

plus-year-old man came to that meeting just to deliver that message: I am old, I am blind, and Social Security is the only thing I have.

It is so important. This is not just some usual debate. This debate about Social Security is about who we are as a country; about whether we will stand up for things that matter; whether we are going to stand up for people who have lived their lives in this country and helped build America and now reach declining income years and are told they can count on Social Security. Yes, they can count on it, as long as we don't let those who come along and decide they want to privatize it begin to take it apart because they never liked it in the first place.

Mr. President, I see my colleague is waiting to speak. I was not even intending to come over until my attention was piqued by a big, old sign that said, "Stop Raiding Social Security Trust Funds," and I thought: Well, that is a curious message from those who supported a fiscal policy that helped drain the trust funds in the first place. I thought I would mention that and talk a little about how important this Social Security fight has been and why the American people—not the Congress, why the American people—have said no to the President and others who want to privatize this important program.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THUNE). The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I join my colleague in coming here to speak for a moment about Social Security. Just as my esteemed colleague from North Dakota said he had not originally intended to speak tonight, I did not intend to speak as well. But for all of us who are so proud of the great American success story called Social Security, and for all of us who understand how it does represent the best about us, we want to have an opportunity to say that tonight because there has been a lot of misinformation, unfortunately, I believe, a mischaracterization on the other side of the aisle.

The fact is, Social Security is based on what is best about us: You work all your life. You pay into a system. And then you know you have dignity in your retirement. You also know, because this is really an insurance policy, that if you become disabled, Heaven forbid, Social Security can step in for you, for your family. If the wage earner in the family loses their life, Heaven forbid, their children, their spouse are able to receive assistance to be able to help them from moving back into poverty, because it is an insurance system. It is basically an economic insurance policy. And it has been one of the great American success stories.

The reality is, without Social Security, about 48 percent of those who are now on Social Security would be in poverty. Today, with Social Security, about 9 percent of older Americans and

the disabled are in poverty. We know this number needs to be lower. But this is a great American success story.

At a time when there is so much upheaval in so many people's lives—I know in my home State of Michigan, my great State of Michigan, there are so many families today that feel the rug is being pulled out from under them because the jobs they have had and worked hard at all their lives are either going overseas or they are being told they are going to have to work for \$9 or \$10 an hour. Their health care costs are going up or maybe they are losing their insurance. Their pensions are threatened or maybe gone because of the bankruptcies of companies that have then dumped the pensions into a pension guaranty fund.

With all of this insecurity and challenge families face in fighting to keep the American dream and the American way of life, the one constant we have had is knowing that there is Social Security, that we have paid into a system, and that it will be there for us. There is absolutely no reason that Social Security will not be there for us, as long as we do not privatize it or undermine it, as has been proposed by colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

We are in a situation today where Social Security and the security of Social Security is needed more than ever. I will never forget talking with a group of people who were mid-level executives at Enron—I know, unfortunately, this story can be told and will be told across Michigan as well—folks who worked all their lives, invested in the company, as they were told to do, did all the right things, they are near retirement, and now it is gone.

One gentleman, with tears in his eyes, said to me: Thank God for Social Security; that is all I have left. Too many Americans find themselves in that situation now. I believe we should be doing something about that as well. Earlier this evening, I spoke on the floor about what we need to do to turn that around: enforcing trade policies, changing the way we fund health care, investing in education and innovation, protecting the pensions of those who have worked hard all their lives. But the reality is, Social Security is a very important part of that picture.

Now, it is a value as well as a program. It represents what is best about us. And we have choices about whether we want to keep it secure and keep it as a priority. Back during the budget debate this year, our ranking member, Senator CONRAD, and I offered an amendment to secure Social Security first before going on with other tax cuts that have been proposed for those most blessed in our country, those, in fact, who do not have to worry about whether Social Security will be there for them.

We indicated, as you can see by looking at this chart, that in order to keep Social Security secure for the next 75 years, it will cost \$4 trillion. That is

compared to the President's tax cuts: If they are made permanent—the overwhelming majority of them going to the top "incomers," those most blessed economically in our country—it will cost \$11.6 trillion, if we decide as the majority, our Republican colleagues, appear to be doing, to extend these tax cuts permanently.

If we instead were to say, wait a minute, we are going to fully fund Social Security first before any of this happens—even if we said to those most blessed in our country, instead of \$11.6 trillion in tax breaks, let us take \$4 trillion off of that—they would have \$7.6 trillion. It seems to me, at a minimum, that would be a choice worth making in order to make sure every single American knows that Social Security is secure.

All of the decisions we make in this Chamber are based on our values and our philosophy. Social Security represents our basic belief that we are in it together as a country, that it does matter what happens to other people. We are not in it alone.

I believe the efforts being proposed on the other side of the aisle represent a very different philosophy that says: You are on your own, buddy, unless you are our buddy.

The reality is that Social Security represents a value that says we are in it together and that together America can do better. That is what Social Security is about. It has worked. It has proved the philosophy that together America does better.

So I am hopeful our colleagues will choose, in the waning days of this session, to move on to join us in the great debate of keeping American jobs in America, supporting our American businesses, our American manufacturers that need our help now, and making sure we have a pension bill that works for all of our businesses and all of our workers, showing that we value and want to make sure the promises of pensions, which so many workers have paid into all of their lives, are kept. Let's work on that rather than undermining a great American success story called Social Security.

DAVID GUNN

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, last week the Amtrak Board of Directors voted to remove Amtrak's president, David Gunn. I think that action is regrettable, and I commend Mr. Gunn for his leadership during his 3½ years at Amtrak's helm.

