

Amendment of the Constitution and which Representative Gabrielle Giffords herself read in the Hall of the House of Representatives on January 6, 2011, of "the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances";

(8) stands firm in its belief in a democracy in which all can participate and in which intimidation and threats of violence cannot silence the voices of any American;

(9) honors the service and leadership of Representative Gabrielle Giffords, a distinguished member of the House of Representatives, as she courageously fights to recover; and

(10) when adjourning today, shall do so out of respect to the victims of this attack.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH). The motion to reconsider is laid upon the table.

Mr. DURBIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume morning business.

PASSING OF ANTHONY AND NICOLE RIGGAN

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, today I come to the floor to honor CPT Martin Anthony Riggan, Jr., and his wife Nicole Riggan. Their journey on this Earth was cut short but it was one filled with honor, purpose, and distinction.

Anthony was one of those individuals whom everyone knew would grow up to be exceptional, and he did. I have known him since he was a small child. We went to church together. I think it was in maybe the seventh grade when he approached me the first time about going to the U.S. Air Force Academy. I have followed his path since he graduated from Pulaski Academy High School in Little Rock in 2003, where he served as class president, Honor Council president, and was a representative on the Varsity Football Leadership Council. During this time, Anthony received numerous awards for his character, service to others, and hard work.

Then he fulfilled his lifelong dream to attend the United States Air Force Academy where he continued to receive accolades for performance and leadership. As a member of the Board of Visitors at the Air Force Academy, I was able to visit the academy from time to time. I enjoyed seeing the facilities and visiting with the brass, but honestly I most enjoyed getting to visit with Anthony in Colorado. During these times, he reminded me about the true definition of selfless service.

In his senior year, Anthony was selected to be Group 1 Commander for

the Cadet Wing, overseeing 1,200 cadets and their activities. He was also named cadet colonel, the highest rank possible for a cadet at the academy. He shared with me how excited he was to be graduating and how proud he was to serve our Nation in our military. I was proud of all he was achieving and he was certainly representing Arkansas well.

Following graduation, Anthony began undergraduate pilot training in Columbus, MS, flying the T-6 Texan, the T-38 Talon and the B-1B Lancer Strategic Bomber. He received the Top Gun Award for Formation Flying and was presented with the Leadership Award by the local Air Force association. Classified as "exceptionally qualified" to pilot the B-1, Anthony was scheduled to deploy this month to Qatar.

In life, Anthony's favorite copilot was his wife Nicole. She shared his strong faith and purpose. After graduating from Colorado's Lewis-Palmer High School as valedictorian, Nicole participated in Serteen, a volunteer program for teens and in mission trips to Peru and Guatemala.

She went on to study theater education at the University of Northern Colorado, graduating magna cum laude. She pursued her theater career and continued leadership roles in Bible studies and youth groups. During this time, many of Anthony and Nicole's friends and families found guidance through the devotionals they regularly sent.

Today we continue to find encouragement and inspiration through the selfless lives they lived. I will miss my friend Anthony and his lovely wife Nicole, and I look forward to the day when I see them again.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

A CAN-DO AMERICA

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, whenever a Senator, such as Senator PRYOR from Arkansas, has to announce to the Senate the loss of a near personal friend, especially one he has been friends with, and with their parents, for years, it is always a tremendous loss.

We are coming up in a couple of days on the 25th anniversary of another great loss in this country, when the Space Shuttle Challenger exploded before our eyes on our television screens on January, 28, 1986. It was such a shock to the Nation, and it hit deep in our psyche because the symbol of America's technological prowess was the space shuttle in the early infancy

of the program. The Challenger was only the 25th flight of the space shuttle that the Nation witnessed. In that rerun over and over of the close-up view of those solid rocket boosters going off in different directions 10 miles high in the Florida sky, the Nation witnessed that extraordinary loss.

I will never forget the memorial service in Houston at the Johnson Space Center, when the President of the United States—as sometimes happens in times of grief—became not the President of the United States, not the Commander in Chief, but the comforter in chief. And that was again vividly illustrated a few weeks ago as President Obama delivered that ringing and highly emotional speech in Tucson, AZ. So 25 years ago, as all the crews gathered there at the Johnson Space Center, President Reagan touched the Nation as the comforter in chief and pointed out that despite that tragedy, those brave souls were doing what America has in our genes. By nature, we are explorers and adventurers, and we don't ever give that up. Otherwise, we become a second-rate Nation.

Look at the history of America as explorers. Remember the criticism we read about in our history books concerning President Thomas Jefferson when he wanted to spend a paltry couple of thousand dollars on an expedition called the Lewis and Clark expedition, to see if they could find the passage to the Pacific coast. As a result of that mission, from which miraculously they returned and most of them were alive, they brought back all the artifacts of what this broad land contained.

Remember when Tom Hanks played Jim Lovell in "Apollo 13." "Apollo 13" was one of the most successful American space ventures not because they didn't land on the Moon, because they couldn't. Most of the spacecraft on the way to the Moon blew up. We thought we had three dead astronauts who were going to drift in space until they ran out of consumables. And it was that incredible story about how all of America's aerospace expertise resided with the astronaut who had stayed behind. He had been training, but he was exposed to the measles and so he was replaced. So then he was there, with all that knowledge and training for the mission and he could go into the simulator and they were able to simulate in real time how they were going to convert that motor of the lunar lander to get the space ship kicked out of lunar orbit and back on a trajectory to Earth. And remember after they got back—as Tom Hanks is playing Jim Lovell, the commander, in the movie—someone in the audience asks the commander of the now safely returned crew of Apollo 13: Well, is there really the money to continue to explore space? And Lovell's answer is: What would it have been like if Columbus had returned from America and they never went back to follow in his footsteps as an explorer?

