

Mr. KYL. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 7, nays 90, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 80 Leg.]

YEAS—7

Coburn	Lee	Vitter
DeMint	McConnell	
Hatch	Paul	

NAYS—90

Akaka	Feinstein	Merkley
Alexander	Franken	Mikulski
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Moran
Barrasso	Graham	Murkowski
Baucus	Grassley	Murray
Begich	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Bennet	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Bingaman	Heller	Portman
Blumenthal	Hoeven	Pryor
Blunt	Inhofe	Reed
Boozman	Inouye	Reid
Boxer	Isakson	Risch
Brown (MA)	Johanns	Rockefeller
Brown (OH)	Johnson (SD)	Rubio
Burr	Johnson (WI)	Sanders
Cantwell	Kerry	Sessions
Cardin	Kirk	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Shelby
Casey	Kohl	Snowe
Chambliss	Kyl	Stabenow
Coats	Landrieu	Tester
Cochran	Lautenberg	Thune
Collins	Leahy	Toomey
Conrad	Levin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Lieberman	Udall (NM)
Corker	Lugar	Warner
Cornyn	Manchin	Webb
Crapo	McCain	Whitehouse
Durbin	McCaskill	Wicker
Enzi	Menendez	Wyden

NOT VOTING—3

Hutchison	Roberts	Schumer
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The motion was rejected.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business for debate only for 2 hours; that Senator SESSIONS control the first hour and Senator CONRAD control the second hour.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT
AGREEMENT—S. 990

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived and that the cloture vote on the motion to concur in the House amendment to S. 990 with an amendment occur at 10 a.m., Thursday, May 26, without intervening action or debate; further, that if cloture is invoked, the time postcloture be counted from 1 a.m., Thursday May 26.

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

Mr. REID. So, in short, we do not have to have the vote at 1 o'clock. Everyone has been most cooperative in getting past that point. We will come in tomorrow, we hope early in the day, to have good news on how we are going

to go forward to make, hopefully, virtually everybody happy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

THE BUDGET

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader for allowing us to have a few remarks at this time, after the process has been completed tonight.

The Senate has not fulfilled its responsibility. The United States Code that we passed, Congress passed, requires that there be a budget. It requires that Congress commence marking up the budget in the Budget Committee, as the Presiding Officer knows, by April 1, and a concurrent resolution be passed by April 15, setting forth what the Congress authorizes to be spent in the next year.

If anybody attempts to spend above that amount, the Budget Act allows a point of order to be raised, and it would require 60 votes to go above that level. So a budget says what we want to spend and makes it difficult for anybody to spend more. It is what we do in our households, it is what our cities and counties do, it is what our State governments do.

I know Senator MANCHIN, the Presiding Officer, as a Governor, he had to deal with his tough budget situation. My Governor, Governor Bentley, just announced he is prorating 15 percent of the discretionary spending for the rest of the year.

We are not talking about those kinds of cuts this year in Washington. I was in Estonia, near the Soviet Union on the Baltic Sea, and the proud Estonians had a larger deficit, larger economic decline than we did. The Estonians told us that every Cabinet official took a 40-percent pay cut, every employee took 10 to 20. The health system, one said: My wife is a doctor. She is very unhappy. But they intend to complete the recovery in Estonia without adding to the debt at all. Their debt to GDP is 7 percent.

By September 30 of this year, our debt-to-gross domestic product will total 100 percent, and according to the Rogoff-Reinhart study, a great authoritative study that has gained a great deal of applause, when the debt amounts to 90 percent of GDP, economic growth declines by 1 percent.

A 1-percent decline in GDP—the experts tell us—is the equivalent of 1 million jobs. So we will be in a position where, because of the debt we have accumulated, the economy will grow 1 percent less and we could have 1 million less jobs.

We do not know what our economic growth might be. It looks like it could be less than 2 percent. We are talking about a huge difference in what our economic growth could be this year. Maybe it will be 3. But if it is 3, it would have been 4. If it was 4, it would have been 5. If it is 3, it would be 2 because of this debt.

So these are the circumstances we are dealing with. Every witness has told us we need to do something about it. The Nation is in a most serious fix. So there has been a decision made by the leadership of the Senate, the Democratic leadership of the Senate, not to produce a budget.

