

piece of wildfire legislation, which was signed into law by the President on December 3 of last year. It is going to protect communities from catastrophic forest fires, preserve old-growth trees, restore unhealthy forests, and protect the involvement of our communities in discussing these issues.

I was very pleased that because of the bipartisan cooperation, we were able to get the Senate to pass a balanced practical approach to Healthy Forests legislation, and it authorized the \$760 million that is essential for hazardous fuels reduction projects, and it made possible my budget amendment that would have provided the funding room necessary for the landmark legislation.

Without the help of the budget amendment that was adopted earlier, the issue that is now being debated in Congress, the Healthy Forests Restoration Act is not going to be able to live up to the full promise that folks in Cave Junction, OR, or Corona, CA, are counting on. The amendment in the budget resolution will take us a step closer to fulfilling the vision that people have in the rural West of this law. They deserve an approach and critical response from the Federal Government, starting now with the prospect of a devastating fire season.

This body agreed that hazardous fuels reduction projects, the National Fire Plan, and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act should be given complete and bipartisan support. I am hopeful that the budget conferees will see the importance of keeping intact the unanimously accepted Senate position to fight these fires with the resources necessary.

It is critical that we not disappoint people in these small rural communities across the West. They are counting on the Congress to ensure that they have the resources that are going to be essential to save their homes and safeguard their lives.

I do not want to see these families evacuated again this year and next year because the Congress did not do its job.

I urge our colleagues, at a time when we are about to go to the budget conference, to support the effort to fully fund forest fires, to promote the healthy forest effort that we enacted on a bipartisan basis.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### MOTHER'S DAY

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this Sunday a lot of families will be celebrating a very special day, a day of joy, a day of thankfulness, and for some a day of sadness due to the fact that their loved ones, their mothers, have passed.

Restaurants are going to be packed for Sunday brunch. Living rooms are going to be full of fidgety children. Families are going to recall teasing stories, all to tell their moms that they love them.

Mother's Day is the busiest long-distance calling day of the year. It accounts for more than one-fifth of all of the floral purchases made for the holidays. I am looking forward to our own holiday with our family, going to church, celebrating Mother's Day with our immediate family, and then later in the day joining an extended family and some old friends for another Mother's Day dinner.

Celebrating moms is a tradition that stretches back millennia. Ancient Greeks celebrated a holiday in honor of Rhea, the mythological mother of gods. Ancient Romans celebrated their mother goddess symbol, Cybele, and in the British Isles and Celtic Europe, the people honored the goddess, Brigid, and later her successor, St. Brigid, in a spring tradition of motherhood.

Mother's Day in America got its start in West Virginia in 1858, led by the indefatigable Anna Reeves Jarvis, a local schoolteacher. After years of petitioning, Mother's Day finally became an official American holiday in 1914, and it was passed in the Congress as a joint resolution and signed by President Woodrow Wilson.

Today, 90 years later, Mother's Day is celebrated all over the world, not just in the United States—in Denmark, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Australia, Belgium.

Abraham Lincoln said of his mom: All that I am or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.

It is a sentiment that is shared by the humble and by the lofty, throughout the ages and across the continents. Human nature binds us to our mothers. The Bible instructs us to respect and obey our mothers, and in turn mothers give us that gift that there is no way to return, that ultimate gift, the gift of life.

I close on this tribute to Mother's Day and all the mothers who are listening and to all the families who have lost their mothers with a quote by the basketball legend Karim Abdul-Jabar. I think it speaks to how we all remember our moms—looking after us, taking care of all the little details, reminding us of the things we would miss as we are growing up, understanding all our unique attributes we might have, as we think of that basketball legend. Karim said:

My mother had to send me to the movies with my birth certificate so that I wouldn't have to pay the extra 50 cents the adults had to pay.

Yes, it is the moms who were thinking about what we never necessarily thought of, looking at each of us as those very special instruments of life.

So happy Mother's Day to all the mothers around the world and to my mom, who died 6 years ago. I miss her very much. To my wife Karyn's mom, Kathryn McLaughlin in Ft Worth, TX, happy Mother's Day; and of course most especially to my wife Karyn, who is the rock of our family, who keeps it all together.

#### MOTHER'S DAY

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, this coming Sunday is Mother's Day. In kindergartens across the Nation, small hands are being pressed against pink construction paper hearts, creating a somewhat smudgy record of loving hand prints for posterity. Those same small hands will clutch a crayon tightly in order to scribe in wobbly letters the heartfelt sentiments so beloved by Mothers—the three best words on earth: I love you.