So it is, during this time of tragedy, and hearing an individual Senator, Senator PRYOR, talk about the loss of loved ones and family friends and young people with bright futures, and the reflection in a day or so of the anniversary of the Challenger tragedy and the loss of seven lives, including the teacher, Christa McAuliffe, who was going to teach that lesson plan to the classrooms from space, we are once again reminded that because we dare to venture, because we are by nature explorers, there are risks, and sometimes the price to be paid is with human life. But that is not a reason not to take the risk and to boldly venture forth.

This is a good reminder for us as Americans as we face so many uncertainties—whether it be financial and our future of trying to get out of the recession, or whether it be the uncertain future in Afghanistan or Pakistan, or how the leadership of al-Qaida is being morphed into other countries, such as Yemen or Somalia, or the constant uncertainty of whether we will have a job tomorrow, or whether we can retrain for the new kinds of jobs that are coming on line.

There are a lot of uncertainties—the uncertainties of our energy future. Can we remain dependent on 70 percent of our daily consumption of oil coming from places such as the Persian Gulf and Nigeria and Venezuela? No. It is time for us to venture forth, to explore new realms, to develop new technologies and to be creative. And, of course, as the President spoke last night, we can't do that unless we have an educated workforce, which is so necessary for us to be creative. It is that creativity, that Yankee ingenuity of Americans, that keeps us competitive in the global marketplace today because we can outinvent, we can outcreate. That is the change America has.

As we reflect upon the tragedies, the individual tragedies that we have, the collective tragedy that we had as a nation—25 years ago with Challenger, several years ago with the loss of Columbia, the losses we had most recently that are seared into our hearts in Tucson—the hope that springs forth for those who are wounded, that they would come back to lead normal lives, these are our challenges. Keep at it. Keep at it.

I say this also. Because it is a time of uncertainty, a lot of pundits are having fun because it appears that NASA is in disarray. NASA should not be in disarray. We have a blueprint. We have a roadmap for the future in the NASA bill that passed this Congress—one of the few that passed in the Congress before the lameduck session. It simply says let's continue to encourage the commercial companies to develop a service of taking astronauts and cargo to and from the space station and let's see if we can do that safely, as determined by NASA, but more efficiently and, therefore, more cheaply, given the constraints of budgets.

But, at the same time, we then allow NASA to do what it does best, which is to venture out and explore the heavens. In so doing, we are going to build a new rocket that will take large components up and that will fulfill the President's goal, which is to go to Mars.

The President specifically set a timetable of 2025 to land and return safely on an asteroid. That is no easy feat, given how fast an asteroid flies through space. But it will give us new technologies, as we develop, to go to Mars.

Think of the unbelievable time it would take us under conventional technology—10 months to get to Mars. Then, once you got to Mars, you pretty well have to stay on the surface of Mars for 1 year, until the planets are realigned, revolving about the Sun, so Mars comes in closer to the Earth for the 10-month trip back. That is why we need new technologies. An astronaut who flew seven times, Dr. Franklin Chang-Diaz, a plasma physicist from MIT, is developing a plasma rocket that will take us to Mars in 39 days. Then, with that short time flying, at 400,000 miles per hour by plasma thrust, we could stay on the surface 1 month, to return to Earth without having to stay 1 year.

These are exciting new technologies. A pilot project of that plasma rocket, with the acronym VASIMR, is being developed to fly on the space station and provide a continuous pulse that will keep the space station boosted, instead of it having, in the degrading of its orbit for conventional technology, to keep boosting it.

Not only is the sky the limit, not only is the stratosphere the limit, the heavens are the limit if we as Americans will assume this can-do posture that is so typical of the personalities of explorers and adventurers; in other words, the personalities of we, the Americans.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HAGAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF PROGRAMS UNDER THE SMALL BUSINESS ACT AND THE SMALL BUSINESS INVESTMENT ACT OF 1958

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 366, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 366) to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs

under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read three times and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 366) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

RECOGNIZING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAGIC EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI ON JANUARY 12, 2010

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 26, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 26) recognizing the anniversary of the tragic earthquake in Haiti on January 12, 2010, honoring those who lost their lives in that earthquake, and expressing continued solidarity with the Haitian people.

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

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 26) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 26

Whereas on January 12, 2010, an earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale struck the country of Haiti;

Whereas, according to the United States Geological Survey, the epicenter of the earthquake was located approximately 15 miles southwest of Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti;

Whereas, according to the United States Geological Survey, the earthquake was followed by 59 aftershocks of magnitude 4.5 on the Richter scale or greater, with the most severe measuring a magnitude of 6.0 on the Richter scale;

Whereas, according to the Government of Haiti, more than 230,000 people died as a result of the earthquake, including 103 citizens of the United States;

Whereas an untold number of international aid personnel also died as a result of the earthquake, including more than 100 United Nations personnel;

Whereas, according to the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration—