecommunications in Alaska from an era of Government-controlled long-distance phone service to the modern era of satellite communication that included the arrival of live television to all parts of the State.

He received numerous awards, including being named the Alaskan of the Year and the Business Leader of the Year.

While I have lived in Anchorage for the past 25 years, I can never forget sitting in my parents' backyard along the Chena River in Fairbanks. You could almost tell time by when Captain Binkley would pilot the Discovery past our house, always waving his warm welcome as we tooted a fog horn in reply as the sternwheeler rounded the small bends heading for the junction with the Tanana.

Alaska has lost a great pioneer and an even greater leader. I want to express my deepest condolences to his wife, Mary, to his son Johnne, himself a former leading member of the Alaska Legislature, to his sons Jim, Jr. and Skip and to all his grandchildren. All of Alaska mourns his passing.●

Mr. STEVENS. I suggest the absence of a quorum.