

need not reinvent the wheel or plead that they cannot accept or acknowledge statutory direction from Congress at this point in the fiscal year, since they have not and will not have had any conflicting direction from Congress.

Second, the Omnibus appropriations bill requires that the Department cease and desist its efforts to shut down the existing geothermal program. Instead, the bill provides approximately \$20 million for geothermal energy technology research. This is an increase of \$20 million over the budget request for the deployment of large-scale enhanced geothermal systems, to include accelerating the development of subsurface technologies, including geological and geophysical data collection and synthesis. This direction to the Department is entirely consistent with that provided in H.R. 6.

The Congress expects the Department to use that money wisely and in a balanced fashion that comports with the direction in the appropriations bill's statement of managers and the statutory direction provided in H.R. 6. Clearly, the funds should not and cannot be used to focus on one or even a narrow set of technologies to the exclusion of the continuum of geothermal energy technologies. I also expect that next year's budget request will reflect the direction given to the Department by Congress in H.R. 6.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

Mr. LEAHY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. HATCH (when his name was called). Present.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 76, nays 17, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 441 Leg.]

YEAS—76

Akaka	Cantwell	Dole
Alexander	Cardin	Domenici
Baucus	Carper	Dorgan
Bennett	Casey	Durbin
Bingaman	Cochran	Grassley
Bond	Coleman	Gregg
Boxer	Collins	Harkin
Brown	Conrad	Hutchison
Brownback	Corker	Inouye
Bunning	Cornyn	Johnson
Byrd	Craig	Kennedy

Kerry	Mikulski	Smith
Klobuchar	Murkowski	Snowe
Kohl	Murray	Specter
Kyl	Nelson (FL)	Stabenow
Landrieu	Nelson (NE)	Stevens
Lautenberg	Pryor	Sununu
Leahy	Reed	Tester
Levin	Reid	Thune
Lieberman	Roberts	Vitter
Lincoln	Rockefeller	Warner
Lott	Salazar	Webb
Lugar	Sanders	Whitehouse
Martinez	Schumer	Wyden
McConnell	Sessions	
Menendez	Shelby	

NAYS—17

Allard	Crapo	Hagel
Barrasso	DeMint	Inhofe
Bayh	Ensign	Isakson
Burr	Enzi	McCaskill
Chambliss	Feingold	Voinovich
Coburn	Graham	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Hatch

NOT VOTING—6

Biden	Dodd	McCain
Clinton	Feinstein	Obama

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. LEVIN. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JOHN DANIEL TINDER, OF INDIANA, TO BE A UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE SEVENTH CIRCUIT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to executive session to consider Executive Calendar No. 373, the nomination of John Daniel Tinder, to be United States Circuit Judge.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of John Daniel Tinder, of Indiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate on the nomination, equally divided.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, we end the 2007 legislative session as we began it, by making significant progress confirming the President's nominations for lifetime appointments to the Federal bench. At the Judiciary Committee's first business meeting of the year, held less than 2 weeks after the Republican caucus agreed to the resolutions organizing the Senate, I included on our agenda five judicial nominations. On January 30, the Senate confirmed the first two judicial nominations of the session. Today's confirmation of John Daniel Tinder to the Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit will be the 40th, including 6 of this President's nominations to powerful circuit courts.

I thank the members of the Judiciary Committee for their hard work all year in considering these important nominations. I thank especially those Senators who have given generously of their time to chair confirmation hearings throughout the year.

Given the work of the Senators serving on the Judiciary Committee, we will have exceeded the yearly total in each of the last 3 years when a Republican majority managed the Senate and the consideration of this Republican President's nominations. Indeed, with the confirmation today of Judge Tinder to replace Judge Daniel A. Manion, like that of Reed O'Connor who was confirmed last month to the Northern District, we are proceeding to fill vacancies before they even arise.

