

best chance for downward departures.” Lastly, “in sentencing, he tends to be very empathetic to the downtrodden, or to those who commit crimes due to poverty.”

Contrary to how the White House has tried to characterize Judge Hamilton, I believe that the record amply demonstrates that Judge Hamilton is an activist judge. He has taken radical positions, and a number of his rulings indicate that Judge Hamilton will impose his own personal beliefs and values in cases. We should not promote an individual whose track record clearly demonstrates that he will carry out an outside-of-the-mainstream personal agenda on the Federal appeals court. For these reasons, I will oppose the nomination of Judge Hamilton to the Seventh Circuit. If he was going to serve on a circuit, as many times as he has been overruled, it would be more appropriate for him to be on the Ninth Circuit, where a lot of those decisions on appeal are overturned by the Supreme Court—about 9 times out of 10.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. LEMIEUX. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

NATIONAL DEBT

Mr. LEMIEUX. Mr. President, the clock has struck 12 on a \$12 trillion debt. Like Cinderella when she was revealed when the clock struck 12, this Congress is now revealed—revealed for the problem it has in spending more than we can afford. We are being a body and an institution that spends money without thinking about the future of this great country. It spends the money of our children and our grandchildren.

It took this country 193 years to spend a trillion dollars and to get a trillion dollars into debt. We are now \$12 trillion into debt as of today. That \$12 trillion is the equivalent of \$40,000 per person, \$107,000 per household. This is what American families are now responsible for, because unlike American families who sit around their kitchen tables and try to make ends meet, and unlike the States that have to balance their budgets, this Congress spends more than it has. There is no evaluation in this Congress about how much money is being taken in versus how much money we spend.

Instead, we raised this year \$1.4 trillion in debt, more debt in a single year than the past 4 years combined.

Outside this Chamber, outside the main entrance, is a clock, called the Ohio Clock—the fabled clock that has been in this institution for more than a hundred years. It stands there to tell the time. I suggest that standing next to that clock should be the debt clock to remind the Members of this Senate, and perhaps our friends in the House, that we are spending money we cannot afford to spend, and it is risking the future of our children and grandchildren.

As you know, I have three small boys, Max, Taylor, and Chase, 6, 4, and 2, and a baby on the way. We worry for their future—just like Americans across this country and my fellow Floridians are worrying for the future of their children. How can we afford this and continue to spend more than we have?

I have been coming to the floor weekly to talk about the various appropriation bills I have been voting on—and, frankly, voting against—because they spend more and more of the people's money and put this country further into debt.

Today, we have marked this occasion with \$12 trillion in debt—an amount of money that is hard to fathom, an amount of money that is so large it is hard to comprehend. But we know that every family in America is now responsible—every household—for \$107,000. That debt now rides upon their shoulders.

In a week—perhaps even this week—Democrats in the Chamber are going to introduce a health care reform bill that is estimated to spend another \$1 trillion. This bill will raise taxes, cut Medicare, and increase premiums—another large governmental program, when we cannot afford the programs we have. We should focus on spending the money we have, spending it more efficiently and effectively, before we go on to create a new program, a new bureaucracy, and more obligations than we can afford.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the health care plan being brought forth by the Democrats in this Chamber will spend 24.5 percent of GDP, 19 percent in revenue only. So we have 19 percent in revenue, but 24.5 percent of GDP, which is a huge unsustainable gap. It was recently reported that the deficit for October alone is \$176 billion—\$26 billion more than estimates by economists. In fact, the debt increased by \$40 billion just over this past weekend.

Our spending is out of control. The Federal Government does not recognize it. This Congress cannot afford the programs it has, let alone the programs it wants. So I am here to sound the alarm. I could not let this day pass as we hit this \$12 trillion mark in national debt.

I look forward to coming back to the floor to explain again and again to the American people that this is a problem that must be solved. We cannot continue to spend our children's and grandchildren's future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TESTER). The Senator from Delaware is recognized.

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. President, I ask to speak as in morning business.

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

IN PRAISE OF ANN AZEVEDO

Mr. KAUFMAN. Mr. President, I rise once more to honor an outstanding Federal employee.

Next week, American families will gather around dinner tables in celebration of Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving is a time for coming together. In earlier ages, members of an extended family usually resided in close proximity to one another. Today, however, the typical American family is spread across the country, with members far in distance even if close in spirit.

Americans of all backgrounds and from all walks of life will be travelling long distances to be with their loved ones. It is no wonder that Thanksgiving weekend is one of the busiest travel periods of the year.

Tens of millions of us will be driving, flying, and taking trains or ferries next week. For some it will be stressful, for others exciting. Most, though, will do it without even realizing how much work goes into keeping American travelers safe.

The Department of Transportation employee whose story I will share today has been instrumental in ensuring the safety of those who travel. But before I tell you about this outstanding public servant, I want to reflect on how important transportation is for America.

From its humble beginnings, ours has been a Nation on the move. In George Washington's day, their mercantile spirit drove our founding generation to dig canals and clear roads across the Appalachians. Steamships and railroads fueled the expansion across the West and helped close the frontier. Air travel in the last century brought every corner of our 50 States ever closer and opened new opportunities for the growth of business and tourism.

This march of progress in transportation technology has not been a smooth ride. When the railroads were new, train wrecks were fairly common. In fact, President-Elect Franklin Pierce was en route to Washington for his inauguration when his train derailed, tragically killing his 11-year-old son.

Travel by ferry or steamship on our rivers and lakes was far from safe in those days. For pioneer families, roads were often impassable during winter-time, and many lost their lives just trying to get to the West. While air travel is the safest form of transportation in our day, it was not always the case.

Making sure that our Nation's “planes, trains, and automobiles” are safe remains one of our highest priorities. My home State of Delaware, like every other State—like Montana—depends on a top-notch transportation infrastructure to facilitate economic activity, moving people and goods across markets.

Travel can and should be a safe and fun experience. No one should ever have to worry that the vehicles on our roads, rails, rivers, or in our skies are unsafe. That is where the hardworking men and women of the Department of

Transportation excel. They set and enforce regulations upholding the strictest standards in transportation safety.

The great Federal employee I have chosen to recognize this week has been a leader on safety issues at the Transportation Department's Federal Aviation Administration for 12 years.

Ann Azevedo came to the department in 1997 with nearly two decades of experience in the private sector. Working from the FAA facility in Burlington, MA, when she first started at the FAA, Ann served as the risk analysis specialist for the Engine and Propeller Directorate.

In her current role as chief scientific and technical adviser for aircraft safety analysis, Ann focuses on safety, risk management, and analyzing accidents. From the data she gathers, Ann is able to develop solutions to help prevent future incidents.

Regularly representing the FAA at national and international air safety round-tables, Ann has become a respected voice among those engaged in risk management analysis. She helped write the training manuals for turbofan and turboprop aircraft used across the industry, and she continues to teach risk analysis at the FAA Academy.

Ann holds a bachelor's degree in systems planning and management in applied mathematics and a master's of science in mechanical engineering. When she was once asked how she ended up in her chosen career field, Ann cited her love of math and an influential physics teacher in high school.

Ann was awarded the Arthur S. Flemming Award for public service in 2002 for developing safety solutions that resulted in a 64 percent decrease in the commercial aviation fatality rate between 1998 and 2002. She also was honored as Distinguished Engineer of the Year by the American Society of Mechanical Engineering in 1996.

Her work, and that of all her colleagues at the FAA and other Transportation Department agencies, helps ensure that travel in our country continues to be as safe as possible.

Most importantly, they facilitate the smiles of those arriving safely at a journey's end and seeing their loved ones for the first time after weeks, months, or even years apart.

That remains a central element of Thanksgiving, and I hope all Americans will join me in thanking Ann Azevedo and all the men and women of the Department of Transportation for their hard work keeping American travelers safe.

They keep us, whether on the road, on the rails, at sea, or in the sky, moving ever forward.

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. MURRAY. 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. MURRAY. 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.

FORT HOOD ATTACK

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, it is with great sadness that I wish to remember victims of the horrific shootings at Fort Hood. This was a senseless attack on innocent people who were serving their country. To know that these people, 12 servicemembers and 1 civilian, were taken from their families in this way is very difficult to accept. I join with people across the country in mourning these tragic deaths. My thoughts are with each and every one of their families.

