

and was soon appointed—he worked hard to get it. I should strike the word “appointed” and say he worked his way so that he became the third most powerful member on the Democratic side in the House of Representatives.

I look forward to working with BOB. BOB comes from Hudson County, one of our most populated counties in the most densely populated State in the country. He worked on the issues of transportation, and education is a particular interest of his. It can be reflected in the fact that his daughter, Alicia Menendez, was the commencement speaker at her graduation from Harvard.

I was very impressed at the leadership provided by her family, by her father's interest in public speaking, and in Government. She had to prepare her address in a competition to see who would be the student commencement speaker. Alicia won that competition with a very lengthy speech. She then, contrary to our habits here, was told to put aside her notes, take a microphone, and make the speech verbally to the graduating class of Harvard. I think it was 2 years ago. And she did it wonderfully—again, a reflection of the leadership that BOB MENENDEZ provided to the family.

His son Robert is at a university in North Carolina and is also a very accomplished young man.

Mr. MENENDEZ and I will be working together on lots of issues that we worked on in the past, I as a Senator and he as a Congressman, particularly, again, focused on transportation, environment, and security.

BOB MENENDEZ's county had the biggest loss of those who perished on 9/11—over 700 people from New Jersey. BOB MENENDEZ was there to help provide some warmth, friendship, and leadership to the problems that followed the loss of those loved ones and the impairment that it brought to those families.

I am so pleased to have someone who understands New Jersey fully, who has lived the traditional dream from very modest working class parents who escaped Cuba in those very dark days and lifted himself up by his bootstraps. We are going to be working together on issues such as transportation, education, security, and some of the problems we now see with Medicare.

My State of New Jersey now has spent \$15 million in the last couple of weeks trying to help people get their prescription drugs as a result of the enormous change that took place starting in 2006. They could not get the product, and the State of New Jersey jumped in, as I would gather almost every State in this country has done, and that is to fill in where Medicare dropped off.

I look forward to working with BOB MENENDEZ on that issue, and I hope it will be high on the list—on an urgent list—of matters to which we have to attend.

Meanwhile, I once again say that BOB MENENDEZ represents not only New

Jersey, but he represents the contribution that Latino Americans make to this country. BOB MENENDEZ will be the third person to join this Senate with a Hispanic background—Senator MARTINEZ, Senator SALAZAR, and now Senator MENENDEZ. It is so appropriate when such a large portion of our population has that cultural background. They are wonderful contributing citizens in our State. We have a very large Latino population, and they are all very proud of Senator MENENDEZ.

It is a historic day for the State of New Jersey and for the country that one of our terrific colleagues is now the Governor of the State of New Jersey. I predict he will be looking in the mirror one of these days and questioning the change he decided to make. He has a tough job. There is a lot of debt. We had some unfortunate mistakes in governance over the past few years. We are desperately in need of support for transportation and other programs. I think Jon Corzine, with his leadership training, having been the chairman and CEO of Goldman Sachs, will make a difference. He left here to take on what he considered a more important, immediate test. We are so pleased that he is replaced by someone such as ROBERT MENENDEZ, Senator MENENDEZ, who just walked in.

I remember the days—my colleague from Virginia is on the floor. We have been around here a long time. So very often the issues of wonderment disappear. We are into the nitty-gritty of issues and we forget sometimes about the excitement of being able to serve in this body. The Presiding Officer knows exactly what I am talking about, having been here only a short time, but also having come from the House of Representatives, and note that change.

When I spoke to BOB MENENDEZ and described to him the seat that he would have, which is the furthest away that one can get, he said to me that he is happy to have a seat anywhere in this Chamber. Sometimes we forget that in our daily toil.

I wound up sitting right near where the Senator from Virginia is, and I was talking to Scoop Jackson. I said: Nice seat. He said: Don't get used to it, you're not going to keep it. In the next couple of days, I wound up over in the freshman seats.

BOB MENENDEZ is a freshman, skilled, able, knowledgeable. We are very excited about him being here. He is going to be a wonderful Member of the Senate.

I thank the Chair and thank the leadership for granting me the opportunity to speak today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, first I commend my good friend, the good Senator from the State of New Jersey, for his remarks this morning on behalf of his colleague. I was privileged to attend what is known here as a reenactment in the Old Chamber just now and had the chance to wish him well. We do wish him well.

