

(The remarks of Mr. HOEVEN and Mr. BLUMENTHAL pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 386 are located in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MOVING AHEAD FOR PROGRESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY ACT—Continued

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding the business before the Senate now is the surface transportation reauthorization bill; is that right?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. REID. Does that need to be reported?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It has already been reported.

AMENDMENT NO. 1730 WITHDRAWN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I withdraw amendment No. 1730.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right. The amendment is withdrawn.

AMENDMENT NO. 1761

(Purpose: To make a perfecting amendment)

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a first-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 1761.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1762 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1761

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 1762 to amendment No. 1761.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 1762

At the end, add the following:

SEC. ____ EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall become effective 7 days after enactment.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT WITH AMENDMENT NO. 1763

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a motion to recommit the bill with instructions, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] moves to recommit the bill, S. 1813, to the Committee on Environment and Public Works with instructions to report back forthwith with an amendment.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be waived.

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

The amendment is as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 1763

At the end, add the following new section: SEC. ____.

This Act shall become effective 6 days after enactment.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays on that motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1764

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have an amendment at the desk, and that amendment is to the instructions that we have already set forth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 1764 to the instructions (amendment No. 1763) of the motion to recommit.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike "6 days" and insert "5 days".

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on that amendment I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 1765 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1764

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 1765 to amendment No. 1764.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike "5 days" and insert "4 days".

Mr. REID. Mr. President, let me take a moment where we are in this important surface transportation reauthorization bill. No one disputes the fact that this is a job creator. Millions of jobs, plural. Today with the Senate's vote to dispose of the Blunt amendment, the Senate completed an important step to advance this bill. The Republican leaders on the Republican side made clear that they would not allow the Senate to move forward on this piece of legislation until they got a vote on contraception. We waited and

waited. It is done. Now we can move on to attempting to process other amendments to this important piece of legislation.

Not everything ground to a halt while the Senate was working toward processing the Blunt amendment. The bill's able managers have been working to clear amendments offered by a number of Senators. As I have said before, the managers of this bill—multiple in nature—are seasoned and know what is going on legislatively. They worked together, Senators BOXER and INHOFE especially, because there is more of what they have in this bill than what other committees have. But we have the Banking Committee, the Finance Committee, the Commerce Committee, and they have all worked together in coming up with a number of cleared amendments. All of these Senators have worked closely together. They worked so closely even before the work over the past week, and on February 9, 85 Senators voted on cloture to proceed to the bill. And as I have indicated, over the last several weeks they have continued to work together and clear numerous amendments that Senators have filed.

I offered a revised amendment a few minutes ago. This amendment includes the very same consensus that comes from the product of these three committees regarding my earlier amendment. It includes matters reported unanimously by the Banking Committee, strong bipartisan vote with the Finance Committee, matters negotiated between the chairman and ranking member of the Commerce Committee.

What is new in the amendment I just offered is that it now also includes 37 additional amendments cleared by the managers of this bill and, where appropriate, cleared by other committees, specifically the Commerce Committee and the Banking Committee. Thirty-seven amendments. So that is now part of my substitute that is now before the Senate.

I would be very satisfied if the Senate adopted this amendment, and provided that it serve as additional text for purpose of further amendment. The two managers will work to clear additional amendments.

We need a path forward on this bill, and we don't have it now. We continue to work on an agreement to have votes on a number of nongermane amendments which the Republican caucus says they want. And our side, if they want amendments, we could have some nongermane amendments also. I would rather we disposed of the nongermane amendments, and I am thinking seriously of coming to the floor today and asking consent that we move forward on this bill with no irrelevant or nongermane amendments.

It is vital that we complete work on this surface transportation reauthorization bill. I am determined that the Senate will do so and do so as quickly as possible. Doing so will take cooperation from different Senators, so we

need to keep our eye on the road. We need to get this legislation passed. Saving or creating up to 2.8 million jobs is the destination of this path that we are seeking. Let's work together to get there as soon as possible.

ST. CROIX RIVER VALLEY BRIDGE

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. I come to the floor today on another topic; that is, to thank and congratulate the House of Representatives, which earlier handed a great victory to the people of Wisconsin and Minnesota by passing legislation that will finally allow construction to begin on a stronger, safer bridge in the St. Croix River Valley. After 30 years of debate and delay, we have finally gotten it done, and I am proud to say it was done with broad support in both Chambers.

