

By pointing out the rate of disbursement the committee has simply sought to explain why, in part, we are unable to support hundreds of millions of dollars for new compacts when compacts that are several years old have only disbursed a fraction of their funds. More time is required to review the effectiveness of the 18 compacts that already exist. I am told that the MCC's board of directors will meet in December to discuss which additional countries will be eligible to apply for compact funding in fiscal year 2009. Since we will not have a final fiscal year 2009 funding level for the MCC until late January at the earliest, I urge board members to act judiciously and to keep in mind that eligibility does not assure that a compact will be funded.

The many competing demands placed on the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill will only increase over the next few years, given the global financial crisis, which will have direct and indirect consequences for the world's poorest countries. We also expect to be asked to increase funding for international HIV/AIDS programs due to the recent PEPFAR reauthorization.

The MCC is a new and innovative form of assistance, and we want it to succeed. I was involved in drafting the authorizing legislation that established the MCC, and I have said many times that I strongly support the concept of providing governments with incentives to combat corruption, improve governance, and address the basic needs of their people. If the MCC shows that it can achieve the results we all want, it could become a model for other forms of foreign assistance.

But we cannot ignore other pressing short-term and long-term needs. Some have claimed that not providing another billion dollars for the MCC in fiscal year 2009 will delay progress toward long-term development goals. I would argue that funding to address the acute personnel shortages at the Department of State and USAID, which the President's budget largely ignores, is a priority for effective U.S. diplomacy and development assistance programs now and in the future.

It is also notable that a number of governments that were awarded compacts are not performing as expected. According to the 2009 Country Scorecard Index, 5 of the 8 MCC lower middle income countries that have compacts have failed 8 of 17 indicators. Similarly, with the reports of systemic voter fraud in the recent Nicaraguan elections, I am concerned that President Ortega's government may have jeopardized the MCC compact in that country.

The future of the MCC is now up to the Obama administration, and I expect President-elect Obama will explore all options for how the MCC should be managed and implemented, as he will for other Federal programs. However, before major adjustments, if any, take place, Congress has to finish the remaining fiscal year 2009 spending bills.

Senator GREGG and I will be working with our colleagues in the House. There are several areas in the State and Foreign Operations bill where the Senate and House positions differ, and the MCC is one obvious example. Until then, I would encourage those who care about the MCC, as many of us do, to focus on ensuring that funds already appropriated are used effectively.

#### TRIBUTE TO BOB MILLER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the great achievements of a wonderful Vermont businessman, Bob Miller, president of R.E.M. Development Company in Williston.

Bobby started R.E.M. Development in 1984, and over the last quarter century, the company has grown to become one of Vermont's largest commercial real estate developers. While it is hard to travel around Vermont without running into one of Bobby's projects, his lifelong commitment to bettering his community is both admirable and commendable.

Bobby recently received two special awards for his outstanding business practices and devotion to the community. Citing "their determination, success, and philanthropy," the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce honored R.E.M. Development as its 2008 Large Business of the Year. In addition, saying that Bobby "typifies the true spirit of service and self-sacrifice in representing the finest ideals of Vermont citizenship," the Vermont Chamber of Commerce presented him with its 2008 Citizen of the Year Award. I congratulate Bobby and R.E.M. Development for both of these well-deserved achievements.

I ask unanimous consent to have a November 17, 2008, Burlington Free Press article about Bobby Miller's successful career printed in the RECORD so all Senators can read about a prosperous Vermont businessman who continually gives back to his community.

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

[From the Burlington Free Press, Monday, Nov. 17, 2008]

#### MILLER IS A BUILDER AND A GIVER

(By Adam Silverman)

WILLISTON.—Just about anybody can create and run a thriving business when times are good. When the economic outlook is gloomier, though, success requires more careful planning and management.

That's both a piece of advice from and a guiding philosophy for Bob Miller, president of Williston-based R.E.M. Development Co., a 24-year-old company that builds and leases commercial real estate. Even with recession fears spreading, Miller said business is flourishing.

"There is always demand," he said last week while sitting behind his granite-topped desk at an industrial park he owns on Avenue D. "I don't think there's a good time or a bad time to go into business. Either you have a business plan that's going to work, or it's not. Anyone can make it in good times."

Outside, cars, trucks, big rigs and package-delivery vans frequented the businesses that rent space in his buildings. The park represents just a fraction of the 2 million square feet of real estate R.E.M. rents, a total that makes the company "the region's largest commercial industrial developer of manufacturing, distribution, warehouse, and flex space," it boasts on its Web site.