The progress we have made this year in considering and confirming judicial nominations is sometimes lost amid the partisan sniping over a handful of controversial nominations and attempts to appeal to some on the far right wing. When we confirm the nomination we consider today, the Senate will have confirmed 40 nominations for lifetime appointments to the Federal bench this session alone. That is more than the total number of judicial nominations that a Republican-led Senate confirmed in all of 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2004, 2005 or 2006. It is 23 more confirmations than were achieved during the entire 1996 session, more than double that session's total of 17, when Republicans stalled consideration of President Clinton's nominations. It is seven more than the confirmations in the second to last year of President Clinton's final term.

We continue to make progress on circuit court nominations. We began the year by resolving an unnecessary controversy over Judge Norman Randy Smith's nomination to one of California's seats on the Ninth Circuit. That nomination could easily have been confirmed—and a judicial emergency addressed—in the last Congress had the Bush administration chosen the commonsense approach of nominating Judge Smith, who is from Idaho, to Idaho's seat on the Ninth Circuit. After many months of urging by me and others, President Bush finally did the right thing at the beginning of this Congress by pulling the controversial Myers nomination to Idaho's Ninth Circuit seat and nominating Judge Smith, instead. He was confirmed in February. We could make even more progress if the President would make a California nomination to fill the long-vacant California Ninth Circuit seat left open by Judge Stephen Trott's retirement.

We continued through the year to consider and confirm district and circuit court judges. In October, the Senate confirmed the nominations of Judges Jennifer Walker Elrod and Judge Leslie Southwick, who became the fourth and fifth circuit court nominees confirmed this year.

After this confirmation today, the Senate will have confirmed six circuit court nominees, matching the total circuit court confirmations for all of 2001. We will also have exceeded the circuit court totals achieved in all of 2004 when a Republican-led Senate was considering this President's circuit

nominees; all of 1989; all of 1983, when a Republican-led Senate was considering President Reagan's nominees; all of 1993 when a Democratic-led Senate was considering President Clinton's nominees; and, of course, the entire 1996 session during which a Republican-led Senate did not confirm a single one of President Clinton's circuit nominees the entire session.

The treatment of President Clinton's nominees contrasts harshly with the treatment Democrats gave the circuit court nominees of Presidents Reagan and Bush in the Presidential election years of 1988 and 1992. In those two election years, the Democratic-controlled Senate averaged nine circuit court confirmations. Regrettably, the Republican Senate reversed that course in the treatment of President Clinton's circuit court nominations, confirming an average of only four in the Presidential election years of 1996 and 2000, and none in the entire 1996 session.

At the end of the 106th Congress, the last 2 years of the Clinton administration, the Republican-led Senate returned to the President without action 17 of his appellate court nominees. I have not duplicated that record and I do not intend to, any more than I intend to see the Senate pocket filibuster more than 60 of President Bush's judicial nominees, as Republicans did with President Clinton's.

It is a little known fact that during the Bush Presidency, more circuit judges, more district judges—more total judges—were confirmed in the first 24 months that I served as Judiciary chairman than during the 2-year tenures of either of the two Republican chairmen working with Republican Senate majorities.

I continue to try to find ways to make progress. Last month, I sent the President a letter urging him to work with me, Senator SPECTER, and home State Senators to send us more well-qualified, consensus nominations. Now is the time for him to send us more nominations that could be considered and confirmed as his Presidency approaches its last year, before the Thurmond Rule kicks in.

As I noted in that letter, I have been concerned that several recent nominations seem to be part of an effort to pick political fights rather than judges to fill vacancies. For example, President Bush nominated Duncan Getchell to one of Virginia's Fourth Circuit vacancies over the objections of Senators WARNER and WEBB, one a Republican and one a Democrat.

They had submitted a list of five recommended nominations, and specifically warned the White House not to nominate Mr. Getchell. As a result, this nomination that is opposed by Democratic and Republican home-state Senators is one that cannot move.

The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts will list 43 judicial vacancies and 14 circuit court vacancies after today's confirmations. Compare that to the numbers at the end of the 109th

Congress, when the total vacancies under a Republican controlled Judiciary Committee were 51 judicial vacancies and 15 circuit court vacancies. That means that despite the additional 5 vacancies that arose at the beginning of the 110th Congress, the current vacancy totals under my chairmanship of the Judiciary Committee are below where they were under a Republican led-Judiciary Committee.

