

I have, gone to Walter Reed and visited with their wounded warriors. More than 21,000 service men and service women have now been wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan—21,000.

Now, thank God, not all of them will become disabled veterans, but many will. No one can question their sacrifice, no one can question their contribution, and no one can question that they have earned the right to participate in this rebate program every bit as much as any other American. So let us honor the Americans who came of age in the Great Depression and during World War II. Let us honor the Americans who have fought for our country in its wars only to come home disabled. And let us ensure that these greatest Americans receive their fair share of any economic stimulus.

That is what is at stake. That is why the Senate should not rubberstamp the House-passed bill. That is why the Senate should pass the Finance Committee's stimulus bill. To do anything less would be to shortchange millions of seniors and veterans who have earned the right to be called the greatest Americans.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TESTER.) Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is authorized to speak for up to 10 minutes if he wishes.

HONORING MARTIN PAONE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today is January 31. It is signifying the end to many things: the end of the month, maybe we will begin to see a little bit of spring down the road, but it is also the end of an amazing career of someone we all know and love, and that is Marty Paone.

Marty Paone has worked for 32 years on the Hill, 28 years on the Senate floor. He started in the House Post Office before working in Senate parking. He joined the cloakroom in 1979 and was appointed Democratic Secretary in 1995 by Senator Daschle. He worked under four Democratic leaders: Senator BYRD, Senator Mitchell, Senator Daschle, and Senator REID. I think every one of them would agree with the word that I would use to describe Marty Paone—"indispensable."

We do not know what we are going to do without Marty here. He has been such an amazing presence, so knowledgeable; not only about the rules of the floor but just about how this body works. I know Senator REID relied on

him for just about every kind of advice. Again, his advice was indispensable.

I am particularly appreciative of his kindness to me when I was a new Senator, teaching me the way the place worked, helping me realize when there would be votes so I could time my schedule. As most of you know, I like to be busy, but I hate to miss votes, as everybody else. And he was just the most knowledgeable, decent, kind, indispensable person around here.

Now Marty is leaving. We really are going to miss him. We are going to miss his dedication to this institution. I think if you made a list of the people most dedicated to the Senate, Marty Paone would be in the top 10 or 20 in all our history.

We are going to miss his ever-present—he hovered in the background quietly—omniscience, always knowing what was going on, and always being there to help. We are going to miss Marty just as a person who, in his quiet, droll way, is actually a very funny guy.

I want to wish Marty the best. I think I speak on behalf of 100 Senators and everyone who served previously. I thank his wife Ruby for putting up with the long hours. I know because I would call Marty at home on weekends much of the time asking him for advice or when there might be a vote or this or that. His three kids, Alex, Stephanie, and Tommy—Stephanie is at William & Mary, Alex goes to VCU, and Tommy is still in high school. And a particular hello, because I have heard she is watching, to Marty's mother Evelyn Paone.

Mrs. Paone, God gave you 95 years, and let's hope he gives you many more. I know you are so proud of Marty, maybe even a little prouder than we all are.

Marty, we will miss you, we thank you, we love you. Good luck, Godspeed.

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. ENSIGN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

COLONEL D'ARCY GRISIER

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I rise today with a truly heavy heart. At Arlington Cemetery, on January 17, 2008, I attended the funeral services of my friend, COL D'Arcy Grisier. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife beloved Roberta, or, as we call her, Bert, and their three children Sean, Kelly, and Darcy.

D, as he was called by his friends, was a caring father, loving husband, and a member of my extended family. A patriot in every sense of the word, D spent 26 years serving this Nation in the U.S. Marine Corps. Upon retiring

from the Corps in 2003, D decided to continue serving this country in a different capacity.

From 2003 until September of this past year, Colonel D was my military legislative assistant. In this capacity D advised me on all national security matters, all the while reminding me that once a Marine always a Marine and that the "M" in Marine is always capitalized.

Those of us who were friends with D will remember him more for who he was than the lifetime of service he gave to this country. My staff and I will miss D always knowing exactly what the Redskins were doing wrong.

We will miss him always saying "keep your seats" whenever he entered a room. We will miss him constantly singing Jimmy Buffet songs out loud, and losing at least two sleeves of golf balls every time he played. We will miss his laughter and his camaraderie. Most of all, we will miss his friendship.

Mr. President, if D Grisier knew that I was making this statement about him, he would probably be upset. That was the type of individual he was.

While he would not have wanted this attention, Americans deserve to know D's story and the caliber of person who spent a lifetime serving them.

This past summer at our annual staff retreat Colonel D announced that he would be leaving the office to go and work in the Pentagon as the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Budget and Appropriations. This was bittersweet for many of us.

We were thrilled for D, of course, but sad to see him go. Unfortunately, he was never able to report to work for his new job, a challenging position that he looked forward to starting.

During his tenure on Capitol Hill he had many accomplishments, which D referred to as "doing the people's business."

These accomplishments included advising me in my role as chairman of the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support.

In this capacity, he drafted legislation and amendments, wrote numerous floor statements, staffed me in high level meetings, advised me on billion-dollar spending bills, and, on occasion, voted my proxy, or what D would refer to his role as, the "extremely junior Senator from Nevada."

He spent a great deal of time in Nevada at our military bases and meeting with veterans. D also took great care in helping the families of our State's fallen heroes. He moved mountains in order to relieve some of the stress and anxiety they face at such difficult times.

After D announced to the office that he would be leaving for the Pentagon he told a short story. I believe this story reflects the type of individual that he truly was.

D told us that the professional accomplishment he was most proud of was bringing a Junior ROTC program to Douglas High School.

The fact that D took pride in accomplishing those less glamorous tasks that directly impacted the lives of Nevadans is what made him the man he was, and made him the man all of us admired.

President Ronald Reagan once said that "Some individuals go through life wondering whether or not they've made a difference. Marines don't have that problem."

Mr. President, I am here to tell my colleagues that this could not be any truer than in the case of COL D'Arcy Grisier.

America is a stronger Nation because of the lifetime of public service that Colonel D gave.

I will truly miss my friend.

His last saying that all of us used to kind of get a chuckle out of, when he was tired of talking, he used to say: "My, my, look at the time."

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

STIMULUS PACKAGE

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, yesterday the Finance Committee went to work. We marked up a stimulus package after the House had done their package on Tuesday, I believe. They sent a package to us because, quite frankly, as we look out across this great Nation, we understand that our economy needs a jolt. It needs a quick jolt. It needs something for hard-working Americans to participate in bringing this country back on line and getting our economy going and moving forward. That is exactly what we did in the Finance Committee. We took the bill the House had quickly done. They moved quickly with the administration to put something out there. That was a good thing to do, get us started and get us moving in the Congress. But, unfortunately, as we looked at that package they sent us, there were some very hard-working Americans, some justifiable Americans who needed to be a part of stimulating this economy who had been left out.

So what we did in the Finance Committee was to try to make some improvements in a timely way to the package the House had already produced and to get it over here so we could get to work on it here on the floor of the Senate and move it forward so that the people of this country could again reinvigorate themselves and their economies and get back to work. Our plan included two very key groups the House had left out. Those two groups are our seniors and disabled veterans.

I know the Presiding Officer, like myself and many others, has a tremendous respect for the seniors of this Nation. These are the individuals who have built this country. They have labored hard. They have given their all. The fact that their Social Security income does not count as income on their tax returns is no reason to leave them

out of this equation. The other group is our disabled veterans. I know my colleagues can realize the importance of this group. These are courageous Americans who have fought, given to this country in order that we can live in this great land and enjoy the freedoms we do. There is no reason we should leave these two groups out in stimulating the economy.

At least 20 million seniors depend primarily on Social Security income for their retirement. These are individuals who are out there in their communities. They are working hard still to be an active part of the community. But more importantly, they are also those who need it the most. They are the ones who are deciding between whether they are going to purchase their prescription drugs, whether they are going to buy food, whether they are going to pay the utility bill, and whether they will be able to do that small something special for a grandchild or a neighbor. Those are the kinds of people they are.

I did a call-in show yesterday. There was the most delightful man, an elderly gentleman—I believe he was from South Carolina—who called in to the program.

He said: I am one of those seniors. I don't want to be forgotten. I want to be a part of stimulating this economy. I really need it. I am appreciative that you didn't forget our wounded warriors, our disabled veterans, those who have given of themselves that this country could be free and respected. But I have to tell you, if you leave us out, it will be OK because I still believe in this country, and I still believe in those who do need it, those folks who are working hard to take care of their families.

That is just the kind of person we need to help, somebody who has that kind of compassion, somebody who respects the fact that they need it, but they are going to continue to give back in whatever possible way they can.

There is no excuse for us not bringing up this Senate Finance Committee package and passing it, leaving those two groups of individuals out in this great opportunity to revitalize our economy, put faith back in the American people that we are going to act quickly, that we are going to target these resources to places where we know they will get back into the economy.

If you look at the facts from the AARP, older Americans spend about 92 percent of their income—a greater proportionate share than all other adults. They are going to spend those resources on putting it back into the economy. Food, for instance—more than 85 percent of the food we consume in this country is produced or processed in this country. Those are American jobs they are going to be supporting. It is an economy that supports us all which they will be supporting. It is critical that we make sure these two groups are not left out, and we did that

in the Finance Committee. Those were two of our priorities.

I was so proud to join with my colleague, Senator OLYMPIA SNOWE of Maine, to offer the amendment for our wounded warriors. I was so proud of Senator BAUCUS and Senator GRASSLEY for working with us to make that happen, realizing a group had been left out that was essential and that should not lose the opportunity nor the belief we have in them that they are an integral part of this American fabric. They are the very reason we enjoy and maintain the freedoms we have.

Our disabled veterans are such an incredibly important group. We know there are approximately 3.2 million veterans who receive disability income from the Veterans' Administration who will be eligible for rebates under the Finance Committee plan; 3.2 million of them receive disability income they cannot count as income on their tax returns. We don't know that all 3.2 million will qualify, but we do know that, at the least, a quarter of a million of them will. We know for a fact that a quarter of a million of them will qualify for that rebate. It is certainly more than that that is possible. But the point is not how many of them qualify. The point is that we would attempt to leave out any of them in terms of being able to participate in this economic stimulus.

These Americans—our wounded warriors, our disabled veterans, just like our seniors and just like hard-working American families—are going to spend their rebate checks on a variety of needs. They are either going to be spending it on food or a new pair of shoes. They are going to be taking care of their needs, maybe pumping money back into the economy in a multitude of ways.

The Senate plan is a good plan. It is good for Americans. It is good for seniors. It is good for disabled veterans. It is good for our economy. We have worked in the committee in a timely way. We have targeted these dollars. We have kept a rein on the amount of money we are spending, having been advised by all kinds of economists, the Secretary of the Treasury, former Secretaries of the Treasury, who said to us: Do not make the plan too big. Keep it limited.

That is exactly what we did. But we did take the opportunity to not forget two very valuable parts of the American fabric and the American family; that is, our seniors and our disabled veterans.

If we take up this Finance Committee package and pass it quickly and get it to the President, then we will have achieved the goal of stimulating our economy and not leaving out any Americans who could be such a vital part in helping us do that.

So I encourage all of my colleagues, let's don't sit here and squabble over a whole lot of things. Let's move quickly, taking what the House has done, making the improvements we have