Amtrak has always been a money-losing proposition. I am afraid that it may always be so. But no one should hold Amtrak's president accountable entirely for this fact. Congress and the administration are also accountable. Despite repeated efforts to reauthorize and reform this money-losing proposition, we have not had the collective will to make the hard decisions that need to be made to finally turn Amtrak around—and that includes altering

Amtrak's route system so that it operates where it actually attracts ridership.

I have known many of Amtrak's presidents over the years and in my judgment, David Gunn was one of the most capable. Not only did he hold an impressive and lengthy career in the rail industry prior to coming out of retirement to take the Amtrak job, I found him to be a man of integrity.

When he testified before hearings I chaired in the Senate Commerce Committee, Mr. Gunn didn't mince words. When I first asked him about the so-called "glidepath to self-sufficiency" which his predecessor continually touted, David Gunn didn't hesitate to inform the committee that it was a sham.

Mr. Gunn and I didn't always see eye-to-eye. Indeed, I disagreed strongly with his unyielding views about the continuation of Amtrak's long distance trains. But I respected the fact that he always spoke his views even when it meant he wouldn't be telling people what they wanted to hear. He faced head on the many problems with Amtrak's escalating costs under control. Again, he is a man of integrity and I commend him for his service.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On January, 25, 2000 in New York City, NY, Melissa Hart had just left a local hotel when eight men threw her to the ground and attacked her. One of the assailants held Ms. Hart by her throat and beat her head against the sidewalk, while the other assailants beat her with their fists. The attackers stripped her of her coat, and stole her cell phone and approximately \$350 from her purse. According to police, the motivation for the attack was that Ms. Hart was a transgender person.

I believe that our Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, in all circumstances, from threats to them at home. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a major step forward in achieving that goal. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

FISCAL YEAR 2006 ENERGY AND WATER APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, although I recognize the important programs funded by the fiscal year 2006

Energy and Water appropriations conference report, on balance, I could not support the bill. The conference report provides \$50 million in funding for the Department of Energy to develop a plan for reprocessing spent nuclear fuel and to select sites suitable for housing reprocessing facilities. This provision was not in the Senate version of the bill and thus was not debated in the Senate. Because reprocessing raises serious environmental, fiscal, and proliferation concerns, this provision should have, at the very least, been the subject of an open and extensive congressional debate before we simply proceeded down the path directed by the report language.

I am also concerned that the Energy and Water appropriations report extends the authorization of funding for the Animas-La Plata project. This extension of funding authorization—which does not belong in an appropriations bill—is contrary to assurances I received in 2000 when the Colorado Ute Indian Water Rights Settlement Act was amended.

NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to announce the beginning of National American Indian Heritage Month. This November we will honor the achievements made by American Indians and Alaskan Natives throughout the history of our country.

For many years, Native Americans strived for an official recognition of their people. The first observance of a day celebrating the contributions of American Indians occurred on the second Saturday of May 1916 in New York State. In 1990, Congress, with my support, passed a joint resolution declaring November 1990 as National American Indian Heritage Month, dedicated to appreciating the impact of Native Americans on the foundation and development of our Nation.

Rooted in the history and culture of South Dakota, as well as the United States, lies the steadfast influence of the Native American people. The Great Sioux Nation of South Dakota consists of nine separate tribes, the Cheyenne River Sioux, the Crow Creek Sioux, the Flandreau Santee Sioux, the Lower Brule Sioux, the Oglala Sioux, the Rosebud Sioux, the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, the Standing Rock Sioux, and the Yankton Sioux. I would like to pay tribute to the more than 62,000 Native Americans in South Dakota and the Native Americans throughout our country whose presence and traditions have enriched our communities.

With the commencement of National American Indian Heritage Month, we have been given an excellent opportunity to educate ourselves about the cultural and historical influence of American Indians and Alaskan Natives. In November, I encourage everyone to join South Dakota in our reverence of Native Americans with the hope that

our Government can continue to make the concerns of American Indians a priority and to ensure that their freedoms and way of life are preserved.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING PAULA YEAGER

• Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life of a great woman, Paula Yeager, who died last Wednesday after a long battle with cancer. For 6 years, Paula served the State of Indiana as the executive director of the Indiana Wildlife Federation, IWF. She was a true conservationist, a dedicated public servant and a wonderful mother. Her colleagues, friends, and family will miss her dearly, and I know that sentiment is shared by countless others across Indiana and the country.

A career travel agent, Paula first applied for a job with the IWF in order to work on meaningful issues—a decision influenced by her experience with breast cancer. During her 6-year tenure with the group, Paula overcame her relative inexperience and became a successful activist in conservation issues through hard work, an unwavering commitment to diplomacy and tireless advocacy. As executive director, Paula mended the State federation's relationship with the National Wildlife Federation, NWF, improved the group's profile with lawmakers, and confronted many important issues, including mercury contamination and wetlands preservation.

Her ability to unite people with differing interests earned her a reputation for diplomacy, and that effort paid off when the Indiana Department of National Resources, IDNR, banned fenced deer hunting in August. The former IDNR director called Paula the person "most responsible in Indiana for leading the effort to ban canned hunting."

Honored twice with the IWF's Presidents Award, Paula was named the Conservationist of the Year in 2001 by the IDNR, and this past summer the NWF recognized Paula with their Conservation Service Citation.

There is a saying that life is not about what you take out of it but what you put back in. Paula lived that sentiment to the fullest. Her work made Indiana a better place to live for all of us. For that, we will always be grateful to the courageous travel agent who decided it was time to make a difference through the IWF.

Indiana lost a great citizen last week. It is my sad honor to enter the name of Paula Yeager in the RECORD of the Senate for her service to Indiana.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. SCOTT MASON ROULIER

• Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I rise to pay tribute to a great educator and a great Arkansan, Dr. Scott Mason Roulier. Dr. Roulier is being honored as the 2005 Arkansas Professor of the