

Senator CORNYN, and others, who are deeply involved in this issue and interested in how it is going to be disposed of. Senator WARNER has done his usual thoughtful job. He is probably the Senate expert on our side of the aisle in these matters, and his views of which way the Senate should proceed carry a lot of weight in the Senate. But I cannot at this late hour agree to this proposal tonight.

Having said that—and these will be my last thoughts, I believe, for the evening—I do think there ought to be a way to work this out. We have made considerable progress on our side of the aisle in narrowing down the proposals that we might want to offer. And I still think the preferred way to do it—and I think the majority leader believes this as well—is to have a number of different concurrent resolutions in the queue. The distinguished Senator from Virginia has made it clear that he is very uncomfortable, as he just expressed himself a moment ago, with taking the bill approach to this. The majority leader has indicated that is not his preference either. I think the message is: Let's see if we can't craft a unanimous consent agreement that is fair to both sides so that we can have this important debate on this exceedingly important issue next week.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I join in that because I think the operative phrase is to let the Senate work its will. Those are the first words I used in connection with this resolution when I laid it down last week. It is essential. This is one of the most important historic debates, as the distinguished leader—both leaders—have said. We should let this body work its will.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, first let me commend the Senator from Virginia for his leadership and the contribution he has made to this historic debate, both for the Senate and for our Nation. Thank you because I think what you have presented in good faith is an effort to engage in a very important and historic debate. I thank you for that. The fact that you have drawn so much support from both sides of the aisle is a testament to the fine work you have done, and I am glad that you are here this evening in an effort to continue that work.

I would say to the minority leader, the Senator from Kentucky, it is understandable that having been given this language and this information at this late hour that he wants a little more time to reflect on it, and I hope in the morning that we can come to the agreement that we all want. But to reiterate what the Senator from Nevada, the majority leader, has said, what we are seeking to do is what the minority leader has expressed, and that is to create the appropriate forum and the appropriate vehicle for the debate on this issue.

We struggle because the procedures in the Senate make it difficult to take

resolutions and amendments. It is clumsy, it is awkward, it is difficult to do. So what the majority leader has suggested is to treat this resolution as a bill for the purpose of amendment but then to remove that bill status so that there is no question as to whether it is going to the President. That gives us a chance to work our will, as the Senator from Virginia has said, using the bill-like approach to amendment and gives the majority and minority leaders a chance to work together to find a reasonable number of reasonable amendments so that we can, in fact, express our will on this critically important issue.

But I say to the minority leader from Kentucky, there is no guile in this proposal. It is an effort to find a reasonable way for both sides of the aisle to address this historic debate.

RETIREMENT OF ED GREELEGS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I come to the Senate today to say something I hoped I would never have to say. I am here to say thank you and farewell to my chief of staff for the past 17 years, Ed Greelegs, as he retires from the Senate.

This is the first time he has ever been on the floor of the Senate while it was in session. Ed is the kind of person who does his work without a lot of fanfare, without a lot of need for attention, but he does it so very well.

Some people are drawn to Congress because of what they think are the perks and power that come with the job. That is not what Ed Greelegs has given so much of his life to. For Ed, being a good public servant has always been privilege enough. The desire to help others, to try to translate our Nation's most cherished values into law and policies that meet the challenge of our times—that is what brought Ed Greelegs to the U.S. Congress and why he stayed all these years.

I will say without fear of contradiction that Ed is one of the most well liked, even beloved figures on Capitol Hill. All you have to do is walk down a hallway in the Capitol with Ed Greelegs and you will know what I mean. He knows everybody and everybody knows him. His easygoing nature and real caring for people means that he has made thousands of friends on Capitol Hill. From those who do the important work of maintaining and cleaning our offices to those at the highest levels, Ed knows them all.

We have a saying in our office, incidentally: Talk to Ed, he probably knows somebody. Whenever a new issue comes up, if you want to know who you can turn to and trust, Ed invariably knows whom to call. The relations he has made and nurtured on and off the Hill have been a great help to me for 17 years. I can't tell you the countless people who have never met Ed but who have benefitted nonetheless from the alliances he has forged, the common ground he helped plow, and the laws he helped pass.

One of Ed's great talents is recognizing and nurturing talent among others. If I had a young person who came to me anytime in the last 17 years who said, It has always been my dream to work on Capitol Hill, I would say, I want you to meet Ed Greelegs. He would patiently take the time to read the resume, talk to them, relate his life experience on Capitol Hill, and point them in a direction so they had a chance to realize their dream, as he had. They come back to me, years later, after success on the Hill or at some other branch of Government, and ask, How is Ed? That is the most common question I run into.

Ed grew up in nearby Wheaton, MD, and graduated from the University of Maryland. He came to Capitol Hill as an intern in 1970. In the 20 years between that first internship and becoming my chief of staff, Ed worked for Congressman Marty Russo of Illinois, Congressman Bob Eckhart of Texas on the House Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight, then for Congressman Sam Gejdenson of Connecticut, and finally back to Congressman Russo's office for most of the 1980s. He worked briefly for the Consumer Federation of America and for Fannie Mae. But when he left the Hill to go into the private sector, his heart was still here. He even told me stories of jobs in the private sector where he never unpacked the boxes. He just never felt comfortable. It was not where he wanted to be. He might have been making more money, but he wasn't happy. He found his way back to Capitol Hill.

It was the leadership he showed in the office of Marty Russo that really brought Ed to my attention. In 1990, I persuaded him to come work for me as my chief of staff in the House of Representatives. Six years later, I decided to run for the Senate seat that belonged to my longtime friend and mentor, Paul Simon. Ed Greelegs was at my side in that effort.

I wondered how he would adjust, making that transition from the House to the Senate, but it was seamless. He knew just as many people on this side of the Hill as he continues to know on the House side.

For the 10 years I have served in the Senate, Ed Greelegs has been an unfailing source of wisdom and thoughtful advice. His quiet, wry sense of humor has helped to lighten the mood when things become too intense, and his decency, modesty, and great egalitarian spirit have helped remind everybody on our side of what is most important and why we are here.

There are a few things Ed loves more than the Senate. Among them are his wife Susan and his stepchildren Andrew and Amanda; another, his books. Ed has so many books you wouldn't believe it. He has a room, I understand, completely filled in his home. The fact that Susan stays with him despite this obsession on books tells you what a strong marriage they have. When I

would look in his office and see all of the books stacked up, I would think, there is a guarantee he will never leave me because he just can't bring himself to pack up all those books. But now he is going to have to, I think.

Another one of Ed's loves is music. One of his favorite musicians is singer-songwriter John Hiatt. Ed even persuaded Susan to include a John Hiatt song at their wedding, entitled "Have a Little Faith in Me."

Over 17 years, I have come to have more than a little faith in Ed Greelegs—not just his knowledge but his character and his decency. What I know about him is that you never have to worry about his motives. You never have to wonder if his advice is crafted to serve himself or a friend more than it serves the common good. His goal has always been the same: He wants the best for the people of Illinois and the best for America. When things go well, as they often do when Ed is involved, he doesn't really care who gets the credit.

They say that behind every successful man is a surprised mother-in-law. I can tell you that behind every good Senator is a talented chief of staff. For the last 17 years, it has been my good fortune to have my friend Ed Greelegs in that critical position in my office. I am grateful to him for all he has done for me, for Illinois, and for our Nation. I wish him the very best as he begins the next chapter of his career. I am sure it will be a successful chapter.

As you wander around Washington, you come to understand that there are some people whom everybody likes. Ed Greelegs is one of those people.

My favorite story, which I want to add at this point, involves the first trip to Afghanistan after the Taliban were deposed. I joined with Senator Daschle and a number of other Senators. We went in on the first daylight landing at Bagram Air Force Base in Kabul in Afghanistan. It was very tense. There were armored personnel carriers in every direction and troops with weapons to defend us as we came off the C-130. As I came down the ramp and got into an armored personnel carrier, there was a man in civilian clothes standing there.

He asked: Are you Senator Dick Durbin?

I said: Yes.

He said: I am a friend of Ed Greelegs'.

I couldn't believe it. Here I am in the middle of a war zone, and I ran into a friend of Ed Greelegs'.

Whether it is war or peace, whether it is on the Hill or off, time and again, everybody knows that Ed Greelegs is genuine. He is the real thing. I have been honored to have him at my side for 17 years. I wish him the very best in his future pursuits.

Thanks, Ed.

