

may not be able to work out anything with the minority. But everyone should be aware that could happen. We are satisfied, if the minority does not want those other two amendments, then we will just go ahead as we are scheduled now under the rules of the Senate.

We are going to have to be here on Saturday. We have so many things to do, as everyone knows, and we have been trying to work through some of that this week and have not gotten through nearly as much as we wanted.

I am, however, disappointed we have not been able to do more. I received a letter from all the Republicans yesterday saying: We are not going to allow you to do anything legislative until we get the tax cuts resolved and funding the government.

Well, we are not only not getting legislative things done now, now they are not letting us do the tax cuts and funding the government. So we are going to try to work our way through this. We have a lot to do. We have to work together, and I intend to be as cooperative as I can. My caucus, even though we have very strong feelings, recognized we are trying to do what is good for this country, but we cannot do them alone. I apologize for not having more definition early on, but we did the best we could.

So tomorrow we are going to be in session and there will be time for people to give some speeches and do the things they need to do. Be prepared for Saturday. As to what time Saturday, we do not know. Under the rule, it is 1 hour after we come in. If we can work out something different than that, we will do it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader is recognized.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

OUR NATION'S COINAGE

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I would like to briefly describe two pieces of legislation which were before the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and recently secured full approval of the Senate.

The first piece of legislation is H.R. 6162, the Coin Modernization, Oversight, and Continuity Act of 2010. This bill principally addresses the issue of how to approach the costs of metals used to make our Nation's circulating coinage. In recent years, market prices for various metals—including those used for our Nation's coinage, such as nickel, copper, and zinc—have risen to such a point that it costs the U.S. Mint more than a penny to make a penny, and more than a nickel to make a nick-

el. By giving the Treasury Secretary the authority to conduct research and development on metallic materials for all circulating coinage, as appropriate, and mandating a biennial report on the status of current coin production costs and an analysis of alternative content, this legislation will equip the U.S. Mint with the tools necessary to present detailed legislative recommendations to Congress. Should the Congress decide to act on any such prospective recommendations for lower cost metallic materials and combinations, there could be considerable savings to the taxpayer over time. In addition, this bill gives the Secretary flexibility in determining the quality and quantity of gold and silver bullion coins produced. The Mint has recently taken drastic but prudent measures to meet the extraordinary demand for silver and gold bullion coins and has suspended production of its proof and uncirculated versions, which are of great intrinsic value to collectors and coin enthusiasts. Going forward, the Mint will be able to simultaneously offer these higher-quality versions directly to the public while continuing to satisfy demand for bullion coins.

The second piece of legislation is H.R. 6166, the American Eagle Palladium Bullion Coin Act of 2010, which authorizes the Secretary to mint and issue a \$25 palladium bullion coin, subject to the submission of a report to Congress demonstrating sufficient public demand for such coins and no resultant net cost to taxpayers. Palladium is a sought-after investment-grade precious metal whose market price is often reliably above silver and below that of gold and platinum. Other governments have issued palladium bullion coins before as investment vehicles and collector's items, and this bill lays the groundwork for the U.S. Mint to carry out a unique palladium coin program that would benefit investors and numismatists, and cost nothing to the taxpayer.

The Coin Modernization, Oversight, and Continuity Act of 2010 and the American Eagle Palladium Bullion Coin Act of 2010 have both passed the House, and will now await the signature of the President. I am pleased that these two bills were approved by this body, as they reflect sound and measured policy towards improving the state of our Nation's coinage, and thank my colleagues for their help in getting these measures adopted.

NEW START TREATY

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I was proud to vote for the passage of the resolution of advice and consent to the New START Treaty between Russia and the United States in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last September. It was the right thing to do for our national security.

The most dangerous threat to America and to the world is for a terrorist

organization or network to obtain a nuclear weapon. Nuclear disarmament is among the most critical steps we must take to keep our Nation and future generations safe. Ratification of the New START Treaty would reduce the number of nuclear weapons in the American and Russian arsenals, bolstering our national security by reducing the risk of loose nuclear weapons and materials falling into the hands of hostile nations or terrorist groups seeking to attack America or her allies.

Only recently, documents have revealed to the world the continuing significant risk that Pakistan's nuclear weapons could fall into the hands of terrorists. There are a number of ways for us to address and minimize this risk in Pakistan and other countries. An agreement between two nuclear leaders to reduce their stockpiles of nuclear weapons and to improve transparency and oversight is a critical factor to keeping nuclear weapons out of the hands of terrorists. By reducing the numbers of unneeded nuclear weapons in Russia, improving verification of Russian nuclear reductions, controlling and securing Russian nuclear warheads, and eliminating retired Russian delivery systems and vulnerable weapons-grade material new START would reduce the possibility that a nuclear weapon could be launched due to a terrorist attack, a misunderstanding, or a miscalculation, killing hundreds of thousands of Americans.

This continuation of a landmark agreement between our nations would be an important step in the President's efforts to convince other countries to get rid of their nuclear weapons. Countries like Ukraine have made this commitment in part due to the confidence that new START provides.

The treaty signed by President Obama and President Medvedev is sensible and it is right for our Nation's security; this is evidenced by the endorsements of several former Secretaries of Defense and State from both sides of the political aisle. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to ratify this treaty, ensuring a safer world for our children.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO OBJECT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I, Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, intend to object to proceeding to H.R. 5717, the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute Enhancement Act, for the following reasons. The Smithsonian has had well documented problems keeping up with the maintenance needs of current structures and facilities. Additionally, I have investigated Smithsonian officials in the past few years regarding inappropriate use of taxpayer funds. I would like to examine whether the Smithsonian is able to meet its current operational requirements before legislation allowing for the construction of a new facility moves through the Senate without debate or even committee consideration.

REMEMBERING IVY JOHNSON

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the spirit, determination, and life of Ivy Johnson. Ivy lost her long battle with cancer on Friday, November 19. Our thoughts and prayers remain with her parents, her brothers, and the rest of her family and friends.

While Ivy's many academic achievements and personal adventures will be chronicled by others, I want to focus on the Ivy we knew—the public servant—and I offer these thoughts on her life and her service to the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

From the start, I appreciated and respected Ivy's strong work ethic, and my trust in her judgment grew each passing day.

Ivy had a wonderful capacity to combine her knowledge of the law and understanding of policy with the practical political realities that form the foundation of the legislative process. Ivy believed in the law and that it worked to advance notable and worthy goals.

She worked with Representative ISSA's staff on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee to identify financial support provided by the Federal Government to the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, or ACORN, after allegations emerged of inappropriate activity by that organization.

She provided insightful analysis on everything from judicial nominations to homegrown terrorism.

She played a critical role in the investigative work of my staff regarding the November 2009 terrorist attack at Fort Hood. She skillfully conducted investigative reviews of the government's policies relating to the reading of Miranda rights to terrorists captured in the United States.

Ivy understood that the security of our Nation and the privacy and civil liberties of Americans are not mutually exclusive. Her guidance on law enforcement and intelligence tools and techniques reflected a mature appreciation of the Constitution and laws of the United States, an understanding of the threat terrorists pose to our Nation, and a deep respect for the rights of Americans.

Her accomplishments were noteworthy in and of themselves, but they are remarkable considering the personal struggle that Ivy was waging throughout her tenure on the committee.

Shortly before joining my staff, her doctors found a tumor in her jaw. She endured multiple surgeries, numerous rounds of chemotherapy and radiation, and other difficult treatments that sapped her strength and energy.

But neither the cancer nor the treatments could destroy Ivy's determination or spirit. Ivy insisted on carrying a full workload. She was always concerned that her treatments might place additional burdens on her colleagues, and she never complained about the hand she had been dealt.

On more than one occasion, we tried to tell Ivy to stop e-mailing from her BlackBerry while she was waiting for treatments. When a particularly grueling round of treatments or an extensive surgery was on the horizon, and with everything she was undergoing at the time, Ivy thought of others and let us know she would be watching her BlackBerry if we needed her for anything.

