

consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of this letter dated January 21, 2010, at the conclusion of my remarks.

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

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. LEMIEUX. Mr. President, in that letter we have asked that the search-and-rescue efforts continue. We saw the miraculous discovery of that young boy and young girl yesterday. There are people potentially alive still buried in the rubble. We must continue while there is some hope to look for survivors. But if there are no survivors, we request in this letter that their loved ones be brought home so they can be here in the United States. It is a request I think we all understand. We have been working with Secretary Clinton's office. We know they share the same view. I wanted to bring that to the attention of the Senate.

As a parent of young children, I cannot imagine the loss and the feeling of loss of these parents from Lynn University and others who are still waiting for the potential recovery, as the days grow longer and the hours go by, of their family members, especially the loss it must be for these parents, the idea of losing a child. There is nothing more tragic one can think of. Our hearts go out to them. They are in our prayers. We look forward to the hopeful return of these students and faculty, but if not their return alive, then at least bringing them home so they can have rest and peace back in the United States of America.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

EXHIBIT 1

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, January 21, 2010.

Re Locating and Returning Americans Missing in Haiti.

Hon. HILLARY CLINTON,
Secretary, U.S. Department of State,
Washington, DC.

Hon. ROBERT GATES,
Secretary, U.S. Department of Defense,
Washington, DC.

Dr. RAJIV SHAH,
Administrator, U.S. Agency for International
Development,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SECRETARY CLINTON, MR. SECRETARY GATES, AND ADMINISTRATOR SHAH: Over the past week, the immense scale of the tragedy in Haiti has been revealed. The outpouring of support from Americans for the Haitian people has been significant and heart-warming.

Americans' commitment to the renewal of Haiti existed before last week's devastating earthquake. As a result, thousands of Americans were working, studying, and serving in Haiti when the quake struck. Many of them remain missing. Among the missing are a number of my fellow Floridians.

Because these Americans remain unaccounted for, please urge all relevant U.S. officials to advocate for continuing search and rescue efforts until the possibility of survival no longer exists. Additionally, on behalf of the families of the missing, I request you to do everything within your power to ensure that every American known to be missing in Haiti is located and returned home.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

GEORGE S. LEMIEUX,
United States Senator.

Mr. LEMIEUX. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEAHY). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Conrad amendment No. 3302.

AMENDMENT NO. 3305 TO AMENDMENT NO. 3299
(Purpose: To reimpose statutory pay-as-you-go)

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be set aside, and I call up an amendment I have at the desk.

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

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) proposes an amendment numbered 3305 to Amendment No. 3299.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be 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.

NOMINATION OF T. ALEXANDER ALEINIKOFF

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, at the end of this month, the dean of the Georgetown University Law Center, T. Alexander Aleinikoff, will resign his post to accept the highly distinguished appointment of United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees. I have come to know Dean Aleinikoff well in the 5 years he has served as the dean at my law school alma mater. I am very proud of the dean's appointment and look forward to working with him in his new position.

Dean Aleinikoff has devoted his entire professional career to public service on behalf of refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants. After graduating from Yale Law School and serving as a clerk to the Honorable Edward Weinfeld, U.S. district judge for the Southern District of New York, Dean Aleinikoff served as an attorney advi-

sor in the Department of Justice and later as General Counsel and Executive Associate Commissioner for Programs to the Immigration and Nationality Service. Dean Aleinikoff devoted years to teaching refugee and immigration law, both at the University of Michigan and at Georgetown University Law Center, where he was appointed dean in 2004. He also served as the cochair of the Immigration Policy Review Team for President Barack Obama's transition in late 2008 and early 2009.

With 34 million refugees and internally displaced persons of concern to the Office of the High Commissioner, Dean Aleinikoff's expertise and management skills will be required on a daily basis. I have long fought to expand the relief available to refugees around the world and to asylum seekers who turn to the United States for protection. I know that we share these goals, and I am confident that Dean Aleinikoff will ably rise to the challenges he will face, however daunting they may be.