The legislation I introduced in the Senate to allow this bridge to be built passed unanimously in January, and our Senate bill has passed the House today with the overwhelming backing of 339 Members, making the final vote count 339 to 80. This was truly a team effort, and it is an inspiring example of what we can accomplish when we are willing to put politics aside and come together to do what is right for the people we represent.

I thank my colleagues in the House for their hard work and dedication in moving this legislation forward: Representatives RON KIND, SEAN DUFFY, MICHELE BACHMANN, CHIP CRAVAACK, and TAMMY BALDWIN. I also thank Secretary Ray LaHood and his staff at the Department of Transportation, as well as Governors Mark Dayton and Scott Walker for their leadership at the State level.

In both Minnesota and Wisconsin, there is overwhelming consensus about the critical need for a new bridge in the St. Croix River Valley. There are sometimes disputes on what that bridge should look like, but there tends to be consensus that we simply can't have a lift bridge built in the 1930s, with 18,000 cars going over it. The current lift bridge was built in 1931. Chunks of rusting steel and concrete fall off and into the river below. Traffic backs up behind it, especially in the summer months, sometimes for a mile. Cars are lined up by houses, cars are lined up by businesses, and it is not a desirable situation for anyone in the town of Stillwater.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation has listed the bridge as being "structurally deficient" and "fracture critical," meaning if one component of the bridge fails, the entire structure fails. Simply put, the bridge cannot meet the needs of the region either in terms of public safety or in supporting traffic caused by a growing population.

As the bridge has aged, we have seen significant increases in congestion. This is an especially big problem in the summer months when the bridge lifts frequently to allow watercraft to pass, causing traffic to back up on both sides of the bridge, increasing gridlock and air pollution, hindering economic ac-

tivity, and threatening public safety, particularly when emergency vehicles are unable to pass through.

Here are the numbers: The current structure was designed to support 11,200 vehicles a day. It cannot handle the average of 18,400 cars that cross it every day, let alone anticipated increases in usage. But with this new bridge, 48,000 vehicles will be able to cross safely and efficiently every day. This is important from a public safety perspective, but it also means new channels for economic growth. Without a new bridge, anticipated usage would reach 23,500 by 2030. With a new bridge, anticipated usage will meet 43,000 vehicles per day. Those 20,000 additional vehicles will mean more opportunity for local industry and more customers for local businesses made possible by an infrastructure capable of supporting new growth and development.

When we look at the numbers, it is easy to see why my Senate legislation was able to pass not only the Senate without any opposition, but it is easy to see why the House passed the bill by such a wide bipartisan margin. We are less than an inch away from the finish line. Now we need the President of the United States to sign the bill.

I spoke with Secretary LaHood this morning. I don't anticipate there will be an issue. He was very positive about the bridge. But we need a prompt signature. The people of Minnesota and Wisconsin have already waited 30 years. They cannot afford to wait any longer. We cannot afford to delay. It is time to finally get this bridge done.

I, once again, thank all of my colleagues who worked hard to advance this bill. MICHELE BACHMANN in the House led the effort on the Minnesota side, and I led the effort in the Senate. I thank the other Senators who were so good to support this bill, including Senator FRANKEN, Senator KOHL, and Senator JOHNSON.

I look forward to standing with all of my colleagues when the President signs this bill into law. I look forward to standing with my colleagues again on that proud day in the near future when we finally break ground on a stronger, safer bridge for the St. Croix River Valley.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

PROGRESS FOR DEAMONTE DRIVER

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I come to the Senate floor to mark the fifth anniversary of Deamonte Driver's death. Deamonte was a 12-year-old who lived in Prince George's County, MD, only a few short miles from here. He died 5 years ago at the Children's National Medical Center in Washington, DC, from a brain infection caused by an untreated tooth abscess.

The Driver family, like many families across the country, lacked dental insurance. At one point his family had Medicaid coverage, but they lost it because they had moved into a temporary

shelter and their paperwork fell through the cracks. When advocates for the family tried to help, it took more than 20 calls just to find a dentist who would treat him.

Deamonte began to complain about headaches on January 11. Then, an evaluation at Children's Hospital led beyond basic dental care to emergency brain surgery. He later experienced seizures, and a second operation was required. Even though he received additional treatment and therapy, and he appeared to be recovering, medical intervention came too late. By the end of his treatment, the total cost to our health care system exceeded \$¼ million—more than 3,000 times the \$80 it would have cost for a tooth extraction.

Deamonte Driver passed away on Sunday, February 25, 2007. Deamonte's death was a national tragedy. It was a tragedy because it could have been prevented if he had received timely and proper basic dental care. It was a tragedy because it happened right here in the United States, in one of the most affluent States in the Nation. It happened in a State with one of the best dental schools in the Nation—the University of Maryland's. It happened in Prince George's County, whose border is less than 6 miles from where we are standing in the U.S. Capitol.

I have spoken on the Senate floor about Deamonte Driver several times since that tragedy, and in the intervening years, in both my home State of Maryland and nationally, we have made progress. When Deamonte's case was brought to light, I believe it served as a wake-up call for our Nation. It brought home what former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop once said: "There is no health without oral health."

Medical researchers have discovered the nexus between tooth plaque and heart disease, that chewing stimulates brain cell growth, and that gum disease can signal diabetes, liver ailments, and hormone imbalances. They have identified the vital connection between oral health research and advanced treatments such as gene therapy, which can help patients with chronic renal failure. They know investing in basic dental care can save money down the road in costly medical interventions for other diseases.

But for all the research findings, without insurance coverage and adequate access to providers, we know millions of children and adults will have oral health care needs that remain unmet. That is why the progress we have made over the past 5 years is so important to America's health. So I have come to the floor today to talk about what we have achieved and how we can move forward as a nation to ensure better access to oral health care.

The Maryland delegation is proud that Maryland has emerged as a national leader in this area, launching a \$1.2 million oral health literacy campaign, raising Medicaid reimbursement rates for dentists, and providing some

allied health professionals and hygienists the opportunity to practice outside of clinics. Today, the Deamonte Driver Dental Project Van, which was dedicated in front of the U.S. Capitol in May 2010 provides services in underserved neighborhoods in Prince George's County, thanks to the efforts launched by members of the Robert T. Freeman Dental Society. This society, an arm of the National Dental Association, is named for Dr. Robert Tanner Freeman, who in 1869 became the first Black graduate of the Harvard School of Dental Medicine.

Congressman ELIJAH CUMMINGS and I were joined that day by Mrs. Alyce Driver and her sons; the project's cofounders Drs. Hazel Harper and Belinda Carver-Taylor; and the National Dental Association President, Dr. Walter Owens.

In 2009, 2 years after Deamonte's death, Congress took up the reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program. In a frustrating attempt to locate a dentist for her child, Deamonte Driver's mother and her advocates had to contact numerous offices before locating one who would treat him.

For a variety of reasons, it is difficult for Medicaid and CHIP enrollees to find dental care, and working parents whose children qualify for those programs are likely to be employed at jobs where they can't spend 2 hours a day on the phone to find a provider. So part of the CHIP reauthorization now requires HHS to include on its Insure Kids Now Web site a list of participating dentists and benefit information for all 50 States and the District of Columbia.

Also, in 2009, Congress passed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act. That law created the Healthy Futures Corps, which provides grants to the States and nonprofit organizations so they can fund national service in low-income communities. It will allow us to put into action tools that can help us close the gap in health status—prevention and health promotion. For too long we have acknowledged health disparities, studied them, and written reports about them. With the help of the senior Senator from Maryland, my colleague, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, we added language to that law specifying oral health as an area of focus.

Now the Healthy Futures Corps can help recruit young people to work in the dental profession, where they can serve in areas that we have shortages of providers in urban and rural areas. It will fund the work of individuals who can help parents find available oral health services for themselves and their children. It will make a difference in the lives of the Healthy Futures Corps members who will work in underserved communities and in the lives and health of those who get improved access to care.

Then, in 2010, we passed the Affordable Care Act which guarantees pediatric oral health care as part of each

State's essential benefit health care package. The law also establishes an oral health care prevention education program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention targeted toward key populations, including children and pregnant women, and it created demonstration programs to encourage innovation in oral health delivery. It also significantly expanded workforce training programs for oral health professionals.

Moving forward, the States have a critical role to play in ensuring that the Affordable Care Act benefit is designed to incentivize prevention, recognize that some children have greater risks of dental disease than others, and deliver care based on their level of risk. Among the most cost-effective ways to improve children's health care are investments in prevention. Dental sealants—clear plastic coatings applied to the chewing surfaces of molars—have been proven to prevent 60 percent of tooth decay at one-third the cost of filling a cavity. So we must make sure prevention is a key part of every State's benefit package.

Further, in 2010, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services launched its oral health initiative, establishing a coordinated multiagency effort to improve access to care across the Nation.

Yet for all the progress we have made, we know more must be done. In 2009, the last year for which we have complete data that is available, more than 16 million American children went without dental care. That is not acceptable.

Our Nation has made significant progress in improving children's dental care in the 5 years since the death of Deamonte Driver, but there is still much work to be done.

Case in point: Last summer, 24-year-old Kyle Willis of Ohio died from an untreated tooth infection that spread to his brain. In fact, the health of millions of Americans is jeopardized because they cannot get treatment for tooth decay.

The access problem has become so severe that many people are forced to seek treatment for tooth pain in the Nation's emergency rooms, increasing the overall cost of health care and receiving uncoordinated care in the least cost-efficient setting. In fact, more people seek treatment in emergency rooms for tooth pain than they do for asthma.

The Pew Children's Dental Campaign produces report cards that grade the States on eight policies that are evidence-based solutions to the problem of tooth decay.

Maryland received an A grade in both reports for meeting or exceeding these benchmarks, which include dental sealant programs, community water fluoridation, Medicaid reimbursement and enrollment, and collection of data on children's dental health.

This is even more striking because in the late 1990s, Maryland had one of the

worst records in the Nation regarding oral health care for its underserved population. But in 2011, the Pew Center on the States ranked Maryland as the top State in the country for oral health.

However, the access issues remain. As Mrs. Driver's efforts to find care for her son showed, low-income families have great difficulty obtaining care due to a shortage of dentists willing to treat Medicaid patients.

Nationally, the National Health Service Corps addresses the nationwide shortage of primary care oral health providers in dental health professional shortage areas by offering incentives in the form of scholarships and loan repayments to primary care dentists and registered dental hygienists to practice in underserved communities.

I will continue to work to increase funding for grants to States and expand training opportunities for dentists. We do not have enough professionals who are trained and available to treat children and adults with dental problems, and it is our responsibility to fix that. We must improve reimbursement to dental providers in offices and clinics so no one who needs dental treatment will be turned away.

I conclude my remarks with congratulatory wishes to Mrs. Alyce Driver. For as painful as Deamonte's passing was for all of us, nothing can compare to the loss of one's own child. Yet Mrs. Driver has worked hard and she has been awarded a dental tech degree. She is now out there helping others with dental care. She will be going back to school next month to receive training in radiology. Yes, in Maryland and throughout the Nation, there are signs of hope for the future of oral health care.

February is National Children's Dental Health Month, and I wish to express my appreciation to the many nonprofit organizations, universities, and providers who are also working across the Nation to make sure we will never forget Deamonte Driver and never forget our responsibility to improving oral health care for America's children.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

GAS PRICES

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor to talk about something that is on the minds of people in my home State of Wyoming and people across the country, the high cost of

gasoline. When I filled up on Sunday evening in Wyoming and on Monday morning on the way to the airport I noticed that the price of gasoline in Wyoming was 10 cents higher per gallon than it was Sunday night when I filled the tank. I am heading back this weekend, later today, to Wyoming, and we will see what the cost of a gallon of gasoline will be. I know absolutely that the price of diesel fuel is much higher, almost by a dollar a gallon, than the price of regular unleaded gasoline.

I think it is something that is happening all across the country because even in this morning's New York Times, Thursday, March 1, 2012, on the front page, a headline reads "Tensions Raise Specter of Gas At \$5 a Gallon." That is on the front page of the New York Times. It says, "Gasoline for \$5 a gallon? The possibility is hardly far-fetched."

It goes on to say:

With no clear end to tensions with Iran and Syria and rising demand from countries like China, gas prices are already at record highs for the winter months—averaging \$4.32 in California and \$3.73 a gallon nationally on Wednesday, according to the AAA's Daily Fuel Gauge Report. As summer approaches, demand for gasoline rises, typically pushing prices up.

Again, "no clear end to tensions in Iran and Syria and rising demand from countries like China. . . ."

It is interesting because, obviously, China is the country that told the Prime Minister from Canada recently: We will buy all that extra oil you have that apparently the President of the United States isn't interested in, as he continues to block the Keystone XL Pipeline.

That is what the American public is facing today, rising prices and an administration that continues to block access to an important source of safe, secure energy, as opposed to sending so much money overseas. Here we are with high gasoline prices, which is continuing to cause additional hardship for American families and American businesses. When families pay more at the pump, it impacts the quality of their lives. Families are dealing with mortgages, goods and services, and their kids as they continue to see the money going to fill the tank. This also hurts economic growth and our ability to create jobs.

When companies pay more for gasoline, they have less money to expand their businesses and create new jobs. Wyoming families and businesses know this all too well because in Wyoming we drive longer distances than most Americans. The President also knows this impacts the economy. That is why he continues to give speeches on energy.

It is clear the President is defensive on this issue, and it is understandable because the average price of gasoline, regular unleaded, the day he became President—today it is 103 percent higher, over double what it was the day President Obama took office just 3 years ago. Again, the price of gasoline

is 103 percent higher than the day the President took office.

There are a lot of factors at play. What this does show is that the President's policies are at best ineffectual; at worst they are contributing to the higher gas prices. People on both sides of the aisle know this and are hearing it at home. This week, actually, one Senate Democrat wrote to the Obama administration and pointed this out. Specifically, he pointed out that these are "the highest prices we have ever seen for this time of year."

Unfortunately, that Senate Democrat's solution is to request that Saudi Arabia produce more oil. I will repeat that. His solution is to have the Secretary of State ask Saudi Arabia to produce more oil.

Of course, the President is also considering other proposals as well. Like asking Saudi Arabia to produce more oil, the President's ideas would put national security at risk. There I am referring to the President's threat to tap the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. This will be the second time that President Obama has tapped the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Prior to the President's decision to do that last June, it had only been tapped twice for emergencies since 1975. So between 1975 and 2011, the Strategic Petroleum Reserve had only been tapped twice for emergencies—in 1991 upon the outbreak of the Persian Gulf war and then again more recently following Hurricane Katrina.

In both of these instances we are talking about actual supply disruption. However, when President Obama tapped the Reserve last year, there was no substantial prospect of a supply disruption. The decision was based on politics, as would be the decision this time. That is why Jay Leno, earlier this week during his nightly television show, called the Strategic Petroleum Reserve President Obama's strategic "reelection" reserve.

A number of my colleagues and I think there are other ways to address high gasoline prices. We understand the Strategic Petroleum Reserve is for emergencies, not political disasters.

It is interesting because just earlier today, the House minority leader NANCY PELOSI endorsed tapping the Strategic Petroleum Reserve—not because of an emergency or a crisis or supply disruption, but she says "to combat rising gas prices."

There is only so much oil in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. The amount that was taken last year was never put back in to fill the tank. The amount taken out last year was sold. If we use that money to fill the tank, it is not enough—almost \$1 billion more this year to fill the tank than what they got for selling what they took out last year.

So we have a tank at the Strategic Petroleum Reserve that is not full, still waiting to be filled from what was taken from it last year. Now, here we are a year later, and the President, as well as NANCY PELOSI, is considering

tapping the Strategic Petroleum Reserve again, drawing it down again, making us that much more vulnerable in case of a true emergency.

The President actually has some options that make a lot of sense to a lot of Americans. An option, of course, is to increase American energy production. The President can begin to follow through on his words in Miami a week or so ago, when he said, "I'll do whatever I can to develop every source of American energy."

The President can provide more access to Federal lands and waters. This week we learned the oil and gas production on Federal public lands and public waters is down. In 2011 there was a 14-percent decrease in oil production on public lands and water from 2010—less energy produced in Federal lands and waters. There was an 11-percent decrease in gas production from 2010.

In Miami, the President said he has "directed my administration to look at every single area where we can make an impact and help consumers in the months ahead, [including] permitting. . . ."

Again, the President needs to follow through on his words. He can begin by increasing the number of permits issued for development in the Gulf of Mexico. I understand that the administration has issued only 21 permits so far this year. In 2010 the administration issued 32 permits by this time.

The President can also increase access to other offshore areas. He can provide access to offshore areas in the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans, not just the Gulf of Mexico. In November he proposed an offshore leasing plan that excluded the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. What kind of offshore leasing plan is that? The President excluded areas off the coast of Virginia, even though both Senators and the Governor of Virginia supported such energy exploration. The President said no.