It was interesting, when the President's budget was brought up, every single Member of the Senate—Republicans and Democrats—voted no. We could say: Why did they do that? Well, the President's budget deserved not a single vote. Considering the severe, serious financial condition we are in, the President's budget was the most irresponsible budget that has ever been presented to Congress. It is stunningly short of anything necessary.

Ersine Bowles, the man President Obama appointed to head the fiscal commission, said the President's budget was nowhere close to where they will have to go to avoid our fiscal nightmare—nowhere close. But our colleagues, what have they done? They complained about the Ryan budget. They vote against their own, and they vote against any other budget. They vote against the Ryan budget saying it is going to eliminate your Medicare, and you will not receive your Medicare because of PAUL RYAN and the mean Republicans.

But the Ryan budget made no change in Medicare in the 10 years in the Ryan plan at all, except canceled the President's health care bill and saved hundreds of billions of dollars. What it did was to propose in the future that we develop a new way of administering Medicare that would save money and make it more responsible to individual needs.

We refused to even move to that legislation, to discuss it, and to analyze whether it should be done that way or whether it could be done another way. But nobody denies that this budget, that any budget we pass, must confront our entitlement programs. Surely, they do not. So whatever you do, you are attacked by it. Our majority leader, whom I admire and enjoy working with, was quite frank. He said: It would be foolish for us to pass a budget. He did not mean it would be foolish for America. He did not mean it would be foolish for the public interest. He did not mean it would be foolish in terms of containing the reckless spending and dangerous path we are on. He meant it would be foolish politically because he had a plan, and the plan was to attack the people who had the courage, the gumption, and the hard work to produce a budget dealing with the long-term fiscal challenges of America: PAUL RYAN and his Budget Committee, wants to attack them, bring up their budget and vote it down, and not produce anything in response.

I believe that is an embarrassment to the Senate. It is an utter failure to meet our statutory obligation. More importantly, it is a failure to meet our moral obligation. Many have said:

Well, we need to do something because we are putting debt on our children and grandchildren. That is absolutely true. But we have been told by numerous experts, including Mr. Bowles, who chaired the debt commission, that we could be facing a debt crisis in 2 years, give or take a little bit. That was his opinion.

His cochairman, Alan Simpson, said it could be 1 year. So we could have another debt financial crisis that could put us back into a recession as a result of our fiscal irresponsibility as soon as 2 years, according to Erskine Bowles—accomplished businessman, successful businessman, President Clinton's Chief of Staff, chosen by President Obama to head the Commission. That is what he told us in the Budget Committee just a few weeks ago.

How serious is it? Our highway spending this year is about \$40 billion. Last year, this country spent, in interest on our debt, \$200-plus billion, five times the highway bill, just for example, and we need to do something about our infrastructure and highways in America. I am very worried about it.

I indicated that, just for example, the highway budget is about \$40 billion. The Federal Department of Education is about \$70 billion. But we spent last year in interest payments on the debt that we have accumulated, over \$200 billion.

The President submitted his budget. It was favorably commented on by Democratic colleagues and represented what appears to be, I guess, the mainstream Democratic view—although I am pleased to see nobody voted for it.

But according to the Congressional Budget Office, which has analyzed the budget the President submitted to us, it would result in an interest payment, in the 10th year, of \$940 billion.

That is an amount of money that exceeds our imagination. It is larger than the Defense Department budget. It is larger than Medicare. It is larger than Medicaid. It is the fastest growing item in our entire budget. And that assumes a slight increase but modest interest rate, below the 6-percent historical average. So if interest rates were to go up faster—and that is quite possible—instead of \$940 billion, we could have trillion-dollar-plus interest payments every year, crowding out the ability of the Education Department, Transportation Department, NOAA, the EPA, and every other agency in government to get funds. We will crowd out that spending by placing an annual burden on our people of \$940 billion a year. It is this trend and this path that is unsustainable. We have been told that.

I just want to repeat what happened just a few moments ago. What happened? Four measures were brought up by the majority, and they were brought up with the full knowledge that nothing would happen. There were several hours of debate. We voted on four tremendously important items, four budgets for the United States of America, with no real ability to discuss each one

of them in any depth at all. It was a political exercise. The majority leader said it would be “foolish” for us to pass a budget. In other words, it is foolish for the Democratic majority to commit themselves to any plan for the future of America. It was an avoidance of responsibility. They would not even vote for the President's budget because if they did, they would be responsible for it.

