

Ledbetter. It would take, as I said, no longer than 15 minutes, maybe 20 minutes if somebody is late for the vote, but that is how long it would take.

So that seems appropriate.

Mr. BURR. May I ask a question of the majority leader?

Mr. REID. Of course.

Mr. BURR. My understanding in the unanimous consent request is that as to the rule that would require us to vote on cloture on the Ledbetter issue 1 hour after we started business tomorrow, under the unanimous consent request, the majority leader has asked that to be postponed until 6:30 tomorrow night. Am I correct?

Mr. REID. Yes. What I did ask is that the vote on Ledbetter would be at 6 o'clock tomorrow.

Mr. BURR. Six o'clock. I apologize.

Mr. REID. The reason being—and it is certainly no secret to anyone—we have a number of Senators who want to vote on that matter, and we would ask that be the schedule.

I would say no one would be inconvenienced with that. If my friends do not accept the consent request I offer, then the only alternative we have is to waste another day because we are postcloture with 30 hours. That time expires at 6 o'clock tomorrow. That is what time it expires. That is why that arbitrary 6 o'clock time was chosen.

As I repeat, Thursday we could have been on the bill. Friday we could have been on the bill. Monday we could have been on the bill. Tuesday we could have been on the bill. As I have indicated—and I am certain my friend has heard some of the statements that have been made today about our not being able to legislate—we have had to invoke cloture so many different times it is difficult to comprehend, but it is approaching 70 times. It would seem to me it would not be a fruitful use of the time not to be in session until 5 o'clock tomorrow. Because under the rules—my friend is right—cloture happens automatically an hour after we come into session. So it is going to happen at 6 o'clock no matter what.

It would seem to me, as to this important piece of legislation, we should be legislating on it from 9:30, 10 o'clock in the morning—whatever time would be convenient to come in. This request I am making is certainly not an unusual request. We almost always, with rare exception, have cloture votes by consent because, as I have indicated, the rules call for cloture votes taking place 1 hour after we come into session.

Today, we set the cloture vote on the motion to proceed to S. 1315—that was by consent. We, with rare exception, do it by consent. It is not as if we are here suddenly trying to invent the wheel.

Simply stated again, Mr. President, I am saying, at 6 o'clock tomorrow, we are going to have a vote on the Ledbetter reversal. Preceding that, we can have a very productive day and work on this veterans bill. Or we can follow the rules and be out of session all day tomorrow and come in at 5 o'clock and have an hour of debate prior to the cloture vote. So it is established we are going to have a cloture

vote at 6 o'clock. The question is, should we have a productive day? We want to have a productive day. We want to legislate over here on this important issue.

I agree with my friend, the distinguished Senator from North Carolina, we have had a good debate today. I was extremely impressed with Senator INOUE's statement. For someone who is a Medal of Honor winner, I think it means a lot coming from him that we all have a misconception of a lot of things that went on in World War II, not the least of which is the Bataan Death March.

In all the movies and everything you see about the Bataan Death March, you see a bunch of White men being driven by the Japanese, many of them to their deaths. That death march had 15,000 Americans and 60,000 Filipinos. That was very educational for me. We have had a number of good statements here today. So I would renew my consent request.

Mr. BURR. Continuing my reservation, Mr. President, as I understand the leader, it is not the minority and it is certainly not me who is suggesting that tomorrow be unproductive; it is the majority leader's desire to change the Senate rules and to move a vote on cloture on the Ledbetter issue from 1 hour after we come into session to 6 o'clock tomorrow night to accommodate people who are not in Washington, supposedly when the Senate is in session.

I think the Senator makes some great observations about the debate today. I agree with him about the heroism of Senator INOUE and others, Senator STEVENS, who performed bravely in the Pacific in World War II, and the debate we have had today. If we have learned anything, it is that we have brave Senators, but we also have the history to look at as to whether this benefit was intended for these individuals. That is why the debate was so important that Senator REID and I discussed earlier yesterday and we continue now. But with the insistence that we change the Senate rules and delay the vote on Ledbetter, I would have to be opposed to the unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Thank you, Mr. President. I appreciate the comments of my friend from North Carolina. The record is very clear. This is a continuation of my friends on the Republican side wanting to accomplish nothing rather than something. I understand that. I accept that. I have gotten used to it.

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

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

COMMEMORATION OF EARTH DAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, Earth Day has been celebrated on April 22 every year since 1970. Much has changed since then. Americans have grown increasingly aware of importance of environmental stewardship for the wellbeing of our country. New challenges have emerged, though, that we didn't recognize in 1970. New sources of pollution threaten our air and water. In recent weeks, for instance, we have been reminded that there are chemicals and pharmaceuticals entering our waters whose effects on the environment are largely unknown.

Perhaps our most important challenge perhaps the greatest problem mankind has ever faced—is global warming. Disruptive climate change threatens our ecosystems, our national security, and our economy. Landmark laws such as the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act have done much to protect America. Now, though, our generation is being asked to step up to save our planet as a whole.

The science is unequivocal: global warming is real and manmade greenhouse gases are the root cause. The scientific debate is over, and the time for action is at hand.

Congress is taking this responsibility seriously. Several bills have been introduced in the 110th Congress that would attempt to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Among them is America's Climate Security Act, the bill crafted by Senators Lieberman and Warner.

The Lieberman-Warner bill has the potential to reduce America's total greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2020 and 66 percent by 2050 compared to 2005 levels. These cuts would restore U.S. leadership in international climate change negotiations and help avoid the worst consequences of global warming.

There is no doubt. We need to start cutting greenhouse gases now. What have we heard from the White House on this? Last week, President Bush said America's goal should be to start to reduce the rate of greenhouse gas emissions by 2025. Representative EDWARD MARKEY, chairman of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, described the plan this way. The President's short-term plan for global warming is: Do nothing. His intermediate plan is: Do nothing much. And his long-term plan is: Do nothing close to what is required to avoid global catastrophe.

The White House plan is not nearly good enough. As global warming progresses we can expect more coastal

flooding, more inland droughts and wildfires, more severe storms, more global water and food crises, and more stress on species and habitats that are already at risk for survival. A White House policy of "business as usual"—of continuing to allow greenhouse gas emissions at an unchecked, accelerating pace—will sentence America to an increasing number of catastrophes—catastrophes that will be costly in terms of dollars and of human life and health.

We in Congress have another choice—the choice to honestly debate a rational plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enacting laws that protect our planet and America's future.

The founders of Earth Day created a legacy that lives with us today. Americans recognize that our well-being is founded on a clean and healthy environment. We have seen much improvement in the environmental stewardship shown by our nation's citizens and industry. Congress can be proud of the role it has played, too. Today, on this Earth Day, America is faced with a new set of environmental challenges. I look forward to working with my Senate colleagues as we do what Congresses before us have done: set aside our personal and partisan differences to do what is right for our country.

Mrs. DOLE. Mr. President, I rise today in support of Earth Day. Thirty-eight years ago, 20 million people from across our country celebrated Earth Day for the first time. This has since become an important annual tradition, not only in America, but across the globe. What started as a day to voice concerns over smog, litter and dirty rivers is now a global movement to clean our air, land, and water for future generations.

I am pleased that we have found many commonsense solutions to difficult environmental problems since the first Earth Day in 1970. For example, in 1978 we banned chlorofluorocarbons in aerosol cans because of their devastating affect on the ozone layer. In 1990 we passed the Clean Air Act Amendments to stop acid rain. And in 2003 we passed the Clear Skies legislation to reduce sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide that pollute our air. Although all of these accomplishments make sense to us today, it wasn't always easy to convince leaders and even the public that these actions were essential to protect our environment.

Some folks had concerns about the actual effects of the legislation, while others had concerns about the economic costs. Their concerns are not unlike the concerns of some in the current debate about global climate change. A number of my colleagues and I support a cap and trade system. But no matter how we deal with climate change we know that this will be a complex and vigorous debate. The discussions about the impact and costs are legitimate debates to be had. But I firmly believe that inaction is not an answer to this growing crisis.

