

The result was announced—yeas 77, nays 20, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 122 Ex.]

YEAS—77

Akaka	Graham	Murkowski
Alexander	Gregg	Murray
Baucus	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Bayh	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Begich	Hatch	Pryor
Bennet	Inouye	Reed
Bingaman	Johnson	Reid
Bond	Kaufman	Rockefeller
Boxer	Kerry	Sanders
Brown (MA)	Klobuchar	Schumer
Brown (OH)	Kohl	Sessions
Burr	Kyl	Shaheen
Cantwell	Landrieu	Shelby
Cardin	Lautenberg	Snowe
Carper	Leahy	Specter
Casey	LeMieux	Stabenow
Collins	Levin	Tester
Conrad	Lieberman	Udall (CO)
Corker	Lincoln	Udall (NM)
Dodd	Lugar	Vitter
Dorgan	McCain	Voinovich
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Feingold	McConnell	Webb
Feinstein	Menendez	Whitehouse
Franken	Merkley	Wyden
Gillibrand	Mikulski	

NAYS—20

Barrasso	Cornyn	Inhofe
Brownback	Crapo	Isakson
Bunning	DeMint	Risch
Burr	Ensign	Roberts
Chambliss	Enzi	Thune
Coburn	Grassley	Wicker
Cochran	Hutchison	

NOT VOTING—3

Bennett	Byrd	Johanns
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate return to legislative session.

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 10 or 12 minutes.

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

SECRET HOLDS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I have not listened to every speech on the Senate floor in the last week or so where there has been a lot of talk about secret holds and everything. But since I have been in the Senate working with Senator WYDEN in a bipartisan way over the course of maybe a decade, not to do away with holds but to have a transparency of holds, and seeing those things compromised, and then particularly to see exception taken to what has happened when this side of the aisle has put on holds, and then considering when Senator WYDEN and I did try to do something, that was gutted by people on the other side of the aisle. So I would appreciate it if Democratic Members of the Senate would listen while I explore some of the his-

tory so that they know this bipartisan effort, that if it had been done the way Senator WYDEN and I did it before it was gutted, we would not have a lot of problems today that we have.

So I wanted to go into my remarks, but I preface it with what I just said. There has been a lot of talk recently on the Senate floor about secret holds. For a practice with so much bipartisan guilt to go around, it is interesting that the discussion has taken on a partisan tone. Republicans are being accused of being particularly egregious offenders when it comes to circumventing disclosure requirements.

Let me say that if any of my colleagues have holds on either side of the aisle, they ought to have the guts to go public and to go public the minute they put the hold on, not like the mysterious way it is done now, which amounts to nothing. It has been my policy for years to place a brief statement in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD each time I placed a hold, with a short explanation of why I placed the hold. I did that before there was ever any Wyden-Grassley proposal. The current disclosure requirements for secret holds have been discussed quite a bit lately, as has bipartisan work with Senator WYDEN to address the issue. It is important I give a little background about how we got where we are today.

After many attempts to work with various leaders over the years on policy to make all holds public, Senator WYDEN and I decided the only way to settle this matter once and for all was for the full Senate to adopt a very clear policy. In the 109th Congress, Senator WYDEN and I were successful in passing an amendment to the ethics reform bill by a very wide vote of 84 to 13 to require public disclosure of holds. That bill was never enacted, but the identical provision was included in the ethics bill passed by the full Senate at the very beginning of the 110th Congress. Members may recall the Democrats had just secured a majority in both houses of Congress. Then, in a process that has become all too familiar under the past two Democratic Congresses, there was no conference committee. Instead, in a twist of irony, the so-called Honest Leadership and Open Government Act was rewritten behind closed doors by the Democratic leadership. Lo and behold, the public disclosure provision Senator WYDEN and I had worked so hard on, which the Senate had overwhelmingly adopted on that 84 to 13 vote, had been altered, and altered significantly. Keep in mind, under Article I, section 5 of the Constitution:

Each House may determine the Rules of its Proceedings . . .

That means that the House of Representatives has no say whatsoever about the Senate rules. When the full Senate speaks on a matter of Senate procedure, that should be the final word, particularly if it is 84 to 13. I want to be clear, the current weak disclosure requirements we now have are

not the ones originally proposed by Senator WYDEN and this Senator. In fact, at the time I came to the floor and criticized the specific changes, because I saw they would be ineffective. And ineffective they are.

Let me reiterate some of those criticisms I initially aired to the Senate on two occasions: August 2, 2007, and September 19, 2007. In the version the Senate originally passed, we allowed 3 days for Senators to submit a simple public disclosure form for the record, just like adding oneself as a cosponsor to a bill. This was intended simply to give time to perform administrative functions of getting the disclosure form to the Senate floor, not to legitimize secrecy for the period of 3 days. The rewritten provision gives Senators 6 session days. That might not sound so bad but wait to see how that actually works out in practice. First, it doesn't take a week to send an intern down to the Senate floor with a simple form saying one is putting a hold on a bill. The change I find most troubling is that the 6 days until the disclosure requirement is triggered begins only after a unanimous consent request is made and objected to on the Senate floor. That is too late. I will explain how that is ineffective. By that point, a hold could have existed for quite some time, perhaps without the sponsor of the bill even realizing it. In fact, most holds never get to the point where an objection is made on the floor, because the threat of a hold prevents a unanimous consent request from being made in the first place. So maybe this 6 days is never even triggered.

The original Wyden-Grassley provision required disclosure at the time the hold was placed. That is where it ought to be today. We have heard lately about how the minority party has used the weak disclosure requirements to avoid making holds public. However, this change made it far less likely that majority party holds would ever, in fact, become public. Since the majority leader controls the Senate schedule, he would hardly object to his own request to bring up a bill or nominee. He would simply not bring up a bill or nominee being held up by a member of his own party, and we might never know that there was a hold on it at all.

Why were these provisions changed? Simply, I don't know. I don't know who does know, because I can't be sure who it was who rewrote these provisions in secrecy behind closed doors. The majority party should be careful now, as they complain about Republicans exploiting loopholes in the disclosure requirements for holds. Both parties are guilty of using secret holds. But we can't blame Republicans for the fact that the current disclosure requirements are weak and ineffective. Again, there is plenty of blame to go around when it comes to using secret holds, but I am hopeful this recent attention to the problem can result in a bipartisan consensus to end secret holds once and for all. That is something we

hope, Senator WYDEN and I, other people will talk to us about. We would like to move in this direction. I, for one, am happy to work with anyone on either side of the aisle to that end.

It should be stressed that this has been a bipartisan effort. Everybody in this body talks about bipartisanship. When this was watered down, it wasn't watered down in an environment that I know about where any Republicans were present.

Mr. WYDEN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Yes.

Mr. WYDEN. First, let me tell the Senator from Iowa how much I have enjoyed working with him on this. We have had, as incredible as it sounds, a 10-year campaign to try to end secrecy in the Senate, just so people know a little bit about it. I always think when people hear about a hold in the Senate, they probably think it is a hair spray or a wrestling move or something like that. Isn't it correct that a hold, the ability to block a nomination or a piece of legislation, is one of the most powerful tools a Member of the Senate has today to influence policy?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, Senator WYDEN is absolutely right. It is a very powerful tool.

Mr. WYDEN. And with respect to transparency, what he and I have focused on all these years, people asked: Are you trying to abolish a hold? I think he and I have said we believe Senators ought to have a right to weigh in on something important. But at a time when the public wants transparency and openness and accountability, a Senator who wants to use what the Senator has said is an extraordinary power, the real public interest is satisfied by that Senator having to disclose promptly that they are imposing a hold; is that correct?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, Senator WYDEN is correct. I would add this point, that not only is it transparency that is essential—and it happens that way—but also a lot of times holds are put on because there is something wrong. We have to know what it is somebody believes is wrong, if we are going to work out some sort of a compromise.

Mr. WYDEN. One additional point, is it the Senator's sense, because we have talked about this often as we have been watching the spectacle of all these secret holds, that the central problem is it is triggered too late and it takes too long to kick in? Is that a fair statement of what needs to be changed? We need to get the openness earlier? It needs to be triggered earlier, and it needs to get into the public domain earlier; is that correct?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the Senator is correct. The present rules are practically not much better than what we have always operated under. So there isn't transparency, and it isn't done soon enough.

Mr. WYDEN. I express my appreciation to the Senator from Iowa for giv-

ing me the opportunity to work with him. He and I have pursued a lot of issues in the past. Very often those issues are part of television news debates and the like. Obviously, the secret hold would not be something on Main Street in Des Moines or Portland that people know about. This is the time to get this right once and for all. We sought to do it literally for a decade. A number of majority leaders, Democratic and Republican, said they wanted to get this done. Yet as of this day, I personally believe it continues to be abused and flagrantly so. At a time when the American people are looking at these challenging economic circumstances, they deserve a government that is truly open, truly accountable, and truly transparent. That has been what has guided our bipartisan efforts over this last decade. I appreciate the Senator coming to the floor this evening. There are not that many opportunities to advance a truly bipartisan agenda. He has given us the opportunity to do that tonight.

I look forward to working with my colleague to once and for all get secret holds abolished in the Senate.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH). The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, to continue this topic, we need to kind of put into perspective a little bit about why this secret hold has become such a detrimental practice. When Willy Sutton was asked why he robbed the bank, he said: That's where the money is. Secret holds are where the power is. Senator GRASSLEY and I have outlined the enormous effect a secret hold can have on a piece of legislation but, frankly, one of the other points that needs to be made is that a secret hold is a very powerful weapon that is available to a lobbyist.

I expect that practically every Senator has gotten a request from a lobbyist asking if the Senator would put a secret hold on a bill or nomination in order to kill it without getting any public debate and without the lobbyist's fingerprints appearing anywhere. If you can get a U.S. Senator to put an anonymous hold on a bill, it is like hitting the lobbyist jackpot. Not only is the Senator protected by a cloak of anonymity but so is the lobbyist.

A secret hold lets lobbyists play both sides of the street and can give lobbyists a victory for their clients without alienating potential or future clients. Given the number of instances where I have heard a lobbyist asking for secret holds, I am of the view that secret holds are a stealth extension of the lobbying world.

In the U.S. Senate, there has been an effort to improve the rules and have stricter ethics requirements with respect to lobbyists. It seems to me it would be the height of irony if the Senate were to adopt a variety of changes

to curtail lobbying, as we have done in the past, without doing away with what, in my view, is one of the most powerful tools that can be available to lobbyists.

The overwhelming majority of our citizens, in every corner of the land, be it Alaska or Oregon or Rhode Island, say they want public business done in public. If you walk down the streets of this country, I do not think you could find 1 out of 100 people who would have any idea what a hold is or what a secret hold is all about. But the fact is, these secret holds in the U.S. Senate can dramatically affect and change the lives of our citizens, and our people will not even know about it.

The hold—the ability to block a piece of legislation, block a nomination—cannot even, in a number of instances, end up being discussed on the floor of the Senate. Literally, the Senate will not even get a peek, will not even get the briefest look, at a particular issue that may involve millions of our citizens, billions of dollars, and affect the quality of life of citizens in every corner of the land.

So what this is all about, what Senator GRASSLEY and I have been working for 10, this past decade, what I have heard colleagues talk about—and Senator WHITEHOUSE has spoken eloquently about this—is we believe now is the time, once and for all, to permanently wipe the secret hold off the rulebooks of the Senate.

It is one thing if a Senator exercises the extraordinary power that a hold presents. It is quite another when they cannot be held accountable because they exercise this power in secret. So the average person in America may not know what a secret hold is, but I am very certain they want the Senate to do its business in public.

I want to express my appreciation to Senator GRASSLEY, who has left the floor, for working with me over this past decade to end what I think is a simply inexplicable denial of the public's right to know. That is what this is essentially about. This is a denial of the public's right to know. With colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I am determined to, this time, get this changed, shorten the period, to make it easier to trigger the requirements of public disclosure.

Mr. President, I know my colleague from Rhode Island is interested in getting in this issue. I look forward to his comments and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage for 5 or 10 minutes in a colloquy with the distinguished Senator from Oregon.

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I, first of all, want to salute Senator WYDEN of Oregon for his long work on this issue. He has been working on this issue since before I came to the Senate, before I had any experience of secret

holds, and saw—as we are seeing right now—their pernicious effect.

At present, we are looking at probably a little less than 80 secret holds by Republicans of President Obama's nominees—some judges. In the past few days, Senator MCCASKILL and I have come to the floor to push some of these nominees forward, to ask unanimous consent they go forward.

In one case, a nominee was a judge who was supported by both a Democrat and a Republican—the Senators from his home State—who had passed out of the Judiciary Committee by a unanimous rollcall vote of 19 to 0. They have been held for months and months. The distinguished Senator from Arizona, Mr. KYL, was put in the unfortunate position, since he had voted for this nominee in committee, to have to come to the floor and raise an objection to the unanimous consent request for a judge who he voted for in committee and one of his Republican colleagues supported—the home State Senator supported—to have to object to that nomination going forward because somebody had a secret hold.

We went through a great deal of these. I want to salute Senator MCCASKILL. She carried the greater part of the burden. I only tried to move a few. I think she tried to move over 70 by the time the day was done. I really want to extend my appreciation to her for that.

I say to Senator WYDEN, as I understand it, the rule is that now that these unanimous consent requests have been made, there is a 6-day-of-session period that has now begun to run, and at the end of that 6 days, our Republican colleagues will be obliged to disclose publicly their holds, who is holding it, and what their reason is.

I understand there is a potential loophole, which is they could pull sort of the old switcharoo, and in the 6-day period the Senator or Senators with the hold could all release their hold so that at the end of the 6-day period they have no hold to disclose, but they could connive with another colleague to put in a new hold, since the unanimous consent request, so they can start the process all over and hide their accountability.

But it strikes me those are really the only two choices our Republican colleagues have: They either have to divulge or they have to engage in a game of switcharoo, connivance with another Republican colleague to try to duck out from under the rule which was passed I think by 92 votes. It has very strong bipartisan support.

I say to Senator WYDEN, I just wanted to clear that understanding with the Senator since he is an expert on this issue, that the clock is running, that they have 6 days to come clean about this; and that the only two ways out are either to divulge or connive with another Senator to engage in a little switcharoo.

Mr. WYDEN. Or I think there might be a third option, of course, which is to

lift the hold. But the Senator has done a very careful and thoughtful analysis of the situation and particularly this situation of what Senator GRASSLEY and I came to call the “rotating hold,” simply shifting to another person—something that has been done often over the years by Democrats and Republicans. I think now is the time to get this changed. By the way, the Senator is absolutely correct on the bipartisan nature of the rule change. The vote was 84 to 13. There was overwhelming bipartisan support for it.

The Library of Congress has actually put together a very thoughtful historical analysis featuring the discussion of things such as the “Mae West” hold, which came to be known as the “come look me over” hold, which I gather was not a full-fledged hold but it might actually blossom into one.

So the Senator is absolutely right about what the choices are. That is why it is time, once and for all, to get this changed. I so appreciate the Senator, and also Senator MCCASKILL from Missouri, coming and highlighting the fact that this has again gotten out of hand.

The historical analysis of this has been that the hold was something that would be used rarely. The hold was for something of great consequence. Yet now it seems we have these secret holds that are simply thrown out for nominations and pieces of legislation because someone has some modest interest or is carrying out a different agenda, and I think that is why the secrecy is so unfortunate.

I thank my colleague.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. So to have 80 secret holds by one party, all at once pending in the Senate, is not consistent with the history of the use of this procedural tactic in this body. Is my understanding correct?

Mr. WYDEN. The Senator is absolutely right about the fact that 80 secret holds is clearly not what Senator GRASSLEY and I and reformers thought would happen. Given all these secret holds, you would think at the back of the Executive Calendar—which is page 19; it is entitled “Notice of Intent to Object to Proceeding”—given what the distinguished Senator from Rhode Island has pointed out, one would think that page 19, “Notice of Intent to Object to Proceeding,” would be filled with these names if the rule was being honored.