What they did was attack the one group of people who have done the right thing, the responsible thing, and that is to produce a historic budget that would basically solve our debt problem—it didn't overreach—and that is the House budget. It was long term, short term, and it dealt with entitlements, discretionary spending, and taxes. It was a thoughtful, important, historic budget. The Chicago Tribune praised it. The Wall Street Journal praised it. The fiscal commission chairmen, Bowles and Simpson, praised it for its courage, its integrity, its lack of gimmicks, and for being honest.

Do you know what they said. They said, again, that anyone who opposes the Ryan budget or opposes any one of the budgets, if you don't like it, you should put forth your plan. Has the leadership in the Senate proposed any plan? In a shocking display of irresponsibility—I don't have words to describe the degree of irresponsibility that I think has been shown here tonight—they have said: We are not going to produce anything. We are just going to attack what you have done.

Many of our colleagues have said we have to deal with entitlements and confront the surging debt caused thereby; that Medicare and Social Security are in danger and they could go belly-up. We have to change what we are doing. The House wrestled with that. It wasn't within that 10-year window. Everybody who is 55 and above and everybody who is on Medicare today would have no change—none. Yet we have people going around telling our seniors that this Ryan House budget would change their Social Security and they would not get it. In fact, it would save the Social Security Program, put it on a sound basis, and guarantee that people now receiving it and people over 55 who are soon to be receiving it would have no change whatsoever. In fact, in some ways, it would strengthen it for them. This is not correct.

Well, do we have a better plan? What about the Becerra rule? I suppose that is Congressman XAVIER BECERRA they named that for, a Democratic Congressman from Los Angeles. Did they produce anything they think is better? Do they have any plans to change the debt course we are on? Zero, nada.

I really believe this is not the responsible way to deal with the challenges this country faces. I am deeply disappointed. The matter is not going away. As ranking Republican on the Budget Committee, I feel a great sense of responsibility to defend the legally required processes of a Budget Act.

What kind of ranking member or member of the Budget Committee would I be if I sat by and acknowledged and accepted these four votes as somehow disposing of the situation?

What should happen? What should have happened is that by April 1, the chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator CONRAD, with whom I enjoyed working this year, should have produced a chairman's mark, and it should have gone to the Budget Committee, and we would have had an opportunity to debate and vote on that and discuss all the issues relevant to getting our country on a fine, sound, fiscal path. But I think the majority leader decided that was not a good path.

Senator CONRAD, if you read the newspapers, apparently brought up his budget, his proposal to the Democratic conference, and it received a chilly reception, according to the newspapers. Senator CONRAD has said repeatedly that he knows we are on an unsustainable path. He said once that we are heading to the wall at warp speed. We have to change, he said, because we are on an unsustainable path. But they thought, I suppose, he was too frugal, and so apparently, according to the papers, he came back the next week with a budget that Senator SANDERS and some of the others apparently blessed. We thought we were going to have a markup, maybe, and he would bring that forward. They said publicly: We have a budget, and we have basically agreed on a budget, but we are just not bringing it forward. But it should have been brought forward to committee, marked up, passed out of committee, and brought to the floor.

It won't pass the committee, they say. What do you mean? We have to pass a budget. The Budget Act provides that it can't be filibustered. It allows the budget to be passed with a simple majority. The Democrats have a majority in the committee. They can pass a budget just like they like it. Whatever they like, they could vote to pass it. Why not? Well, I think it is because they thought it would be foolish politically for them to commit themselves to any plan that dealt with taxes, with spending, with the debt. They didn't want to commit themselves. They decided that the smart thing to do would be to attack the foolish Republicans, who actually had the responsibility and the integrity and the sense of duty to lay out a plan for this country's financial future.

Make no mistake about it, a budget is a serious matter. It sets forth your vision for America, how big you would like the government to be, how much tax you want to impose, how much spending you want to incur and how much debt you would like to incur, and it sets it forth before the whole world. We were waiting to see—the House had done their duty—what will the Senate do? Nothing.