I have worked closely with Dean Aleinikoff on a variety of issues throughout his tenure as dean and greatly admire his intellect and commitment to justice. The quality of the Georgetown legal education is extraordinary, and the institution's role as a national leader in law and policy has never been more prominent. As a graduate of the law school, I am sorry to see Dean Aleinikoff depart, but his work on behalf of refugees could not be more important or more timely.

I thank Dean Aleinikoff for his extraordinary leadership of the Georgetown University Law Center and wish him great success in this challenging but critically important new role.

ANNIVERSARY OF ROE V. WADE

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today is the 37th anniversary of a double tragedy for our Nation. On January 22, 1973, the Supreme Court of the United States twisted the Constitution to create a right to kill babies before they are born. Since then, nearly 50 million babies have lost their lives. That is more than 40 times the number of Americans who died in all of our Nation's wars. Those babies were living human beings, and they were killed by abortion.

Less than 25 years earlier, inspired by the experience of World War II, the United Nations unanimously adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The United States voted for it, and it is said to be the most widely translated document in the world. Its very first words declare that "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." Article 3 of the Declaration states that "everyone has the right to life."

I belong to the human family because I am a living human being. So does

every Member of the Senate, every citizen of this country, every human being on this planet. Each of us was no less a living human being, no less a member of the human family, before we were born than we are now.

The facts did not change, but *Roe v. Wade* represented a radically different set of values. In January 1983, President Ronald Reagan said that the 10th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* was a good time to pause and reflect. He said that the real issue with abortion “is not when human life begins, but, What is the value of human life?” That is still the real issue today. Do human beings still have, in the words of the U.N. Declaration, inherent dignity and inalienable rights? Or do we have, as President Reagan described, “a social ethic where some human lives are valued and others are not”? I will ask to have printed President Reagan’s profound essay titled “Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation” in the *RECORD* following my statement.

We have not done enough to address the reasons that many women feel they have no alternative but abortion. I applaud the thousands of selfless women and men who volunteer and give and work to help women choose life. I understand that today there are more pro-life centers than abortion clinics in America. But abortion is right or wrong not because of why it is done, but because of what it is. Abortion is the killing of living human beings.

A few years ago, Congress considered bills to ban the killing of horses and to promote humane treatment of farm animals. A House member who supported these bills and co-chaired the Congressional Friends of Animals Caucus said: “The way a society treats its animals speaks to the core values and priorities of its citizens.”

I believe that the way a society treats babies also speaks to the core values and priorities of its citizens. As President Reagan said, we “cannot diminish the value of one category of human life—the unborn—without diminishing the value of all human life.”

The result of the *Roe v. Wade* decision is the first tragedy we should mourn today. The second tragedy is the means the Supreme Court used to achieve that result. The real Constitution, the one that the people established, the one that is the supreme law of the land, the one that protects liberty by limiting government, does not contain a right to abortion. To achieve the result they wanted, the Justices effectively created a different Constitution, and in so doing asserted control over the charter that is supposed to control them. The Justices became masters over the Constitution they had sworn an oath to support and defend.

So the result of *Roe v. Wade* diminished the value of human life. The means of *Roe v. Wade* diminished the value of liberty. The Supreme Court attempted to impose upon the people a set of values that they still reject. Most Americans still oppose most abor-

tions, and last year more Americans called themselves “pro-life” than the alternative label for the time in the 15 years Gallup has asked that question. As President Reagan said in 1983, “despite the formidable obstacles before us, we must not lose heart.”

Today, we are challenged to reach out and to give of ourselves to help others. I championed the legislation to help make service a national priority. In July 2008, before he was elected President, Senator Obama said that when you serve, “you are connected to that fundamental American ideal that we want life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness not just for ourselves but for all Americans. That’s why we call it the American dream.” It might even be called the human dream.