And we often did. The trust Ivy had earned from me and my senior staff was such that we regularly sought her guidance on matters across the board. Ivy was "a lawyer's lawyer"—even the most skilled lawyers on my staff regularly sought her thoughts on issues because her knowledge of the law and her reasoned approach to problem solving was indispensable when complex problems required careful analysis.

In her professional life, and her pain, Ivy was intensely private. Few knew how ill Ivy actually was because while she suffered, her work never did.

There are times in our lives, whether professional or personal, when we know the right person has come into our lives, and that was the case for us with Ivy. It brought a heartfelt smile to my face when Ivy's mother told me that Ivy had called her time with us her "dream job."

Ivy's courage and determination will continue to serve as an inspiration for all of us.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO AGNES WELCH

• Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I pay special tribute to Agnes Welch, a member of the Baltimore City Council and a dedicated public servant. Councilwoman Welch, who was first elected to the Baltimore City Council in 1983, is retiring after serving her community and her city in the council for almost three decades.

Councilwoman Welch has always been attuned to the needs of her west Baltimore community and loyal to her faith. She has been a trailblazer for women, African Americans, and her constituents. Her committee work in the city council helped shape the renaissance of Baltimore's downtown and the redevelopment of its neighborhoods. Her work with not-for-profit organizations and city agencies has created new opportunities for child care, family health care, better schools, and senior housing. Councilwoman Welch's work with the Catholic Archdiocese has improved the Church's outreach to and accommodation for people of color and it has improved services for the neighborhoods and communities surrounding the churches. As a result of her outstanding service and dedication to the church, she received the Papal Medal "pro ecclesia et pontifice" from Pope John Paul II.

Legislatively, Councilwoman Welch has demonstrated her concern for the

welfare of her constituents, particularly those people living in poverty. She sponsored legislation which created the framework for addressing homelessness. Another legislative proposal funded a study into the increase in teenage homicides. Most recently, she introduced legislation to establish a Task Force on Childhood Obesity.

Councilwoman Agnes Welch has been an outstanding public servant, working selflessly, tirelessly, and effectively on behalf of others. I ask my colleagues to join me today in thanking Councilwoman Welch for her dedication to her community and constituents, and in wishing her well in her retirement.●

TRIBUTE TO TOM MONAHAN

• Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, today, I would like to celebrate the extraordinary career of newsman Tom Monahan, who, after 40 years of political reporting for NBC Connecticut, is semi-retiring. I first came to know Tom in the early seventies when he covered me in the Connecticut General Assembly, and I have greatly admired his work and personality ever since.

Tom is a native of Bristol, CT, who began his career in broadcast radio. He started reporting sports when he first joined NBC CT, and then graduated through the ranks to eventually become the station's chief political reporter and one of Connecticut's very finest.

Much can be said about Tom's skill as a journalist, but his integrity immediately comes to mind. Edward R. Murrow, the great television broadcaster, once said "we cannot make good news out of bad practice," and Tom's career surely embodied that principle. At a time when journalism is increasingly defined by attacks and negativity, Tom represents something of the "old guard" fact-driven reporting meant to inform and educate. He was always interested in getting the story out, but not interested in "getting" the public official who was part of the story. For so many years, the people of Connecticut who watched him came to rely on him for his truthfulness, and in the end many of us who were privileged to be in public life during his career wanted to help him get the story because we had such respect for and confidence in him.

I have so many memories from over the years with Tom, but one stands out above the others. I remember the morning in August 2000 when Vice President Gore announced that he had selected me to be his Vice Presidential running mate. I was in my house in New Haven, CT, and the number of satellite and TV trucks outside began to grow, in effect barricading me in. The Gore campaign team flew in from Nashville and my new press secretary said to me in my kitchen, "Sir, the initial reaction to Vice President Gore's selecting you as his running mate has been tremendous and, if you speak to the press outside, you can only detract