

constituents. I think this is an outrage, for a government bureaucracy to ignore the people they are supposed to serve. They pay their salaries—those taxpayers pay their salaries. The least this Department should do is respond not just in a timely way but to respond completely. But we haven't seen that yet.

Last week, I met with an Assistant Secretary of Energy to discuss my opposition to the transmission corridor as it is presently drafted. I have sent letters to the Energy Secretary, Mr. Samuel Bodman, most recently in early October. We are still waiting for a response to that, a letter signed by both Senator SPECTER and me, waiting for a response. I know people get busy, but I think it is time now to respond to that letter. We are also waiting for Secretary Bodman to respond to my request for a meeting. We are getting a little resistance there as well.

So while I am waiting for these responses from the Energy Secretary, I want to put him on notice and I want to put the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission—which we know by the acronym FERC—I want to put FERC on notice and I want to put the Senate on notice that I have grave concerns, as a lot of people in Pennsylvania have grave concerns, about this transmission corridor as presently designed or drafted. I am outraged by how my constituents have been treated so far in this process. I would argue they have been ignored in this process.

So I intend to use every means at my disposal—every means at my disposal—to prevent the National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor from moving forward until Pennsylvania is at a minimum treated equitably. So I intend to place a hold on the renomination of Joseph Kelliher, who is now serving as the Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, known as FERC. I will place a hold on his renomination, and I will be introducing tomorrow, in connection with the amendments to the farm bill, an amendment to prevent the use of eminent domain to take farmland for use as a part of this power transmission corridor.

One more chart before I conclude. The second chart here depicts the number of counties affected in the northeastern corner of the United States. I will speak just of Pennsylvania for today—52 out of those 67 counties. Basically, what the Federal Government has told us, in essence, implicitly—this is what I derive from their failure to respond to the State of Pennsylvania—is there is going to be a superhighway of power lines across Pennsylvania, and there is nothing anyone can do about it. The Federal Government is going to take over this effort and put those lines across the State of Pennsylvania.

Well, I have news for them. Pennsylvania is full of a lot of people who are concerned about this, whether they are in small towns or urban areas, and, as we are going to be speaking to tomor-

row, rural areas in Pennsylvania, farm communities. Most of those counties designated there are in rural communities. If the Federal Government and the Department of Energy or the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission or anyone else in this town wants to fight about this, we are ready to fight, and we will fight morning, noon, and night until our State, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, is treated equitably.

24TH ANNIVERSARY OF BOMBING OF MARINE CORPS BARRACKS IN BEIRUT

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, 24 years ago today, at 6:20 in the morning, in Beirut, a yellow Mercedes-Benz truck drove into the Beirut International Airport, where the 1st Battalion 8th Marines was keeping its headquarters. The truck crashed through a barbed wire fence, went through the parking lot, passed between two sentry posts, and then crashed through a gate and into the lobby of the large building where the marines were keeping their headquarters.

At that point, the explosives were set off in this truck, ending up with the deaths of 241 American military servicemembers. This was the largest loss of life for the U.S. Marine Corps in one single day since Iwo Jima. It was the largest loss of life in one day for American service people from the beginning of the Tet Offensive of 31 January 1968, and it remains the largest single loss of life in one day since that time.

I believe it is appropriate for us to take a few minutes and remember today the sacrifices that were made and the contributions the United States was attempting to make in that particular circumstance.

I make these comments as someone who is proud to have served in the U.S. Marine Corps, who has a brother who served in the Marine Corps, who has a son who is now serving in the Marine Corps, and as someone who covered the marines in Beirut as a journalist and had recently left the country when this incident occurred.

The marines who went to Beirut came in peace. They had been sent in after several incidents occurred regarding multiparty incidents, which I will describe in a minute, at the request of the Lebanese Government. We had a U.S. Marine Corps representation. We had military people from the United Kingdom, Italy, and France. They were asked to help separate the warring factions inside Beirut during a vicious civil war and also to help separate the end result of an Israeli incursion, in which the Israelis were attempting to take out large elements of the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

So our marines began this “visibility” presence in September of 1982. They had been there through different cycles of rotation for a little more than a year when this event occurred.

They operated under enormously difficult rules of engagement. The situ-

ation in Beirut at that time was rather similar to what we see in Iraq today in terms of having a weak central government and many different factions around it.

On any given day, our marines in Beirut could be bumping up against Shia militia, Sunni militia, Christian Phalange, Druze militia, the Syrians over the border on one side—as well as with French, U.K., and Italian military units all operating in this environment. The Israeli military, which at this point had pulled back over the Chouf mountains, also was present.

These were very fine marines. I spent a good bit of time with them on their different positions. They were overall commanded by COL Tim Geraghty, an extraordinarily capable officer who had spent more than 2 tours in Vietnam. Their battalion commander, LTC Howard Gerlach, had done a tour and a half in Vietnam as infantry leader.

The rules of engagement were so strict in Beirut at the time that when our marines took fire, they could only return fire with the same type of weapon they were receiving fire from. These very restrictive rules ended up contributing to the situation in which the truck bomb went off. The sentries at the gate where the truck came in were not even allowed to have ammunition in their weapons at that time. They were precluded from being able to take out this truck when it entered because once they saw what was happening, they had to attempt to load their weapons and then fire at it.

This was an incident which combines so many different factors that are still in play right now in the Middle East. We should be remembering it. We should be remembering when we look back on it that the United States must play its hand very carefully in that part of the world. As one marine said to me during a firefight at one outpost I was covering as a journalist:

It is always difficult when you get involved in a five-sided argument.

We ought to think about that when we are looking at what is going on in other parts of the Middle East today.

But the main purpose of me speaking today is to urge all of us never to forget the courage and the risk and, ultimately, the sacrifice that so many of our young people are required to make on behalf of our country and under the direction of the leadership of those who decide to send them into harm's way.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER JOHN W. ENGEMAN

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, in the lush green hills of Arlington Cemetery, where peace holds its gentle sway, there is a headstone inscribed with the name of John W. Engeman. On it are his rank of chief warrant officer, and his honors, the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, and Purple Heart. But, like all of the iconic white markers at Arlington, it only tells part of a hero's story.

Chief Warrant Officer Engeman enlisted in the Army when he was 18, and was stationed in Korea and Germany, and served in Kosovo and Operation Desert Storm. Two years ago, he moved with his family to West Virginia, where he was the active duty liaison between the National Guard and Reserves.

But he was more than a career military man; he was also a devoted father and husband, brother and son.

The soldiers in his unit called him a father figure and a great story teller. They recalled that whenever they needed advice, they always went to the Chief. They said they would follow him anywhere because he was a great leader, a good decisionmaker, and a good friend. And, they said, he loved to talk about his wife Donna or his two children, Nicole and Patrick.

So I can only imagine how he must have felt when the Army made special arrangements for him to watch his wife graduate from college. It had been a shared goal between the two of them, and on the day before Mother's Day, he sat half-a-world away and watched the dream turn into a reality. He ended that day by telling his wife how proud he was of her, and that he would call the next day to wish her a happy Mother's Day.

It was a call that would never come. Chief Warrant Officer Engeman's humvee would be struck by a roadside bomb later that evening.

From the earliest days of the Republic we have held a special place in our hearts for those families who have lost a loved one in war. Later this week, as part of the White House Commission of Remembrance, the family of Chief Warrant Officer Engeman will be honored, along with the families of other soldiers, sailors, and marines who have been lost in combat.

It is altogether right and fitting that we do this. Chief Warrant Officer Engeman answered the call to duty and served with honor and distinction. He won the respect of his soldiers and the admiration of his country.

But those truly timeless qualities—his laugh, his quirky smile he would give you when you needed his advice, and his love for his family—will live in the hearts of his wife, children, sisters, and parents forever.

All of West Virginia joins with me today in keeping the Engemans close in our hearts and prayers.

ESTABLISHING A FEDERAL STATUTORY FIRST AMENDMENT PRIVILEGE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, The Senate Judiciary Committee has considered and for the first time reported a bill to establish a Federal statutory privilege to safeguard the freedom of the press. The Free Flow of Information Act, S. 2035, is bipartisan legislation that was reported on a strong bipartisan vote. The House has already passed legislation on this same subject,

H.R. 2102, with a strong, bipartisan and apparently veto-proof majority of 398 to 21. Thus, both S. 2035 and H.R. 2102 are available for Senate action on the Senate business calendar. I strongly support the enactment of a Federal shield law for journalists, and I urge the Senate to promptly consider Federal shield legislation.

All of us have an interest in enacting a balanced and meaningful first amendment privilege. Sadly, the press has become the first stop, rather than the last resort, for our Government and private litigants when it comes to seeking information. This is a dangerous trend that can have a chilling effect on the press and the public's right to know.

Enacting Federal shield legislation would help to reverse this troubling trend. In fact, proceeding promptly to consideration of this legislation is something I strongly support. Should the Senate take up the bipartisan shield bill that overwhelmingly passed in the House, Federal shield legislation could go immediately to the President's desk and be signed into law without delay this year.

The Senate bill has the support of a bipartisan coalition of Senators, including Senators SPECTER, SCHUMER, LUGAR, DODD, GRAHAM, and myself, who have all united to cosponsor this legislation. In addition, more than 50 news media and journalism organizations support this legislation, and the call for Senate action on this historic bill extends to editorial pages across the country, including the New York Times, Arizona Republic, L.A. Times, Salt Lake Tribune, and San Francisco Chronicle, among others.

The Senate and House bills protect law enforcement interests and safeguard national security. Moreover, both of these bills follow the lead of 33 States and the District of Columbia which have shield laws, and many other States, including Vermont, which recognize a common law reporters' privilege. Tellingly, the Bush administration has not identified a single circumstance where a reporters' privilege has caused harm to national security or to law enforcement, despite the fact that many courts have recognized such a privilege for years.

When he testified before the Judiciary Committee in favor of Federal shield legislation in 2005, William Safire told the Committee that the essence of newsgathering is this:

[I]f you don't have sources you trust and who trust you, then you don't have a solid story—and the public suffers for it.

On behalf of the American public, I urge the Senate to protect the public's right to know by promptly considering and passing a Federal shield law.

KINGDOM GEMS OF VERMONT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased to stand before the Senate today to tell my friends about Vermont's Northeast Kingdom—a place

that is known as much for its natural beauty as the rural and industrious Vermonters who have settled there.

This region, defined by the three northeastern-most counties of Vermont that sit between the headwaters of the Connecticut River and the U.S.-Canadian border, became one of America's first National Geographic geotourism destinations. The designation highlights the character and sense of place that has come to define the dozens of mountain valley communities that sit in Orleans, Essex, and Caledonia Counties.

My wife Marcelle was born in the Northeast Kingdom, just south of the Canadian border in the city of Newport. Since then, like many Vermonters, we have often found ourselves heading to this part of Vermont to visit friends, go for a hike, or find a special place to have a meal. The people of the Northeast Kingdom have made this region of Vermont advance while carefully holding on to the key elements of their identity. Whether they are crafting furniture from the forests of the north woods or diversifying their family farm, these individuals have helped the communities of northeastern Vermont grow.

This autumn, Michelle Edelbaum and Daria Bishop of the Burlington Free Press published an article about a trip the two of them shared through the area, and I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the text of the article offering a glimpse into these "Kingdom Gems."

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

[From The Burlington Free Press, Sept. 30, 2007]

KINGDOM GEMS

(By Michelle Edelbaum)

When trees scream with crimson, gold and orange, head to the Northeast Kingdom for world-class leaf peeping.

With foliage in mind, photographer Daria Bishop and I spent a day exploring the towns, shops and people that make the area special. We strayed from our loose plan to follow locals' hand-drawn maps down scenic dirt back roads to not-to-miss destinations.

On our 13-hour tour we didn't reach half the locations on our list, which included classic attractions Cabot Creamery, Great Vermont Corn Maze, Stephen Huneck's Dog Mountain and Fairbanks Museum. But we did visit a handful of gems worth a stop.

GREENSBORO

Twenty-eight years ago an enthusiastic David Smith and his wife, Willie, took over Highland Lodge in Greensboro from his parents and fostered a community-centric gathering place that hosts out-of-town guests and community gatherings. "The Walking Ladies," a group of 55 women who range in age from 40 to 86, meet thrice weekly in the dining room for coffee and muffins after they exercise.

On their recommendation we ate moist, sugar-crusted blueberry muffins, from-scratch blueberry pancakes and a fluffy cheese and veggie omelet with McKenzie sausage links. After breakfast, we set out on the lodge's 30 miles of trails from a grove of soaring pine trees decorated with colorful placards of children's artwork, courtesy of the lodge's summer campers.