

If everything else failed to fail, adding an amendment to a bill to be taken to conference by Chairman McCain was the iron-clad guarantee it would be rejected. And in fact, that is exactly what Senator McCain stated on the floor of the Senate. He stated emphatically, and quite predictably, that if the ethanol or energy amendment passed, he would drop it in conference.

So the Democrat leader's amendment was designed in so many ways to fail, and thus, to block his own amendment. And guess who gets the blame? Republicans.

Farmers lose. All energy consumers lose. But if the block and blame game works and Republicans lose, too, then it is all worth it, because Congressional Democrats win.

The block and blame game.

An interesting exchange occurred between Chairman McCain and Senator Dorgan during the debate of this amendment. Senator McCain said, "I am sure there may be a headline in South Dakota that says: Senator Daschle fights for ethanol."

Senator Dorgan responded, "Senator Daschle has not offered an amendment for the purpose of a headline in South Dakota."

Guess what. As soon as his amendment failed, Senator Daschle did issue a press release. And not only that, the press release attacked Republicans.

The release, according to the Congressional Quarterly, was headlined, and "Washington Republicans abandon ethanol."

The block and blame game: hurts the farmers, hurts Americans, but helps the Democrats.

I would like to share a statement issued by the National Corn Growers following the vote:

Yesterday, during consideration of legislation dealing with internet sales taxes, Senator Daschle offered an amendment to create a Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS). Senator Domenici offered S. 2095 as a second degree amendment to the Daschle amendment. S. 2095 contains the RFS as well as other energy provisions. NCGA will support all efforts to pass an energy bill that contains an RFS and addresses the serious problem our nation faces regarding energy. We again call upon Congress to set aside partisan bickering and to pass an energy bill.

I agree wholeheartedly with the National Corn Growers Association. We have serious problems facing our nation, and we have several very important bills aimed at addressing these problems that are falling victim to the block and blame game.

I wish that what I was told by a Democratic lobbyist, about the strategy to block everything this year . . . I wish that it were not true. I hope that the Democratic leaders will have a change of heart and a change of campaign strategy that allows vital pieces of legislation to be signed by the President this year, and then let the election be fought over who has the best ideas or who will do better if they take control of Congress or the White House.

SECTION 8 HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I am pleased to join Senators SCHUMER, KENNEDY, REED, and others as an original co-sponsor of this important legislation, which would clarify the intent of a provision in the fiscal year 2004 appropriations law regarding the Section 8 housing voucher program.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD, has claimed that language in the FY2004 appropriations law requires it to distribute voucher funding in a manner that leaves no alternative but to reduce assistance by \$191 million nationwide. Subsequently, it issued a notice on April 22, 2004 that put in place a new system for funding Section 8 vouchers that differed greatly from its usual practice. In the past, HUD would reimburse housing authorities for the cost of providing housing to low-income individuals based on their real, current costs. Under the April 22 guidelines, however, the reimbursements will be gauged to August 1, 2003, plus a small adjustment for inflation. In addition, the change will be retroactive to January 1, 2004, which will create even further confusion for those public housing authorities whose vouchers are already issued and whose budget are already finalized.

I strongly believe that that HUD's interpretation of the FY2004 appropriations law is both unduly restrictive and is in sharp contradiction to the intent of Congress to fully fund Section 8 program. Despite HUD's protestations that Congress forced its hand to make these cuts, Congress in fact added funding to the Section 8 program in FY2004 so that HUD could fully fund all vouchers currently in use. Congress appropriated \$17.6 billion in FY2004 to renew expiring Section 8 contracts, or \$1.4 billion above the amount requested by the administration. Although the FY2004 appropriations law did make some modest changes in how voucher funding is disbursed, nothing in the law mandated that HUD take the unprecedented step of cutting housing assistance for senior citizens, the disabled, and working families and individuals with the greatest housing needs.

It therefore makes little sense that HUD would insist on reading the FY2004 appropriations law in such a way as to produce more homelessness across the nation. My own State of Connecticut will be especially hurt if HUD's April 22 notice is not changed to reflect the program commitments of housing authorities. Many public housing authorities in Connecticut are anticipating that the HUD proposal will result in a significant reduction in funds needed to honor existing contracts as well as effectively administer the voucher program. The current average Housing Assistance Payment for many agencies has typically increased beyond the August 1, 2003 "benchmark" plus the Annual Adjustment Factor. In most cases, this result is not due to increases in local rental rates but re-

flects the rise in unemployment among Section 8 participants and thus an increase in the public housing authority's share of the rent.

The impact of the April 22, 2004 rule on Connecticut will be particularly severe given that it has the sixth most expensive rental housing market in the nation and very few vacancies to meet the needs of low-income individuals. Coupled with the administration's proposed FY2005 budget cuts and block granting of the Section 8 program, which could adversely affect over 4,000 existing voucher holders in Connecticut, it is difficult to understand why HUD would be trying to balance its budget on the backs of low-income Americans.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's April 22, 2004 notice is therefore just another salvo in the administration's war on the Section 8 program. Section 8 provides more than just rent assistance for low and moderate wage individuals in high cost housing markets. It also helps to sustain the employee base in urban markets, keeps wages for jobs in the service and manufacturing sectors competitive, enables corporations to remain and expand in their communities, and reduces the strain on vehicular transportation systems.

In an economy that is creating few jobs and producing scant affordable housing, HUD should be pursuing policies to ensure that no family in America loses its housing assistance. HUD's April 22 notice should therefore be changed, so I urge my colleagues to support this urgent legislation.

MANUEL RODRIGUEZ GOMEZ, MD

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Manuel Rodriguez Gomez, MD, Emeritus Professor of Pediatric Neurology at Mayo Medical School in Rochester, Minnesota, for his lifetime of education and as one of the first physicians in the United States to champion tuberous sclerosis complex, TSC. Dr. Gomez is considered by many to be the "father" of tuberous sclerosis complex research because of his many contributions to the field of TSC research and passionate patient care. Through his work to describe TSC over the lifespan of an individual with the disorder and the extraordinary resources provided by the Mayo Clinic, Dr. Gomez published extensively on his growing knowledge of the multiple organ involvement in TSC. He passionately encouraged his colleagues to not only provide medical care for individuals with TSC, but to also share their knowledge through conferences, publications and the three editions of the book, "Tuberous Sclerosis Complex." This book is considered by his peers to be the premier medical textbook for care of TSC patients. For his dedication to the many individuals he treated throughout his medical practice and his guidance of the Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance, Dr. Gomez made the world a

better place for individuals living with TSC by providing exceptional medical care and guidance through the many challenges associated with living with the disease. His quest to better understand the nature and cause of the disease will benefit all patients diagnosed with this condition and possible unlock the secret to a cure that will eradicate this disease once and for all. Because of his dedication to his patients and his contribution to the research community, it is my pleasure to rise today, and offer this tribute to Dr. Gomez.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING ERWIN ARNDT

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the National World War II Memorial will be dedicated here in Washington on the Saturday before Memorial Day. It is a stunningly beautiful monument, located midway between the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument. It is a long-overdue salute—an expression of profound gratitude—to the millions of Americans who served their country with courage, sacrifice, and selflessness in that war.

I would like to share with my Senate colleagues a remarkable story about how the small community of Walnut, IA, has expressed its gratitude to a local veteran of the Second World War, Erwin Arndt.

Mr. Arndt returned from the war to serve his community as an electrician, a volunteer firefighter, a city council member, and commander of the local AMVETS unit. Just about everybody in Walnut knows and respects Mr. Arndt. And there was much concern when he suffered a series of strokes over the past year.

All too typically, a man in Mr. Arndt's condition would have no choice but to become a dependent in a nursing home. But friends and neighbors in Walnut came to his rescue in a truly remarkable and inspiring way. They joined hands to give him the wherewithal and assistance he needed to continue living independently in his apartment.

A local restaurant helped to provide daily meals. Several citizens helped Mr. Arndt to keep his apartment clean and orderly, and take him to medical appointments. Still others organized shifts to keep him company in his apartment. Several especially kind citizens got together to purchase a motorized chair to help Mr. Arndt get around.

It was truly a community effort—an act of collective kindness that I find truly inspiring. As you can imagine, Mr. Arndt's daughter, Karen Dewinter, is overwhelmed with gratitude for what the people of Walnut did for her father. She told me that she was especially touched that on her father's birthday, the local AMVET auxiliary held a party at a cafe, where they brought cards from local elementary and preschool children.

I express my own gratitude to the people of Walnut, IA, for their extraordinary caring and kindness toward Erwin Arndt. Like millions of Americans of what Tom Brokaw has labeled "the Greatest Generation," Mr. Arndt served our Nation with dedication in both war and peace.

In their own special way, the people of Walnut have said thank you to this veteran and beloved member of the community. I would like to add my own gratitude, not just to Mr. Arndt but also to the good citizens of Walnut.●

FRIENDS OF THE DES PLAINES PUBLIC LIBRARY

• Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to honor The Friends of the Des Plaines Public Library, an organization that has been serving the Des Plaines community for the past 50 years.

The Friends of the Des Plaines Public Library was founded in April 1954 by a planning committee of the northwest suburban branch of the American Association of University Women and members of several parent organizations from Des Plaines area schools.

The initial objectives of The Friends of the Des Plaines Public Library were to stimulate interest in the library and record historical data for the town of Des Plaines. Much of the historical data first recorded by The Friends has since become part of the collection of the Des Plaines Historical Society.

Over the course of the past 50 years, The Friends of the Des Plaines Public Library has come to play an invaluable role in the ongoing operations of the institution and community they serve. Members have volunteered to straighten book shelves, provided rainy day plastic bags to help protect books on loan, and held voter registration drives.

The Friends of the Des Plaines Public Library holds ongoing book sales to provide financial support to the library, enabling the library to purchase additional resources and provide educational programming for the citizens of Des Plaines. In the past, the proceeds of these book sales have enabled the library to purchase computers and audio visual equipment.

I congratulate the Friends of the Des Plaines Public Library as it celebrates its 50th anniversary. I am confident that this organization will continue its long tradition of promoting and fostering a lifelong commitment to reading and education in the community of Des Plaines long into the future.●

THE LIFE OF AN AWARD-WINNING COLUMNIST, REPORTER, AUTHOR

• Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I honor the life of an award-winning columnist, reporter and author. My friend, Bill Fiset, lived a long, distinguished life of 73 years, serving his country in World War II. In addition to his honorable ca-

reer, he was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather.

Bill Fiset was born March 15, 1921 in Seattle, WA and attended Queen Anne High School and the University of Washington, where he was a member of the Delta Kappa Epsilon Fraternity and a member of the golf team. At 21, he was a reporter and wrote a column called "Strolling Around the Town" for the Seattle Times.

At 22, Fiset saw foreign service in Africa as an ambulance driver in the American Field Service, an organization giving medical aid to the Allies before the U.S. entered the war. He resigned the Field Service in Egypt in April 1942, and enlisted with the Royal Armored Service Corps. As a second lieutenant in the British 8th Army in North Africa, he served as a machine gunner on an armored lorry defending convoys from Italian bombers between Tobruk and Suez. Fiset also filed field reports as a war correspondent.

Then America entered WWII. With refugees flooding African transports, Fiset luckily used his recent gunnery experience to sign on with an American freighter as a member of the gun crew, reaching the U.S. 3 months later.

In October, 1942, he joined the Navy. He did his preflight training at St. Mary's College in Moraga, CA, and served as a blimp pilot in Airship Squadron 32 on a coastal submarine patrol stationed out of Moffet Field, California.

After the war, Fiset worked as a reporter for the Oakland Post Enquirer from 1946 to 1950 and joined the San Francisco Call Bulletin as a staff reporter from 1950 to 1952.

Fiset then wrote for the Oakland Tribune from March 1952 to 1955 as a general assignment reporter covering such infamous murder and kidnap trials as Burton Abbott, Carl Chessman; and Barbara Graham, Jack Santo and Emmett Perkins of the so-called Mountain Murder Mob. He also witnessed and reported on their executions at San Quentin Prison.

In 1956 he wrote the Tribune's first television column where he became internationally syndicated and was invited to do walk-on acting parts in "Route 66" and "Tales of Wells Fargo." He began a general column for the Tribune in 1962. That same year, he was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize and won many awards for his writing. His award-winning public service booklets "This Is Sherry" and "Want To Be Smart," written by Fiset and illustrated by artist Ray Marta were discreetly designed to warn children and parents about the dangers of kidnapping and child sex offenders. Over a million copies were distributed free worldwide and locally by the Tribune, the Bay Area Board of Education, and local police departments. The efforts earned a commendation by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover as, "a graphic message which may mean the difference between life and death for countless