

XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Dorgan amendment No. 990 to S. 1082, the FDA Revitalization bill.

Byron L. Dorgan, Dick Durbin, Claire McCaskill, John Kerry, Ted Kennedy, Amy Klobuchar, Sherrod Brown, Ken Salazar, Mark Pryor, Daniel K. Inouye, Chuck Schumer, Harry Reid, Ron Wyden, Dianne Feinstein, Carl Levin, Blanche L. Lincoln.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this is a cloture motion on Senator DORGAN's longstanding endeavor to allow Americans to go to other countries for the importation of cheaper drugs. We know people are going to Canada now from around the country who live on the border, and it works pretty well. But if you are someone who lives in Nevada, you certainly need these drugs as well as someone living in Minnesota, and it makes it much more difficult. Nevadans go to Mexico a lot of times for cheaper drugs. It is unfortunate.

Senator DORGAN is right. He has worked on this very hard for a number of years. This is an effort to bring this matter to a close. I hope the Senate votes to invoke cloture so we can have a vote on this amendment. It is important. I am confident it will pass if cloture is invoked. It is something that has been needed for such a long time to help in one way to lower the cost of medicine for the American public.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING STEVEN SCHWARZ

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last week I attended a ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda to commemorate the 2007 Holocaust Days of Remembrance.

Fred Zeidman and Joel Geiderman, Chairman and Vice Chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, spoke eloquently about the horror and courage, the unspeakable tragedy and unimaginable heroism that even 62 years later we cannot begin to comprehend.

Sara Bloomfield, Director of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, as well as my colleague, Senator JOE LIEBERMAN, added their own powerful words.

I was privileged to sit beside Steven Schwarz. As we sat together, Steven listened silently, tears streaming down his face. Afterward, he told me his story.

Born in Poland, Steven lost both parents and a brother in the Holocaust. Forged with sheer willpower and blessings from God, he, his late wife Tina, and his brother Henryk managed to survive by hiding out in Poland. In

1953, they came to the United States and were welcomed with open arms. In the years that followed, Steven and his brother rose to become prominent and successful businessmen, overcoming great suffering to live the American dream.

Steven Schwarz embodies the grace and fortitude of all those who wrested triumph from despair. I am honored to have shared that day of remembrance with him and pleased to now pay tribute to his life story in the RECORD of the U.S. Congress as a powerful and poignant example of the unbreakable human spirit.

AAA SCHOOL SAFETY PATROLLERS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to recognize several young people who were recently selected by the American Automobile Association to receive special awards for their work as school safety patrollers.

More than 560,000 students in 52,000 schools across the country participate in AAA's School Safety Patrol Program. These young people have taken on the important responsibility of making the streets around their schools safer for their classmates. Though their responsibilities are often routine, the patrollers on occasion must place themselves in harm's way in order to save lives. It is my honor today to recognize two students who were selected to receive the AAA Life-saver Award for their selfless and heroic actions in fulfilling their duties as patrollers.

Taylor Pitzer and Caleb Jarrell participate in the AAA School Safety Patrol Program at Southdale Elementary in Kettering, OH. On November 8, 2006, Taylor and Caleb pulled a younger child to safety when a speeding van ran the red light at the intersection they were patrolling. The younger child was watching carefully for the "walk" signal. When the light changed, she began crossing the street and did not notice the oncoming vehicle approaching the intersection. Responding to an adult guard's "hold back" indication, Taylor and Caleb reacted quickly by locking arms so the child could not cross the street, which allowed the van to speed by without incident or injury to the child.

I would also like to thank AAA for making the school safety program possible. This program has helped save many lives over the years and has made our schools safer for our students, though, as the story of the Life Saver Award recipients demonstrate, the streets around our schools are not safe enough. That is why I worked to create the national Safe Routes to School Program, which was adopted as part of the Federal transportation bill on July 29, 2005. Funds for this program can help communities construct new bike lanes, pathways, and sidewalks, as well as launch Safe Routes education and promotion campaigns in elementary and middle schools.