I don't think that is responsible. I don't believe it is acceptable. I don't accept it. I am going to continue to resist this kind of no-action policy.

I hope the American people will register their complaints and concerns with their Senators and demand that this Senate do its duty to set forth a budget that can help contain spending in America and put us on a path to financial stability and allow our economy to begin to grow at a robust rate because I truly believe the debt and the interest we pay is weakening our economy, as the expert economists have told us.

Mr. President, we can't quit now. We are not going to quit now. We are going to keep pushing for the kind of budget that will allow us to put this country on a sound path. I am deeply disappointed that we have totally short-cut the entire process. We have entirely avoided the responsibility to cast a serious vote on a budget, bring one up where we have the opportunity to debate and amend it and calculate out and study and make sure there are no gimmicks in there and hidden manipulations that hide the way the numbers appear. We have seen that too often. In fact, if the American people knew the extent to which this Congress, year after year, has manipulated the numbers to hide the serious, irresponsible spending programs we are executing, they would be more angry with us than they are, and 70 percent of Americans think this country is on the wrong track. Fundamentally, I believe that is based on the fact that they think we are spending recklessly, running up too much debt, and endangering the future health and welfare of generations to come.

I yield the floor.

• Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I am submitting my views today about the need to enact a fiscally responsible federal budget for fiscal year 2012.

The April 15 statutory deadline for Congress to complete its annual budget resolution was over a month ago. An annual budget resolution is essential for controlling spending, for guiding the annual appropriations process, and for setting national spending priorities.

For the past 2 years, the Senate has failed to meet this critical deadline. During that time, the U.S. has borrowed an additional \$3.2 trillion—more than \$100 billion a month until the \$14.29 trillion debt ceiling was reached on May 16.

For the first 7 months of the 2011 fiscal year, the budget deficit was a record \$871 billion—\$71 billion higher than it was at the same point in fiscal year 2010. During the same period, income tax revenues increased by \$110 billion, or 9.1 percent.

The problem isn't that Americans are taxed too little; Federal deficits are out-of-control because government is spending too much.

Not passing a budget, not bringing forward even a budget proposal, takes us down a path that ends in Social Security and Medicare bankruptcy, harms our national security, and passes the bill for current fiscal irresponsibility onto our children and grandchildren.

We are just 4½ months from the beginning of fiscal year 2012. Unless we pass a budget and approve the individual spending measures that are required to fund government operations, we will return to stopgap continuing resolutions and to recurring threat of government shutdowns.

Yesterday, I joined all 46 of my Republican colleagues in a letter to the Senate majority leader that urges him to initiate the steps that must be taken for the Senate to debate, vote, and produce a responsible Federal budget for the next fiscal year.

As the majority leader knows, the procedural votes he has scheduled will not advance us toward that goal. These votes are intended only to score political points.

Today I will be in Dallas to attend my daughter's graduation from lower school to middle school. This will prevent me from being present for votes on the motions to proceed on four budget proposals. My absence for these procedural votes will not affect the outcomes. But I wanted to make known my position in advance of these votes.

A serious attempt to move a fiscal year 2012 budget forward would be a bipartisan effort that would enable us to debate, amend, and move forward a plan for long-term deficit reduction, while funding essential government programs and services. I look forward to a real debate, open amendments, and a vote on a serious budget that will dramatically bring down the outstanding debt our country has accumulated. Unfortunately, that opportunity is not going to be presented to the Senate today.

I would vote in favor of the motions to proceed on the three Republican-originated budget proposals before the Senate: the so-called Ryan budget that has been approved by the House of Representatives, as well as alternative plans put forward by Senator TOOMEY and Senator PAUL.

Each of these proposals would put the Federal Government on a multiyear glide path to a balanced Federal budget. Each proposal would go about achieving this crucial goal by reducing Federal spending, not by raising taxes, and could be a constructive starting point for Senate debate and consideration of amendments. I do not agree with parts of each proposal. But if we had an open amendment process we could attempt to improve each proposal, while preserving the best parts.

I could not vote for the motion to proceed to consideration of the President's fiscal year 2012 budget. Unlike the Republican proposals, the President's fiscal year 2012 budget proposes to add \$8.7 trillion in new spending and \$1.26 trillion in net new taxes over the next decade, while only projecting \$1.1 trillion in savings over 10 years.

