

says is more important than what the science would say we can do best.

There is the Emmett Till unsolved civil rights bill. I agree we ought to pass that bill, but I don't think we ought to add that money to our grandkids. I think we ought to get rid of the waste, fraud, abuse, and excesses at the Department of Justice and pay for it. It is a legitimate Federal role. It fits with the enumerated powers. Those were Federal laws violated in the fifties and sixties. But to pass that bill and not get rid of wasteful programs and not get rid of waste says we are only doing half the job. It is easier doing it that way. You don't make anybody mad or upset with you. But you don't do the best thing for our children and our grandchildren, and you certainly don't do the best thing for our country.

It is interesting. I have sent two letters to the prime author of that bill. He has not had the courtesy to answer me once. He held a press conference that impugned I was a racist because I would not let that bill go through.

The fact is, the statements are: You can't work and negotiate bills. We have offered amendments to pay for the bill, with which Mr. Sykes, the main supporter of this bill, agrees. What has happened is it is take it or leave it, no debate, no amendment, no working in the Senate to the best tradition of the body.

So we have this statement made by Senator HARRY REID that you can't work with COBURN. I tell you, PEPFAR was a great bill. This Senate passed it. We were critical in terms of negotiating that bill. The Second Chance Act, which makes sure that we work against recidivism on prisoners throughout this country, we worked hard and changed that bill. On the Genetic Nondiscrimination Act, we negotiated well and got a great bill for every American so the insurance company can no longer discriminate against you if you have a genetic tendency and they cannot raise your premium. We have done a ton of things, but it is on the small bills which require people to work that we have not been able to accomplish that.

I look forward to the next 2 weeks. I look forward to the weekend. Congress is about to go on vacation. Most Americans today with gas prices cannot go on vacation. And we are going to get a debate this weekend on these 40 bills. We probably won't have done anything significant yet about energy. So we are going to be debating spending \$25 billion, \$50 billion, maybe even \$70 billion more, creating 50, 60, 70 new programs, and you are still going to be paying \$4.10 for your gasoline with no hope 10 years from now that things are going to be any different because we have our priorities wrong. We would rather look good to special interests and pass bills in the dark of night than debate them on the floor and put the priorities that should be in front of this country out there—energy, health care, Social Se-

curity reform, \$300 billion worth of waste in the Federal Government every year. Nobody is doing a thing about it. Half the agencies will not even comply with the improper payments law. We have \$3 billion a year spent at the Pentagon maintaining properties they don't want, but the Congress won't pass a true real property reform because it is held up by a homeless act, most of which none of the buildings are capable of being utilized by homeless individuals.

What I say to my colleagues is let's have a debate. Let's see the rumble in America that thinks whether we are doing the right things, the right priorities. Do they want us to go down this road where we strangle the lifeblood economically from our children, we take away their ability to own a home, we take away their ability to get a college education, or should we be about real priorities? And if we are going to spend new money, shouldn't we be about getting rid of some of the \$300 billion that is wasted every year right now?

I don't have to take a poll about that one. That is a 90-plus-percent factor with the American people. It is only in the Senate that we don't get it, that we would rather spend time growing the Government and spending more money than fixing the real problems of this Nation.

I look forward to the debate. I am excited about this weekend. My hope is we will have an open amendment process, one that does justice to the greatest traditions of the Senate but, more importantly, one that does justice to the American family and their children to come.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. KLOBUCHAR). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I have in my hand the bill Senator REID just filed. There is no CBO score with this, and I object to the introduction of this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate 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.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SPECIALIST ESTELL "LEE" TURNER

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to SPC Estell

"Lee" Turner and his heroic service to our country. As a member of the Army's Echo Company, 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division based in Fort Campbell, KY, SPC Turner was serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. On July 2, 2008, he died in the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD, after being mortally wounded by an IED in Afghanistan.

Lee had already served his country for 6 years in the Army two decades earlier, having finished his military service in 1989. Yet this wasn't enough. Even though he had gone above and beyond, Lee still had the drive to be a hero. After moving to Sioux Falls in 2004, he reenlisted in the Army at the age of 39, after the Army had raised its age limit. He looked forward to being deployed to Afghanistan, his first tour in the war on terror. His wife recalls, "He never seemed worried about it, this is something he believed in. He thought it was right."

Raised in a military family, patriotism was instilled in his heart from a young age. Lee's father served in the Navy for 18 years, and his grandfather was an Army soldier who served in World War II. His younger brother John is in the Army and his wife is an Army reservist. Lee's awards and decorations include the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Army Combat Action Badge, and the Purple Heart. Lee enjoyed racing and fixing cars and playing guitar. He had a fierce devotion to his family, and he will be deeply missed by those who survive him: his wife Leah, his daughter Lyda, his siblings, John and "Gucci," and his mother Gloria.

Specialist Turner gave his all for his soldiers and his country. Our Nation owes him a debt of gratitude, and the best way to honor his life is to emulate his commitment to our country. Madam President, I join with all South Dakotans in expressing my deepest sympathy to the family and friends of SPC Estell Turner. He will be missed, but his service to our Nation will never be forgotten.

STAFF SERGEANT JEREMY VROOMAN

Madam President, I also rise today to pay tribute to SSG Jeremy Vrooman and his heroic service to our country. As a member of the Army's 2nd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, in Vilseck, Germany, Staff Sergeant Vrooman was serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. On July 15, 2008, he died in a Baghdad hospital after sustaining injuries from an improvised explosive device.

A native South Dakotan, Jeremy carried on the tradition of military service in his family when he joined the Army 9 years ago. Both of his grandfathers served and his older brother, Justin, is currently in the Army. Jeremy was proud to serve in the military and planned on making it his career.

He was on his second tour of duty in Iraq.

Jeremy enjoyed playing with his children, hunting, fishing, and mountain biking. Friends and family will miss Jeremy's laughter and infectious smile.

Sergeant Vrooman gave his all for his soldiers and his country. Our Nation owes him a debt of gratitude, and the best way to honor his life is to emulate his commitment to our country. Madam President, I join with all South Dakotans in expressing my deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Sergeant Vrooman. He will be missed, but his service to our Nation will never be forgotten.

34TH ANNIVERSARY OF TURKEY'S INVASION OF CYPRUS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I rise to commemorate the 34th anniversary of Turkey's invasion of the island of Cyprus. Today, Cyprus remains a divided island, with a third of the territory still occupied by Turkish forces.

Over the years, numerous United Nations resolutions have called for the respect of the sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Cyprus and for an immediate end to the Turkish occupation. The Government and people of Cyprus are ready to make compromises to achieve peace and to reunify the island. We must continue to stand with them to fight for a fair and reasonable agreement—one that safeguards basic freedoms and human rights for all Cypriots.

I am proud of the partnership we have with the Republic of Cyprus. During the evacuation of Lebanon in 2006, Cyprus served as the primary transit location for some 15,000 U.S. citizens and was the launching point for humanitarian aid to the people of Lebanon. As a member of the European Union, the Government of Cyprus has worked to improve the economic viability of all its citizens and has taken important steps to integrate the Turkish-Cypriot community.

Madam President, I welcome the renewed interest in the efforts for a comprehensive and fair solution to reunify Cyprus. I urge the Government of Turkey to cooperate with the negotiations and I applaud the people of Cyprus for their steadfast commitment to securing a peaceful and prosperous future.

TRIBUTE TO POLISH FOREIGN MINISTER GEREMEK

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Bronislaw Geremek—scholar, diplomat, and Polish patriot—who passed away on Sunday, July 13.

Bronislaw Geremek played a key role in Poland's transition from communism to democracy. The Solidarity movement is known as a labor movement. In 1980, an obscure electrician jumped over the wall of the Gdansk shipyard and took the world with him.

Yet behind these workers stood leading Polish academics and intellectuals, like Professor Geremek. The scholars became advisers to the workers. Professor Geremek was imprisoned by the Communist government during the dark days of martial law.

Professor Geremek was instrumental in the negotiations that led to the election of 1989. These elections brought the Solidarity government to power and ended Communist control of Poland. This peaceful transition was a model for other nations.

I got to know Minister Geremek during the debate on NATO Enlargement. Poland was taking the difficult steps to become a free market democracy. Yet Poland yearned to be a true partner in Europe. That meant joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The Senate had a robust debate on enlarging NATO. I argued that the new democracies would strengthen NATO and share the burden of European defense.

In the years since, Poland has shown the world why NATO membership was so important. In Kosovo, in Iraq, in Afghanistan—Poland has stood by the side of the United States and the members of NATO.

I was with Foreign Minister Geremek in Madrid—when Poland signed the articles of enlargement. I joined President Clinton in Warsaw to celebrate. It was a historic time for America and for Poland.

Bronislaw Geremek's achievements will live on in the history books. His legacy is a Poland that is democratic and free—and a true friend and ally of the United States.

IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Madam President, in mid-June, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, numbering over 1,000, are heartbreaking and touching. To respect their efforts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through energy_prices@crapo.senate.gov to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. This is not an issue that will be easily resolved, but it is one that deserves immediate and serious attention, and Idahoans deserve to be heard. Their stories not only detail their struggles to meet everyday expenses, but also have suggestions and recommendations as to what Congress can do now to tackle this problem and find solutions that last beyond today. I ask unanimous consent to have today's letters printed in the RECORD.

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

Thanks for your stand. I believe you have it exactly right. I sent you an e-mail a month ago with some of my thoughts, but here are a few more. I work in the distribution business. With the cost of diesel almost \$5, it is inflating the cost of all our products.

We have already had increases the when printed are the size of a phone book. We are seeing a big slow down in our business that is directly related to the cost of fuel. It has a domino effect in that our customers are cutting back because the average business and home owner does not have extra money to spend because it is all going to fuel. If it gets any higher I see it destroying our economy. There will be an ever increasing slowdown in the economy as everyone cuts back more and more. Thanks for your hard work.

DENNIS, *Meridian*

It is time the Congress and Senate quit looking for stories and do something! America needs to be independent from foreign oil and energy. We need an energy bill brought before President Bush before [a new President is elected]. Items that need addressed: domestic construction of nuclear power, clean use of coal, renewable energy resources, construction of new clean technology, oil refineries, renewed domestic production of oil, legislation that would hold those accountable for hindering achieving these goals by crying about "not in my backyard." [Such] people are a threat to our national security. Where is this legislation you claim to strongly support?

Mr. CRAPO, I am 39 years old. I have worked hard and look forward to being able to achieve a comfortable life in retirement. I am afraid that our country is going in a direction where that will be the least of my concerns. It costs me over \$5 a day to get to work, and I live less than 15 miles from work. With what those of you in Washington are currently doing, prices will only worsen. [The] negligence in previously addressing these needs has brought our nation to its current economic distress. You can't just support issues; you need to take the lead in promoting new policies.

Give me something to judge you by your actions.

ROB.

SENATOR, Nightly, I listen to a number of pundits and politicians debate the "solutions" to our energy problems. One of the more ridiculous ones is mandating people switch to higher fuel efficiency automobiles (i.e., buy a new car). As a small business owner, our health insurance premiums have just gone up (again), the minimum wage has risen, grocery costs are rising and our 401k is diminishing. The very thought of anyone in Congress telling me I have to replace my "paid for" cars, and take out a loan to buy a new (more energy efficient) car is ludicrous!! Gasoline would have to be over \$10 a gallon to make economic sense to my family, in lieu of absorbing a car payment.

I support drilling offshore and in ANWR, as well as shale oil extraction. I think it is time that the world's most technologically-advanced nation illustrate to the world the most technologically-advanced means of extracting energy. I am deeply offended that the United States government, who cannot profitably manage Amtrak, the U.S. Postal Service, or even its own Senate cafeteria, has the audacity to pretend to convince me that they know more about "safe and sound" energy extraction than the companies that are professionals in this endeavor. I hear people crying about how drilling in the U.S. might "spoil national resources"! I would be willing to wager that if we were not dependent upon Middle Eastern oil, we could have, most likely, saved about 4,000 U.S. servicemen and women's lives. That cost of natural resource is infinitely greater than a handful of caribou!

Respectfully,

DANIEL, *Boise*.