On this Earth Day, which is celebrated by our Federal, State, and local governments; grassroots organizations; citizens of North Carolina, the United States, and the rest of the world, we set out a vision of how things can be. We can be energy independent and secure, we can de-carbonize our electric generation, and we can wean ourselves off foreign oil. We can leave the cause of this day—the Earth—cleaner and more vibrant. It will not be easy, but we as a nation can and must lead the way.

THE MATTHEW SHEPARD ACT OF 2007

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would strengthen and add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On the night of March 7, 2008, Lance Neve was with his boyfriend at a bar in Spencerport, NY. Neve told police that a man at the bar had been yelling anti-gay slurs at him and his boyfriend and continued to harass them using derogatory comments throughout the night. The aggressor then allegedly asked to shake Neve's hand, explaining that he had never shaken hands with a gay man. When Neve refused, he says the man attacked him and continued to beat him after he had fallen to the ground, knocking him unconscious. Neve was hospitalized with a fractured skull, nose, left eye socket, and jaw as a result of the attack. Police have arrested 24-year-old Jesse D. Parsons of Spencerport, NY, and charged him with second-degree assault designated as a hate crime in connection with the attack.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. Federal laws intended to protect individuals from heinous and violent crimes motivated by hate are woefully inadequate. This legislation would better equip the Government to fulfill its most important obligation by protecting new groups of people as well as better protecting citizens already covered under deficient laws. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

MAJOR MARK E. ROSENBERG

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life of Major Mark E. Rosenberg—a father, a husband, and a soldier. Major Rosenberg was on his second tour in Iraq when a bomb exploded near the Humvee that was car-

rying him through the streets of Baghdad. The explosion tore through his vehicle, killing him. He was 32 years old.

Major Rosenberg was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, out of Fort Carson. The 3rd Brigade Combat team has lost 32 soldiers in Iraq, nine since deploying in November. Major Rosenberg was the 236th Fort Carson soldier killed in Iraq.

Words cannot begin to measure the magnitude of Major Rosenberg's sacrifice, or the void left by his loss. Those who knew Mark remember him as a dedicated and dutiful soldier full of jokes and smiles. "He was the life of the party," his sister recalls. "Everybody wants to be around him." By all accounts, he was an extraordinary husband to his wife, Julie, and father to his two young sons, Joshua and Maxwell. Major Rosenberg was planning to come home on leave in June to celebrate Maxwell's second birthday.

Mark entered the Army in the footsteps of his father, Burton Rosenberg. He graduated from the New Mexico Military Institute in 1996 and received his commission shortly thereafter. He spent a year in Korea in 2001–2002 and a year in Iraq in 2004–2005. For his honorable service, he earned the Army Commendation Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terror Service Medal, and the Humanitarian Service Ribbon.

Mark's second deployment, which began last November, was scheduled for 15 months. His unit was tasked with training the Iraqi military, a job in which Major Rosenberg was committed to making a difference. He carried the spirit of a peacemaker and understood the humanitarian mission that a soldier could fulfill.

Major Rosenberg was the type of 'great man' who the activist and humanitarian Jane Addams described in a 1903 address to the Union League Club in Chicago. In the remarks she offered in honor of George Washington's birthday, Addams argued that "when we come to the study of great men it is easy to think only of their great deeds, and not to think enough of their spirit. What is a great man who has made his mark upon history? Every time, if we think far enough, he is a man who has looked through the confusion of the moment and has seen the moral issue involved; he is a man who has refused to have his sense of justice distorted; he has listened to his conscience until conscience becomes a trumpet call to like-minded men, so that they gather about him and together, with mutual purpose and mutual aid, they make a new period in history."

Major Rosenberg, as Jane Addams describes, was able to see through the "confusion of the moment" and understand the moral dimensions of his work. He was able to inspire and lead his soldiers, and the Iraqis whom he was training, with his vision and his heart. He worked in one of the most