Rather than balancing the Federal budget, the President's budget plan would add several trillion dollars more to the national debt. That would be a

catastrophe by any standard. But the reality of the President's budget would be much worse. In the President's budget a \$1.1 trillion deficit was projected for the current fiscal year. But we are instead headed for a \$1.4 trillion shortfall.

The President subsequently signaled understanding that his proposed budget falls short by releasing a new deficit reduction proposal on April 13. The President's new plan targets \$4 trillion in deficit reduction in 12 years—through tax increases and a new “debt failsafe” trigger that would include cuts to spending through the tax code—a new euphemism for tax increases.

It is our responsibility to the country to act on establishing constraints on federal spending and producing a budget blueprint. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have chosen not to prepare nor advance a fiscal year 2012 budget resolution forward, except to say repeatedly that higher taxes are essential. In my estimation, raising taxes in a struggling economy will stifle job creation and further delay recovery from a devastating, long-lasting recession.

We must make bold cuts in spending where we can. We should also take steps to assure the long-term safety and soundness of Social Security and Medicare, for current retirees and for today's workers who will need to depend on benefits later. We must also carefully prioritize investment and research in areas of strategic national importance.

Just as American families and small businesses across the Nation set their spending priorities so Congress is expected to do the same. As a nation, we have reached a serious, fiscal crisis. It is time to start making the necessary and difficult decisions for the future of our country. •

H. CON. RES. 34

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, for me, Medicare is not a political talking point. My parents immigrated to the United States in the late 1950s. They worked hard for over 40 years to provide their children the chance to do all the things they themselves could not. But they never made much money. As a result, they retired with precious little in savings. Medicare was and is the only way they could access health care.

When my father got sick, Medicare paid for his numerous hospital stays. And as he reached the end of life, Medicare allowed him to die with dignity by paying for his hospice care.

Like most 80-year-olds my mother has several age-related ailments. Without the access to quality health care that Medicare pays for, I cannot imagine what life would be like for her.

America needs Medicare. We need it to continue without any benefit reductions for those like my mother currently in the system. And we need it to survive for my generation and my children's generation.

But Medicare is going bankrupt. Anyone who says it is not is simply

lying. And anyone who is in favor of doing nothing to deal with this fact is in favor of bankrupting it.

Medicare will go broke in as little as 9 years. No one likes this news, but it is the undeniable truth. And the sooner we begin to deal with it, the better off we are all going to be.

My goals are simple. First, I will not support any plan that changes Medicare for people like my mother who are currently on the plan. We cannot ask seniors to go out and get a job to pay for their health care.

Second, any solution must solve the problem. We need to save Medicare, not simply delay its bankruptcy.

And third, any solution cannot hurt economic growth. At a time of high unemployment, Americans cannot afford to pay more taxes.

I will support any serious plan that accomplishes these three things. It does not matter to me if it comes from a Democrat or a Republican. Saving Medicare is more important than partisan politics.

House Budget Committee Chairman PAUL RYAN has offered a plan. I support H. Con. Res. 34 because, right now, it is the only plan out there that helps save Medicare.

Democrats oppose this plan. Fine. But, if they have a better way to save Medicare, what are they waiting for to show us? What is their plan to save Medicare? Either show us how Medicare survives without any changes or show us what changes you propose we make. Anyone who supports doing nothing on Medicare is a supporter of bankrupting Medicare.

Where is the House Democrat plan to save Medicare?

Where is the Senate Democrat plan to save Medicare?

Where is President Obama's plan to save Medicare?

They have no plan to save Medicare, and they do not plan to offer one. They have decided that winning their next election is more important than saving Medicare for my mother and retirees like her.

I have been in the Senate just long enough to be disgusted by the reality that Washington has too many people who think their personal political careers are more important than our country's future.

Maybe the Democrats' strategy to use Medicare as a political weapon will work. Maybe not offering their own plan to save Medicare will help them win seats in Congress and reelect the President. Maybe it is great for the Democrat Party.

But it is terrible for people like my mother, and it is terrible for America.

Medicare is going bankrupt. If something does not happen soon, in just a few years whoever is in charge in Washington will have to go to people like my mother and tell them we can no longer afford to continue providing her with the same Medicare she is used to.