Miller, 73, of Burlington, whose initials compose his company's acronym, incorporates another component into his philosophy: the need for philanthropy, for businesses to give back to their communities. He has donated money and construction services to hospitals, exposition centers and youth recreational facilities, among many others. Miller and his wife, Holly, give what they call the "three Ts"—time, talent and treasure.

"It's kind of fun to take on one of these projects and stand back and say, 'We really helped this neighborhood,'" Miller said. "It's a great way to get your name out. There are rewards for philanthropy. People know you're out in the community giving back and not just taking, taking, taking. That's not why we do it—we do it because we want to—but there is that relationship in getting involved."

Those components of Miller's work, the successful company and the devotion to philanthropy, led to two awards he received last week.

The Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce honored R.E.M. Development on Tuesday as its large business of the year, citing Miller and the company for "their determination, success, and philanthropy." Three days later, the Vermont Chamber of Commerce presented Miller its Citizen of the Year Award, also championing his business acumen and his good works.

Miller "typifies the true spirit of service and self-sacrifice in representing the finest ideals of Vermont citizenship," the Vermont Chamber says on its Web site. "His commitment to the prosperity of the people and businesses in Vermont reaches statewide."

Among Miller's projects is Burlington's Gosse Court Armory, an old National Guard facility the military donated to the city in 2005 for transformation into a community center.

The city approached Miller about a potential contribution after budget estimates exceeded available resources. Miller looked at the plans, said he could do the work for \$500,000 less than the \$1.3 million estimate, and agreed to serve as general contractor. Later he wrote a check for \$100,000.

"It's really extraordinary to have a developer with his skills and expertise step forward to do this for his community," the city's chief administrative officer, Jonathan Leopold, said earlier this year.

Sitting in his office last week, Miller fielded a phone call from a construction worker at the armory. Without referring to any plans or drawings, Miller helped solve an engineering challenge from memory, delivering precise instructions. Then he drew a sketch on a blank sheet of paper to help an observer understand the issue: the alignment of basketball hoops and the configuration of lines on the gymnasium floor.

Miller's talent for drawing and engineering came naturally, he said. A Rutland native, Miller thought during high school he wanted to be a mechanic, but after graduation he turned toward engineering. His first job was as a draftsman.

He moved to Burlington in 1959 and helped draft electrical plans for the University of Vermont's library and Burlington High School; because the money wasn't great, Miller also tended bar, he said. In 1972 he started New England Air Systems, which he ran for

a dozen years, and then he sold it to the employees and created the company he continues to run—with 12-hour days during the week and seven hours on Saturdays.

"One of my philosophies is, you've got to make money or you're not going to be in business," he said. "I love the business. I love the challenge of negotiating. I'm fiercely competitive. I may not look that way, but I'm a highly competitive guy. But I'm not a sore loser, either."

Miller is especially happy to see businesses "grow with us," starting out small and expanding as their success increases. R.E.M. Development, which Miller runs with his son, Tim, is devoted to helping its tenants, but expects serious effort in return, Miller said.

"We try to help people get started. I'm a great advocate of the underdog, because that's where I came from," he said. "We want people to make a profit, but they've got to work for it, as we do."

Businesses first must craft a solid, well-researched, thorough, realistic business plan, Miller suggested. Then they must forge relationships with customers and with vendors, and develop and maintain a positive reputation. That's helped Miller thrive.

"When we really need a product, we can get that product," he said, referring to critical building components. "People know they will get paid. We don't cry wolf every day, but we do cry wolf from time to time."

Last, and sometimes of special importance, is for an owner to be able to abandon an unsuccessful venture, as he did with a portable-storage project he launched just before 9/11, even though a stigma can be attached, Miller said.

"If you're successful, everyone thinks you're a genius. If you fail they think you're a schmuck," he said. "Don't fall in love with 'em. Drop 'em if it doesn't work. You have to be a realist."

Regardless of the situation, Miller encourages other business owners to give back. He likes to quote fellow Vermont philanthropist J. Warren McClure, who died in 2004: "If you can't give a dollar, you'll never give a hundred."

"Give what you can," Miller said. "We have an obligation. There are many, many, many needs. And you can have a lot of fun doing it."

#### HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I wanted to take this opportunity to share with my colleagues an especially poignant and meaningful column that appeared in the Boston Herald last week by Wayne Woodlief honoring the efforts Senator EDWARD M. KENNEDY has made to enact legislation to provide health care for all Americans—and looking forward to his leadership on this issue. As Senator KENNEDY recently said "It is painfully obvious that our health care system costs Americans too much, costs employers too much, denies too much needed care and leaves out too many Americans." He is right. We need to take immediate action next year to reform our health care system. I look forward to working with Senator KENNEDY to enact broad reform of our health care system to help every American gain access to high-quality, affordable health care.

I ask unanimous consent to have the column to which I referred, printed in the RECORD.