I say to the Senator, both you and I are holding up this page 19 with nary a word on it.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. We are looking at an empty page.

So just to summarize, the clock has run as a result of this series of unanimous consent requests Senator MCCASKILL and I have put forward. The 6 days have begun. By the end of that, one of three things—as the Senator has corrected me—will have happened. Either the hold will have been lifted, and then we can move to unanimous consent and clear these individuals who

the President has nominated and get them to work for the American people or, two, the Senator who has the secret hold will have to acknowledge publicly and become transparent and clear and candid with the rest of the body about who they are holding and why, or, three, they can engage in this rather obscure, shall we say, game of rotating holds, what I called the switcharoo, ducking out before the time runs and getting somebody else to actually have your hold for you but get in a proxy.

Given this was a rule that was adopted with a very strong vote, a very strong bipartisan vote, and that it is now a rule of the Senate, what comment would the Senator have on that third tactic in terms of its merit and appropriateness, if we find it is being used at the end of the 6 days? Would that spur the need for reform of this rule?

Mr. WYDEN. It surely would. I am grateful to the Senator from Rhode Island for prosecuting the reform case. I have talked with Senator GRASSLEY about it, and with Senator MCCASKILL and the Senator, and I think this is the time.

There are two points with respect to the secret hold: one as it relates to the institution and one as it relates to an individual Senator. With respect to the institution, in this example, the Senator has given us scores of these secret holds. I think this serves to undermine the credibility of the institution at a crucial time in American history. It is no secret Americans are divided on a host of issues.

Well, if the Senate insists on doing so much important business in secret—which is what happens if you honor these secret holds—I think that just undermines the institution. Because I think, first and foremost, you are absolutely right to zero in right now where we have all these secret holds.

Secondly, with respect to an individual Senator, what seems particularly important—the Senator and I share an interest in health care and a variety of economic issues—suppose an individual Senator works for years and years to try to build a bipartisan coalition on an issue and then is done in by an unknown or secret opponent, an unknown, unseen opponent who has been able, in effect, to block all that bipartisan work in secret.

So I want the Senator to know I am four-square behind his efforts to get this changed. Senator GRASSLEY and I have been talking about it. I think there is an opportunity to make this bipartisan.

I will also say, in closing—and the Senator has been kind to give me all this time—I do not think the secret hold passes the smell test of openness in American government. It is time to change it. I look forward to working with my colleague to finally, after all of these years, get this done and send the secret hold off into the dust bin of history.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The legacy of the Senator from Oregon on this, with 10

years of work, is very impressive to this newer Senator. I appreciate so much what he and Senator GRASSLEY have done over the years to begin to put an end to this practice.

I think the straw that broke the camel's back—or maybe the 80 straws that broke the camel's back—was the absolute avalanche of secret holds that has confronted our new President from this Republican minority. It has come to the point where the President, I think fairly, believes his ability to staff his own administration is being compromised by people who will not stand and be counted and be accountable for the reason for their opposition. It is being done in the dark, secretly, and without any accountability. I agree that needs to be put to an end.

So I urge people who are watching this: The sixth day has begun—6 days of session. At the end, we will know who is doing this or we will be able to clear these nominees, and we will have broken this unfortunate practice, to a significant degree or we will have learned something I think very unfortunate about our friends on the other side; that is, that they have agreed to connive with one another to play a switcharoo and bring in a new Senator to dodge the clear import of the rule that the Senator from Oregon and Senator GRASSLEY worked on, on a bipartisan basis, to put into effect in this body and which was approved by an enormous majority of this body. So the clock is running and we will see. We will learn a lot about this institution and our colleagues in 6 days. I thank the Senator for his leadership on this issue.

I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. 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.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF EARTH DAY

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I come to the floor to recognize the 40th anniversary of Earth Day and to remember the man who founded Earth Day, the late Wisconsin Governor and Senator Gaylord Nelson.

