

the east coast has to get to the interior of the country. I want to have a vision for interior ports, because one thing could affect the other. And the only way the Senate can make smart decisions is to break the government into 12 parts, as we have been doing for a long time, and get back to doing business in a more traditional fashion.

This is a classic example: If we brought the Energy and Water appropriations bill to the floor, people other than me would have a say about what to do, given the change in shipping. And if we don't do it in the normal course of business—if we keep doing this in the last week of the session—we are going to be left behind as a Nation.

This is a great example of why we should do appropriations bills in the normal course of business. If we can pull this off in 2012, it will not be a lost year; it will be where we can do some good for the public.

So I thank you very much. I yield the floor.

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I have one thing to say in closing while my two colleagues are still on the floor: Today, Senator SHAHEEN read Washington's Farewell Address which we have been doing in the Senate since 1888. One of the reasons we do that is because President Washington calls to us through history to do our best.

We talk about this issue in South Carolina—deepening the port of Charleston. Certainly President Washington knew about the port of Charleston. It was a huge asset for this fledgling Nation of ours. He had no idea about a Panama Canal. He had no idea about goods coming over from China. He certainly had no idea about goods coming in from the west coast because at that point he was hoping we would get to Appalachia. He had no idea what was going to happen here. But he calls to us from history to do our job and accept the challenges that come our way.

The appropriations bills shouldn't be a challenge. That is nuts-and-bolts good government.

This week in Arkansas we had five townhall meetings and they were great. I got lots of good questions; a few pointed questions. My colleagues know how it goes because they have participated in those as well. It was great. It is democracy in action. When people can show up in a community and ask their Senator questions, that means the system is working. It is working back home, but we need to get it to work up here. That is what I heard over and over this week in Arkansas, is the expectations for this Congress are very low for this year. We talk about a 10-percent approval rating. I am sometimes surprised it is that high.

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, if the Senator will yield, here is the good news: It wouldn't take much to exceed expectations. But I want to say to the west coast Senators that their ports need to be modernized too. They need transportation hubs around their ports.

The whole infrastructure regarding export opportunities in this country has deteriorated because of a lack of vision.

Wal-Mart is a pretty good model of how business works. They get thousands of millions of products a day out to stores all over the country. They do it in a business fashion: FedEx—Federal Express—UPS. The Federal Government is stuck in the 1950s and we need to change that. I think the appropriations process is the right vehicle to do it.

Mr. PRYOR. That does go back to the appropriations process, because obviously those things require money, they take investment in our future. But the truth is if we are stymied in our appropriations process, there are a lot of good things that we can't get done. But when they go through, we can take care of the challenges that present themselves around the country. We have a lot of need in this country. I am certainly a promoter of investing in infrastructure, and the ports are very important to our Nation.

With that, I yield to the Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I wish to thank the Senator from South Carolina for his leadership in helping to make the Senate work and for his good example and for his giving us a specific example—the deep ports—as to why it is important that we set out to do what we are elected to do, which is to say, the Port of Charleston and the Port of Savannah have to be deepwater ports if we want to keep our jobs. That needs to be said in the Senate. It needs to be said in the subcommittee and in the full committee, and it needs to be said on the floor.

It is encouraging to me when Senators such as the Senator from North Carolina and Arkansas and Virginia from that side of the aisle, and the Senator from South Carolina and the Senator from Maine and the junior Senator from Arkansas and the Senator from Georgia on this side of the aisle—I think we would all say firmly that while we are only several Senators, the words we speak are the same feelings that a large number of Senators on both sides of the aisle feel.

We want to get results. We want to do our jobs. We want to create an environment in which our leaders can succeed. We know that if we want to, we can do that. And we should do it because it is our constitutional responsibility, because oversight is our responsibility, because it is lazy management if we allow it to go to the end of the year and end up with a great big pile of bills in an omnibus or a continuing resolution, which is worse.

We need to go over spending item by item. I am on six subcommittees. All three of us are on the Appropriations Committee. We will probably have 30 hearings in the next 2 or 3 months. We will have a good opportunity to go through \$1 trillion of discretionary spending and try to spend it wisely and to save money wherever we can.