Older children's efforts to honor their mothers may be more sophisticated, but the sentiment remains the same: I love you, Mother. Or Mom, Mommy, Mama, Ma, or Maw. The name may show some variation across the country, but the title remains a cherished one. The flowers, too, may show some variation, from the short-stemmed fistful of buttercups wilting in a sweaty young palm to the artistry of the floral arranger with the world's bounty of blossoms at his or her fingertips. And these days, the cards may range from time-honored construction paper classics through sweet and witty store-boughts, to animated e-mail extravaganzas.

Whatever the display laid at the mother's feet this Sunday, the old adage remains true: It is the thought that counts. Mothers, who so often put their children and husband first, and themselves always last, will surely be touched by the love reflected in the efforts to make her day a special one. From a plate of cold toast and runny home-cooked eggs to an elaborate Sunday restaurant brunch, the meal will taste the same to a mother on Mother's Day. It will taste of love.

It was just such a love that brought about the first Mother's Day, and the depth of the sentiment was and is such that this holiday continues to resonate among families today.

The first Mother's Day proclamation, I am proud to note, was issued by the Governor of West Virginia in 1910, but by 1911 every State had its own observances. Such is the depth of sentiment for mothers across the Nation that fueled the spread of Mother's Day observances like wildfires across the parched West.

The Mother's Day International Association was incorporated on December 12, 1912, for the purpose of furthering the observance of Mother's Day. By May 1913, the House of Representatives had adopted a resolution requesting that the President and other Federal Government officials wear a white carnation on Mother's Day. The following year, on May 8, 1914, the Congress adopted a joint resolution designating the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day and urging the U.S. Flag to be flown on Government buildings and private homes on that day "as a public expression of our love and reverence for the mothers of our country." President Woodrow Wilson issued the first proclamation making Mother's Day an official national holiday.

What inspired this outpouring of devotion and array of public displays of affection? A single West Virginia mother, Mrs. Anna Reese Jarvis, is at the heart of this story. Mrs. Jarvis was a minister's daughter. She taught Sunday school in the Andrews Methodist Church in Grafton, WV, for many years, while raising her children and caring for her neighbors in the difficult years following the Civil War.

Mrs. Jarvis's daughter, born in 1864 and also named Anna, was a devoted child. She remained close to her family and especially to her mother. Miss Jarvis graduated from the Female Seminary in Wheeling, WV, and taught in Grafton before moving with her family to Philadelphia, PA. When her mother died in Philadelphia in 1905, Miss Jarvis was deeply affected. She felt that children often neglected to appreciate their mothers enough while their mothers are still alive.

With the help of her friends, in 1907 she initiated a letter-writing campaign urging influential ministers, businessmen and congressmen to declare a national Mother's Day, hoping to increase respect for parents and strengthen family bonds. And such was the power of her message that her grassroots campaign took off, resulting in the national display of familial love that we will see this Sunday.

At that first Mother's Day observance in Grafton, Miss Jarvis supplied carnations to the church because they were her mother's favorite flower. White carnations were chosen because they represented sweetness, purity, and endurance of a mother's love. Over the years, red carnations have become the symbol of a living mother. White carnations now signify that, like Miss Jarvis's mother at the time of the first Mother's Day, one's mother has died.

Though not many people wear flowers these days, Mother's Day is a bonanza for the floral industry, just as it is for restaurants, the phone companies, greeting card companies, and jewelers. It is said that more long distance calls are made on Mother's Day than on any other single day of the year. Though Miss Jarvis might decry some of the more commercial aspects of today's Mother's Day celebrations, I think that she, too, would be pleased that through her efforts, so many people do make the effort to pay their respects and show their affection for their mothers.

We have so much to thank our mothers for, when we consider the enormous expenditure of time and effort that it takes to raise a child properly. Aside from the sometimes grueling routine that many mothers face every day just to stay abreast of regular family maintenance, there are the hours she cheerfully spends ensuring that homework is done, that chores are performed, that piano lessons or sports practices or dance classes are attended, or that cookies are baked and presents wrapped. There are also the loving times that a mother spends with her

children: washing hair, reading bedtime stories, saying prayers, comforting away bad dreams, kissing away hurts, encouraging dreams. It is a wonder that mothers find the time to do any of the other creative things they do, from sewing to scrap-booking, painting to pottery, reading to writing the letters that help to knit families together.