I am pleased to commend this important program today before the Senate. I know I speak for every member of the Senate in expressing our gratitude for their valuable work in our communities.

NORTHERN NEVADA CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to honor the Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living, NNCIL. I am honored to congratulate this organization for their 25 years of dedicated service to the people of northern Nevada.

NNCIL has helped disabled citizens in Nevada in all aspects of their lives. They have empowered disabled citizens to become more independent and have given disabled people a stronger voice in matters that directly affect their lives. With the skills taught by NNCIL, disabled people who were benefactors of this program are now participating fully in the community by volunteering in the center and in other service agencies across Nevada.

NNCIL has helped disabled citizens thrive socially as well. The center has instituted "recreation night" that has helped disabled people form peer support groups. They have incorporated game night and movie night into their organization to build communities throughout Nevada.

The efforts of NNCIL have garnered broad respect and support from the community as a whole. NNCIL has incorporated multiple programs to educate the public concerning issues concerning disabled citizens. They have encouraged Nevada residents to get involved in their communities, and the citizens of northern Nevada have responded by volunteering in a home-modification program that has helped install ramps, handrails, and other improvements to make life easier for disabled people.

I would like to commend NNCIL for their many years of dedicated service to the people of Nevada. They have been an important part of improving the lives of disabled members of our community, and I wish them continued success.

RECOGNIZING NEVADA'S 45TH ANNUAL RENO JAZZ FESTIVAL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the 45th annual Reno Jazz Festival. Hosted by the University of Nevada, Reno, the Festival has grown into one of the largest of its kind in the United States, with over 10,000 people attending last year's event.

The competition portions are one of the highlights of the festival. Musical groups and individuals from junior highs, high schools, and colleges from throughout the country are invited to participate. The festival winner and other highly acclaimed musical groups will perform at the festival's showcase on its concluding day.

Clinics will also be offered at the festival to help developing musicians improve their abilities and talents. Jazz students have a unique opportunity to meet with and learn from some of the most talented musicians and educators in the Nation.

Jazz has come a long way since I first listened to the music as a boy on the radio in Searchlight. This distinct musical form has developed from its humble origins in early 20th century New Orleans to touch music fans of all ages and backgrounds today. The personalities of the early days of Jazz continue to influence today's artists across the musical spectrum.

I wish the host and participants of the Reno Jazz Festival continued success in bringing Jazz to all members of the community.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT KENNETH LOCKER

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I rise to express my sympathy over the loss of U.S. Army SSG Kenneth Locker of Burwell, NE. Sergeant Locker was killed on April 23 in Diyala province, Iraq. He was 28 years old.

Sergeant Locker graduated from Burwell High School in 1997. He enlisted with the Army while he was still in high school. Bob Lee, his high school math teacher, said that after he enlisted, Sergeant Locker became a much more focused young man whose grades shot up.

After high school, Sergeant Locker spent 3 years in the Army, 2 years with the National Guard, and eventually reenlisted with the Army. He had been in Iraq since August 2006 with the Army's historic 82nd Airborne Division.

Sergeant Locker was previously injured in Iraq by a land mine. He was awarded a Purple Heart and lived with shrapnel in his neck. Thousands of brave men and women like Sergeant Locker are serving in Iraq.

In addition to his life as a soldier, Sergeant Locker was father to three young sons and believed he was making a safer world for his children. He is also survived by his father Ken, two sisters, and a half sister and half brother. We are proud of his service to our country.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Americans in honoring SSG Kenneth Locker.

FIRST LIEUTENANT KEVIN GASPERS

I rise to express my sympathy over the loss of U.S. Army 1LT Kevin Gaspers of Hastings, NE. Lieutenant Gaspers was killed on April 23 in Diyala province, Iraq. He was 26 years old.

Lieutenant Gaspers was a 2000 graduate of St. Cecilia High School in Hastings, where he wrestled and played football. After graduation, he attended the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and enrolled in the ROTC program. As a senior at UNL, Lieutenant Gaspers was selected to lead the ROTC cadet's battalion. His colleagues remember him as low-key and professional in his leadership style. He earned his Army officer's commission in 2005, along with a degree from UNL in accounting.

Lieutenant Gaspers was a paratrooper with the Army's historic 82nd Airborne Division based at Fort Bragg, N.C. He had been serving in Iraq since August 2006.

Lieutenant Gaspers is survived by his parents, John and Pam, and sisters Katie and Audrey. We are proud of his service to our country.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Americans in honoring 1LT Kevin Gaspers.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I regret that on April 25, I was unable to vote on certain provisions and passage of S. 761, the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act. I wish to address these votes, so that the people of the great State of Kansas, who elected me to serve them as U.S. Senator, may know my position.

Regarding vote No. 142, on amendment No. 930, I would not have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

Regarding vote No. 143, on amendment No. 918, I would not have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

Regarding vote No. 144, on amendment No. 921, I would have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

Regarding vote No. 145, on amendment No. 922, I would have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

Regarding vote No. 146, on passage of S. 761, the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act, I would have voted in favor of passage of this act. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

HOLD ON INTERIOR DEPARTMENT NOMINATION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I have placed a hold on the nomination of R. Lyle Laverty to be Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks at the U.S. Interior Department. Consistent with my policy of publicly announcing whenever I place a hold on a nomination, I want to notify my colleagues of my objection to allowing Mr. Laverty's nomination to be considered under a unanimous-consent agreement, and to take a few minutes to explain to my colleagues why I am doing so.

The Interior Department has suffered no shortage of scandals in recent years. To name just two of the most egregious: Its former No. 2 official, a Deputy Interior Secretary who previously had been a coal industry lobbyist, pleaded guilty earlier this year to fel-

ony obstruction of justice for lying about his relationship with disgraced lobbyist Jack Abramoff. And we discovered that the Minerals Management Service, an agency within the Interior Department, has known for years about flawed drilling leases that allow companies to pay no royalties on valuable oil and gas they take from Federal land in the Gulf of Mexico, but the MMS did nothing until news reports brought the facts to the public last year. Indeed, the MMS has silenced auditors on its staff who tried to blow the whistle on companies not paying their fair share.

"Simply stated, short of a crime, anything goes at the highest levels of the Interior Department," the Interior Department's inspector general has warned us.

Last year, when Dirk Kempthorne was nominated to be Secretary of the Interior and he appeared before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee for confirmation, I secured from him a pledge. He told me that he would reform that troubled department and introduce a higher ethical standard. The scandals would stop coming.

However, in late March, the inspector general once again released a scathingly critical report warning us about bad things happening at the Interior Department. This time the subject was Julie MacDonald, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Mr. Laverty would be the immediate supervisor of the position Ms. MacDonald held.

In detail, the inspector general told us two things about Ms. MacDonald. One, she violated Federal rules by leaking internal Fish and Wildlife Service records to business groups actively challenging the Government's environmental rulemaking process. In the process, she has been undermining her own agency's cases in court. Two, without any formal education in the natural sciences, she has bullied and threatened FWS scientists and forced changes in their reports to suit her own political and personal agendas. FWS attorneys no longer will sign off on reports if they know the reports passed through her hands because they no longer are certain of the accuracy.

This sort of conduct is simply unacceptable. If you agree to work in the Interior Department, your loyalty should be with the Interior Department and protecting this country's natural treasures. Ms. MacDonald's loyalty lay elsewhere.

The inspector general sent his report on Ms. MacDonald to the Interior Department for administrative action more than a month ago. The Interior Department had no public comment. Only after I announced that I would place a hold on Mr. Laverty's nomination did Ms. MacDonald resign. That removes her from the equation, but not the atmosphere that allowed her to operate as she did for so long.