

Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to S. 3001, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009.

Carl Levin, Christopher J. Dodd, E. Benjamin Nelson, John F. Kerry, Claire McCaskill, Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Bill Nelson, Blanche L. Lincoln, Richard Durbin, Daniel K. Akaka, Robert Menendez, Kent Conrad, Sherrod Brown, Jack Reed, Jim Webb, Charles E. Schumer, Harry Reid.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call is waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to S. 3001, an original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2009 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN), the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON), the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUE), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. KYL. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK), the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

Further, if present and voting, the senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE) would have voted "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 83, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 197 Leg.]

YEAS—83

Akaka	Coburn	Hagel
Alexander	Cochran	Harkin
Allard	Coleman	Hatch
Barrasso	Collins	Hutchison
Baucus	Conrad	Inhofe
Bayh	Corker	Isakson
Bennett	Cornyn	Johnson
Bingaman	Craig	Kerry
Bond	Crapo	Klobuchar
Boxer	DeMint	Kohl
Brown	Dodd	Kyl
Bunning	Domenici	Lautenberg
Burr	Dorgan	Leahy
Byrd	Durbin	Levin
Cantwell	Enzi	Lieberman
Cardin	Feingold	Lincoln
Carper	Feinstein	Lugar
Casey	Grassley	Martinez
Chambliss	Gregg	McConnell

Menendez	Rockefeller	Stabenow
Murkowski	Salazar	Stevens
Murray	Sanders	Tester
Nelson (FL)	Schumer	Thune
Nelson (NE)	Sessions	Voinovich
Pryor	Shelby	Warner
Reed	Smith	Webb
Reid	Snowe	Whitehouse
Roberts	Specter	

NOT VOTING—17

Biden	Inouye	Obama
Brownback	Kennedy	Sununu
Clinton	Landrieu	Vitter
Dole	McCain	Wicker
Ensign	McCaskill	Wyden
Graham	Mikulski	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 83, the nays are 0. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for the benefit of Members, cloture has been invoked on the motion to proceed. We are now waiting to see if we are going to require the use of 30 hours. We hope that is not the case. The two managers of the bill are ready to start legislating whenever they can.

We have worked all afternoon trying to figure out a way to move forward on this bill, and I hope we can do that very quickly. This is an extremely important piece of legislation. This is the way we take care of our troops. There is a 3.9-percent pay increase in this bill, and there are a lot of other good efforts to help the Nation's military, so I hope we can move as quickly as possible. But we will wait for the Republicans to tell us if they are going to require the use of the 30 hours postcloture.

There will be no more votes today, 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 the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 6532

Mr. REID. Mr. President, earlier today I came to the floor and indicated I had received calls from the administration—specifically, one call from the Secretary of Transportation, Mary Peters, who pleaded with me to do everything I could to replenish the money from the highway trust fund. The House has passed legislation that that will take place on or about October 1 of this year. What we want to do, at the request of the administration, is move that forward and do that now. The money is gone. The Secretary has informed me and everyone else that she is going to start doling the money out, first 80 percent and then, as I understand what she said to me, it will be 50 percent, and pretty soon nothing. We have major projects around the country that will go unfunded and will have to cease construction.

It is extremely important we do this. We have asked, on many occasions prior to today, that this take place. We knew the trust fund was down. But we have asked this be done before, and we received word from the White House that this was something they did not want to do. Now it appears the White House wants to have it done—as they should have wanted it done a long time ago.

Mr. President, having said that, I ask unanimous consent the Finance Committee be discharged from H.R. 6532 and the Senate proceed to its consideration; that the amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table and any statements relating to this matter be printed at its appropriate place in the RECORD with no intervening action or debate.

That is the consent. I add that what this would do is replenish—take from the general fund money in the sum of \$8 billion and put it in the highway trust fund.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. GREGG. Reserving the right to object, if the majority leader will allow me to take a minute or so to explain the theory behind the objection, it is this. Essentially, the highway fund was set up with the highway trust fund and road construction to be paid for with revenues from gas receipts. This will be one of the first occasions when the highways' construction will be paid for by taking the money out of the general fund. The only problem is we don't have any money in the general fund. This money will have to be borrowed from our children.

It makes no sense from our fiscal responsibility to set this precedent. There are many other ways this can be paid for in a responsible way. Therefore, I do not believe we should start a precedent of borrowing from the general fund in order to pay for highway construction, which historically has been paid out of the highway trust fund.

