

leading the world in discovering and exploring new frontiers.

I will not support any future NASA budget request that does not have a robust human exploration program. It must be a program that inspires, yet is also a program grounded in what is possible and not wishful thinking.

If we no longer prioritize space exploration, we can be certain that others on this planet will. A number of the findings by the Augustine Commission would guarantee that other nations, such as Russia, China, and India, will be waving to us as they fly by the space station on their way to the Moon and other planets if we are not careful. We cannot cede our leadership in space, and we must have a viable human space exploration program.

As we are losing global market shares in most industries, we are still the world leader in human spaceflight. I will not support a NASA that squanders that lead, and I hope the Senate will not. Simply put, if that were to happen, I would not support a visionless NASA, and I do not believe the Congress would.

In conclusion, I thank again Senator MIKULSKI, the chairwoman of this committee, for her leadership on this bill. We have worked together on many issues throughout our years, both serving together in the House and the Senate, and this bill reflects our strong relationship. I ask my colleagues—as she will—to support this bill and to urge its swift passage this week.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise to offer for the record, the Budget Committee's official scoring of H.R. 2847, the Departments of Commerce and Justice, and Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2010.

The bill, as reported with an amendment by the Senate Committee on Appropriations, provides \$64.9 billion in discretionary budget authority for fiscal year 2010, which will result in new outlays of \$44.2 billion. When outlays from prior-year budget authority are taken into account, nonemergency discretionary outlays for the bill will total \$71.2 billion.

The bill includes \$126 million in budget authority designated as being for overseas deployments and other activities for national security programs at the Department of Justice. Pursuant to section 401(c)(4) of S. Con. Res. 13, the 2010 budget resolution, an adjustment to the 2010 discretionary spending limits and the Appropriations Committee's 302(a) allocation has been made for this amount in budget authority and for the outlays flowing therefrom.

The Senate-reported bill matches its Section 302(b) allocation for budget authority and for outlays.

The bill is not subject to any budget points of order.

I ask unanimous consent that the table displaying the Budget Committee scoring of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

H.R. 2847, DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE AND JUSTICE, AND SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

[Spending comparisons—Senate-reported bill (in millions of dollars)]

	Defense	General purpose	Total
<b>Senate-Reported Bill:</b>			
Budget Authority .....	4,589	60,337	64,926
Outlays .....	4,690	66,515	71,205
<b>Senate 302(b) Allocation:</b>			
Budget Authority .....			64,926
Outlays .....			71,205
<b>House-Passed Bill:</b>			
Budget Authority .....	4,603	59,810	64,413
Outlays .....	4,701	65,960	70,661
<b>President's Request:</b>			
Budget Authority .....	4,608	60,004	64,612
Outlays .....	4,705	66,477	71,182
<b>SENATE-REPORTED BILL COMPARED TO:</b>			
<b>Senate 302(b) allocation:</b>			
Budget Authority .....	0	0	0
Outlays .....	0	0	0
<b>House-Passed Bill:</b>			
Budget Authority .....	-14	527	513
Outlays .....	-11	555	544
<b>President's Request:</b>			
Budget Authority .....	-19	333	314
Outlays .....	-15	38	23

Note: Table does not include 2010 outlays stemming from emergency budget authority provided in the 2009 Supplemental Appropriations Act (P.L. 111-32).

The Senate bill includes \$126 M in budget authority designated as being for overseas deployments and other activities at the Department of Justice.

HONORING NEAL BOORTZ

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate a constituent from my home State of Georgia who is familiar to many of my colleagues, and that is radio talk show host Neal Boortz.

Next month, in November, after 40 years of airing his unique and often colorful opinions, skewering lawmakers and pending best-selling books, Neal Boortz will be inducted into the National Radio Hall of Fame.

Neal has been an Atlanta institution since his first foray into talk radio in 1969 on WRNG Radio. Since 1993, he has been holding forth on the airways of WSB-AM 750, a member of the Cox Broadcasting Group. His ratings show that he strikes a chord with listeners. For 47 straight ratings periods, his show has finished in first place.

He has also struck a chord with Americans across the country, counting among the audience for his nationally syndicated show listeners from Maine to California.

Neal is a confirmed libertarian, dish-ing out his brand of, as he calls it, "the painful truth" to Republicans and Democrats alike. And I should know; he frequently dishes it out to me, too.

But Neal is more than a radio talker. In his life, he has been a military brat, whose dad was a marine pilot, an attorney, a department store clerk, an insurance salesman, a carpet buyer, a postal worker, a gubernatorial speech-writer, as well as a motel bookkeeper.

These experiences form more than an eclectic background. It is the foundation that gives Neal the ability to connect with a wide variety of listeners from all walks of life, and to voice what is on their minds. As Neal puts it: "Somebody's got to say it."

His Hall of Fame honor is the latest in a string of national successes, including writing the best-selling books, "The Fair Tax—The Truth" and

"Somebody's Gotta Say It," both of which are New York Times bestsellers.

I am pleased to have joined Neal over the years in his fair-tax efforts.

When he is not holding forth on the issues of the day or speaking to groups, Neal can be found in the skies or on a golf course. He is an avid pilot and, I might add, a very safe pilot, having had some experiences with Neal. Neal has been a very good friend of mine for many years.

Like most of us, he married way over his head. His lovely wife Donna is his rock.

Neal's selection to the National Radio Hall of Fame is overdue, and I am very happy that this honor has now come to him. With his induction into the National Radio Hall of Fame, Neal joins luminaries such as Bob Hope, Paul Harvey, and Dick Clark. This honor is well deserved.

Congratulations, Neal.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

BATTEN DISEASE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I recently heard from the friends and family of a young boy in Illinois named Jasper Duinstra who was diagnosed earlier this year with late infantile neuronal ceroid lipofuscinosis, often referred to as Batten disease.

Batten disease is a rare and devastating childhood disease, affecting between 2 and 4 of every 100,000 live births in the United States. Due to an enzyme deficiency, waste accumulates in the child's brain, causing cells to become dysfunctional and eventually die. This results in seizures, mental impairment and progressive loss of sight and motor skills. Sadly, there are no known treatments to halt or reverse the symptoms of Batten disease and the disease is fatal.

The physical, emotional, and financial toll of this disease is devastating. But Jaspers family and friends have rallied around him to create a sense of hope and have motivated many people in their community to team together in pursuit of a cure for this disease. There is a sense of urgency behind the need to increase funding for Batten and

other rare childhood disorders. The urgency grows everyday when mothers and fathers watch their children's health rapidly deteriorate.

Jasper Duinstras friends and family have formed a nonprofit organization called Jasper Against Batten, and children from 20 elementary schools have mobilized one of the largest kids helping kids initiatives on behalf of this group. The money these students are raising will go toward research for a treatment and maybe one day, a cure.

Jasper Duinstra is just one of the thousands of children who need our support in the fight against Batten disease and other fatal orphan diseases. In addition to private efforts to raise money through groups like Jasper Against Batten, the National Institutes of Health is funding research in Batten disease and other rare diseases.

While the number of Americans affected by any particular rare disease may be very small, over 6,000 rare diseases have been identified. Taken together, these diseases affect about 25 million Americans. The burden of these diseases is great, not only because of the number of people affected but because too often there are few or no treatments available for people suffering from them.

The Orphan Drug Act provides some incentives for drug companies to develop drugs for rare diseases. This has been a successful effort, and more than 200 drugs and biological products for rare diseases have been brought to the U.S. market. However, despite the success in finding treatments for some rare diseases, others such as Batten disease have seen relatively little progress over the last several decades. Today, there are promising experimental treatments, but they need to find their way more quickly to these children who are rapidly deteriorating.

In addition to searching for new and more readily available treatments, some scientists are also searching for ways to use existing drugs to treat rare diseases that have few options for treatment. A Chicago-based research foundation called Partnership for Cures has teamed with Jasper Against Batten and is now doing just that. In partnership with the National Institutes of Health, they are currently screening thousands of drugs that have already been approved by the Food and Drug Administration to see whether there are beneficial side effects that could slow down the progression of rare orphan diseases, starting with Batten.

I know Jasper's family is heartbroken, and I commend his family, friends, and the Chicago community for responding to tragedy with action. With biomedical researchers, clinicians, and community partners, Jasper's family is leading the fight to find a cure for Batten disease and for quicker access to treatments for children with many fatal orphan diseases.