The President can also increase access to onshore areas. The President can open areas in Alaska, and he can support proposals to open ANWR. Both Senators from Alaska—one Republican and one Democrat—and the Governor strongly support opening ANWR for exploration. The President should too. The President should also take steps to facilitate onshore exploration in the West. Specifically, he should scrap new regulations requiring what is called "master leasing and development plans."

These regulations were put into place over 2 years ago by the Secretary of the Interior. It is unclear why the Secretary issued such regulations. They add more redtape and cause more bureaucratic delay and slow down American energy production.

Of course, there are other regulations that drive up the cost of American energy—specifically, the EPA's forthcoming tier III regulations which will affect America's refineries. A recent study says this rule could increase the

cost of manufacturing gasoline, which will add to what Americans are paying at the pump and will add to the pain at the pump. They could also raise operating costs for refineries by anywhere from \$5 billion to \$13 billion a year. They could force as many as seven U.S. refineries to shut down and could lead to a 7- to 14-percent reduction in gasoline supplies for American refineries. These policies, by this administration, are completely unacceptable. The President should, at the very least, delay the issuance of this current rule.

In addition to providing more access to Federal lands and Federal waters and eliminating burdensome regulations, the President should follow through on his words—his words—and address what he called delivery bottlenecks. Specifically, he should address the bottlenecks the Keystone XL Pipeline would relieve. I am referring to 100,000 barrels of oil a day that the pipeline would be able to ship from Montana and North Dakota.

That is right; we are talking about homegrown American energy. Of course, the President ought to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline coming in from Canada. It is North American oil from Canada but specific and significant amounts of oil—100,000 barrels a day—from Montana and North Dakota. Right now, there isn't sufficient pipeline capacity out of North Dakota and Montana. They are shipping the oil on trucks and trains, and that is much more expensive than shipping it by pipeline. Approving the Keystone XL Pipeline is an easy decision and the President should make this decision immediately.

It was interesting today to see in *Politico*—one of the local papers on Capitol Hill—an article quoting Bill Clinton as saying, "We should embrace" the Keystone XL. The first sentence of the article says:

Bill Clinton says it is time to build the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Perhaps President Obama ought to listen to President Clinton.

Finally, the President says there are no silver bullets. That doesn't mean the President should sit on the sidelines. It doesn't mean his only options are asking Saudi Arabia to boost production or opening the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. The President needs to promote American energy production. He can eliminate costly regulations and he can approve the Keystone XL Pipeline. Those are the steps the President needs to take, and he needs to do that in the very near future because I believe we are going to continue to see headlines such as the one in today's *New York Times*: "Tensions Raise Specter of Gas at \$5 a Gallon."

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEATH OF MARIE COLVIN IN SYRIA

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, Marie Colvin died last week, Wednesday, in Syria. As I speak, her body is still in Homs because the Assad regime refuses to honor the centuries-old tradition of human decency that even in war you are allowed to recover your dead.

An American official in a position to know about the circumstances of her death has used with me the word "murder," and this is not an official who uses such words loosely. News reports have suggested Marie was targeted using her cell phone signals. Why was she killed? Marie once said: "Covering a war means going to places torn by chaos, destruction, and death, and trying to bear witness."

She was killed because she was doing what she was passionate about and what her gift was; that is, to bear witness.

Marie was in Syria to bear witness to the massacre of the innocent in the city of Homs by the Assad regime. Her last report to the BBC was of a baby killed by shrapnel, dying in its mother's arms. That baby had no voice and that mother had no voice, but Marie was there. She was there making sure the dead did not die unheralded and the killers did not escape unwatched. She was there so they wouldn't get away with it. She was there to bear witness.

The dictionary tells us that to bear witness means "to see, to be present at, or know at firsthand." It means to "testify." It means "to show by your existence that something is true."

This was Marie. Over and over she put herself in harm's way as she followed her calling to bear witness to the atrocities of our world.

In Sri Lanka's brutal conflict, she was hit by the explosion of a rocket-propelled grenade, and in addition to other injuries, she lost sight in one eye. She was shot at that day after calling out, "I'm a journalist."

In the Balkans and Chechnya, at Libya and around the world, she went to bear witness to suffering and corruption. I think she spent more time on the ground in Libya than any other Western correspondent.

Marie was proud of this work, saying:

We can and do make a difference in exposing the horrors of war and especially the atrocities that befall civilians.