I certainly say to my distinguished colleague, the new Governor of New Jersey, our former colleague whom we all hold in high esteem, we wish him well in his responsibilities. The Senator mentioned that, of course, he departed to take on this authority. You know, there is a precedent in your State for recycling back here. It seems to me the distinguished senior Senator is here on his second term.

I thank my colleague.

CAMBODIA

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today, I would like to address a troubling series of events that has recently transpired in Cambodia. In the past year, the government of Prime Minister Hun Sen has engaged in a widespread campaign to silence his critics, stifle dissent, and enfeeble his political opposition.

The result of these actions has been a very disturbing erosion of Cambodia's commitment to democratic principles, the rule of law, and the protection of human rights.

Nearly a year ago, in February 2005, Cambodia's National Assembly voted to revoke the parliamentary immunity from prosecution of opposition leader Mr. Sam Rainsy and two of his colleagues. The alleged offense was defaming the Prime Minister.

Just after this vote, Mr. Rainsy and one of his colleagues, Chea Poch, managed to escape Cambodia to avoid arrest. However, the other opposition parliamentarian and an ally of Mr. Rainsy, Cheam Channy, was arrested.

Several months later, in August 2005, Cheam Channy was sentenced to 7 years in prison for allegedly forming “a secret army to overthrow the government.” And, in December 2005, Sam Rainsy was sentenced in absentia to 18 months in prison for defaming the Prime Minister and the President of the National Assembly.

The Cambodian Government's assault on its political opposition is only the tip of the iceberg. The Prime Minister has also carried out a campaign against human rights activists in Cambodia.

In a period of 5 days, just before and after the new year, three of Cambodia's top human rights activists were arrested. These included Mr. Kern Sokha, president of the Cambodian Center for Human Rights; Mr. Yeng Virak, director of the Community Legal Education Center; and Pa Nguon Teang, a journalist and the acting leader of Mr. Kern Sokha's human rights organization.

Again, these activists and critics of the Government were detained on trumped-up defamation charges.

These arrests and detentions are just the latest in a series of actions aimed at silencing the critics of the Cambodian Government. In addition to members of the political opposition, Cambodia's Government has also targeted prominent individuals in the media, trade unions, and civil society.

The United States has rightly condemned these actions, and I applaud Ambassador Müssomeli and his staff at the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh for raising this troubling issue with senior officials in the Cambodian Government.

I am also encouraged that the international community is responding to Cambodia's recent transgressions. In particular, the World Bank has issued a stark warning that Cambodia's actions are jeopardizing the millions of dollars in international financial assistance that it receives each year.

I call upon Prime Minister Hun Sen and the Cambodian Government to end this troubling series of events. Although the Cambodian Government has released Mr. Kern Sokha, Mr. Yeng Virak, Pa Nguon Teang, and other high-profile political prisoners on bail, the charges have not been dropped and other dissidents remain in custody. The Cambodian Government needs to release all political prisoners and drop the spurious charges being levied against them. These actions point to the obvious conclusion that democracy, the rule of law, and the protection of human rights are no longer priorities or principles of the Cambodian Government.

I also urge the international community to increase pressure on Cambodia to reverse its recent actions and to demonstrate to the world its commitment to freedom and to allowing its citizens to express their political opinions without fear and intimidation.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

WELCOMING ROBERT MENENDEZ TO THE SENATE

• Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I join my colleagues in welcoming our newest colleague, Senator ROBERT MENENDEZ of New Jersey.

I also want to welcome Senator MENENDEZ's family, who I know are justifiably proud of his great achievements.

And I want to thank our former colleague, New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine, for appointing an outstanding successor to finish his term. The people of New Jersey elected a top-notch Governor in Jon Corzine, and they will have another top-notch Senator in the bargain.

With FRANK LAUTENBERG and BOB MENENDEZ in the Senate, the people of New Jersey can be assured that they have two outstanding Senators in their corner, protecting their interests in Washington.

I have known BOB MENENDEZ for more than a decade. We served together for 4 years in the House of Representatives. It was during those years that Congress passed the historic 1993 budget agreement. That agreement—which passed by the thinnest of margins, just one vote in both the House and the Senate, without a single Re-

publican vote—put the Federal budget back on the course of fiscal responsibility after 12 straight years of ever larger deficits. It also made smart, targeted investments in America's greatest resource: our people—to enable more Americans to realize the American dream.

That dream is no slogan to BOB MENENDEZ; it is the story of his life.

Like my mother, Senator MENENDEZ's parents came to America from a nation that had lost its freedom. In my mother's case, it was Lithuania. In his parents' case, the land was Cuba.

Like so many first-generation Americans throughout our history, Senator MENENDEZ inherited from his parents a deep appreciation for American freedom and opportunity, as well as a deep sense of personal responsibility to help preserve and expand those blessings for all Americans.

Senator MENENDEZ entered public service at the age of 19, when he launched a successful petition drive to reform his local school board, and he has been fighting for education and opportunities for working families ever since. He has been a mayor, State legislator, House Member, and now, U.S. Senator.

He has never backed away from a fight—even to the point of wearing a bullet-proof vest when he challenged the political establishment in his hometown of Union City and led a coalition of reformers in cleaning it up.

He is the highest ranking Hispanic in the history of the House, and a proven leader. And I am proud today to call him "my fellow Senator."

Welcome to the U.S. Senate, Senator MENENDEZ. •

MASS EVACUATION EXERCISE ASSISTANCE ACT

• Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have introduced the Mass Evacuation Exercise Assistance Act, S. 2043. As we witnessed in the wake of recent natural disasters, our cities face special challenges and vulnerabilities when disaster strikes.

Part of disaster preparation at any level of government includes having well prepared and practiced evacuation plans. Otherwise, citizens can easily become trapped without food or water in a devastated area or along an escape route. To help cities prepare for future emergencies and evacuations, this bill will authorize a new 5-year grant program that will endow local governments with the funds to develop comprehensive evacuation plans, stage drills and exercises to perfect evacuation procedures, and stockpile materials to supply evacuation staging areas and evacuation routes. This legislation will serve to supplement existing grant programs rather than compete for already scarce homeland security grant funding.

I hope that my colleagues will join me in this effort that will simply provide cities and States with the proper

planning, preparation, and resources to ensure that their citizens will be evacuated quickly and safely should a natural disaster or terrorist attack occur. Our citizens deserve no less. •

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CORPORAL BRETT LEE LUNDSTROM

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to CPL Brett Lundstrom and his heroic service to our country. As a member of the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force based in North Carolina, Corporal Lundstrom was killed in action near Fallujah on January 7, 2006 while serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Brett was born in Vermillion, SD, and he was a member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. Brett, who was also the proud son of a marine who served his country for 20 years, chose to follow in his father Ed Lundstrom's footsteps. By enlisting in the Marine Corps following the September 11th terrorist attacks, Brett firmly believed he could make a difference.

Doyla Lundstrom, Brett's mother, remembers her son as someone who "loved people, and people loved Brett." Brett's friendly personality was infectious and "he lit up a room when he walked in." A true soldier, Ed recalled that Brett believed in his mission. Without question, he was an exemplary soldier and an example for all those with whom he served.

Brett's goodwill and service touched the lives of many people. Although his life was cut short, he continues to inspire all those who knew him. Our Nation owes him a debt of gratitude, and the best way to honor his life is to emulate his commitment to our country.

Mr. President, I join with all South Dakotans in expressing my deepest sympathy to the family of CPL Brett Lundstrom. He will be missed, but his service to our Nation will never be forgotten. •

PRIVATE JONATHAN R. PFENDER

• Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart and deep sense of gratitude to honor the life of a brave young man from Evansville. Jonathan Pfender, 22 years old, died on December 30 when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle during a patrol in Bayji, Iraq. With his entire life before him, Jonathan risked everything to fight for the values Americans hold close to our hearts, in a land halfway around the world.

A 2001 graduate of North Posey High School, Jonathan decided to leave his job at the Evansville Pizza Hut to pursue a career in the Army. According to his mother, Jonathan was not satisfied with the direction his life was taking and decided to change course by joining the military, an idea he had contemplated since junior high school. Remembered as a likeable, fun-loving and passionate young man who loved serving in the Army, Jonathan was the