#### INSIDE THE GUN SHOW

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the Violence Prevention Research Program at the University of California, Davis, released an important report earlier this month detailing many of the potential dangers at gun shows. The report, "Inside Gun Shows: What Goes on When Everybody Thinks Nobody's Watching," was composed from an analysis of existing research as well as direct observation and photographic evidence. During a 3-year period, data was collected from 78 gun shows in 19 States. The report provides a clear illustration of a largely unregulated gun market that is "an important source of guns used in criminal violence."

Under the Federal Brady Act, before an individual can purchase a handgun from a licensed dealer, they must pass a background check to insure they are not legally prohibited from purchasing or possessing a firearm. In 2008, 9.9 million background checks were conducted for firearm purchases, 147,000 of which were rejected. The majority of these denials were the consequence of a prior conviction or indictment. However, when an individual purchases a handgun from a private citizen, who is not a licensed gun dealer, there are no requirements to ensure that the purchaser is not in a prohibited category. Because private party transactions account for approximately 40 percent of all gun sales, current Federal background check requirements have limited affect over the overall rates of gun-related violent crime.

Based on promoter listing, the report estimates that there were nearly 2,800 gun shows in the United States during 2007. Generally open to the public, they can vary in size from fewer than 100 display tables to a few thousand. Accounting for approximately one-third of sales at these shows, unlicensed vendors often seek to exploit their unregulated status. At one show, a vender advertised with a sign that read "No background checks required; we only need to know where you live and how old you are."

The report details that while a wide range of guns can be found at most gun shows, assault weapons, particularly civilian versions AR and AK rifles, are much more prominent than one might generally see at a licensed gun store. Semiautomatic pistols that accept the same high-capacity magazines and fire the same ammunition as AR and AK rifles are also heavily present. Even .50 caliber rifles, notorious for their extraordinary destructive capabilities, are available from some private parties.

According to the report, there were more than 360,000 violent crimes involving guns, including an estimated 11,512 homicides, committed in the United States in 2007 alone. While America accounts for less than 5 percent of the world's population, we account for somewhere between 35 to 50 percent of all firearms in civilian hands. Gun shows present an ideal op-

portunity for gun traffickers to make unregulated purchases. I urge my colleagues to take up and pass sensible gun legislation that will help prevent such acts and help protect the safety of our communities.

#### ZIMBABWE

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I held a hearing last week of the Subcommittee on African Affairs to explore U.S. policy options toward Zimbabwe's transition. The hearing confirmed that far too little progress has been made in implementing the Global Political Agreement signed last year and that abuses continue at an alarming rate. The transition remains incomplete and far from irreversible. Yet at the same time, the hearing made clear to me the great potential that this transition holds and the great opportunity for the United States and those who care about Zimbabwe to help advance real reform and recovery. We need to seize this opportunity and look for ways that we can proactively engage and help strengthen the hands of reformers in Zimbabwe's transitional government.

Just over a year ago, Zimbabwe was in the throes of intense violence carried out by Robert Mugabe and his allies against the opposition MDC's members, supporters, and families. This was a deliberate campaign to hold on to power and subvert the will of the people expressed in the March 29 elections. Once considered a liberator of his people, Mugabe had become one of the most despotic and brutal leaders of the day. And under his watch, the Zimbabwean economy had gone from one of Africa's most prosperous to one of Africa's most desperate. By the end of last year, millions of Zimbabweans were at risk of starvation and official estimates put inflation at 231 million percent.

The situation today in Zimbabwe looks quite different, at least on the surface. Last September, with South Africa's mediation, the parties signed the Global Political Agreement and committed to form a transitional government. Then, after 5 months of delays, MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai was sworn in as Prime Minister and the MDC assumed control of several key ministries. A year before, this would have been inconceivable for most Zimbabweans. Yet, it happened and has brought forth a sense of possibility that has not been there in years. That optimism has been furthered by the success of the new Minister of Finance from MDC, Tendai Biti, in stopping the economic decline and taking initial steps to promote economic growth.

These changes are quite significant, though there is still a long way to go toward restoring the rule of law. Mugabe continues to refuse to implement important aspects of the Global Political Agreement, for example the appointment of new provincial governors and the replacement of the Reserve Bank Governor and Attorney