

passed by the House and the Senate, the most controversial of which centered around the ruling by the National Mediation Board on unionization rules. But that is why Chairman ROCKEFELLER and Ranking Member HUTCHISON appointed Members to a conference committee where the House and Senate could work out our policy differences. So far, the House has refused to appoint conferees. Instead, they have decided to stop negotiating and, unfortunately, to play politics with 4,000 FAA workers and their families.

Right now the FAA has been shut down for 11 days and as long as that shutdown continues, the government will continue to lose \$200 million a week, about \$30 million a day, that would pay for airport maintenance and safety and for the replacement of our country's outdated air traffic control system. If the shutdown continues through the August recess, we are going to lose over \$1 billion in revenue that could be used to upgrade our air transportation system. That is waste of the worst kind, and it makes our deficit problems worse at a time when everybody says they are so focused on the deficits.

Every day the shutdown continues has a very real, very painful impact on people all around the country who have been furloughed. I hope the House, in leaving for recess, has left open the opportunity to continue to address this dispute and resolve it in a way that will bring everybody back to work.

The FAA has issued stop-work orders for 241 airport construction projects worth nearly \$11 billion that support 70,000 jobs. Again, these are real people who are being forced to make real sacrifices.

In my State of New Hampshire, a \$16 million project to rebuild the runway of Boire Field in Nashua will be delayed if we don't pass an extension. Boire Field is the busiest general aviation airport in New England, and breaking ground this fall on the runway reconstruction project would have created 50 jobs. Instead, because of this delay, construction likely won't begin until spring and those 50 people are going to have to wait, something that shouldn't have to happen. The tragedy is they won't have jobs, not because they don't have the skills or that the project isn't needed but because the House is playing politics with the FAA. Forty-two employees at the FAA's air traffic control center in Nashua have been furloughed and this shutdown is taking a terrible toll on them. I want to tell you about one, Steve Finnerty from Bedford.

I talked to Steve earlier today. He is a civil engineer and he has worked for the FAA for the last 15 years. He is the sole breadwinner for his family of five. He has a young daughter and a pair of 1-year-old twins who are struggling with medical issues. He has already lost nearly 2 weeks of pay, and he is not sure that he is going to get that

pay back even when he does go back to work. He is concerned, understandably, about how he is going to pay his mortgage and his doctor bills and the grocery bills and all the other needs his family has. Now he is facing the possibility of an entire month without pay.

There are thousands of people all across the country who are stuck in the same circumstance who want to get back to work, who we need to get back to work. We need them to get back to work so they can pay their mortgages and their children's college tuitions and their medical bills. We need them to get back to work so they can continue to build a GPS-based air traffic control system like every other industrialized country has. We need to get this economy moving again. That means we need to be serious about our responsibilities here in Washington. Let's pass a clean extension of the FAA. Let's get these people back to work, and let's go about the business of rebuilding a modern air traffic control system like we should have in the United States.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant parliamentarian proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, I ask consent to speak as in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNIZING THOM RUMBERGER

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, I rise to recognize the important contributions of a special Floridian for his unrelenting determination to protect one of our Nation's unique natural resources; that is, the Florida Everglades. He is a prestigious attorney. He is a commanding litigator. This individual, Thom Rumberger, has dedicated much of his personal and professional life to advancing the restoration and protection of the river of grass. His brilliant, incisive mind, his creativity, and his fearlessness combine to make Thom one of Florida's most influential Everglades leaders.

He has been a man proud to serve his country and his community. It goes back to the time he interrupted his college career to volunteer for the Marines. He served in the Korean war. Over the course of his life, he has continued this service as a dedicated public servant, a respected judge, and a respected prosecutor.

In his family, he is a dedicated father and grandfather who obviously has always found great happiness with that

ever-expanding family of his, and the relentless efforts he undertakes to preserve Florida's natural heritage is a legacy gift, certainly to his family and to his colleagues but to all us Floridians—indeed, to us as residents of planet Earth.

He served 2 years in the Marines, earned his degree with honors, a law degree, and was associate editor of the Florida Law Review. He became the youngest circuit judge serving in a district in central Florida. He was the Brevard County solicitor, he was special assistant State attorney, he was county attorney for Seminole County, he was Assistant to the Florida Governor, and he served as a member of the Florida Land Sales Board.

I knew Thom back in those early days in Melbourne and Brevard County as we were experiencing the explosive growth, at the time, of the Nation's attempt to catch up with the Soviet Union since they had surprised us by putting up Sputnik and then later beat us into orbit with Yuri Gagarin before we could get Alan Shepard into orbit and then John Glenn into orbit.

Those were exciting times. I will never forget I heard Thom, as we were sitting around one day, saying I am impatient having to sleep because I am so excited about getting up in the morning and going out and doing all these things. Of course, I just listed all those important positions of public service.

Along the way, Thom became a good friend of another Brevard County man, George Barley. Actually, I think George was married to Mary. Both of them dedicated their lives to restoration of the Everglades. George and Mary established the Everglades Trust and the Everglades Foundation and then, when George died a very tragic death back in 1995, Thom joined with Mary to make sure George Barley's dream of a restored Everglades became a reality.

Thom was an active member of the Republican Party, but I can tell you that in the friendship between us, partisan membership did not mean anything. We had a personal friendship, and one could often see that as he engaged in public service, but that was especially so when it came to the preservation and the restoration of the Everglades. His success extends, other than his community and country service, to a career in private practice. He was one of the founding partners of Rumberger, Kirk & Caldwell, and under Thom's leadership the firm's modest beginnings were quickly surpassed as it moved to all kinds of new legal successes. Today, that firm includes 75 trial attorneys in 5 offices all across several southern States. Of course, he has been listed as one of Florida's superlawyers every year for the last several years.

Legend has it Thom Rumberger once convinced a Federal judge to allow a real automobile in the courtroom as

evidence. He convinced the judge to have a window in the courtroom enlarged—in a historic courthouse, nonetheless—to accommodate a crane that lifted the car right into the courtroom. He has been known throughout his life for his infectious sense of humor, often referred to—because he had so many different careers—somewhat derisively as a career chameleon. Thom worked his way all the way through college, all the way up to these present successes.

Let me tell you what he did to support himself and to pay for his college education. A lot of people do not remember Ross Allen's Reptile Institute in Ocala, at Silver Springs. Guess what the main attraction was: the eastern diamondback rattlesnake. Thom's job, at which he earned enough money to put himself through school, was to milk those rattlesnakes.

Clearly, that is a tourist attraction because that is a fascinating thing, to see that snake coiled up, ready to strike, and they stick a stick down there and pin his head and then reach down behind the head and pick him up and they have this 6-foot rattlesnake. But there is a purpose to this other than charming their guests. They squeeze behind that head and the mouth opens and those two fangs come out and they put those fangs down into a glass and they milk that rattlesnake. The poisonous venom that was then collected and stored becomes the basis for the anti-snake bite serum that has saved so many lives. I remember one time he actually went back after he had been judge and prosecutor and all these things. He told me he was invited to come back to the Ross Allen Reptile Institute. He said when he walked into that cage with all those rattlesnakes, the snakes looked so big. He didn't remember the snakes looking that big when he was a college kid earning his way through college. Thom promises that it was right there in that snakepit that he learned the skills of public speaking and working with the public because he had to explain how he was milking the rattlesnake to all of the guests who were there, and obviously he had their attention.

He even enjoyed a brief acting career as a stuntman for the movie "The Creature of the Black Lagoon." Remember that one that scared the wits out of all of us when we were children, "The Creature of the Black Lagoon"? He has had quite a few varieties in his life.