One last thing: When these spending bills come to the floor and we debate them and approve them, we can show the American people that discretionary spending is not the biggest problem we have with spending in this country. Discretionary spending is 38 percent of the budget, and according to the Congressional Budget Office it is scheduled to go up over the next 10 years at the rate of inflation. The rest of the budget, which is largely our entitlement programs, is scheduled to grow up to four times the rate of inflation. If it does that, we will be a bankrupt country after about 10 or 12 years. So there is every reason in the world for us to bring these bills to the floor.

My concluding sentence is this: We congratulate the Democratic and Republican leaders and the chairman and ranking member of the Appropriations Committee. We believe our job is to bring all 12 bills through committee and to the floor and pass them before the fiscal year starts. We, on both sides of the aisle—those of us who have spoken and many others who feel the same way—pledge our support to help our leaders achieve that result.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH). The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I thank Senator ALEXANDER from Tennessee for his leadership on this issue. He is the one who wanted to come here and praise the two leaders for their leadership. Again, they are demonstrating leadership by reaching this agreement and trying to change recent practice around here. They want to set a new standard for getting it done as we are supposed to get it done.

So I thank my friend and colleague from Tennessee for all of his hard work, and this is just the tip of the iceberg. He is working on many ways to try to make this institution run better and to make the American people proud of the Senate. So I thank the Senator for that.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS CULBERTSON

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise to recognize Thomas Culbertson of Fremont, OH, for many years of outstanding leadership and service to The Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center. A former college librarian and stockbroker, Mr. Culbertson began his service to the center in 1988 as a manuscripts curator and rose to the position of executive director in 2004.

Mr. Culbertson was instrumental in developing two workshop series for educators. The first series, "History Links: A Partnership to Teach American History," helped 300 area schoolteachers implement State standards for social studies that focused on American history. The second series included three workshops for more than 200 community college faculty that focused on America's Gilded Age. Mr. Culbertson also led the effort to gain

accreditation for the Hayes Museum from the American Association of Museums in 2002.

Of utmost importance to Mr. Culbertson's legacy is the \$1.2 million restoration of the first floor of the Hayes home to how it looked when our 19th President and his wife, Lucy, lived there. With the help of the late U.S. Representative Paul Gillmor, the Hayes Center was awarded a \$400,000 Save America's Treasures grant through the U.S. Department of Interior. In addition, the center received \$500,000 in State capital funding, and Mr. Culbertson helped raise \$300,000 in donations to pay for the restoration. The project included replicating wallpaper, carpets, and other features that had been altered over the years. The home renovation will be completed in July 2012.

For his commitment to public service and the many contributions he has made to the Hayes Presidential Center, I would like to recognize and thank Mr. Culbertson for his years of service and wish him well in his retirement.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO WILLIE O'REE

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, Willie O'Ree made history on the night of January 18, 1958, but for too long the significance of what he accomplished that night went largely unacknowledged. Every American should know Willie O'Ree for his rightful place in history: he is the Jackie Robinson of hockey—the first player of African heritage to play in the National Hockey League.

Unlike Jackie Robinson's widely heralded debut with the Brooklyn Dodgers 11 years earlier, Willie O'Ree's appearance on the ice for the Boston Bruins 54 years ago got little notice in the press. The New York Times simply reported: "The Boston Bruins, with a Negro, Billy O'Ree, in the line-up for the first time in National Hockey League history, scored once in every period tonight to beat the first-place Montreal Canadiens for the first time in eight games, 3 0." Sports Illustrated had even less to say in its Scoreboard column: "Boston made history by bringing up Quebec's Billy O'Ree, first Negro to play in NHL."

But it was a milestone for hockey—and a dream come true for the 22-year-old Willie O'Ree, who had spent his boyhood in New Brunswick, Canada—the youngest of 13 children—idolizing such NHL legends as Gordie Howe and Maurice Richard. He liked baseball, too, landing a tryout with the Milwaukee Braves minor league team in Waycross, GA, in 1956. He even got to meet Jackie Robinson on a trip his baseball team made to New York in 1949.