The President has sent us 27 nominations for these remaining vacancies. Sixteen of these vacancies—more than one third—have no nominee. Of the 17 vacancies deemed by the Administrative Office to be judicial emergencies, the President has yet to send us nominees for 7, nearly half of them. If the President would decide to work with the Senators from Michigan, Rhode Island, Maryland, California, New Jersey, and Virginia, we could be in position to make even more progress.

Of the 16 vacancies without any nominee, the President has violated the timeline he set for himself at least 11 times—11 have been vacant without so much as a nominee for more than 180 days. The number of violations may in fact be much higher since the President said he would nominate within 180 days of receiving notice that there would be a vacancy or intended retirement rather than from the vacancy itself. We conservatively estimate that he also violated his own rule 15 times in connection with the nominations he has made. That would mean that with respect to the 43 vacancies, the President is out of compliance with his own rule more than half of the time.

We have succeeded in dramatically lowering vacancies and, in particular, circuit court vacancies. We have helped cut the circuit vacancies from a high water mark of 32 in the early days of this administration to as low as 13 this year. Contrast that with the Republican-led Senate's lack of action on President Clinton's moderate and qualified nominees that resulted in increasing circuit vacancies during the Clinton years from 17 when he was inaugurated to 26 at the end of his term. During those years, the Republican-led Senate engaged in strenuous and successful efforts under the radar to keep circuit judgeships vacant in anticipation of a Republican President. More than 60 percent of current circuit court judges were appointed by Republican Presidents, with the current President having appointed more than 30 percent of the active circuit judges already.

The American people expect the Federal courts to be fair forums where justice is dispensed without favor to the right or the left. I have set out since the beginning of this Congress to do all that I can to ensure that the Federal judiciary remains independent and able to provide justice to all Americans. These are the only lifetime appointments in our entire government, and they matter. I will continue in the 2008 session to work with Senators from both sides of the aisle as I have in the 2007 session.

John Daniel Tinder has a decade of service as a District Court Judge for the Southern District of Indiana. Before his tenure on the bench, he worked for 7 years at the Justice Department as U.S. Attorney and Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana. He has worked in private practice and has experience as a county prosecutor and county public defender. His nomination has the support of both home State Senators. I acknowledge the support of Senators LUGAR and BAYH, and want to thank Senator DURBIN for chairing the hearing on this nomination.

While I support Judge Tinder's confirmation, I am concerned about his answer to a question I sent him on the legal significance of Presidential signing statements. I asked Judge Tinder if an alleged violation of the law prohibiting cruel, inhuman, and degrading conduct by American personnel were to come before a court, would it be appropriate for that court to consider the President's signing statement as legislative history, in addition to the text of law itself. I am troubled by Judge Tinder's answer that he is open to looking at signing statements as a tool for determining the meaning of a statute.

Throughout the country's history, Presidents used signing statements for limited purposes, such as explaining to the public the likely effects of legislation or providing direction to administrative agencies within the Executive Branch. It has long been considered out of bounds for any President to use signing statements—which are at most post-passage remarks—for the more expansive and controversial purpose of creating legislative history that our courts would be expected to follow. Legislative history is created within the Congress, which is charged by the Constitution with considering and passing laws. The President may veto legislation, but the constitutional system of checks and balances does not allow the President to speak for Congress.

The Nation stands at a pivotal moment in history, where Americans are faced with a President who makes sweeping claims for almost unchecked Executive power. This President has used signing statements to challenge laws banning torture, laws on affirmative action, and laws that prohibit the censorship of scientific data. When the President uses signing statements to unilaterally rewrite laws enacted by Congress, he undermines the rule of law and our constitutional checks and balances. It is incumbent upon the Federal judiciary, to safeguard and protect the constitutional balance when necessary.

I hope that Judge Tinder will fulfill his oath and be an independent buffer against constitutional overreaching. I congratulate the nominee and his family on his confirmation today.

