

probably 400 or 500 volunteers who had come from around the country from their various Red Cross entities, I assume from about every State in the country.

I mention this because volunteers are the lifeblood of the American Red Cross. I have seen it directly in my own life, both as a doctor, as a physician, of course, as a citizen, as well as a Senator. These volunteers affected my life in a very direct way. I told them yesterday, as I ran the multiorgan transplant center at Vanderbilt, we did heart transplants, we did lung transplants, bone marrow transplants, we transplanted pancreases, we transplanted livers, transplanted kidneys. None of that could take place without the Red Cross because all of the blood that is required in terms of transfusions—liver transplants especially, probably heart transplants, secondly, and lung transplants, all of that blood comes from where? The Red Cross, from volunteers who manage the Red Cross facility and from the people who actually donate their blood.

I would not have done all of the heart transplants I have done if it were not for the Red Cross, the volunteers associated with the Red Cross. People do not think about how much we depend on the volunteers.

Jump, fast forward, 15 years and go to New Orleans. About 3 days after the levees broke, I was in New Orleans, more as a physician, as a volunteer, than as a Senator. I was in the airport there in September with evacuees who lost everything—their medicines, sometimes their family members, clothes, their home. Sitting there on the baggage belts, coming in on the baggage carts, being unloaded from helicopters, all they needed at that point in time was someone to talk to, for the most part—some needed medical help—someone to talk to and a hot meal to be comforted, some semblance of security, having lost everything.

So who was there? Who was there right up front? It was the Red Cross. Once again, and almost instantaneously, shelters sprung up in Tennessee. But Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, and Texas, of course, all opened their doors to the gulf coast evacuees.

By the end of that week, 675 Red Cross shelters had opened up in 23 States, which was the single largest response to a natural disaster in Red Cross history. Remarkable. Remarkable.

Then, jump forward about a few months to what happened last month in Tennessee. We had tornadoes that came right through middle Tennessee and all through west Tennessee about 2 or 3 weeks apart. Thousands of homes were damaged. Many people lost their lives.

Once again, it was the Red Cross that came in and set their trucks, had food cooked, talked to people, arranged for places for people to stay who had just lost their homes. There were tens of

thousands of meals served. People were taken care of. And there was mental health care in terms of the devastation people felt, the depression people felt. They came to that Red Cross van to be able to talk to somebody.

I mention those three examples because I have seen them. I saw it in Tennessee when I was back there talking to people whose homes had been destroyed. I saw it in New Orleans, 3 days after those levees broke. And I saw it for years and years and years, for 20 years of my life, when I saw it every day, working in hospitals, with that donation of blood.

It is the 125th anniversary of the Red Cross. They had a gala last night. Karyn, my wife, was one of the co-chairs for that gala. We were there to see the generosity of people who have volunteered and also have contributed. One person who was honored last night had given \$9 million—one person had given \$9 million—to the Red Cross.

It takes a lot of people working together. But all of that does provide a symbol of hope and compassion and strength and endurance. It is going to take the continued commitment of those volunteers to continue that, so I do want to thank you, those of you who might be listening who have volunteered and will volunteer for the American Red Cross.

MOTHER'S DAY

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, one last item, a very important statement, and then we will close down. But it is very important and people will recognize why.

This Sunday, millions of families around the world will celebrate their moms. I was changing my reservations around. I know a lot of people are scurrying around for reservations. I should be cooking at home that day, I guess, but I am looking for an appropriate place for reservations, shifting it from Sunday afternoon to Sunday evening.

Restaurants will be packed on Sunday. Living rooms will be packed full, crammed full of aunts and uncles and fidgety children.

Families will warmly "remember when" to show their moms they love them. I have three boys, and they let me know all the time how much they love their mom. But I don't know where all three boys are going to be. They are going to be traveling all over the country today, so I am trying to get them together as well—all the challenges of Mother's Day.

Mother's Day, as we all know, is the busiest long distance calling day of the year. It accounts for more than one-fifth of all the floral purchases made for the holidays that 1 day.

We typically start the day by going to church and then gathering either in the afternoon or the evening—a tradition that millions and millions and millions of people will celebrate and have celebrated over the years.

The celebrations of our moms have gone back millennia. The ancient

Greeks celebrated a holiday in honor of a mythological mother of gods. Ancient Romans celebrated their mother goddess symbol. In the British Isles and Celtic Europe, the people honored the goddess Brigid in a spring celebration of motherhood.