Willie was as good at shortstop as he was at second base. He was good at the plate, too. And with his speed, he stole

a lot of bases. But to him, baseball was just a way to stay in shape for hockey. To him, "there was just something about hockey," he always said. He started skating when he was 2 years old and began playing organized hockey when he was 5.

He explains his love of hockey in words all of us who share his passion for the game can appreciate. "When I put a pair of skates on and a hockey stick in my hand and started maneuvering the puck," he says, "I just became obsessed with it. I had that burning desire within me."

That burning desire—that deep ambition—drove Willie O'Ree through almost two minor league seasons with the Quebec Aces before being called up by the Boston Bruins for that historic game in Montreal against the Canadiens in 1958. But after that memorable night, he would play only one more game with Boston before being sent back to the minors for the rest of the season.

But in 1960, Willie O'Ree was back with the Bruins for 43 games, including one memorable game at the Boston Garden in which he scored the winning goal in a 3 2 victory over Montreal. It came in the third period. Willie broke away from his check, got a perfect pass from Leo Boivin, stick handled past two Canadiens players, then from 10 feet out fired a shot past goaltender Charlie Hodge. More than 13,000 Bruins fans jumped to their feet and gave Willie a 2-minute standing ovation.

That year, Willie had a total of four goals and 10 assists with the Bruins, but that was the end of his NHL career. He spent the next six seasons in the Western Hockey League, then nine more seasons in the Pacific Hockey League until he retired in 1979 at the age of 44. Most seasons were productive despite the fact that at 19 he had suffered an injury that left him blind in his right eye. Doctors said he would never play hockey again. They were wrong. With aggressiveness, fearlessness and speed, he scored nearly 500 goals in his 21 years playing professional hockey.

His own impairment was no obstacle to Willie O'Ree. Neither was the blind bigotry of those who filled his mailbox with anonymous death threats, those who screamed racial epithets at him from the stands, those who even tossed black cats out on the ice, even those players who took countless cheap shots at him, in a time when players did not wear helmets or face shields. Willie responded the same way as Jackie Robinson had in 1947 when he broke the color barrier in baseball—with quiet strength and calm dignity. "I just want to be a hockey player," he said, "and if they couldn't accept that fact, that was their problem, not mine."

It wasn't until 1974 that another black player, Washington's Mike Marson, made it to the NHL. It is undeniable that Willie O'Ree—his talent and his character—opened the NHL to other minorities. But Willie's ground-

breaking days are far from over. For the last 14 years, he has served as the NHL's Director of Youth Development and ambassador for NHL Diversity, part of the NHL Foundation supporting hockey programs for boys and girls throughout North America. He is constantly on the go, running clinics and speaking at schools all across the continent, teaching not only hockey but also how to live life off the ice. He continues to spread the word that "hockey is for everyone."

We have recognized and celebrated ambassadors from all over the world. We should also honor Willie O'Ree who is the ultimate ambassador not just for hockey, but for dignity and respect and even courage in the world of sports. The world weathers so many storms and so much uncertainty, but at the center of each we find people of character who revive our hope and give us strength. Willie O'Ree is such a man, and we are all blessed to have his strength as an example. ●

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

• Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize National History Day, a yearlong academic program focused on improving the teaching and learning of history for 6th to 12th grade students, for receiving a 2011 National Humanities Medal. The National Humanities medals honor achievements in history, literature, education, and cultural policy. For the first time ever, a K 12 education program has received this prestigious award. National History Day was recognized as "a program that inspires in American students a passion for history."

Each year more than half a million students, encouraged by thousands of teachers nationwide, participate in the yearlong National History Day program. Students choose historical topics related to a theme and conduct extensive primary and secondary research through libraries, archives, museums, oral history interviews, and historic sites. After analyzing and interpreting their sources and drawing conclusions about the significance of their topics in history, students present their work in original papers, Web sites, exhibits, performances, and documentaries. These products are entered into competitions in the spring, at local, State, and national levels where they are evaluated by professional historians and educators. The program culminates in a national competition each June. National History Day programs operate in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories, engaging students with its unique approach to the hands-on learning of history.

In addition to discovering the exciting world of the past, National History Day also helps students develop the attributes that are critical to make them college and career ready. This includes: