

crew cannot be working for more than 15 hours. The problem is this: 95 percent of the military personnel going into Afghanistan and some of these other areas go in by subpart-S operators. They are exempt from the crew rest. Right now, there is legislation that is pending that would make them fall under the crew rest requirements.

Military can take them in, but military doesn't have the capacity. That is why 40 percent of all materiel and 95 percent of personnel are being brought into these zones. As an example, if they are going from the logical place, which would be in Germany to go into Afghanistan, they would carry it in, but they would not be able to offload whatever cargo or personnel and then get back and go to Stuttgart or whatever location it is in Germany because that would exceed crew rest.

On the other hand, they are precluded from having civilian aircraft staying in places such as Afghanistan. So there is no solution to it. We want to address this. We are going to try to do it. We feel this will not clear as it is now. So I will not be offering it tonight, but it is one I think is very significant.

With that, I yield the floor.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 1094, 1095, 1096, AND 1101  
WITHDRAWN

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I wonder if while the Senator from Oklahoma is here—we are trying to get a current list of amendments. Is it his intent to withdraw amendment No. 1101 on C-12 aircraft?

Mr. INHOFE. I don't have that one with me. I would rather wait until I get the amendment. There is one other I will want to have passed—several amendments are on Guantanamo Bay detention. This is on long-term, high-value detainees. It is my intention to offer that tomorrow.

I have currently four amendments that I will withdraw at this time so we can unclog some of this.

I ask unanimous consent to withdraw amendments Nos. 1094, 1095, 1096 and 1101.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Oklahoma for helping us to get our list of amendments whittled down to where we can hopefully have a manageable group for tomorrow. We are going to have a very busy day tomorrow. We have a lot of amendments to address and dispose of. It is doable because we have had the cooperation of Senators. It is our goal—we must finish this by 6 o'clock.

Everybody has a right to a vote if their amendment is germane. We hope we will have a chance to debate all these amendments as well as vote on them. I believe we will be coming in at 9:30. That is the current plan, and we will be back on the bill at 11. We have to start off immediately. I hope we will

vote on my amendment within a few minutes after it is offered. There will be some debate in opposition to my amendment, I understand.

Hopefully, the Senators who oppose it will be notified tonight that my amendment is first up and we are going to be prepared to debate this at 11 o'clock.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate resumes consideration of S. 1867, the Defense authorization bill, tomorrow, December 1, 2011, the pending amendment be the Levin amendment No. 1293, relative to high-speed ferries.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCAIN. Reserving the right to object, and I will not object, I thank the chairman for the progress we have made and also again point out that we have some very serious issues that deserve debate and discussion. But when cloture expires—the 30 hours—there will be an automatic vote triggered at that time. We look forward to working with our colleagues to make sure they have sufficient time to debate the amendments.

It would be regrettable, as important as some of these amendments are, that we back up to the expiration of the cloture time and that would trigger an automatic vote. I am sure we will get the cooperation of all our colleagues.

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

#### MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

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

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

#### RETIREMENT OF SYLVIA GILLESPIE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to take a few moments to thank a remarkable woman on my staff. Sylvia Gillespie, in my Springfield office, is retiring after 12 years. When you walk into that office in Springfield, Sylvia is the first person you see, and her smile has made thousands of people feel welcome. Her heart is as warm as her smile.

Sylvia is from the South Side of Chicago. She likes to say, "The same as Michelle Obama." She went to Austin O. Sexton Elementary School on South Langley Avenue and grew up on the

same streets where that infamous street gang, the Blackstone Rangers, made a lot of trouble. But she survived that experience and went on to make a life in the service of others.

When she looks back at her life, Sylvia gets a little choked up and she says, how did I go from being that little girl from the ghetto to working for a Senator. Well, the answer is very simple. Sylvia Gillespie cares about other people. She has helped countless people during the 12 years she has worked in my office. From helping people get their passports so they wouldn't miss a family wedding in some foreign country to speaking on behalf of constituents who ran into trouble with Federal agencies such as the Internal Revenue Service, Sylvia has been such a positive force in the lives of so many people.

The work she is most proud of, and the one thing she will talk to you about, is what she has been working on for the last 2 years—helping families in Illinois stay in their homes. Sylvia has helped dozens of families stay in their homes during the mortgage crisis when they thought they had lost everything through foreclosure. She would sit on conference calls with banks for hours at a time, refusing to take no for an answer. You don't want to cross Sylvia Gillespie when she is fighting for someone she believes in.

Ask her why and she explains:

I just felt like we just couldn't lose one more home. If I can prevent a family from losing their home by being on the phone with the bank for 3 hours, I would do it.

And she would do it. Sometimes she would persevere long after the homeowners had given up. In one particular case, a hardworking mom with two kids had done everything right.

She played by the bank's rules, but she was still only days away from watching the home she loved be auctioned off, and she was ready to give up. But Sylvia wasn't. Sylvia asked:

Have you ever seen a mustard seed? That's all you need: Faith the size of a mustard seed to get through this.

That was Sylvia. And after a long and grueling process, guess what. Sylvia prevailed. The woman received her loan modification. With Sylvia's help, that mother and her children will be spending this holiday season right where they want to be—in their own home.

That mom is just one of the many Illinoisans who are going to join me in being sad when Sylvia decides to retire.

When Sylvia is not working hard in my office, she spends a lot of time at the Abundant Faith Christian Church. She loves that church. She has invited me there on Sundays, and she really gets into it. She is a woman of faith, and she is a great singer. She throws herself, heart and soul, into their services. Every Sunday morning she and a few others cook up a breakfast for the community people who live near the

church. They serve the families of patients in a nearby hospital and homeless people who come over from the neighborhood shelters.

Let me tell you another thing about Sylvia. She is a great cook and a great baker. If you ask anyone in my Springfield office, they will tell you that her cookies and cakes are the best.

We have seen Sylvia dressed up in full regalia as a clown, which she does once a while to bring cheer and fun to parties and events in her community. She is a happy person and it is a joy to be around her.

She also has a great talent for decorating. One of her last responsibilities in my office, before her official last day before retirement, was setting up the Christmas decorations. Thanks to her, our office in Springfield is in full swing for the holidays.

We are going to miss Sylvia in our office. I speak for everyone there and countless people when I thank Sylvia for the outstanding 12 years of service she has dedicated to helping people in Illinois.

Sylvia is the mother of two beautiful grown daughters, Danette and Genaire. She is a proud grandmother of three grandchildren, ages 15, 13, and 11. She now has to make the tough choice of which daughter she will join and live with. They both want her. She has to decide whether to go with Danette in Portland, OR, or stay with Genaire in Davenport, IA. Whatever her choice, she told me there is one thing she wants to make sure of—that she has a reservation for the ticket of Barack Obama's second inaugural. She made the first, and she wants to be at the second one too. I made that promise to her.

Wherever she goes, I know Sylvia Gillespie will continue to be an inspiration to everyone she meets, and will, as long as she lives, reach out a helping hand to people who need a little assistance, a little encouragement, and that great Sylvia Gillespie smile.

Sylvia, thanks for 12 years of wonderful service in our office in Springfield. I wish you and your family the very best for many years to come.

#### TRIBUTE TO HELEN J. STEWART

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Helen J. Stewart, a brave and extraordinary Nevadan who lived during the early days of Las Vegas. On December 3, 2011, there will be a dedication of the statue erected in her honor at the Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort State Historic Park.

In 1882, Helen arrived in the Las Vegas Valley with her husband Archibald and their three young children. After her husband died of a gunshot wound in 1884, she managed their isolated ranch while caring for five young children. A business-savvy woman, Helen sold 1,832 acres of the ranch to the railroad in 1902 for \$55,000. This land became the area from which the City of Las Vegas developed.