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

Today, 90 years later, Mother's Day is celebrated all over the world—all over the world—including Denmark, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Australia, and Belgium.

It is celebrated by the humble and by the proud throughout the ages and across continents.

Abraham Lincoln said of his mom:

All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.

Human nature does bind us to our mothers. The Bible instructs us to respect and obey them. Mothers give us the gift we can never return—life itself.

I will close with a quote by the basketball legend Kareem Abdul Jabar. His mom knew him well, and I suspect never stopped looking after him. He once confessed:

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

I do want to wish a happy Mother's Day to all of the mothers of the world.

To my own mother, who I miss very much, her daily image comes down on just about everything I do in terms of what she might have done, what she would do, what she would whisper into my ear to do.

To my own wife, Karyn, the mother of our three boys, Jonathan, Harrison, and Bryan, I say thank you, I love you. You are the rock that holds our family together and makes everything possible.

TRIBUTE TO DAVID WILLIAMS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to the Kentucky Senate President, David Williams. He is a master legislator, a fighter for the people of Kentucky, and a true friend.

David has served the people of the 16th Senate District since 1987, and has served as Senate President since 2000. In his leadership position, he is one of the dominant figures in Kentucky politics. David and I have worked together on many issues important to the Commonwealth over the years, and I have always been impressed by his knowledge, ability, and talent to persuade others. David defends his ideas and his principles well, and as a result has positively influenced much of the legislation that comes out of the state capital.

Every Kentuckian benefits from having David Williams as Senate President. This year, the Kentucky State

Senate had a productive and beneficial session under his helm. I ask unanimous consent to print in the RECORD an article that appeared in the Lexington Herald-Leader on May 8, 2006, that details his recent accomplishments. I ask my fellow Senators to join me in thanking David Williams for his service to the people of Kentucky.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

POWER POLITICS HAS A NEW CAPTAIN

(By Ryan Alessi)

FRANKFORT.—For better or for worse, this was Senate President David Williams' General Assembly session.

Williams, the commanding and strategic-minded Republican from Burkesville, has gradually established himself as the dominant personality in the legislature since taking the helm of the upper chamber six years ago.

But during this year's session, which wrapped up last month, Williams played multiple starring roles.

He was the deal maker—adding more money in the budget for the University of Kentucky and ensuring that one of Gov. Ernie Fletcher's priorities, the addition of two school days, was approved.

He was a facilitator. Just when most everyone thought a seat-belt enforcement bill was dead, Williams tackled the measure—another key priority of Fletcher—on to less controversial legislation, which eventually passed.

And early in the session, Democrats praised him for allowing bipartisan proposals relating to mine safety and a ban on protests at military funerals.

He also was a lightning rod for criticism, notably the controversy over the University of the Cumberlands.

It was Williams who inserted \$10 million into the budget for construction of a pharmacy school on the campus of the Baptist-run university in Williamsburg, which is in his Senate district. Another \$1 million would go to scholarships at the pharmacy school.

The revelation about public funds going to a private university sparked some outcries, particularly after the school expelled a student for announcing on a Web site that he is gay. Williams has defended the funding.

And an ongoing rhetorical feud between Williams and Supreme Court Chief Justice Joseph Lambert provided an interesting sidebar to the legislature's work, as Williams sparked debates about separation of powers between the legislative and judicial branches.

Throughout the 60-day session, all roads seemed to lead through Williams.

"They led through me or over me?" joked Williams, who at times comes off as affable and self-deprecating, and at others as defiant and argumentative.

He acknowledged that he tried to approach 2006 differently than recent sessions that digressed into bickering and stalemate among the legislative leaders over key issues—especially the budget.

"I felt like in the past, I had been drawn into a few confrontations that I shouldn't have gotten into. I don't think it was constructive to the institution," Williams said.

That's not to say he remained above the fray.

The last week of the session was a particularly grueling test of Williams' restraint. Lawmakers were trying to finalize details of the budget while scrambling to pass the last batch of other bills, including a proposal to lessen the tax burden on certain small businesses.

As Williams attempted to ram through the Senate's version of that tax-relief plan, Democratic Sen. Tim Shaughnessy vehemently objected, at one point declaring: "I don't trust you guys."

So Williams switched off Shaughnessy's microphone.

In the end, negotiations between Senate Republicans and House Democrats crumbled on the small-business tax issue—one of a handful of key priorities pegged by both parties that failed.

But the main goal—passing the state's two-year, \$18.1 billion spending plan—was achieved. And negotiations between House Democratic and Senate Republican leaders again proved to be a stage for Williams.

For instance, House Democrats first included \$17.5 million in their budget draft to repair a dam on the Kentucky River.

The Senate stripped that funding in its version.

During later closed-door negotiations between the two chambers' leaders, Williams was the first to emerge to tell reporters that they had restored the funds and allowed the Kentucky River Authority to use \$33 million in additional fee money to fix more dams.

Senate Republicans often gain the upper hand during such budget negotiations because Williams and Majority Floor Leader Dan Kelly of Springfield usually convey a united front, lawmakers say.

Sen. Ernesto Scorsone, a Lexington Democrat, said that's because Williams "controls the party caucus."

But Williams noted that it's easier for Senate Republicans to get on the same page because there's just 21 of them, compared to 56 House Democrats.

"It would appear to me that the Democratic negotiators generally do not have a unified plan or plan of action. There are about five or six strong personalities," he said. "They don't seem to come to a consensus before they come to the table."

Others say that the Senate Republican leaders have a knack for putting their own stamp on just about every key bill.

"David and Sen. Kelly are the driving force behind all the legislation that comes out, no matter where it originates," said Rep. Stan Lee, a Lexington Republican.

As a result, many legislators have dubbed Williams the most powerful man in Frankfort, with more effect than even the governor.

"David knows what he wants and goes out and gets it. I don't think the governor knows exactly what he wants, and certainly doesn't know how to get it," said Scorsone. "Fletcher's future, in terms of legislative success, is very much in the hands of David Williams."

The governor's staff disagreed, saying Fletcher has stood on his own.

"Governor Fletcher's record of accomplishments speaks for itself. His style is to build consensus and find areas of common ground with members of the assembly," said chief of staff Stan Cave in a statement.

Williams, who has said he supports Fletcher's re-election bid in '07, is deferential, noting that Fletcher missed a month of the session battling complications from a gallstone and pancreatitis.

"It's hard to compare management styles," he said. "Obviously the governor, because of his illness, was not around a lot at crucial times."

Williams, meanwhile, rarely missed a cue at those critical points.

"I feel I had the most productive session I've ever had," he said.

that I inadvertently missed the vote on cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 22, the Medical Care Access Protection Act of 2006, due to unavoidable airline flight delays. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Americans are going to spend \$2.3 trillion this year on health care. One out of every three dollars does not go to help anybody get well. We are never going to be able to compete globally if we cannot control the health care costs in this country. The threat of medical liability raises the cost of health care for everybody in this country.

Only 16 percent of the lawsuits that are filed across the entire country have any merit whatsoever—84 percent of them are filled with the idea that we can intimidate people into settling a case so a lawyer can make money. It has nothing to do with the patient. It has everything to do with enriching the trial bar. I have experienced that personally as a physician who has delivered over 4,000 children into this world.

We have a problem with out of control medical liability—the cost of defensive medicine alone is up to \$126 billion per year. We can fix those problems. But we can't fix them by protecting special interest groups that have been protected for years—special interest groups that claim they want to do something great for people but who most of the time are motivated to do something great for themselves.

The Medical Care Access Protection Act of 2006 is based on the successful Texas model of medical liability reform. It's a solution to the problem that is already getting results.

NATIONAL POLICE SURVIVORS DAY

Ms. MURKOWSKI. In 1962, the Congress enacted and President Kennedy signed into law a joint resolution designating May 15 as Peace Officers Memorial Day and the week in which May 15 falls as National Police Week.

National Police Week is observed with numerous events here in our Nation's Capitol and parallel events in communities across the Nation. The two most moving of these events are the Peace Officers Memorial Day ceremony, on the Capitol grounds, and a candlelight vigil at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial on Judiciary Square. At that candlelight vigil, the name of each officer who perished in the line of duty during the preceding year is read aloud to an assemblage numbering 10,000 or more.

These events emphasize the heroic acts of the law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty. The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial bears the inscription that our fallen officers are not heroes for the way that they died but for the way they lived their lives. Heroes, as we know, live on forever in our hearts, our spirits and our collective memories.

But for the families, friends and co-workers of law enforcement officers

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask that it be submitted to the RECORD