My own dear mother died when I was just a baby. I cannot recall the touch of her hand on my cheek, or the sound of her voice saying "I love you." But her angel face still smiles at me from an old photograph, and in her smile I can see the love that she still bears for me as she waits. No mother ever truly leaves you. Anna Jarvis knew that to be true when she conceived the notion of a national Mother's Day. She would not have us regret failing to show our love and appreciation to our mothers while we can.

I offer my thanks to all mothers on this Mother's Day. To my own mother, I say thank you for giving me life, and for thinking of me and my future even as your own short life was coming to a close. And to the great love of my life, Erma, the mother of my beautiful daughters, I say thank you. Thank you for mothering me even as you mothered our children. Your talent at your chosen career, and your devotion to it, continue to show themselves in the generations of our lovely and loving grandchildren and great grandchildren. If Miss Jarvis had not beaten me to it, my wife Erma certainly has provided ample inspiration for a national Mother's Day.

I close with the words of one of my favorite poems, one that I come back to each Mother's Day. It is called "Rock Me To Sleep," and it was written by Elizabeth Akers Allen (1823-1911).

#### ROCK ME TO SLEEP

Backward, turn backward, O time, in your flight,

Make me a child again just for to-night!  
Mother, come back from the echoless shore,  
Take me again to your heart as of yore;  
Kiss from my forehead the furrows of care,  
Smooth the few silver threads out of my hair;

Over my slumbers your loving watch keep:  
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!  
Backward, flow backward, oh, tide of the years!

I am so weary of toil and of tears—  
Toil without recompense, tears all in vain—  
Take them, and give me my childhood again!  
I have grown weary of dust and decay—  
Weary of flinging my soul-wealth away;  
Weary of sowing for others to reap;  
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!  
Tired of the hollow, the base, the untrue,  
Mother, O Mother, my heart calls for you!  
Many a summer the grass has grown green,  
Blossomed and faded, our faces between:  
Yet, with strong yearning and passionate pain,

Long I to-night for your presence again.  
Come from the silence so long and so deep:  
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!  
Over my heart, in the days that are flown,  
No love like mother-love ever has shone;  
No other worship abides and endures—

Faithful, unselfish, and patient like yours:  
None like a mother can charm away pain  
From the sick soul and the world-weary brain.

Slumber's soft calms o'er my heavy lids creep;

Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!  
Come, let your brown hair, just lighted with gold,

Fall on your shoulders again as of old;  
Let it drop over my forehead to-night,  
Shading my faint eyes away from the light;  
For with its sunny-edged shadows once more  
Haply will throng the sweet visions of yore;  
Lovingly, softly, its bright billows sweep:  
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!  
Mother, dear Mother, the years have been long

Since I last listened your lullaby song:  
Sing, then, and unto my soul it shall seem  
Womanhood's years have been only a dream.  
Clasped to your heart in a loving embrace,  
With your light lashes just sweeping my face,

Never hereafter to wake or to weep;  
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

TRIBUTE TO STAFF SERGEANT GEORGE S. RENTSCHLER

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I pay tribute today to the patriotism and the courage of SSG George Rentschler of Louisville, KY. SSG Rentschler was killed a month ago on April 7, 2004.

While his family, friends and his country mourn the loss of this man, I offer a few words to praise the inestimable value of his sacrifice. In this time of war, my colleagues, we can all expect to hear reports of the tragic loss of life. It would be unrealistic to expect that we can fight a war and not lose lives. SSG Rentschler knew this. And knowing this he went forth into battle for the love of his country.

To serve your country when you know that it might be the cause of your death, involves sacrifice. It means that you are brave, honorable, patriotic, virtuous. It also means that you are willing to make the final sacrifice should the necessity arise. The men and women serving our country, as SSG George Rentschler did, are heroes who are protecting America to preserve our freedoms in these times of continuing terrorist threat across the world.

The death of SSG Rentschler reveals to the world that this man was a true hero who sacrificed for our country. We have lost a man of courage and generosity. He was role model for all of us and will be missed.

#### ON SECTION 8 RULE CHANGES

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, We have all heard of the war on poverty, but I fear that 40 years after that war began, there is a new war afoot, a war on people in poverty. And the latest assault in this war threatens to leave thousands of people homeless. I am speaking about the Bush administration's plan to make substantial changes in the way our Government helps our poorest citizens secure housing.