We have always had intense partisan politics in America. But throughout

our history, on issues of generational importance, our leaders have agreed to put aside politics for the sake of our country. Shouldn't saving Medicare be that kind of issue?

I am ready to work with anyone in Washington who is serious about saving Medicare. I am open to any serious solutions they have.

We are running out of time to save Medicare for our parents and secure it for our children. If we fail, history will never forgive us.

S. CON. RES. 20

Mr. President, I came here to support budgets that make tough spending reductions, save our safety net programs, and preserve our commitment to protecting Americans at home and abroad. In the midst of this fiscal crisis, there should be no sacred cows in the Federal budget, but we also can't walk away from our commitments abroad. Especially in this time of great upheaval around the world, and as America's enemies dream of a Greece-like day of reckoning that will leave us no choice but to abandon our allies around the world, I simply cannot support a budget that would make the world a less safe place because the United States' role in it is diminished.

TRIBUTE TO MARY JANE MCCARTHY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Mary Jane McCarthy will retire at the end of May after more than 23 years of service to the U.S. Senate. As one of the official reporters of the debate in the Senate, Mary Jane and her colleagues ensure that the debates and votes of the Senate can be read by future generations.

Mary Jane started her professional career as a free-lance reporter in 1972 by recording government hearings at the Federal Trade Commission. Since that time, she has reported hearings and proceedings at the Federal Aviation Administration, and the National Labor Relations Board.

In the Senate, Mary Jane developed a reputation for understanding the intricacies of this legislative body. With her years of experience, Mary Jane knows the nuances of the parliamentary procedures so well that she is often asked to train new reporters when they enter the Senate. I am sure many of her colleagues have benefitted from her instruction.

I am proud to have worked with Mary Jane and I appreciate her important contributions to the Senate. I know I speak for the Senate family as we wish you the best in your future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO LLOYD ATOR

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, it is my very great pleasure to pay tribute to one of the great treasures of the Senate, Mr. Lloyd Ator. Lloyd is retiring after 17 years as the legislative counsel for the Commerce Committee,

and 11 years in the Senate Legislative Counsel's Office. Lloyd has been a truly outstanding public servant, and his service has made our country a better place.

Given the breadth of issues within the committee's jurisdiction, the legislative counsel is required to be something of a Renaissance man. Fortunately, that is a perfect description of Lloyd. He has been required to know the underlying law in so many areas, from the Olympics, to daylight savings time, railroad rates, aviation security screening, cellphone use, science standards, fisheries management, maritime liability, commercial privacy, and satellites. To draft concise, thoughtful, and technically accurate bills on this range of issues, as Lloyd has done, requires unparalleled skill, expertise and dedication. Lloyd is also a parliamentary expert and served as an outstanding resource for committee members. Even when every other committee did away with their own legislative counsels, the Commerce Committee was determined to keep Lloyd, knowing that his unique capabilities made him our "secret weapon."

Not only is Lloyd an experienced drafter, he is a man of unflagging spirit. One of Lloyd's most remarkable qualities is his unwavering patience. No matter how many times he was asked to rewrite an amendment or edit a draft, he never once rolled his eyes or expressed frustration. He continually responded calmly and patiently, offering a word of humor at just the right moment. His humorous comments on drafts of bills are legendary on the committee.

Lloyd has become a bulwark on the committee, respected by colleagues and Members on both sides of the aisle. As a trusted adviser, he has always maintained the utmost level of confidentiality, even while drafting competing bills. Despite this position of privileged knowledge, Lloyd has always remained discreet and has earned the respect of all with whom he has worked. Lloyd is someone that both the Members and the Commerce staff have come to rely on, time after time. It has been largely through Lloyd's hard work, patience, and extensive legislative knowledge that the Commerce Committee has been able to produce such high quality legislation for the past 17 years. He has played an important role in every major piece of legislation the committee has considered for the past decade and at the close of the last century.

Lloyd is an incredibly humble man and has never been one to seek recognition, which is part of why I am so pleased to honor him today. Lloyd's retirement signifies a great loss to the committee and to the Senate. As sad as we are to see him go, I know that he is looking forward to spending more time with his family, his dog, and on many more trips to France. It is with sincere thanks from a grateful committee that I wish him nothing but the best in the