Is that still our dream today? What are our core values and priorities? Do we still embrace those universal human values of inherent dignity and inalienable rights for all members of the human family? Today, *Roe v. Wade* still gives us an opportunity to pause and reflect. That tragic decision, in President Reagan’s words, “has become a continuing prod to the conscience of the nation.”

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the *RECORD* President Reagan’s essay titled “Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation” to which I referred.

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

[From the National Review, June 10, 2004]

ABORTION AND THE CONSCIENCE OF THE NATION

EDITOR’S NOTE: While president, Ronald Reagan penned this article for *The Human Life Review*, unsolicited. It ran in the *Review*’s Spring 1983, issue and is reprinted here with permission.

The 10th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade* is a good time for us to pause and reflect. Our nationwide policy of abortion-on-demand through all nine months of pregnancy was neither voted for by our people nor enacted by our legislators—not a single state had such unrestricted abortion before the Supreme Court decreed it to be national policy in 1973. But the consequences of this judicial decision are now obvious: since 1973, more than 15 million unborn children have had their lives snuffed out by legalized abortions. That is over ten times the number of Americans lost in all our nation’s wars.

Make no mistake, abortion-on-demand is not a right granted by the Constitution. No serious scholar, including one disposed to agree with the Court’s result, has argued that the framers of the Constitution intended to create such a right. Shortly after the *Roe v. Wade* decision, Professor John Hart Ely, now Dean of Stanford Law School, wrote that the opinion “is not constitutional law and gives almost no sense of an obligation to try to be.” Nowhere do the plain words of the Constitution even hint at a “right” so sweeping as to permit abortion up to the time the child is ready to be born. Yet that is what the Court ruled.

As an act of “raw judicial power” (to use Justice White’s biting phrase), the decision by the seven-man majority in *Roe v. Wade* has so far been made to stick. But the Court’s decision has by no means settled the debate. Instead, *Roe v. Wade* has become a

continuing prod to the conscience of the nation.

Abortion concerns not just the unborn child, it concerns every one of us. The English poet, John Donne, wrote: “. . . any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”

We cannot diminish the value of one category of human life—the unborn—without diminishing the value of all human life. We saw tragic proof of this truism last year when the Indiana courts allowed the starvation death of “Baby Doe” in Bloomington because the child had Down’s Syndrome.

Many of our fellow citizens grieve over the loss of life that has followed *Roe v. Wade*. Margaret Heckler, soon after being nominated to head the largest department of our government, Health and Human Services, told an audience that she believed abortion to be the greatest moral crisis facing our country today. And the revered Mother Teresa, who works in the streets of Calcutta ministering to dying people in her world-famous mission of mercy, has said that “the greatest misery of our time is the generalized abortion of children.”

Over the first two years of my Administration I have closely followed and assisted efforts in Congress to reverse the tide of abortion—efforts of Congressmen, Senators and citizens responding to an urgent moral crisis. Regrettably, I have also seen the massive efforts of those who, under the banner of “freedom of choice,” have so far blocked every effort to reverse nationwide abortion-on-demand.

Despite the formidable obstacles before us, we must not lose heart. This is not the first time our country has been divided by a Supreme Court decision that denied the value of certain human lives. The *Dred Scott* decision of 1857 was not overturned in a day, or a year, or even a decade. At first, only a minority of Americans recognized and deplored the moral crisis brought about by denying the full humanity of our black brothers and sisters; but that minority persisted in their vision and finally prevailed. They did it by appealing to the hearts and minds of their countrymen, to the truth of human dignity under God. From their example, we know that respect for the sacred value of human life is too deeply engrained in the hearts of our people to remain forever suppressed. But the great majority of the American people have not yet made their voices heard, and we cannot expect them to—any more than the public voice arose against slavery—until the issue is clearly framed and presented.

What, then, is the real issue? I have often said that when we talk about abortion, we are talking about two lives—the life of the mother and the life of the unborn child. Why else do we call a pregnant woman a mother? I have also said that anyone who doesn’t feel sure whether we are talking about a second human life should clearly give life the benefit of the doubt. If you don’t know whether a body is alive or dead, you would never bury it. I think this consideration itself should be enough for all of us to insist on protecting the unborn.