Therefore, on behalf of myself and Senator DEMINT, I will be objecting. But I would like to say this. I believe that with a reasonable number of amendments, probably no more than three, and a very tight timeframe, we can address the issues about which I am concerned and about which Senator DEMINT is concerned. They would be relevant issues, I would hope. We would run them by the majority leader so he could be reasonably comfortable with their relevance. Mine obviously would be related to paying for it in a more responsible way than borrowing it from our children.

At this time, I have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. As I said a number of times, I so appreciate the ability that I have—and I hope he, the distinguished senior Senator from New Hampshire,

has with me—to talk with each other, even though we disagree on matters. He is always very upfront. He told me what amendments he thinks should be offered and I appreciate that very much. But at this stage we cannot do that. It would take days to get to this matter and then, of course, amendments would take time.

I would also add this. This is not the first time the highway trust fund has been used in some manner. In 1998 we took approximately \$8 billion from the highway trust fund and put it in the general fund. So now this is an opportunity to pay that back. We should have done it some time ago. We didn't do that.

I appreciate the concern of the Senator from New Hampshire, but I hope, during the night, people will think about this. I hope the Secretary of Transportation will let the Republicans know how desperate the country is for this money. We will renew this request tomorrow.

Mrs. BOXER. Will my colleague yield please for a question?

Mr. REID. I am happy to yield for a question.

Mrs. BOXER. I stand here as the chair of the Environment and Public Works Committee. We write the highway bill, and Senator MURRAY is involved in the funding of it. Both of us are involved in both. I ask the majority leader's opinion on this.

We found out days ago that 82,000 jobs were lost in the month of August.

Mr. REID. It was 84,000.

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you for the correction—84,000 jobs were lost in the month of August and our unemployment rate is the highest in 5 years. It is over 6 percent. I think it is extraordinary. I understand the respect we all have for Senator GREGG. He is upfront about how he feels. But the bottom line is, when people don't get a paycheck and they lose their job, I want them to know what is going on here. You have the Secretary of Transportation calling all of us saying: Please move now. As my friend pointed out, we have, in fact, used the highway trust fund in the past to fund the general fund. So this is not some extraordinary moment in history.

My question to my friend is—I want to ask you this, Mr. Leader: Could you please state again the urgency of this matter so my Governor, who is dealing with a horrific budget crisis—he doesn't need this. Neither does my State legislature. I have a Republican Governor and Democratic State legislature struggling to get a budget passed. I won't go into the details. You need two-thirds to pass it. Now we get this circumstance and job layoffs start to go out and the funding goes down—would my friend, the leader, please explain again in clear language why this is so urgent.

Mr. REID. I say to my friend, the chair of the committee of jurisdiction, the highway trust fund is broke. As a result of that, there are roads being built and bridges being built and that

is simply going to stop. The people there, going to work, in the near future are not going to be able to go to work anymore because there is no money to pay them.

I would also say this. One of the things that so concerns me about the Bush-Cheney-McCain operation is no one seems to care about all the red ink we have spent over the last 8 years. In Iraq alone we are spending \$5,000 a second. During the time we have been here since this vote started, 40 minutes—I don't know how much money that is. I tried to figure out what it would be, 40 times 60 times 240. It is lots of money. Everything we have done this last 8 years has been basically done on borrowed money.

Here is a situation where the administration is asking us to take money from the general fund. They will borrow that money as they have done with everything here. That is why we have a \$11 or \$12 trillion debt. I cannot imagine that self-righteous people are all of a sudden wanting things paid for.

Mrs. BOXER. If I could ask one more question. The Senator has hit the nail on the head. We do not hear any complaints from Senators DEMINT or GREGG or any of them over there on that side, or Senator MCCONNELL, when we send all this money abroad. As a matter of fact, the administration announced \$1 billion to Georgia—not Atlanta, GA, the country of Georgia.

Regardless of how we feel, we all want to help them—

Mr. REID. That is borrowed money.

Mrs. BOXER. Borrowed money. The war costs \$1 billion to the country of Georgia. Why are we paying \$1 billion? It seems to me Europe has some interest in this. But oh, no, now we hear objection from our Republican friends when it comes to investing in America.

I tell my friend, the American people need to know more about this. That is why I prolonged this discussion. I thank the Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire is recognized.

Mr. GREGG. I appreciate the enthusiasm of the Senator from California for her position. I don't think it accurately reflects my position. When you are voting for war costs, you are voting for supporting soldiers in the field. Basically, there is a big difference between the obligation of a Federal government to defend the Nation and support soldiers in the field and the obligation of the Federal Government to borrow from our children in order to do construction which should be paid for from taxes which go into the highway trust fund. That is a fairly significant difference. In fact, the two, as a matter of public policy, have basically no touch point.

The issue is, the highway trust fund does not have enough money in it right now to pay for the costs which have been obligated as a result of construction commitments.

We knew 3 or 4 years ago, when we passed the highway bill, that as a very

practical matter we were setting up this scenario because we put in place thousands—actually, tens of thousands—of projects in that bill which we knew could not be paid for under the projected cash flows into the highway trust fund. We knew this point was going to occur when we passed that bill. So now we are here, and suddenly we hear these statements: Well, I am sorry, we are out of money. So we have to go into the general fund—which doesn't have any money, by the way—and take money out of the general fund and put it in the highway trust fund in order to pay for these costs. Well, who pays for that? That is borrowed debt. That is debt on debt. Our children pay for that.

The purpose of the highway trust fund was to build roads and to do it in a fiscally responsible way. If the highway trust fund does not have enough money to build the roads that are proposed, then you either, A, get more money into the highway trust fund; B, take the money from someplace else that is part of the trust fund, such as the mass-transit fund, which was the proposal of the administration initially and which makes probably the most sense here; or, C, you raise more money for the highway trust fund, something I do not happen to support, but that is the responsible way to approach this. You do not go into the general fund and set a precedent of borrowing from the general fund for the purposes of funding the highway trust fund because all that means is our children will get the bill and you will set up a scenario where the next time we get the highway bill, there will be even more projects in it because people will know the relevance of the highway trust fund, and the revenues coming into it, has no relationship to the number of projects you put in the bill because they will know that the precedent has been set that you can raid the general fund for the purposes of the highway trust fund. This is not good policy. It is not good fiscal policy.

It has nothing to do, by the way, with funding troops in the field. Now, the Senator from California alleges that I am supporting funding Iraq. By the way, I am not. Iraq reconstruction—I actually put the language in the appropriations bill which stopped money from going for Iraq reconstruction. So don't accuse me of something I didn't do. I have supported funding the troops, but I do not happen to believe we should be sending any more money to the Iraq Government. I think they should be sending us more money, if we get down to the basics here, for all the money we have spent on reconstruction, especially the money that has been stolen.

But, in any event, that is a red herding. The issue here is whether we are going to set the terrible precedent of using general fund money to fund the highway trust fund because, believe me, once you open that floodgate, there is no end to it—no end to it—and

the next time we get a highway bill around here, there will be no end to the amount of spending that is involved.

Now, I understand the construction industry is not really too concerned about that. I mean, they want those dollars and they want them now. If they get access to the general fund, they are probably pretty excited about that. But it is terrible policy. Remember, these projects will not be terminated. The spend-out will continue. It will continue at a slower rate. As money comes into the general fund, it gets spent out of the general fund. That is called—wow, a surprise—pay as you go.

Now, I hear a lot from the other side of the aisle about pay as you go. Well, this is the ultimate test of pay as you go. We should be paying for highway construction as we go or, alternatively, if you really want to start raiding different funds, you should raid within the highway trust fund. There are significant dollars in the mass-transit fund. You could take that money and put it in the highway trust fund if you really wanted to be consistent about funding the transportation needs of this country or, as I said earlier, you could raise the taxes, which I do not happen to support, to go into either one of those funds in order to make this a more responsible fiscal action. But what we are setting here is a precedent that makes no sense at all from a standpoint of fiscal policy.

The majority leader is absolutely right. We have been spending money around here in a very profligate way, and regrettably it has not been a partisan event, it has been bipartisan. There has been a lot of money spent here that should not have been spent. But that doesn't justify creating a new precedent which will create significant debt for our children, on top of debt which already exists, when we know that is not the policy that was set up under the highway trust fund.

Now, if the theory of the chairman of this committee is that the highway trust fund is essentially a nonexistent event, that it is basically something that is there, it is a political statement—you know, the gas taxes should come in and be spent, but if we run out of gas taxes, we go into the general fund—if that is the position of the majority, the chairman of the committee, which appears to be the position, well, then let's abolish the highway trust fund. Let's abolish it. Let's put the gas tax into the general revenue base, and then you can argue, effectively, that it should come from general funds for construction—not necessarily a good policy. In fact, it moves away from good policy. If we wanted a good policy, we would actually have a much more structured capital budget around here, and we would fund it from independent sources such as gas taxes.

So we have a difference of opinion. It is a difference of opinion, however, that is pretty significant because it goes to the question of, How does a govern-

ment spend money when it runs out of money? Does it borrow the money? Does it raise taxes or does it slow its spending to meet its income? And I would suggest that the best way to approach this is to slow spending to meet incomes.