As a Senator from Wisconsin, I do feel a special duty to remember the two Wisconsinites who were killed. Both were extraordinary members of our Armed Forces, and their deaths are a terrible blow to all who knew them, and to our State. Wisconsin takes so much pride in its long tradition of military service, and in the Wisconsinites who serve so bravely in the Armed Forces today. Wisconsin has already lost so many servicemembers in recent years—90 in Operation Iraqi Freedom and 12 in Operation Enduring Freedom. We recently honored our veterans by celebrating Veterans Day, and we are thinking of these men and women and the sacrifice they made, so to suffer these additional losses at this time is simply tragic.

SSG Amy Krueger from Kiel, WI, and CPT Russell Seager from Mount Pleasant, WI, were both outstanding servicemembers, and their families and communities are heartbroken by their deaths.

Staff Sergeant Krueger, who was just 29, joined the Army after the 2001 terrorist attacks. She had deployed previously to Afghanistan in 2003 and helped soldiers dealing with combat stress. Staff Sergeant Krueger arrived at Fort Hood on November 3 and was scheduled to be redeployed to Afghanistan in December. She graduated from Kiel High School in 1998 and was very proud to serve her country. About 500 family and friends gathered recently at the Veterans Memorial Park in Kiel to remember and pay tribute to Sergeant Krueger.

CPT Russell Seager, 47, was a registered nurse and advanced practice nurse prescriber who was with the primary care mental health integration program at Zablocki VA Medical Center in Milwaukee. He also taught classes at Bryant and Stratton College in Milwaukee. As part of the combat stress control unit, Seager was tasked

with watching for warning signs among soldiers on the front lines that could signal long-term mental health problems. He is survived by his wife and adult son.

It is so tragic to think that these two people, who were trained to help fellow servicemembers cope with the stress of combat, were struck down when their help is needed the most. These servicemembers are really unsung heroes of our military today—the men and women who help other servicemembers deal with post traumatic stress disorder, which has skyrocketed since the start of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Both Staff Sergeant Krueger and Captain Seager were truly selfless people who helped their fellow servicemembers through some very tough times. Both were part of the 467th Medical Detachment, which is based in Madison, WI. It is an outstanding unit doing much-needed work, and it is terrible that the unit suffered these losses.

I also want to say a few words about the four Wisconsinites who were injured at Fort Hood. At the recent memorial at Fort Hood, which was such a moving tribute to those who were killed, I had the privilege of meeting Specialist John Pagel, 28, of North Freedom, WI, who was also with the 467th Medical Detachment. Specialist Pagel is married and has two children.

I also had the privilege of meeting SPC Grant Moxon, 23, of Lodi, WI, another member of the 467th, who is a mental health specialist. Specialist Moxon graduated from UW-La Crosse. He joined the military just last year and had arrived in Texas one day before the shooting incident.

Both Sergeant Pagel and Specialist Moxon were shot but are now both doing well.

CPT Dorothy "Dorrie" Carskadon, 47, of Madison, WI, is also a member of the 467th. Carskadon fought with the Army in Iraq during Operation Desert Storm and then enlisted in the Army Reserve 2 years ago. She is a clinical social worker with the U.S. Army Reserve. She was set to deploy to Iraq to counsel troops suffering from PTSD. She was shot twice in the hip and underwent an all-night surgery. Fortunately, she is expected to make a full recovery.

Army PFC Amber Bahr, 19, of Random Lake, WI, with the 187th medical battalion, has been at Fort Hood for a year working as an Army nutritionist. She was scheduled to deploy for the first time in January. In the midst of the shootings, Bahr was putting a tourniquet onto another soldier and helping him out of harm's way before she discovered that she was shot herself. She was released Friday night from the hospital.

I think the conduct of Private First Class Bahr, and everyone at the base who responded to the attack with such heroism, says volumes about the men and women who serve today. I am so proud of them, and so profoundly saddened by this attack. As the nation grieves, we offer heartfelt thanks to all