

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the live quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

S. CON. RES. 21

AMENDMENT NO. 589

Mr. KYL. The fiscal year 2006 and fiscal year 2007 budget resolutions included an importation reserve fund for drugs imported from countries “with strong safety laws.” Yet the Dorgan-Snowe amendment omits that language. Does the Senator from New Hampshire agree that under the Dorgan-Snowe amendment, the term “safe importation” means from countries “with strong safety laws”?

Mr. GREGG. Yes. The term “safe importation” means importation only from countries with strong safety laws. The additional language “with strong safety laws,” which was included in last year’s budget, was redundant, but the absence of those words does not alter the meaning, in my opinion. “Safe importation” refers to the importation of prescription drugs from countries that require the review of drugs for safety and effectiveness by an entity of the government of the country; that require the methods used in and the facilities and controls used for the manufacture, processing, and packing of drugs in the country to be adequate to preserve their identity, quality, purity, strength, and efficacy; that require the labeling and promotion of drugs to be in accordance with the approval of the drug and whose valid marketing authorization system is equivalent to the systems in the United States.

GENOMICS AND PERSONALIZED MEDICINE ACT

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support for S. 976, the Genomics and Personalized Medicine Act of 2007, which my distinguished colleague from Illinois, Senator OBAMA, and I introduced on March 23, 2007. Senator OBAMA introduced this legislation last year. We have worked together on some revisions, and I am proud to join him in cosponsoring the legislation this year.

I believe this legislation will help improve the quality and safety of health care by providing a better understanding of what causes certain diseases. Through a coordinated research initiative and safer genetic tests, patients and doctors will be empowered

to make more informed decisions about medical treatments.

This bill will advance the study of human genes and their functions to better predict patients’ susceptibility to certain diseases or conditions and better customize drugs and medical treatments to meet patients’ unique needs. By facilitating genomics research, fostering a capable genomics workforce, and encouraging the development of high quality genetic tests, patients will be better informed about the medical care they need.

I am proud that North Carolina is a leader in genomics and personalized medicine research. Duke University’s Institute for Genome Sciences and Policy and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s Institute for Pharmacogenomics and Individualized Therapy are both conducting significant research efforts in this area and support a stronger Federal focus on genomics. This legislation will increase Federal support for initiatives at Duke and Chapel Hill—a win-win for North Carolina and patients.

Specifically, this bill establishes an Interagency Working Group at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to pull together and accelerate genomics research by developing standardized terminology and establishing quality standards and guidelines for the collection, processing, and storage of genomic samples and data. It advances genomics research by establishing a national biobanking distributed database that collects and integrates genomic data to simplify pooled data analysis. The bill also develops biobanking initiatives at academic medical centers across the country, including biobanks containing biological specimens. It will improve genetics and genomics training by developing model training programs, residency curricula and teaching materials, and by integrating genetics and genomics into clinical and public health practice by developing health professional guidelines.

The bill will also encourage drug sponsors and device companies to develop companion diagnostic tests, and it will improve Federal oversight and regulation of genetic tests by identifying which tests require review and which agency—the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services or the Food and Drug Administration—should have oversight over specific categories of tests. It requires the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to evaluate direct-to-consumer marketing of genetic tests to which consumers have direct access and to educate the public about genomics and its applications. It also asks the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality to assess the clinical utility and cost-effectiveness of companion diagnostic tests that guide prescribing decisions.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

BURLINGTON COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, this spring, the new community health center in Burlington, IA, officially opened for business. Having secured funding for the center and attended the groundbreaking ceremony last June, I know how important this health care facility is to Burlington and the surrounding communities. At long last, Des Moines County has a permanent, unified medical and dental clinic, which has been sorely needed for many years.

This is a truly unique community health center. It is housed on the grounds of Southeastern Community College, and there is an agreement between the CHC board and the community college to allow nursing and health aide students to do some of their training in the center. This gives the center an edge in recruiting staff, and it gives students hands-on training opportunities right there on campus. Clearly, this is a win-win-win arrangement for the center, for the community college, and for the entire Burlington community.

I salute Ron Kemp and others who had the vision to create this new community health center, and the persistence to transform their vision into bricks and mortar. The facility is welcoming, modern, and well-equipped. The staff members are truly an inspiration. They have a special passion for their work, and take pride in the fact that they are providing first-rate health care to underserved communities.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., used to say that “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?” The staff members at the community health centers of Southeast Iowa have answered that question in powerful ways. They have committed themselves to providing high-quality health care to all comers, regardless of ability to pay. All are welcomed equally. All are served with professionalism and excellence. As chair of the Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee, I am 100 percent committed to securing appropriate funding for community health centers all across America. One thing I know for certain: Every dollar Congress appropriates for centers like the one in Burlington is a dollar spent wisely and frugally. It never ceases to amaze me how their staff members are able to do so much—and to serve so many people—with such limited resources.

I dare say that no one in the health care profession faces greater challenges than those who choose to work in community health centers. These challenges include chronic illness, cultural and linguistic differences, geographical barriers, and homelessness, to name just a few. Nothing stops these dedicated professionals.

And one more thing: community health centers have a well-deserved reputation for caring and kindness. They offer a direct and personal style of health care. They follow up. They care about prevention and wellness.

So I am deeply grateful to Executive Director Ron Kemp, to President Beverly Simone of Southeastern Community College, to the center's dedicated board members, to Ted Boesen, executive director of the Iowa/Nebraska Primary Care Association, and to all the other people who made this new facility possible. They work their hearts out to provide the very best health care to some of our most needy citizens. I deeply appreciate their passion, their compassion, and their dedication to public service.

HONORING LAS PLANTADAS

• Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Las Plantadas, a group of women incarcerated for resisting the dictatorial regime of Cuba for nearly half a century. The National Association of Cuban American Women will gather on Saturday, March 24, 2007, to honor a group of Las Plantadas—Ana Lazara Rodriguez, Miriam Ortega, Genoveva Felixgraw, Clara Berta Canton Gomez, Olga Morgan and Gladys B. Campaneria Herrera—with the Elena Mederos Award during a Women's History Month Celebration at Schuetzen Park, in North Bergen, NJ.

The Elena Mederos Award was instituted by the National Association of Cuban American Women in memory of Dr. Elena Mederos, 1900–1981, a human rights activist, who is considered the most prominent Cuban woman of the 20th Century.

Ana Lazara Rodriguez, a doctor, was imprisoned when she was a 19-year-old medical student for participating in protests against the Cuban dictatorship. She was released in 1979 and traveled to the United States via Costa Rica. In May 1995, she published "Diary of a Survivor," a book detailing her experiences while incarcerated.

Miriam Ortega was born in Ciego de Avila, Cuba. She was imprisoned for 18 years for working against the Castro regime. She was released and moved to the United States, where she continues in her determination to fight for a free Cuba.

Clara Berta Canton Gomez was born in Havana, Cuba. In 1962, State security agents searched the home of her parents seeking her brother who was involved in efforts against the Castro regime. Because they did not speak against their family member, Clara and her parents were incarcerated and sentenced to serve 30 years in prison. Released after 7 years, Clara has dedicated her time to fight for the release of political prisoners. She dreams of returning to see a free Cuba.

Olga Morgan was born in Santa Clara, Las Villas. When she was working against the Batista dictatorship, she met her husband, William Alex-

ander Morgan, with whom she has two children, Olguita and Loretta. Olga and her husband were imprisoned in 1960 and 1961. Her husband was executed with the regime proclaiming both he and Olga a "high risk for the revolution." Olga was released in 1971, and after being denied a travel document in 1978, she reached the shores of the United States in the 1980 Mariel boatlift.

Gladys B. Campaneria Herrera was born in Matanzas and raised in Havana. Between 1959 to 1963 she fought against the Castro regime, for which she was arrested in 1964 and sentenced to 3 years in prison. While she was in prison, she suffered greatly. She was released and moved to the United States, where she has lived in New York and worked in New Jersey as a reporter for various Spanish media outlets. An avid writer, Gladys has authored more than 150 poems and songs. She continues to fight for a free Cuba.

The inspiring stories of these women, and of the nearly 3000 other Cuban women who have been imprisoned, tortured, and endured many punishments for refusing to accept a dictatorial regime are a symbol of the dignity and courage of women and a reminder of the need to continue to fight for human rights around the world.

There is no doubt that Las Plantadas are exemplary leaders and profoundly committed individuals who are role models for the Nation. Therefore, I am pleased to pay tribute to Las Plantadas, and I know my colleagues will join in wishing them continued success in their quest for human rights and a free Cuba.●

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE ELSIJANE TRIMBLE ROY

• Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, every year during the month of March, we honor the women who have made a lasting impact on our country's history with Women's History Month. This month, I want to pay tribute to a true Arkansas pioneer who passed away earlier this year, Judge Elsijane Trimble Roy.

Judge Roy has been referred to as "Arkansas' Lady of Many Firsts." Only the third woman to graduate from the University of Arkansas law school in 1939, Judge Roy was the first female in the state of Arkansas to be appointed as circuit judge in 1966. In 1975, then-Governor David Pryor appointed Judge Roy to the Arkansas Supreme Court, making her the first woman to serve as an Arkansas Supreme Court Justice. Just 2 years later, newly elected President Jimmy Carter selected Judge Roy to serve on the Federal bench, and she was given the distinct honor of becoming Arkansas' first female Federal judge, as well as the first female judge appointed to the eighth Circuit.

The daughter of Federal judge Thomas C. Trimble, Judge Roy and her father also held the distinction of being the first father and daughter to serve

as Federal judges. In fact, Judge Roy served in the same courtroom that her father presided over for nearly 20 years. She often mentioned that she could feel his presence, and in a 1996 interview with the Arkansas Democrat Gazette, she noted that "It's meant so much to me to be able to try cases in the same court. I look up there, and he helps me with the hard cases."

A gifted athlete who loved sports, Judge Roy was a star player for the Lonoke High School basketball team in Lonoke, AR, and was a two-time women's singles champion at the University of Arkansas.

Judge Roy was devoted to both her family and her faith. She was a proud mother, grandmother, and later in life, a great-grandmother. Judge Roy was also an aunt to many nieces and nephews. She was a longtime member of First Baptist Church in Lonoke and taught Sunday school class when she lived in Blytheville, AR. According to her obituary, Judge Roy gave credit to the Lord for her many judicial appointments, saying, "I have always felt I have been brought to these positions by the Lord." The center of her faith was her favorite Bible verse, Micah 6:8, which reads, "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God."

A truly remarkable woman, Judge Roy received many honors in her life, including the Outstanding Appellate Judge of 1976–1977 by the Arkansas Trial Lawyers Association. One honor, however, stands out above others. In 1976, Judge Roy was chosen as Arkansas Democrat's Woman of the Year, a distinction her mother also earned. She received a plaque for that honor, and in a 1979 Arkansas Democrat article, Judge Roy said, "If anything is ever written about me, I want it to contain the words on that plaque. Throughout my career, the things written there are the things I have lived for."

The plaque reads:

As a law clerk, lawyer, and trial judge, Elsijane Trimble Roy established a reputation for integrity, intelligence, and independence. As the first woman on the Arkansas Supreme Court, she has become a symbol of pride and inspiration to all women.

Judge Roy, you have been a source of pride and inspiration to all women, not only in Arkansas, but throughout our great land. You will most certainly be missed.●

DIERKS, ARKANSAS, CELEBRATES 100TH ANNIVERSARY

• Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, it is with the greatest pleasure that today I honor Dierks, AR, which will soon be celebrating its 100th anniversary. Dierks is located in Howard County which lies in the southwestern part of my State. It was named after a German family that immigrated to the United States in the mid-1800s. The family established a major sawmill known as Hardscrabble, and when the community was incorporated in 1907, it changed its name to Dierks.