The second way to address this is to keep the integrity of the highway trust fund by moving funding around within the highway trust fund. The third way to address this is to raise taxes, which I do not support. But absolutely the worst way to address this is to essentially make the highway trust fund a nonevent, neutralize it, neuter it, and essentially merge it with the general fund, which is what is going to happen as a practical matter if this bill goes forward in this form.

Now, I suggest to the majority leader, since I do not have the votes to sustain my position—I recognize that—the influence of the various forces that want to get this money is pretty significant, as always happens around here anyway, but in this case it is even more significant since the White House has changed its position just this week.

But I have suggested that we take up this bill, we spend a couple of hours on it, allow myself and Senator DEMINT—I think Senator DEMINT told me he wanted two amendments—I cannot speak for him, but I believe that is what he said—and that they would be relevant to earmarks, and my amendment would be relative to a better way to pay for this, which would be to pay for this by the transit fund or, alternatively, set up some sort of structure where the general fund gets paid back. But in any event, we could set aside a couple of hours here sometime this week and do it. I mean, we can do that on unanimous consent. I think it is a reasonable way to approach it, and as a very practical matter, it would give those of us who think a fiscally responsible approach at least requires a vote on it the chance to vote on it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I did not dream up the idea that projects were going to be terminated. That is what the Secretary of Transportation told me. Now, maybe I misunderstood her. Maybe she was exaggerating. But that is what I took away from my conversation with her.

It is difficult for me to argue with the Senator from New Hampshire because I think it is fair to say that he has been trying to raise a red flag for a number of years about the wild spending of this administration. Even though he is a stalwart Republican and close to the administration, he has not been quiet about this.

Now, this is an issue I brought up today because I was asked to do so by the White House. Let the record be clear: Democrats have been very supportive of funding the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. We want to support the troops. And we can go into another dis-

cussion—and none of us want to get into that tonight—about what is going on in Afghanistan and Iraq.

But the highway trust fund, part of it—and I believe, if we ever get to a point where we are debating amendments on taking money out of mass transit—maybe 20, 25 years ago, when Nevada didn't have these tremendously difficult problems we have with traffic, with roads, and we were not concerned about mass transit, maybe we would have joined with the Senator from New Hampshire. But we in Nevada, as with many metropolitan areas around the country, are desperately in need of more transit money, not less—more transit money rather than less. So it would exacerbate a tremendously difficult problem if the idea of the Senator from New Hampshire bore fruit; that is, we take the money out of mass transit and put it in for highways. That would be the wrong thing to do.

You can no longer say that the highway trust fund is just for highways because for decades now, we have used part of this money—rightfully so—because of actions of the Congress, along with the administrations, taking this money and doing very important mass-transit projects.

So here is where we are. If we were able to have a vote on this piece of legislation tonight or tomorrow, it would pass overwhelmingly. But, as with the Senate, we cannot move to things just because we want to. We have a lot ahead of this. We have the Defense authorization bill, we have an energy issue we have to take up. That is next week. Every day that goes by, according to the Secretary of Transportation, is a bad day for the Department of Transportation.

Mr. DURBIN. Would the majority leader yield for a question?

It is my understanding that the Bush administration's Secretary of Transportation has asked us to move this bill, to put billions of dollars into the highway trust fund, so that it will not go broke so that we can continue building those projects across America to reduce highway congestion. And we have an objection on the floor of the Senate from a member of the Republican party to move to this bill to put the money in the highway trust fund; is that correct?

Mr. REID. The Senator is right. I see on the floor a poster child for the necessity to do this, and that is the junior Senator from Minnesota. We had a bridge collapse from lack of money, and we, on an emergency basis, came to this floor, recognizing what a catastrophe that was for Minnesota and our country. That bridge is now being built with borrowed money.

Mr. DURBIN. I say to the leader in closing, to make the record clear for those following the debate, our attempt to pass a bipartisan measure to help the administration, to make certain there is money in the highway trust fund is being stopped by the Republican side of the aisle; is that correct?

Mr. REID. Absolutely true.

Mrs. MURRAY. Would the majority leader yield for a question? I would say to the majority leader, since I am chairman of transportation appropriations, I have been warning of this to come for some time. It is my understanding that the amendment you are asking unanimous consent for takes \$8 billion out of the general fund and puts it back in the trust fund, which is exactly what happened back in 1998, in reverse.

Taxpayers pay their gas tax into the trust fund, expect it to go for transportation projects. In 1998, we took \$8 billion of that money that they expected to go into transportation funding and put it in the general fund.

What you are asking to do tonight is simply to take that \$8 billion back and put it exactly where taxpayers expected it to go originally, which was to transportation funds; is that not correct?

Mr. REID. The Senator from Washington is exactly correct.

Mrs. MURRAY. I did not talk to the Secretary of Transportation. I did see their press release that they now want this money to come out. It is my understanding that if we do not take this action, as the House has done, that beginning this Thursday, and shortly thereafter, States will not get their transportation dollars and will therefore have to begin to lay off workers at construction projects and essentially halt many of the construction projects in the country, correct?

Mr. REID. When I talked to her, I believe last Friday, she indicated to me that she was going to have to make those difficult decisions. Then I also read her press release later, after she had been able, I guess, to put more numbers in the paper, and that is what I read, which is an elaboration of what she told me.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I share the concern of the majority leader.

I am deeply concerned that several members of the Republican Party have said no to this. At a time when our economy is in real trouble, when construction projects are not only providing critical dollars but completing important transportation work across the country, that we would allow those projects to be halted and workers to be laid off, adding to the economic woes of the country at this time, is simply not a smart move. I hope we see that decision reconsidered on the other side in the next 24 hours.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader for his leadership. I am not surprised that the Transportation Secretary for the Bush administration would call the majority leader and ask this be done. She came to us today. She stood over that bridge the day after it happened. When I was listening to my friend from New Hampshire talk about the fact that we need

to continue funding our soldiers, of course, we need to do that. But for me, this is an issue of priorities. Why this administration would decide to spend \$10 billion a month in Iraq month after month after month, so that this war has gone on longer than World War II, while we have bridges collapsing, while we have levees falling apart, defies reality.

When I heard the Senator from New Hampshire talk about soldiers on the frontline, which this Congress has been more supportive of than any other Congress for continuing that funding, for those people on the bridge that day in Minnesota, they were on the frontline. Those people who plummeted into that cold water that day were on the frontline. People died at that bridge. The NTSB has not concluded its investigation of the cause for the bridge collapse, but what we do know is, if it had been fixed earlier, if there had been appropriate funds all over this country for bridge and levee repairs, we may not have experienced some of the disasters we have seen. I view this not only as fixing a bridge that, by the way, is six blocks from my house—I drive over it every day with my daughter in the back seat, an eight-lane bridge that fell into the Mississippi River—it is also about going into the next century's transportation system.

If we are going to move to the next century in this economy, if we are going to start talking about transportation and wind and solar and doing things with biofuels and building our own energy future, we cannot be stuck in the last century's transportation system. As we face difficult economic times and look at the number in terms of what we can generate in jobs with transportation funding, it is a winner. I want to have an infrastructure plan and a stimulus package that lasts long after the rebate checks are cashed, that is looking to the future with infrastructure funding.

When Dwight D. Eisenhower created the interstate highway system, when President Roosevelt did the rural electrification system, they saw it as not only moving the economy forward, they saw it as a way to generate jobs. That is what this is about.

It is shortsighted, indeed, and shows a lack of understanding of the country's priorities to say that we should let transportation funding go down the pot while we are constructing bridges in Iraq and as bridges in Minnesota are falling apart.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. 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.

RECOGNIZING LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the musical group Los Tigres del Norte for its contribution to the greater Las Vegas community and especially for its commitment to the Silver State's vibrant Hispanic community. As we commemorate the importance of the Hispanic community in Nevada and around the country during Hispanic Heritage month, I find it fitting to recognize the members of Los Tigres del Norte for their talent and dedication.

Just last year, this premier musical group was chosen by a committee comprising Las Vegas community and business leaders to join individuals such as my good friend, Wayne Newton, Vicente Fernandez, and other notable celebrities who have made a positive impact on Clark County. Like the Walk of Stars honorees before them, Los Tigres del Norte have added to the worldwide prominence of Las Vegas. These talented artists have also been an encouraging and supportive voice for the Silver State's hardworking Hispanic community.

Their Grammy and Latin Grammy winning music not only entertains, but it sends a clear message that we all have a commitment to making a lasting impact on our community, regardless of the color of our skin or our country of origin. It also tells stories of those individuals who often are not able to share their concerns and challenges. Los Tigres del Norte truly are a voice of the unheard. They confront the issues of our day and use their music as a medium to provide inspiration and hope.

Today I join my colleagues in the Silver State in recognizing Los Tigres del Norte for all they have brought to Nevada and their dedication to serving as a positive voice for our vibrant Hispanic community. Their addition to the Las Vegas Walk of Stars was a much deserved recognition of their almost 40-year-long musical career and their success in bringing to light the challenges facing America's Hispanic communities. As we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, I offer my congratulations to Los Tigres del Norte—an accomplished group of musicians of whom all Nevadans can be proud.

TRIBUTE TO TRILBY WHOBREY BALL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a dear friend of mine who has left behind her beloved