NFC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, Senator LANDRIEU and I come to the Senate

floor for a painful—for us—but necessary task, and that is to live up to our wager with colleagues from the great State of Illinois and congratulate them on the Bears' defeat of the New Orleans Saints in the NFC championship game.

Of course, the Bears won fair and square 39 to 14, but that score really doesn't reflect how the game was actually played. It was much closer than that for a long time. The Bears' defense played exceptionally, hats-off to them, strong pass rush that really put the Saints' quarterback, Drew Brees, in some precarious situations. They also played overall a really tough physical game, defensively and offensively. Because of some of the bone-crunching hits delivered by the Bears' defenders, the Saints had multiple turnovers, and certainly that was part of the problem from the Saints' perspective. But, really, I think the Chicago Bears won the game because of their incredible ability to manage field position. Each time the Saints' offense took the field, it appeared as if they had their back to the wall, including when a safety was scored against them.

So congratulations to the Chicago Bears. Again, Senator LANDRIEU and I are here to fulfill our commitment and pay our debt. By the way, we just served Senator BARACK OBAMA's staff a lunch of great Louisiana food, and we are about to do the exact same thing for Senator DURBIN and his staff.

But as we give the Bears their due, I know both Senator LANDRIEU and I also want to praise the Saints for an absolutely unbelievable season with the biggest turnaround in NFL history, going from a 3 in 13 last year to the NFC championship game this year. Much more importantly than just that, they serve as a wonderful example of renewal and rebuilding from which we all can learn and emulate in terms of the rebuilding of the gulf coast.

A lot of folks say it is just football, it is just sports, but particularly in the context of everything folks in the greater New Orleans area are going through post-Katrina, the Saints meant an awful lot to us this season, and their example of leadership and integrity and great turnarounds and commitment is something we all took pride in and I think something we all learned from. That example is going to be repeated in many other different walks of life as we spur on our recovery on the gulf coast even further.

So with that, Mr. President, I again congratulate the Chicago Bears. I congratulate our two Senate colleagues from Illinois. I wish them all the best in this Sunday's Super Bowl. But I also note, maybe they are going to need that good luck because they face another New Orleans powerhouse, Peyton Manning, in Miami. So good luck to them.

I yield the floor to Senator LANDRIEU.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Speaking in my capacity as a Senator from Min-

nesota, I will say that our team, the Vikings, went four times and never won the Super Bowl, so there is always hope.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for joining me this morning to deliver some delicious, piping hot, and very spicy red beans and rice that he and I cooked through the night to deliver to our colleagues, Senator OBAMA and Senator DURBIN. I would like to personally congratulate the Bears on their victory and say it was a hard-fought victory during a great game of icy and cold conditions, but our Saints stood up under the tremendous pressure of their defensive line.

As Senator VITTER said, the final score doesn't reflect the battle that was actually played that day on that field. But we congratulate the Bears on their victory and look forward to watching them in the Super Bowl this Sunday.

But to the Saints, I have to say again, as I have said several times on this Senate floor, thank you for being so reflective of and mirroring the spirit of the people from Louisiana, from New Orleans, from the region, and from south Louisiana who have struggled, and like you, have been fighting back to bring our cities and our communities, large and small, urban and rural, back from the brink, in many cases, of utter destruction. The Saints have shown us the way, having experienced themselves as players and family members the loss of their homes, the loss of their places of worship, the loss of the schools where their children attended but, like so many hundreds of thousands of citizens, have literally marched their way back to victory. So we are very grateful for their inspiration and their encouragement, every member of the team.

But to the Bears, led by Rex Grossman, who proved himself to be a Super Bowl quarterback, to, again, their extraordinary defense on the field, we congratulate them.

Senator VITTER and I love pizza. We were looking forward to that Chicago pizza, but we ended up, because of what happened, having to deliver our local favorite, red beans and rice, to Senator DURBIN and Senator OBAMA. But our congratulations to them and to the people of Chicago and to the citizens of Illinois who, I know, will be pulling for their team.

I also want to say we will be looking forward to seeing Peyton Manning on the field. He is a wonderful quarterback from a great family in New Orleans that has also helped us and inspired us a great deal.

HONORING GEORGE OMAS, CHAIRMAN, POSTAL RATE COMMISSION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President. I rise to mark the retirement from Federal service, of a loyal friend and Mississippian, and a fine public servant, George Omas.