Helen had a pioneering spirit, and she is considered to be the "First Lady of Las Vegas." Among her numerous accomplishments in the community, she was the first Postmaster, the first woman to serve on a School District Board, and the first woman to serve on a jury. In addition, she was an advocate of women's rights, a charter member of the Mesquite Club, one of the founders of the Christ Episcopal Church, and the president of the Las Vegas chapter of the Nevada Historical Society.

Helen also developed strong friendships with the Southern Paiutes. They were her neighbors and some were workers on her ranch. In 1911, she deeded 10 acres of her land to the Federal Government for use as an Indian school. That land established what is now known as the Las Vegas Indian Colony for the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe.

I am pleased to stand today to recognize Helen's outstanding achievements. She was a remarkable mother, rancher, businesswoman, and community leader, and she serves as an inspiration to us all.

#### HOLD ON H.R. 3012

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise to inform my colleagues that I am placing a hold on H.R. 3012, the Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act. This bill would eliminate the per-country numerical limitations for employment-based visas and increase the numerical cap for family-based immigrants. I have concerns about the impact of this bill on future immigration flows, and am concerned that it does nothing to better protect Americans at home who seek high-skilled jobs during this time of record high unemployment.

#### TRIBUTE TO THOMAS H. MILLER

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I would like to recognize and honor the service of Thomas H. Miller as he retires as the executive director of the Blinded Veterans Association. Mr. Miller has been an outstanding servant to his country and an advocate for his fellow veterans. He is truly an example of courage and perseverance. He has demonstrated throughout his career that the blindness he sustained through combat injuries does not impede his ability to have an impact here at home.

Mr. Miller served his country honorably in Vietnam and lost his eyesight during a 1967 combat mission. He was honorably discharged a year later and returned home to find limited resources for veterans suffering from blindness. Following his own struggle to adjust to life at home, Mr. Miller dedicated himself to ensuring that all blinded veterans share in the resources, services, and support that can bring new hope and opportunities.

As executive director of the Blinded Veterans Association, Mr. Miller

helped dramatically improve the lives of blinded veterans nationwide. In 2006 he helped launch Operation Peer Support a program aimed at ending the isolation suffered by many blinded veterans returning from combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. This program provides veterans with valuable information regarding rehabilitation, employment, and self-help activities. Most importantly, Operation Peer Support has provided many blinded veterans with the opportunity to interact with one another and make lifelong friendships here at home.

Mr. Miller was also instrumental in raising awareness for blinded veterans. During his time with the Blinded Veterans Association, Mr. Miller worked with the Veterans Health Administration to improve care for the vision impaired. He testified before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs about the challenges facing blind veterans and served as the chair of the Federal Advisory Committee on Prosthetics and Special Disabilities Programs. In 17 years of leadership, the Blinded Veterans Association made vital contributions to legislation that has greatly expanded benefits and services for vision impaired veterans.

Our Nation is fortunate to have veterans as selfless and dedicated as Mr. Miller. While he could have allowed his combat injuries to slow his career, Mr. Miller instead saw his experience as an opportunity to help improve the lives of thousands of his fellow veterans. He has given honest and faithful service to his country and those wounded veterans transitioning to life back at home.

#### WALL STREET PROTESTS

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article written by Mallory Factor and published in Forbes magazine.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

OCCUPY WALL STREET . . . NEXT STOP, ATHENS?

In the past few weeks Americans have watched with interest, bemusement and anger as protests and sit-ins on Wall Street have sparked similar demonstrations around the country. With vague goals of combating corporate greed and calls to rectify all manner of social and economic inequality, this movement seems, to the press at least, to capture a mood of deep discontent among the American people.

But if you think a thousand protesters on Wall Street is a trouble sign for our nation, wait until you see the civil unrest that follows the reforms and cuts to government programs needed to bring our national debt under control. Just look at Greece, where government is being reformed, drastic cuts are being made—and the society is unraveling. In Greece a series of severe austerity measures has been imposed as conditions for recent bailouts by the International Monetary Fund and the other members of the single European currency, the euro. Yet the economy continues to spiral downward.