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I appreciate this opportunity to support the

President's nomination of Judge John Daniel Tinder to serve as a United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit.

I would first like to thank Senate Judiciary Chairman PAT LEAHY, Ranking Member ARLEN SPECTER, the respective Leaders, and Senator BAYH for their important work to facilitate timely consideration of this nomination.

Late last year, Circuit Judge Dan Manion informed me of his decision to assume senior status after a distinguished career of public service. Given this upcoming vacancy and the need for continued strong leadership, I was pleased to join with my colleague EVAN BAYH in commending John Tinder to President Bush. This selection was a product of a bipartisan process and reflective of the importance of finding highly qualified Federal judges to carry forward the tradition of fair, principled, and collegial leadership.

As the Founders observed when our Constitution was drafted, few persons "will have sufficient skill in the laws to qualify them for the stations of judges," and "the number must be still smaller of those who unite the requisite integrity with the requisite knowledge." Judge Tinder embodies the rare combination that the Framers envisioned.

I have known John for many years and I have always been impressed with his high energy, resolute integrity, and remarkable dedication to public service.

John graduated with honors from Indiana University while earning his Bachelor's degree and then later graduated from Indiana University School of Law in Bloomington.

John served in a variety of critical legal roles early in his career which helped to shape his strong litigation background and experience. Among many legal positions, he has served as an assistant United States Attorney, a public defender, chief trial deputy in the county prosecutor's office and as a partner in private practice.

Given his broad experience and great abilities, John was a natural selection to serve as United States Attorney for the Southern District. After 3 years of active and distinguished service, John was then tapped again by President Reagan to serve as United States District Court Judge for Southern Indiana where he has served since 1987. In 20 years on the bench, he has presided over more than 200 jury trials in this district. His decisions are well known to be clear, well-reasoned, and thorough while applying appropriate precedents to the facts in each case. He is fully aware of the importance of appellate court decisions and their impact on the trial courts.

Throughout John's career, his reputation for personal courtesy, fairness, decency and integrity was equally well-earned and widespread among colleagues and opposing counsel alike and on both sides of the political aisle. The Senate has already unanimously con-

firmed him twice, and it is not surprising that news of his Circuit Court nomination has been well received by stakeholders in the legal community and the public.

I am also pleased that John's experience and professionalism were recognized by the American Bar Association which bestowed their highest rating of "well qualified" for his nomination.

I would again like to thank Chairman LEAHY and Ranking Member SPECTER for their important work on this nomination. I believe that Judge Tinder will demonstrate remarkable leadership and will appropriately uphold and defend our laws under the Constitution.

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, this past spring, Senator LUGAR and I made a joint recommendation to President Bush to nominate Judge John Tinder for a seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, the second highest court in the land. President Bush followed our advice, the Judiciary Committee unanimously approved his nomination, and today I am pleased to announce that the Senate will vote on Judge Tinder's nomination.

I take very seriously the Senate's constitutional duty to provide advice and consent for all judicial nominees. The Senate shares a responsibility with the President to ensure that the judiciary is staffed with men and women who possess outstanding legal skills, suitable temperament, and the highest ethical standing.

I regret, however, that the process for confirming judicial nominees has become too partisan in recent years and has produced too many controversial nominees.

I have worked hard with my friend and colleague, Senator LUGAR, to restore civility in Washington and to end the politics of personal destruction. We have worked closely together to build consensus and move forward in a responsible way to address the challenges that face the American people.

John Tinder is the embodiment of good judicial temperament, intellect and evenhandedness. He has been praised from both sides of the political spectrum for his service in the Southern District of Indiana, and I am confident he will receive those kinds of reviews, as well, on the Seventh Circuit.

I have known John for 20 years. Judge Tinder was born in Indiana, went to law school in Indiana, and has spent his entire legal career in Indiana, where he and his wife Jan currently reside. Judge Tinder is a Hoosier through and through.

At only 57, Judge Tinder has had a distinguished legal career that would make most lawyers envious. Judge Tinder has served as a Federal district court judge, Federal and local prosecutor, public defender, adjunct professor, and private practitioner. In 1984, at 34 years of age, he was nominated by President Reagan to become the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Indiana. Three years later, Reagan

nominated him to become a Federal judge. With over 30 years of experience, Judge Tinder has already practiced on both sides of the bench in the Seventh Circuit, arguing cases before it as an assistant U.S. attorney and presiding by designation in 12 cases. Overall, he has presided over 750 trials and has published over 700 opinions.

By all accounts, Judge Tinder is a good, smart, honest judge, who is highly experienced and capable. Judge Tinder has received the highest possible rating from the ABA.

If we had more nominees like John Tinder, we would have less fighting around this place. He is a good judge, he is a good lawyer, he is thoughtful, and he is nonpartisan. I hope that going forward, perhaps, others of a similar mold will come before us so that we can do our duty with less acrimony.

Judge Tinder enjoys my whole support, and I ask my Senate colleagues to confirm Judge Tinder to the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, with this nomination, I note we have confirmed more in this session of the Senate—of President Bush's judges—than the total number of judicial nominations the Republicans confirmed in all of 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2004, 2005, and 2006. I thought I would mention that.

Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I simply ask unanimous consent that the record of John Daniel Tinder be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to support him for confirmation.

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

JOHN DANIEL TINDER

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SEVENTH CIRCUIT

Birth: 1950, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Legal Residence: Indiana.

Education: B.S., with honors, Indiana University School of Business, 1972; Hoosier Scholar and Dean's List, 1968-1972; Beta Gamma Sigma (national business honorary fraternity), 1971 and Business School Honor Society.

J.D., Indiana University School of Law—Bloomington, 1975.

Employment: Associate, Tinder & O'Donnell, 1975; Assistant U.S. Attorney, U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Indiana, 1975-1977; Partner, Tinder & Tinder, 1977-1982; Public Defender, Marion County Criminal Court, 1977-1982; Deputy Prosecutor (Chief Trial Deputy), Marion County Prosecutor's Office, 1979-1983; Associate, Harrison and Moberly, 1982-1984; Adjunct Professor, Indiana University School of Law, 1980-1987 and United States Attorney, Southern District of Indiana, 1984-1987 and United States District Judge, Southern District of Indiana, 1987-Present.

Selected Activities: Academy of Law Alumni Fellow, Indiana University School of

Law, 2007; Volunteer of the Year, Wheeler Boys and Girls Club, Indianapolis, 1988; Member, Indianapolis Bar Association, 1975–Present; Current Vice President and Member Pro Bono Standing Committee, 2002–2004.

Bloomington Board of Visitors, Indiana University School of Law, 1985–1996; Chair, 1994 and Dean Search Committees, 1990, 2003.

Member, Indiana Supreme Court.

Member, U.S. Attorney General's Advisory Committee of U.S. Attorneys, 1985–1987 and Vice Chairman, 1986–1987.

Member, Judicial Conference of the United States; Member, Committee on Automation and Technology, 1994–1997 and Member, Committee on Court and Judicial Security, 1990–1992.

ABA Rating: Unanimous well-qualified.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is, Shall the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of John Daniel Tinder, of Indiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit?

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. LOTT. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. DOMENICI) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 93, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 442 Ex.]

YEAS—93

Akaka	Dorgan	McConnell
Alexander	Durbin	Menendez
Allard	Ensign	Mikulski
Barrasso	Enzi	Murkowski
Baucus	Feingold	Murray
Bayh	Graham	Nelson (FL)
Bennett	Grassley	Nelson (NE)
Bingaman	Gregg	Pryor
Bond	Hagel	Reed
Boxer	Harkin	Reid
Brown	Hatch	Roberts
Brownback	Hutchison	Rockefeller
Bunning	Inhofe	Salazar
Burr	Inouye	Sanders
Byrd	Isakson	Schumer
Cantwell	Johnson	Sessions
Cardin	Kennedy	Shelby
Carper	Kerry	Smith
Casey	Klobuchar	Snowe
Chambliss	Kohl	Specter
Coburn	Kyl	Stabenow
Cochran	Landrieu	Stevens
Coleman	Lautenberg	Sununu
Collins	Leahy	Tester
Conrad	Levin	Thune
Corker	Lieberman	Vitter
Cornyn	Lincoln	Voivovich
Craig	Lott	Warner
Crapo	Lugar	Webb
DeMint	Martinez	Whitehouse
Dole	McCaskill	Wyden

NOT VOTING—7

Biden	Domenici	Obama
Clinton	Feinstein	
Dodd	McCain	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the President will be notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will return to legislative session.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORVIS SCHOOL OF NURSING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as the Senate finishes its business for the year, it is my privilege to rise today in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Orvis School of Nursing at the University of Nevada, an important part of Nevada's health care community.

The beginnings of the Orvis School are humble. During a brief hospitalization in Reno, Arthur Orvis, a stockbroker and Nevada resident, noticed the lack of student nurses and began to wonder about the educational opportunities for health care providers in Nevada. On December 15, 1955, in a letter to University President Minard W. Stout, Orvis wrote, "I desire to give \$100,000 to the University of Nevada for the establishment of a department to be known as the 'Orvis School of Nursing.' This is a free will offering with no strings attached."

As a result of this generosity, the Orvis School of Nursing was founded by Arthur and Mae Orvis at the University of Nevada in 1957. When the Orvis School opened its doors in the fall of that year, there were 12 students and 5 faculty members. Unusual for the time period, the Orvis School's first class was very diverse, including one African-American student, one male student, one Asian-American student, and nine white female students.

The Orvis School of Nursing has come a long way from that first class of 12 students. Today, a wide group of students attend a world-class institution that offers the highest quality of nursing education. While traditional nursing programs focus only on hospital nursing, the Orvis School is distinctive in that it offers a bachelor's of science degree in nursing, emphasizing nursing leadership, community health, and nursing research. I confidently believe that this unique focus will lead to greater innovations and ideas for the future of health care.

In closing, I extend my most sincere gratitude to the Orvis School of Nursing, its alumni, and greater community. Nevadans are fortunate to have such a talented and skilled institution in our State.

GLOBAL HIV/AIDS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise in recognition of World AIDS Day, which millions around the globe commemorated on December 1. Although this event will be a recent memory as the new year begins, it is my hope that its purpose will be reflected in our thoughts and actions throughout 2008 and beyond.

World AIDS Day is a solemn opportunity to remember that HIV/AIDS continues to wreak havoc on individuals, families, and communities around the globe. Although the new estimates on HIV prevalence is good news, we cannot forget that AIDS is still a leading cause of death. More than 5,700 lives are taken by this disease every day, many just at a time when they are attending school, raising children, or contributing to society as productive adults. At the same time, nearly 7,000 people become infected every day, meaning that as 2.5 million more people—about as many people in my home state of Nevada—will face the start of the new year with HIV/AIDS. More than 30 million globally are already living with HIV/AIDS today.

In Nevada, the number of HIV and AIDS cases diagnosed each year since 2000 is on the upward trend, and AIDS rates continue to disproportionately impact ethnic and racial minorities. Our State also ranks 14th in the Nation for the rate of adolescents and adults living with AIDS. As a Nevadan, as well as a Member of Congress, I know that more must be done to tackle the epidemic at home and abroad.

In Congress, we must continue to support international AIDS relief programs like PEPFAR and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. It should be a priority to fund vital programs that fight HIV/AIDS domestically as well, especially the Ryan White Care Act and the National Family Planning Program, which works to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and other diseases. Medicaid in particular is a lifeline for vulnerable HIV/AIDS patients who would otherwise have no other means of receiving the care they need.

In giving recognition to the human toll of the HIV/AIDS global epidemic, let us also heed the resulting call to action. From supporting prevention to treatment, individual remembrance to public awareness, let us all keep working together to ensure that the goals of World AIDS Day will soon become reality.

DARFUR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have repeatedly come to the floor to speak