

(D) Head Coach of the University of Florida football team, Urban Meyer.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Thursday, January 15, 2009 at 2:30 p.m. in room 628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct an oversight hearing on Job Creation and Economic Stimulus in Indian Country.

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at 202-224-2251.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on January 13, 2009 at 10 a.m. to conduct a committee hearing on the nomination of Mr. Shaun Donovan to be Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate to conduct a hearing on Tuesday, January 13, 2009, at 10 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. At this hearing, the Committee will consider the nomination of Steven Chu, to be Secretary of Energy.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 13, 2009, at 9:30 a.m., to hold hearing a nomination hearing.

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate on January 13th, to conduct a hearing on the nomination of Mr. Arne Duncan, of Illinois, to be Secretary of Education. The hearing will commence at 10 a.m. in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

LILLY LEDBETTER FAIR PAY ACT OF 2009—MOTION TO PROCEED

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 14, S. 181, and send a cloture motion to the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 14, S. 181, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act.

Jim Webb, Benjamin L. Cardin, Richard Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Dianne Feinstein, Jeff Bingaman, Mary L. Landrieu, Tom Harkin, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Charles E. Schumer, Sheldon Whitehouse, Christopher J. Dodd, Maria Cantwell, Debbie Stabenow, Patty Murray, Bernard Sanders, Barbara A. Mikulski, Harry Reid.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the mandatory quorum be waived.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I now withdraw the motion.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The motion is withdrawn.

The Senator from New Jersey is recognized.

GAZA CONFLICT

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the events that are in front of us and their significance. We are presently sharing in the excitement that surrounds this Capitol and our country at the prospect that President Obama will be taking office and leading this country in a positive fashion.

There is a lot of work to do and a lot of concerns have been brought to our attention. We are reminded by President-elect Obama that people are losing their jobs, and we cannot stand still and let it happen. Prospects are that maybe 500,000 new people a month will be out of work. The economy is fragile and there is not the capital around to get businesses started or to reverse the course we are on. And health care is of great concern to people who are uninsured and struggling.

At the same time that we are concerned about these things now in our own country, we have international responsibilities that we cannot ignore.

Even as excitement surrounds us here, inspired by the new President, we have to look away from our shores and see what is happening in the Middle East where there is fighting raging between Israel and Hamas. And even while we face domestic problems, we cannot step back from what is happening in the Middle East and the responsibility of America as the leading Nation on our globe. Although I bring this up with some degree of reluctance, we must discuss the situation that we face.

We know that governing is about choices. When we look at the Middle East right now, the choice for Israel is whether Israel steps aside and ignores the attacks on her people that come daily, without provocation.

We have all heard the opinion around the world about how awful the situation in the Middle East is. It is awful. It is terrible. When I see children hurt, when I see them killed, when I see families distressed as their economy worsens, it is a terrible sight.

I was in the Gaza Strip some years ago, bringing good news and financial assistance to the people of the Gaza as they opened a new airport. It was during the time that Arafat was President. There was hope springing up all around that maybe they could get out of the misery that existed in the Gaza Strip and develop an orderly society.

Israel is a democracy in an area of many nations that are less than democratic. When these economies flourish the wealth falls into a few hands, who build their buildings, take their resources, and buy bigger yachts and bigger airplanes for themselves and not for their countries. But there was hope that maybe the Gaza Strip would become a place of opportunity for its people. That is why I was so pleased to be there and to bring the promise of aid upon which we had agreed.

There was no Hamas there at that time. Now, Hamas is there making determinations about its future and the future of the people of the Gaza. Apparently the choice of Hamas is to continue the assault on Israel and to not let discussions take place. I am one of those people who support a two-state commitment there, knowing full well that Israel is a place that could share its knowledge and experience with the people of Gaza. But Hamas refuses to do that. It is a terrorist organization.

I remember a trip I took with several colleagues when we went to Iraq and on the way we stopped in Jordan and Syria, and we spoke to the President of Syria and I asked him to try to curb the activities of Hamas by securing the borders. I said: Why are you encouraging Hamas to find refuge here, have their headquarters here along with Hezbollah? President Asad said: They are a social service organization.

Social service—Mr. President, that is no more a social service organization than the people who attacked us on 9/11; than the people who attacked the British train system; than those who attack innocent people in various countries and cities.

Terrorism is at our throat. We have to be wary. It has changed the way our society functions. Look at all the inspections you go through if you want to catch an airplane or go into public buildings—always with an ID card. We know the results of terrorism. It is to destroy democratic society, take away the choices people have in their lives. It says women have to conduct themselves in a certain way satisfactory and

not have rights to participate in financial opportunities for themselves and their families.

And so we look at Hamas and have to ask: Does it really care about the people of Gaza or is it simply dedicated to its terrorist ways? For the answer we can review how Hamas conducts itself.

Once again, I, as a human being, as a person who cares about life and family, I am distressed to see the loss of life that is taking place in Gaza and in Israel. People are injured and frightened to go out of their homes—and yet even their home can be a place where misery prevails.

But Hamas has attacked Israel, firing rockets, and even now, when it is perhaps possible to get a cease-fire, they insist on continuing rocket firing.

We have seen the opinions of countries around the world as they look at this situation. Instead of just criticizing Israel, why isn't it said that Hamas is a terrorist organization that wants to take away people's rights, that wants to permit their innocent citizens to be used as decoys—in schools and mosques and other places—to try to hide the militants who are firing rockets into Israel?

Hamas starts by saying they don't recognize the right of the State of Israel to exist, but Israel has that right and shall defend that right. She has built a society from the sands, a society that flourishes, not just on the economic side, but on the scientific and research side. They have figured out how to grow crops in areas that were arid, and how to develop the technology that Israel is known for.

The practice of medicine is another thing that Israel is known for. There is a facility in Israel that I helped fund, in memory of my father who died as a very young man—43 years old—from cancer. There is a scientist who lived in New Jersey and was a professor at our principal institution, Rutgers University.

And he asked if I would help fund a laboratory and a facility there that did cancer research. I said yes. That was some time ago. I know they have Arab students there and they have Arab professors there and they all cooperate in helping people maintain good health. We have all seen stories in the paper about the young Arab child who came to Israel, brought by her father, to have a heart transplant. In this way Israeli science reaches out to people of all nations and all religions.

Israel has a right to exist, and a right to exist in peace, and would be more than willing to bring in the countries surrounding Israel to participate in programs for peace as it has with medicine. But there cannot be real peace without security. Israel is taking appropriate action to ensure the security of its people, and to ask them to do less is unfair.

It is impossible to say to them that if we had rockets falling on Boston, we would not respond or if we had rockets falling on Newark, NJ, we would not respond.

I can tell you, as a resident of New Jersey where we have a 2-mile strip that is said by the FBI to be the most dangerous 2-mile strip in the country for a terrorist attack, we are constantly on the alert. We have boats there, we have guards all over the place, and we make sure we are ready to defend ourselves.

Not only is Israel defending itself, as we would, against deadly aggression, it is also putting a stop to the psychological warfare that has become a daily part of life for the people in southern Israel. Innocent civilians live with constant fear that a rocket might kill them, their children, or destroy their home.

Israel, like the United States, is determined to protect and safeguard its people. After 9/11, America sought to eliminate threats to our country from Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida. Now Israel is seeking to eliminate threats from ongoing terrorist attacks.

We cannot kid ourselves about the strategy that Hamas used to gain power in Gaza. Hamas built up its image among the Palestinian people by painting itself as a social service provider. But if they really cared about the Palestinian people, they would not use them as human shields, and they would not use the rooftops of homes to launch rocket attacks.

The events of the past few weeks illustrate to the world that terrorist groups cannot be permitted to go on menacing the free world with terror attacks and there are no countries that are safe from this kind of assault.

Hamas has shown that it cares more about destruction than about improving the lives of the people of Gaza. Hamas leaders have chosen to ignore the fact that their people are suffering in poverty and instead have focused exclusively on hurting Israel.

So we ask Hamas: Stand up; show that you do care about your people and stop attacking Israel's citizens.

There will be tense days ahead in Israel and Gaza, and I am deeply concerned about the loss of innocent life, the pain of losing a family member, and injuries that may last for a lifetime.

To put a stop to the loss of innocent life, Hamas must come to its senses and pursue a cease-fire that is sustainable and durable.

Israel should be joined by nations around the world in pursuing a cease-fire because terror is ultimately possible in their own states and their own communities, whether it is in India, whether it is in France, whether it is in Spain, whether it is in the UK, or whether it is in America as we saw on 9/11.

There is only one way to bring real peace and real security to the Middle East: stop the rockets and get the people to the bargaining table.

Negotiations are being attempted with Egypt's active participation. We have to encourage these negotiations.

And it has to be very clear to Hamas and other terrorist organizations that

they are not going to win by killing people or by discouraging free thought and democratic values.

PROHIBITING THE SALE AND COUNTERFEITING OF PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURAL TICKETS

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Rules Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 60 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 60) to prohibit the sale and counterfeiting of Presidential inaugural tickets.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements related to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 60) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 60

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PROHIBITION ON SALE AND COUNTERFEITING OF INAUGURAL TICKETS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 25 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 515. Prohibition on sale and counterfeiting of inaugural tickets

“(a) IN GENERAL.—It shall be unlawful for any person to—

“(1) except as provided in subsection (b), knowingly and willfully sell for money or property, or facilitate the sale for money or property of, a ticket to a Presidential inaugural ceremony;

“(2) with the intent to defraud, falsely make, forge, counterfeit, or falsely alter a ticket to a Presidential inaugural ceremony; or

“(3) with the intent to defraud, use, unlawfully possess, or exhibit a ticket to a Presidential inaugural ceremony, knowing the ticket to be falsely made, forged, counterfeited, or falsely altered.

“(b) EXCEPTION.—This section shall not apply to the sale for money or property, facilitation of such a sale, or attempt of such a sale, of a ticket to a Presidential inaugural ceremony—

“(1) that occurs after the date on which the Presidential inaugural ceremony for which the ticket was issued occurs; or

“(2) by an official presidential inaugural committee established on behalf of a President-elect of the United States.

“(c) PENALTY.—Whoever violates subsection (a) shall be fined under this title, imprisoned not more than 1 year, or both.

“(d) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ‘Presidential inaugural ceremony’ means a public inaugural ceremony at which the President-elect or the Vice President-elect