He has generously committed himself to public service. Beyond the positions I have already mentioned, he was appointed to Florida's Federal Judicial Advisory Commission and the Board of Supervisors of the Spaceport Florida Authority. Presently, he is chairman of the Everglades Trust. He has served as chairman of the Collins Center for Public Policy, which was named after one of our great Governors of Florida—former Governor, now deceased—Gov. Leroy Collins. He has been a member of the Board of Visitors of Florida State

College of Law and Board of Trustees for the Law Center Association of the University of Florida. He has represented about every environmental organization, including Save the Manatee, the Everglades Trust, and Save Our Everglades. He has been the lead counsel for the Everglades Foundation well past two decades.

Notably, Thom was instrumental in the passage of two Everglades-related Florida constitutional amendments, the Federal Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, and in obtaining several billion dollars in funding for Everglades restoration. That has been one of my primary duties as the senior Senator from Florida, and I have worked with him over the years on this Everglades restoration.

He has been primarily responsible for Florida's acquisition of one of our natural resources, the 75,000-acre Babcock Ranch in the southwest part of Florida, which now provides necessary corridors for wildlife, especially the endangered Florida panther. In the late 1980s, Thom worked to implement some of the first manatee protection laws.

Throughout his four decades in public service, he has demonstrated the importance of looking out for the common good.

I just did an interview today in the aftermath of our vote on what started out to be highly contentious on what we were going to resolve in debt reduction and deficit reduction with the pending guillotine hanging over our head, the default that would occur at 12 tonight, which has now been averted. The reporter who was asking me the questions in the interview said: Well, why is it that everything is so contentious and people are all so wrapped up in themselves that they talk past each other and they are only looking out for their own interests and don't respect the other fellow's point of view?

Thom Rumberger represents that kind of person who always respected the other person's point of view. So when it was time to draw up the solution to whatever the problem was, then the parties could come together and find that consensus. That has been sorely lacking in Washington and around this country. We saw a shining little moment yesterday and today—yesterday in the House of Representatives with an overwhelming vote and today on the floor of the Senate with an overwhelming vote—to start the process of deficit reduction. It is folks such as Thom Rumberger whom we ought to be looking to in how they have demonstrated their community service instead of what we have seen play out over the last several months.

Thanks to the selfless commitment of folks such as Thom, America's Everglades will be restored for the benefit of future generations. It is not just Florida, it is America that owes Thom a great deal of gratitude. My bride of 40 years, Grace, who has known Thom almost as long as I have, joins me in

thanking him and his wife Debbie for their many contributions to Florida's treasured landscapes.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER JANE LANHAM
TAFOYA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to a young woman from Owensboro, KY, who lost her life while in service to her country. U.S. Navy LCDR Jane Lanham Tafoya was assigned to the Naval Branch Health Clinic in Manama, Bahrain, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. She died from non-combat related causes on September 19, 2006. She was 43 years old.

For her heroic service, Lieutenant Commander Tafoya received many awards, medals and decorations, including the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Gold Star, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, the National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Star, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Armed Forces Reserve Medal, and the Navy Pistol Shot Medal with Sharpshooter Device.

Lieutenant Commander Tafoya had served for 18 years in the Navy. Before her assignment in Bahrain she had served at the Naval Hospital and Naval Reserve Center in Philadelphia, the Bureau of Medicine here in Washington, DC, the Naval Hospital at Camp Lejeune, NC, aboard the U.S.S. Ronald Reagan, and at Navy Environmental Preventive Medicine Unit 2 in Norfolk, VA. In Bahrain she was working as an industrial hygienist.

Born in Daviess County, KY, Jane was a graduate of Owensboro Catholic High School, Murray State University and Temple University. Her mother, Avis Lanham, remembers Jane as a smart student who enjoyed learning, got all As in school, and loved to read. In high school Jane played softball and volleyball, and she was on the Murray State intramural bowling team.

Avis says that Jane loved to travel, and she loved being in the Navy. And Jane "could always see the good in people." Avis says of her daughter. Whenever something negative was said about a person, Jane would just respond with, "Well, nobody's perfect."

We are thinking of Jane's loved ones today, including her husband John Tafoya; her daughters Rachel and Natalie Tafoya; her mother Avis Lanham; her brother and sister-in-law Brad and Kathy; her sister and brother-in-law