

on WRDA. It is my understanding the conference is basically completed, but we would only move to that if Senators BOXER and INHOFE indicated they wanted us to do that. I understand they do. It has wide-ranging bipartisan support. But that wasn't in my original package and that will not hold us up. The only thing that will hold us up is the bill we are on now, SCHIP, 9/11 Commission recommendations and the ethics and lobbying reform. So I hope we can complete those things in a timely fashion, and I hope we don't have to work this weekend. If we do because of cloture votes, then we will schedule those according to whatever the standard procedure is.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

COMPLETING PENDING ITEMS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I would say to my friend the majority leader, I think there is a good chance of completing the work he outlined before the August recess. We will be working with him to try to move those items along.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business for 60 minutes, equally divided, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the first half of the time under the control of the majority and the second half of the time under the control of the Republicans.

The Senator from Maryland is recognized.

CAL RIPKEN, JR., HALL OF FAME INDUCTION

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise with a great deal of joy and enthusiasm this morning, as the senior Senator from Maryland, to be a part of what all of Maryland is doing today. We are on the road to Cooperstown. We are literally in our cars or renting transportation to be heading to Cooperstown, and we are going to Cooperstown in our hearts, because on Sunday, our beloved all-around Marylander, all-around American hero, Cal Ripken, Jr. will be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

We are so excited about this because we want the world to know Cal Ripken as we know Cal Ripken. What a great guy. The world knows him as a fan-

tastic baseball player, and he certainly is. I will go into his record in a minute. But he is also a fantastic human being, a devoted father, a faithful husband, a man of the community, giving his time and energy to philanthropic work. When we call him the "Iron Man," he absolutely is.

Throughout his 21-year career, he has been the epitome of "Iron Man," both on and off the field. I watched Cal going from being unknown to being the best known baseball player from Baltimore since Babe Ruth. I was there that last day at Memorial Stadium, when we closed the stadium down, and I was there on opening day at Camden Yards, and Cal was there, and I will watch him as he is inducted into the Hall of Fame. For we Oriole fans, it was never "if" Cal would go into the Hall of Fame, it was simply when.

Now, all baseball fans know about something called "the streak." We remember the victory lap he took around Camden Yards on that very special night. As we were heading into that record-breaking, show-up-at-every-game Cal Ripken event, there was a countdown that was going on all over. At Camden Yards every day, they had the number when Cal would come out on the field. In my own office in the Hart Building, I had a great big banner for our own countdown.

There he was: 2,632 consecutive games. During that time, he hit 431 homeruns. He also started in 19 All-Star games. He won two American League Golden Glove awards, eight Silver Slugger awards, two American League Most Valuable Players, and the statistics go on.

But statistics don't tell the real Ripken story. We remember not the numbers, but we remember the man—the strong, dependable presence of Cal Ripken, Jr. Night after night, day after day, sometimes through injuries, through the wide range of emotions and pressures experienced as a major leaguer, at every game there he was: at third base, at shortstop, smiling at doing his job and doing it well.

I remember that fateful night when Cal broke the Lou Gehrig standing record. To see that banner drop from 2,130 to 2,131 and hear the admiration and the jubilation of the crowd in Baltimore is something I will always remember. The sustained cheers were never ending as Cal, urged by Rafael Palmeiro, took a lap around the field. It was a proud night for the Ripken family, for the Orioles, and for Maryland.

Mr. President, I wish you had been there that night. It was a magical night. Families came from all over to that game. Now, when I walked into Camden Yards, I thought maybe it would be a raucous night. Maybe it would be a spirit of New Year's Eve that we have in the Inner Harbor. But when you walked into Camden Yards, it was a quiet night. It was a respectful night. It had an air of great dignity. People were bringing their children.

They had come from all over. They knew that something very special was going to happen because of a very special man. That evening had as much dignity as the player himself.

Cal's accomplishments transcend well beyond the baseball field. His character and demeanor are reflected in the successes he experiences every day on the field and off the field. He shows up and gives his maximum effort in every aspect. He puts his family above all. He is a community philanthropist and is committed to living something called the "Ripken way." The Ripken way was something taught to him by his father, that very well-known baseball manager, Cal Ripken, Sr. Now, this Ripken way is something special. It isn't complex. Did the Ripkens hire a consultant or handlers to tell them about it? How did they do it? It came from their hearts, their experience, and their commitment to values.

The Ripken way is a value-driven leadership way. Its wisdom is to build great players and bind generations together. Here is what it is: No. 1, keep it simple. No. 2, explain the why of what you are doing to the people who are affected. Celebrate the individual. Make it fun and sweat those details and learn the little things so the big things can be done the right way. It emphasizes clarity, simplicity and, most of all, personal integrity.

I think the Ripken way is being used all over Maryland. It is used in our businesses and in our homes. It is in our hospitals, where Cal and his wife Kelly have contributed so much to children, and it is in our hearts today as we salute Cal Ripken and the wonderful honor he is receiving.

He applies the Ripken way on the ballfield and off the ballfield. He has established a foundation in his father's name: The Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation, which helps young people learn not only baseball but the values of sportsmanship and the values of integrity, honor, and fidelity, the things that do build iron in your character. This is the legacy which shapes Cal's life, and so he wants to pass it on. Cal may be the local boy, but he is now an international hero.

There is no question that Cal has earned his way into the Hall of Fame. We congratulate him on his very stellar career. We so admire his work ethic and his commitment to community, to country, and for the well-deserved honor of being inducted into the Hall of Fame. While Cal has already achieved so much, I cannot help thinking about him that the best is yet to come.

On behalf of Senator CARDIN and myself, I will introduce to have referred to the appropriate committee a resolution commemorating Cal on his outstanding career in baseball and for his induction into the Hall of Fame.

Mr. President, these are tough times in the Senate. So when we can talk about something that really does deal with honor, fidelity, a commitment to

community, a commitment to country, and showing up every day and getting the job done, I think the way Cal would want us to tip our hats to him would be to step up to the plate and do our jobs and to do it the Ripken way. That is what I would like to do.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. NELSON of Nebraska). Without objection, it is so ordered.

SENATE AGENDA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I understand there are only a few minutes remaining in morning business, which is our opportunity to talk about a wide range of topics. We have a lot of important business going on in the Senate. We have the Homeland Security appropriations bill, which we want to pass quickly to keep our Nation safe. Then we are going to turn to the 9/11 Commission recommendations. Most Americans recall after 9/11, we appointed a very good bipartisan group to come up with suggestions to make America safer. Unfortunately, those suggestions have not been acted on, and each year the commission gives the Government a failing grade when it comes to their compliance, so we want to change that situation. This year, with the new Congress, we passed the implementation of these recommendations and hope to bring those to the floor this week and have them enacted.

We also have pending major ethics reform. Most people are, unfortunately, inured to the prospect of stories of corruption in Washington. Some of the events that have happened over the last several years have been horrendous, leading to the prosecution of Members of Congress and many lobbyists in town. It is time to change that situation. We have a bill that will move us dramatically in the right direction, the most significant ethics reform in the history of Congress. It has been caught up in a lot of political debate and wrangling. Now is the time to move it forward, enact it into the rules, the law of the land, and apply it to the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Then next week comes a critically important bill. There are 47 million uninsured Americans, many of them children. Right now we have a program where we provide Federal funds to States so they can help us in insuring those children. We have about 6 million children who are now covered by this plan, kids who otherwise would not have health insurance.

Incidentally, most of them are children of parents who are working, who go to work every day. They are not poor enough to have the Government

insure them, and they are not wealthy enough to insure themselves. They get caught in the middle. Six million children have protection today.

The program expires September 30. We want to make sure those kids are not left without coverage, and we have another 9 million children who are eligible who have not been brought in. The Senate Finance Committee is going to expand the number covered from 6 million to 9 million nationwide.

I wish we could do more. We should cover them all. Why wouldn't we as Americans want our kids to have basic health insurance protection? Unfortunately, even though our bill is bipartisan, it is reasonable, it is within our budget, the White House said the President will veto it. The President's reason for vetoing the children's health insurance bill? It is hard to believe, but he says it is unfair to private health insurance companies. Unfair to private health insurance companies? Most Americans understand that for most of those companies, each year means higher premiums and lower coverage, and many of those companies have failed to come forward to find ways to bring Americans into health insurance coverage. There are not going to be many tears shed for that industry. We should have our concern and focus on the children who are going to be left behind when it comes to health insurance if the President vetoes this bill.

Next week we will focus on that legislation. We will try to get down and pass this, get together with the House of Representatives, and send it to the President as quickly as possible.

In August, we have a 3- or 4-week recess, which I assume we will be taking most of, and then come back in September in the first week. There are a lot of appropriations bills to consider at that time. We will go back to the Defense authorization bill and a very important national debate on the war in Iraq. The administration promises us September 15 to give us a status report, as required by law.

Most of the indicators are that the violence continues in Iraq. The Government continues to disappoint us and, unfortunately, American deaths continue to mount. That debate in September is going to be a critical watershed debate. We need to have more Republican Senators cross the aisle and join us to call for a new policy in Iraq. So far 4 of the 49 Republicans have come to our side. We need 11. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to work for a cooperative bipartisan approach to a new direction in Iraq.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Texas.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, last evening the majority leader and I had an exchange on the Senate floor with regard to a proposed amendment by

our side that would enhance Federal spending on border security measures and interior enforcement by \$3 billion. While it is fair to say there was virtually universal support on this side of the aisle, there was some objection on the other side of the aisle, so that amendment was defeated.

Then the majority leader came back with a proposal that would strip some of the language from that amendment, but nevertheless would commit \$3 billion to border security. I told the majority leader that I believed it should also include a way to spend that money not just on the border but also for interior enforcement of our immigration laws. In particular, I mentioned the sad phenomenon of roughly 600,000 absconders, people who have been ordered deported and who have simply gone underground rather than obey that lawful order from a court, or people who have actually been deported and then reentered the country after they have been deported. Both of those categories of individuals are known as absconders. They are, under the Immigration and Naturalization Act, felons.

I thought it was important that if we were going to be serious about enforcing our immigration laws we not just deal with the border, as important as that is, but we also deal with interior enforcement.

We were unable to reach an agreement last night, but I am pleased to say the majority leader was generous enough to call me last night and to tell me he wanted to look more closely at the language we had proposed. I take it from some of his remarks this morning on the floor that it is likely we will be able to reach some sort of agreement that will see those funds in this bill, \$3 billion, where the Federal Government will finally do what it has advertised and promised to do for a long time, and that is to actually put the resources behind border security and enforcement of our immigration laws, rather than promise a lot and deliver very little.

I am grateful to the majority leader for working with me on that issue. I am hopeful Senator GRAHAM, who was the principal proponent of the border security amendment yesterday that I was proud to cosponsor, will be back here at 10:30 a.m. when we get back on the bill to talk about that amendment. I hope we can reach an agreement. It will go a long way toward beginning to regain the lost confidence and trust of the American people when it comes to our broken immigration system.

If there is one diagnosis I would make from our immigration debate over the last few weeks, it has been that people do not trust the Federal Government to actually do what it promises to do in this area. Where we have to start is on a firm foundation of border security and interior enforcement and from that build to a more comprehensive approach that deals with all aspects of the problem.