Before he was the founder of Earth Day, and one of the Nation's greatest

conservationists, he was a son of Wisconsin. He was a young boy growing up in the town of Clear Lake, WI, amid the great natural beauty of our State. When asked how he developed his lifelong interest and dedication to the environment, Nelson would say "by osmosis" while growing up in Clear Lake, WI.

He reflected the very best of our State from the beginning, building on Wisconsin's long tradition of environmental conservation. Our State passed landmark forest and waterpower conservation acts during the progressive era and lays claim not only to Gaylord Nelson but to other giants of the conservation movement such as Aldo Leopold, John Muir, and Sigurd Olson.

All of them were inspired, as Nelson was, by the beautiful Wisconsin wilderness. The natural beauty of our State charted the course of Nelson's life, from the shores of Clear Lake to the banks of the Potomac, where he changed the way we think about our planet and changed the law to protect the water we drink and the air we breathe.

There are few Members of this body, past or present, who have left such a valuable legacy. So I am proud to help celebrate that legacy with a resolution in the House and Senate celebrating the 40th anniversary of Earth Day and its founder. As we look ahead to the many challenges we face, we can draw strength from the example Gaylord set for us all. He drove tremendous change and, with Earth Day, created a new momentum that has been critical to so many efforts to protect the health of our environment.

Gaylord also understood the connection between the two great Wisconsin traditions of fiscal responsibility and conservation. Too often, a Federal program that is wasting taxpayer dollars is also laying waste to our air, our water or our public lands. The Nation's outdated mining laws are a perfect example. These laws allow the mining companies to mine on our public lands for next to nothing and leave behind an environmental mess for taxpayers to clean up.

Gaylord fought to change those laws, and when I was elected to the Senate, he asked me to take up this fight and I have. I have made it part of my Control Spending Now Act, legislation to cut the deficit by about \$½ trillion over the next 10 years. If we scrap these outdated mining laws, we can save taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars and protect the public lands that belong to the American people. They do not belong to the mining companies.

I am also working on another environmental issue that has a special connection to Gaylord Nelson; that is, clean water. The man from Clear Lake did so much for clear, clean water everywhere, including being a champion of the Clean Water Act.

Today, the Clean Water Act is under threat because two recent Supreme

Court decisions have jeopardized its protections. Those decisions put nearly 20 million acres of wetlands habitat and more than 50 percent of our stream miles in the lower 48 States at risk. These waters could now become polluted or wiped out altogether unless Congress takes action.

I am working to see that Congress stands up to the special interests that want to roll back the Clean Water Act's protections and ensure that these bodies of water can continue to provide drinking water, wildlife habitat, recreation, and support for industry and agriculture for generations of Wisconsinites to come.

So I have joined with Minnesota Representative JIM OBERSTAR to introduce the Clean Water Restoration Act. This bill is designed to accomplish one basic and important goal: ensure that the Clean Water Act of 1972 stays in place. There are no new regulations in our legislation, only a return to the original intent of the Clean Water Act, which has protected our waters for more than 35 years.

Gaylord Nelson and others have done so much to protect the health of our waters, and we owe it to them and to ourselves to carry that legacy forward. That is what I seek to do in the Senate with the Clean Water Restoration Act.

We face many other challenges as well. Of course, climate change looms largest of all. We need to address the serious problem of climate change and do so without unfairly hurting Wisconsin, which relies on coal for much of its energy needs. If we do this right, we have an opportunity to pass legislation that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create energy jobs here in America. We can help American businesses gain a competitive advantage developing new renewable energy and energy efficient technologies.

The desire to protect our air, our water, and our planet will bring people together tomorrow, all around the world. They will talk about global issues we face and the local environmental issues in their communities that they want to address. They will organize, mobilize, and galvanize new momentum for change.

That is exactly what Gaylord Nelson intended. He knew the power of people coming together and what that could mean for the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the national parks and public lands we all cherish. He knew that these natural resources connect us all and that Earth Day would bring us together to protect them.

I am so grateful to have known Gaylord Nelson, and I am proud of the legacy he left behind. As we celebrate the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, we remember the man from Clear Lake who came to this body inspired by the beautiful Wisconsin landscape of his childhood and in the end made a better world for us all.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.