The case against abortion does not rest here, however, for medical practice confirms at every step the correctness of these moral sensibilities. Modern medicine treats the unborn child as a patient. Medical pioneers have made great breakthroughs in treating the unborn—for genetic problems, vitamin deficiencies, irregular heart rhythms, and other medical conditions. Who can forget George Will’s moving account of the little boy who underwent brain surgery six times during the nine weeks before he was born? Who is the patient if not that tiny unborn

human being who can feel pain when he or she is approached by doctors who come to kill rather than to cure?

The real question today is not when human life begins, but, What is the value of human life? The abortionist who reassembles the arms and legs of a tiny baby to make sure all its parts have been torn from its mother's body can hardly doubt whether it is a human being. The real question for him and for all of us is whether that tiny human life has a God-given right to be protected by the law—the same right we have.

What more dramatic confirmation could we have of the real issue than the Baby Doe case in Bloomington, Indiana? The death of that tiny infant tore at the hearts of all Americans because the child was undeniably a live human being—one lying helpless before the eyes of the doctors and the eyes of the nation. The real issue for the courts was not whether Baby Doe was a human being. The real issue was whether to protect the life of a human being who had Down's Syndrome, who would probably be mentally handicapped, but who needed a routine surgical procedure to unblock his esophagus and allow him to eat. A doctor testified to the presiding judge that, even with his physical problem corrected, Baby Doe would have a "non-existent" possibility for "a minimally adequate quality of life"—in other words, that retardation was the equivalent of a crime deserving the death penalty. The judge let Baby Doe starve and die, and the Indiana Supreme Court sanctioned his decision.

Federal law does not allow federally-assisted hospitals to decide that Down's Syndrome infants are not worth treating, much less to decide to starve them to death. Accordingly, I have directed the Departments of Justice and HHS to apply civil rights regulations to protect handicapped newborns. All hospitals receiving federal funds must post notices which will clearly state that failure to feed handicapped babies is prohibited by federal law. The basic issue is whether to value and protect the lives of the handicapped, whether to recognize the sanctity of human life. This is the same basic issue that underlies the question of abortion.

The 1981 Senate hearings on the beginning of human life brought out the basic issue more clearly than ever before. The many medical and scientific witnesses who testified disagreed on many things, but not on the scientific evidence that the unborn child is alive, is a distinct individual, or is a member of the human species. They did disagree over the value question, whether to give value to a human life at its early and most vulnerable stages of existence.

Regrettably, we live at a time when some persons do not value all human life. They want to pick and choose which individuals have value. Some have said that only those individuals with "consciousness of self" are human beings. One such writer has followed this deadly logic and concluded that "shocking as it may seem, a newly born infant is not a human being."

A Nobel Prize winning scientist has suggested that if a handicapped child "were not declared fully human until three days after birth, then all parents could be allowed the choice." In other words, "quality control" to see if newly born human beings are up to snuff.

Obviously, some influential people want to deny that every human life has intrinsic, sacred worth. They insist that a member of the human race must have certain qualities before they accord him or her status as a "human being."

Events have borne out the editorial in a California medical journal which explained three years before *Roe v. Wade* that the social acceptance of abortion is a "defiance of

the long-held Western ethic of intrinsic and equal value for every human life regardless of its stage, condition, or status."

Every legislator, every doctor, and every citizen needs to recognize that the real issue is whether to affirm and protect the sanctity of all human life, or to embrace a social ethic where some human lives are valued and others are not. As a nation, we must choose between the sanctity of life ethic and the "quality of life" ethic.

I have no trouble identifying the answer our nation has always given to this basic question, and the answer that I hope and pray it will give in the future. American was founded by men and women who shared a vision of the value of each and every individual. They stated this vision clearly from the very start in the Declaration of Independence, using words that every schoolboy and schoolgirl can recite:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We fought a terrible war to guarantee that one category of mankind—black people in America—could not be denied the inalienable rights with which their Creator endowed them. The great champion of the sanctity of all human life in that day, Abraham Lincoln, gave us his assessment of the Declaration's purpose. Speaking of the framers of that noble document, he said:

This was their majestic interpretation of the economy of the Universe. This was their lofty, and wise, and noble understanding of the justice of the Creator to His creatures. Yes, gentlemen, to all his creatures, to the whole great family of man. In their enlightened belief, nothing stamped with the divine image and likeness was sent into the world to be trodden on . . . They grasped not only the whole race of man then living, but they reached forward and seized upon the farthest posterity. They erected a beacon to guide their children and their children's children, and the countless myriads who should inhabit the earth in other ages.

He warned also of the danger we would face if we closed our eyes to the value of life in any category of human beings:

I should like to know if taking this old Declaration of Independence, which declares that all men are equal upon principle and making exceptions to it where will it stop. If one man says it does not mean a Negro, why not another say it does not mean some other man?

When Congressman John A. Bingham of Ohio drafted the Fourteenth Amendment to guarantee the rights of life, liberty, and property to all human beings, he explained that all are "entitled to the protection of American law, because its divine spirit of equality declares that all men are created equal." He said the right guaranteed by the amendment would therefore apply to "any human being." Justice William Brennan, writing in another case decided only the year before *Roe v. Wade*, referred to our society as one that "strongly affirms the sanctity of life."

Another William Brennan—not the Justice has reminded us of the terrible consequences that can follow when a nation rejects the sanctity of life ethic:

The cultural environment for a human holocaust is present whenever any society can be misled into defining individuals as less than human and therefore devoid of value and respect.

As a nation today, we have not rejected the sanctity of human life. The American people have not had an opportunity to express their view on the sanctity of human life in the unborn. I am convinced that

Americans do not want to play God with the value of human life. It is not for us to decide who is worthy to live and who is not. Even the Supreme Court's opinion in *Roe v. Wade* did not explicitly reject the traditional American idea of intrinsic worth and value in all human life; it simply dodged this issue.

The Congress has before it several measures that would enable our people to reaffirm the sanctity of human life, even the smallest and the youngest and the most defenseless. The Human Life Bill expressly recognizes the unborn as human beings and accordingly protects them as persons under our Constitution. This bill, first introduced by Senator Jesse Helms, provided the vehicle for the Senate hearings in 1981 which contributed so much to our understanding of the real issue of abortion.

The Respect Human Life Act, just introduced in the 98th Congress, states in its first section that the policy of the United States is "to protect innocent life, both before and after birth." This bill, sponsored by Congressman Henry Hyde and Senator Roger Jepsen, prohibits the federal government from performing abortions or assisting those who do so, except to save the life of the mother. It also addresses the pressing issue of infanticide which, as we have seen, flows inevitably from permissive abortion as another step in the denial of the inviolability of innocent human life.

I have endorsed each of these measures, as well as the more difficult route of constitutional amendment, and I will give these initiatives my full support. Each of them, in different ways, attempts to reverse the tragic policy of abortion-on-demand imposed by the Supreme Court ten years ago. Each of them is a decisive way to affirm the sanctity of human life.

We must all educate ourselves to the reality of the horrors taking place. Doctors today know that unborn children can feel a touch within the womb and that they respond to pain. But how many Americans are aware that abortion techniques are allowed today, in all 50 states, that burn the skin of a baby with a salt solution, in an agonizing death that can last for hours?

Another example: two years ago, the Philadelphia Inquirer ran a Sunday special supplement on "The Dreaded Complication." The "dreaded complication" referred to in the article—the complication feared by doctors who perform abortions—is the survival of the child despite all the painful attacks during the abortion procedure. Some unborn children do survive the late-term abortions the Supreme Court has made legal. Is there any question that these victims of abortion deserve our attention and protection? Is there any question that those who don't survive were living human beings before they were killed?

Late-term abortions, especially when the baby survives, but is then killed by starvation, neglect, or suffocation, show once again the link between abortion and infanticide. The time to stop both is now. As my Administration acts to stop infanticide, we will be fully aware of the real issue that underlies the death of babies before and soon after birth.

Our society has, fortunately, become sensitive to the rights and special needs of the handicapped, but I am shocked that physical or mental handicaps of newborns are still used to justify their extinction. This Administration has a Surgeon General, Dr. C. Everett Koop, who has done perhaps more than any other American for handicapped children, by pioneering surgical techniques to help them, by speaking out on the value of their lives, and by working with them in the context of loving families. You will not find his former patients advocating the so-called "quality-of-life" ethic.

I know that when the true issue of infanticide is placed before the American people, with all the facts openly aired, we will have no trouble deciding that a mentally or physically handicapped baby has the same intrinsic worth and right to life as the rest of us. As the New Jersey Supreme Court said two decades ago, in a decision upholding the sanctity of human life, "a child need not be perfect to have a worthwhile life."

Whether we are talking about pain suffered by unborn children, or about late-term abortions, or about infanticide, we inevitably focus on the humanity of the unborn child. Each of these issues is a potential rallying point for the sanctity of life ethic. Once we as a nation rally around any one of these issues to affirm the sanctity of life, we will see the importance of affirming this principle across the board.

Malcolm Muggeridge, the English writer, goes right to the heart of the matter: "Either life is always and in all circumstances sacred, or intrinsically of no account; it is inconceivable that it should be in some cases the one, and in some the other." The sanctity of innocent human life is a principle that Congress should proclaim at every opportunity.

It is possible that the Supreme Court itself may overturn its abortion rulings. We need only recall that in *Brown v. Board of Education* the court reversed its own earlier "separate-but-equal" decision. I believe if the Supreme Court took another look at *Roe v. Wade*, and considered the real issue between the sanctity of life ethic and the quality of life ethic, it would change its mind once again.

As we continue to work to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, we must also continue to lay the groundwork for a society in which abortion is not the accepted answer to unwanted pregnancy. Pro-life people have already taken heroic steps, often at great personal sacrifice, to provide for unwed mothers. I recently spoke about a young pregnant woman named Victoria, who said, "In this society we save whales, we save timber wolves and bald eagles and Coke bottles. Yet, everyone wanted me to throw away my baby." She has been helped by Save-a-Life, a group in Dallas, which provides a way for unwed mothers to preserve the human life within them when they might otherwise be tempted to resort to abortion. I think also of House of His Creation in Catesville, Pennsylvania, where a loving couple has taken in almost 200 young women in the past ten years. They have seen, as a fact of life, that the girls are not better off having abortions than saving their babies. I am also reminded of the remarkable Rossow family of Ellington, Connecticut, who have opened their hearts and their home to nine handicapped adopted and foster children.

The Adolescent Family Life Program, adopted by Congress at the request of Senator Jeremiah Denton, has opened new opportunities for unwed mothers to give their children life. We should not rest until our entire society echoes the tone of John Powell in the dedication of his book, *Abortion: The Silent Holocaust*, a dedication to every woman carrying an unwanted child: "Please believe that you are not alone. There are many of us that truly love you, who want to stand at your side, and help in any way we can." And we can echo the always-practical woman of faith, Mother Teresa, when she says, "If you don't want the little child, that unborn child, give him to me." We have so many families in America seeking to adopt children that the slogan "every child a wanted child" is now the emptiest of all reasons to tolerate abortion.

I have often said we need to join in prayer to bring protection to the unborn. Prayer

and action are needed to uphold the sanctity of human life. I believe it will not be possible to accomplish our work, the work of saving lives, "without being a soul of prayer." The famous British Member of Parliament, William Wilberforce, prayed with his small group of influential friends, the "Clapham Sect," for decades to see an end to slavery in the British empire. Wilberforce led that struggle in Parliament, unflinchingly, because he believed in the sanctity of human life. He saw the fulfillment of his impossible dream when Parliament outlawed slavery just before his death.

Let his faith and perseverance be our guide. We will never recognize the true value of our own lives until we affirm the value in the life of others, a value of which Malcolm Muggeridge says: "... however low it flickers or fiercely burns, it is still a Divine flame which no man dare presume to put out, be his motives ever so humane and enlightened."

Abraham Lincoln recognized that we could not survive as a free land when some men could decide that others were not fit to be free and should therefore be slaves. Likewise, we cannot survive as a free nation when some men decide that others are not fit to live and should be abandoned to abortion or infanticide. My Administration is dedicated to the preservation of America as a free land, and there is no cause more important for preserving that freedom than affirming the transcendent right to life of all human beings, the right without which no other rights have any meaning.

IMPROVEMENTS IN MINE SAFETY

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I come before this Chamber to speak about good news. The Mine Safety and Health Administration confirmed that 2009 was the safest year in the history of American mining.

As many of us have learned in the course of our lives, sometimes good can come from tragedy. Indeed, this is true of American mining after the 2006 disasters at the Sago, Aracoma, and Darby mines. Overall that year, 73 miners perished in American mines. Last year, that number decreased by more than half as a result of efforts made throughout the industry. Thirty-four American miners perished, a new record low.

Also in 2009, nearly 85 percent of all U.S. mines recorded no lost-time injuries. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the 2009 incident rate of nonfatal occupational injuries for mining was 3.5. For comparison, the incident rate for all of private industry was 3.9 and manufacturing and construction were 5.0 and 4.7, respectively.

Four years ago, after a decade of steady improvement in mine safety, the Nation was riveted to the unfolding mine tragedies in Appalachia that claimed the lives of more than a dozen miners. And as some of you in this Chamber will recall, those accidents prompted us and the mining industry to revisit mine safety.

Several of us, including Senators BYRD, ENZI, Kennedy, MURRAY, and ROCKEFELLER, spent long hours and conducted extensive hearings on how we could make our mines safer.

We delved into the safety challenges and how the industry and the Federal

and State regulators were meeting them. We consulted professional safety experts inside and outside the mining community—including academicians and technology experts.

The result was the MINER Act that Congress passed in the summer of 2006.

At the same time Congress was responding to these tragedies, so was the entire mining industry—employers and employees alike. Complacency about safety was no longer acceptable for 21st century mining. Employees and employers set out to put the industry on course to drive serious mine accidents down to zero.

Among their first actions was to go outside the mining community for other perspectives on how best to meet the mine safety challenge. The result was the Mine Safety Technology and Training Commission—a panel of independent experts from public, private and academia established by the National Mining Association, the industry's trade group.

Among the recommendations of the Commission, perhaps none was more far-reaching than the recommendation to better manage risks. The Commission advised the industry to focus particular attention on areas of the mine where incidents were more likely to occur, then manage those risks aggressively with programs specifically designed to raise awareness of them. The idea was not just to respond to accidents better, but to prevent accidents from happening in the first place.

U.S. mining is acting on these recommendations, and has taken steps far and wide with more sophisticated technology and enhanced training to further improve mine safety. A third component of this effort is raising safety awareness among everyone who works at our mines, and one example is a series of initiatives launched by the industry to reduce accidents by drawing attention to the risks in three high-incident areas: proximity to mobile underground equipment, slips and falls, and driving safety. At the same time, U.S. mining has been investing almost a billion dollars in communications technologies; increased oxygen supplies underground, enhanced rescue capabilities and other safety measures under the MINER Act and to meet the recommendations of the independent safety commission.

Every time we discuss mine safety, I cannot help but remember George "Junior" Hamner. Junior Hamner died in the January 2, 2006 disaster at the Sago Mine in Tallmansville, WV. His loving daughter gave me a picture of him and asked that in my capacity as chairman of the Employment and Workplace Safety Subcommittee, I would work to see that future generations of miners would not suffer as her father did. I promised her I would.

It is in light of that promise that I will continue working with the industry, the Obama administration, and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to