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

BARACK OBAMA, LISTEN TO DR. TED

(By Wayne Woodlief)

Now's the time for President-elect Obama and Congress to seize the moment and enact health care for all Americans. ASAP.

Sen. is pressing a new strategy—shaped in bipartisan meetings—for one consensus bill that can be moved swiftly through the Senate and the House, perhaps even in Obama's first 100 days.

Kennedy has courted and listened to allies on both sides of the aisle. Sen. Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), ranking Republican on the Health Care Committee that Kennedy chairs, is working with Teddy. And Senate Finance Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) weighed in this week with his own ideas on health care; ideas that look a lot like Kennedy's and like the Massachusetts universal coverage law that Teddy touts as a national model.

Kennedy said Baucus' White Paper "brings us closer to our goal." Especially since the finance committee has to find a way to pay for a law that would cost billions, yet help tens of millions of struggling citizens, many without jobs now, pay their health care bills.

That is different from the early 1990s when then-Chairman Daniel Patrick Moynihan's opposition doomed health care reform championed by Kennedy and the Clintons.

And Obama—though treading carefully—said recently that health reform is "priority number three," right after the economy and energy independence, adding, "I think the time is right to do it."

Amen. Passage of universal health care would be the capstone on Kennedy's legacy. And Obama owes him. The passing of the Kennedy torch to Obama by Teddy and niece Caroline just before Super Tuesday was a turning point in Obama's path to the presidency. He also owes it even more to all those people to whom he promised relief.

In last Sunday's Washington Post, Kennedy wrote, "it is no longer just patients demanding change. Businesses, doctors and even many insurance companies are demanding it ... The cost will be substantial, but the need for reform is too great to be deflected or delayed."

For those who would say, "That's just a liberal talking," hear this:

David Blumenthal, director of the Institute for Health Policy for the Partners Health Care System and an Obama adviser, said, "Some of the largest corporations in America are struggling to compete in the world marketplace because of high health care costs."

Rick Umbdenstock, president and CEO of the American Hospital Association, said the economic turmoil, coupled with health care's high costs, "will likely mean the loss of jobs and employer-related health coverage ... and possibly even diminishing access to health care services."

Nancy Nielsen, president of the American Medical Association, said, "The cost of doing nothing is much higher than the alternative"—the scuffling to pay for good care, including preventive care, and dooming millions to "live sick and die younger."

These aren't socialists. These are people who work with health care daily and know the crisis it is in.

Kennedy has worked behind the scenes to craft health reform since Memorial Day, by phone, by e-mail and even by face-to-face meetings despite his illness. He's back in Washington, and he's not slowing down.

As soon as Obama takes that oath that Kennedy's slain brother took 48 years ago, he should start preaching and working for health care for all. And Congress, which Ken-

nedy has served for so long, should do it for Teddy—and for the American people. It's time to strike while those stars are aligned.

#### SPACE

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I wish to address the report to Congress of the Independent Assessment Panel on the Organization and Management of National Security Space, which was released on Tuesday, September 16. The Institute for Defense Analyses, led by Mr. A. Thomas Young and a team of six qualified and experienced experts, undertook this project to provide the Congress with a comprehensive assessment of the state of our national space policy, especially as it relates to our national security and our position as the global leader in space.

I raised concerns in 2006 when then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld suggested that the commander of Air Force Space Command, based in Colorado Springs, should be downgraded from the four-star level to three stars. I reminded the Secretary that space is critical to our Armed Forces; that nearly every military operation we carry out makes use of assets in space in one way or another, be it using our satellites to locate the position of the enemy, providing instant communications, or gathering dependable intelligence. I was pleased the Pentagon opted not to institute this troublesome proposal.

Following this episode, I authored legislation in the 2007 Defense authorization bill to establish a new space commission, similar to the 2001 Commission to Assess U.S. National Security Space Management and Organization. I wanted an independent panel of space, intelligence, and military experts to study, analyze, and make recommendations to the Congress on the current state and future vision of America's national space agenda. This review began last fall, and I am pleased that it was completed in a timely manner.

The panel began their report articulating what I have always understood to be true, that U.S. leadership in space is paramount to the preservation of our national security. It is key to our lasting ability to ward off modern and unexpected threats against our homeland or our allies and essential to maintaining our economic superiority in the ever-changing information age. Most importantly, the report reinforced that space-based technology is essential to our intelligence gathering and warfighting capabilities. As such, according to the panel, and I agree, updating and modernizing our national space policy and its related personnel structure must be a top priority. America's willingness and capacity to continue to lead in space provides our Nation with a priceless strategic advantage that will pay dividends for generations to come.

As a result of their extensive research and thorough investigations,