Sometimes she managed to do more than just expose atrocities. In East Timor, she went to bear witness to the massacres. When the U.N. threatened to pull out of a base, leaving local employees and those sheltering there to the mercies of the massacre, Marie announced, "I'm staying with them."

That created a new predicament for the U.N. leadership, and faced with Marie's courage, they decided to stay. Massacre averted.

Marie was special. Her friends all knew it. Her colleagues knew it. The people who were trapped in the wars

and conflicts she covered and who saw her there, sharing their risks and their suffering, and who knew someone would bear witness knew it. The Bible talks of bearing witness. It tells that John the Baptist "came as a witness, to bear witness about the Light, that all might believe through him."

There is a parallel. Marie went as a witness. She went to bear witness in the places cloaked in darkness, that we all might perceive through her. With her death, it is our turn to bear witness. Marie Colvin had a calling, and it is our turn to bear witness to the courage and the passion of that calling. It is our time to bear witness to the grace and humor and brains and skill with which Marie Colvin pursued that calling. It is worth noting Marie did this all with style. I don't think Marie would want the record to fail to reflect that she had style.

There has been an outpouring since the news of Marie's death spread around the world. From heads of state, famous writers, press celebrities, from old friends and colleagues, and from those whose praise she valued the most, the small band of brothers and sisters who practiced the dangerous craft of conflict journalism, there has been a torrent of grief and praise. I have culled from this torrent a collection of remembrances, reflections, tributes, and obituaries about Marie that I now ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Yale Daily News, Feb. 23, 2012]
FROM THE ARCHIVES: COLVIN '78 RELECTS ON
YALE CAREER

(By Marie Colvin)

The piece below, titled "Running out of time," was written by Marie Colvin '78 for the special issue of the News handed out at Commencement 1978. Colvin, a seasoned war correspondent, was killed by a mortar strike on Wednesday while covering the escalating violence in the city of Homs.

The most memorable event of my Yale career occurred in the dining hall. At Silliman lunch last week, I was eating and commiserating with a group of fellow seniors, slapping happy at the thought of all the work to be done in the last week of term. Everyone had a how-to story, the kind that only circulates at finals time, like the one about the student who handed in a bluebook with "IV" written on the cover, inscribed with one sentence on the first page: "and that's the way it was in seventeenth century England," and received a final grade of "B" from some T.A.; talk about surefire dean's excuses and where to catch a quick 24-hour bug, always good for a night at DUH.

At a pause in the conversation, during which I flashed on the twelve pages per day I'd have to write for the next week, a friend next to me sighed and said profoundly, "There's just not enough time." It came out of the blue, but it was the most relevant non-sequitur ever uttered.

It sums up my Yale career. I've spent the last weeks of every semester holed up in the Sillibrary, coffeepot by my side, moving from one stack of books and clutter of papers to the next like a guest at the Mad Hatter's Tea Party. The last week of my senior year I was there again, drinking coffee by the pot,

sleeping two hours nightly, marshaling enough credits to graduate.

That's why I wasn't a varsity athlete, or an editor of the Oldest College Daily, why every room I've ever lived in has been almost furnished. It's why my papers come back marked "good potential, inadequately realized." And it's why I can't tell you what it feels like to be finished with Yale, whether it's euphoric or just anti-climatic, because I'm not, and by the time I am everyone will have left and I won't even be able to ask anyone.

It takes everybody but the football team four years to realize that there is no way to do the work expected of you, that teachers and deans don't really expect you to do it all and that the real test of intelligence is to do the minimum amount of work for the maximum reward. The football team somehow learns freshman year what it takes everyone else three years (it took me four). The most important things to look for when choosing a course are not relevancy to future career, interesting subject, or something you should know. Number of papers and pages per paper, number of exams, and Course Critique grade point spread are all you need to look for. And if the football team shows up for the first lecture, you've chosen correctly.

The finer points of course selection involve arranging enough of a workload so that when you do go out to Rudy's, Mory's, or the Elizabethan Club for tea you can feel a twinge of guilt. And so that you can participate in end-of-semester-conversations.

The worst thing about graduating is that I can't remember what I did all semester. I thought I was working, but that seems impossible. I've started promoting the theory that Yale is centered in a time warp. Time doesn't just seem to pass twice as fast, it does. We have only one week to the universal two.

I haven't accepted the fact that I am not going to do everything I kept putting off. I am not graduating Phi Beta Kappa, I don't have 48 credits and 47 A's, I will never read the bookcase of course books diligently bought in the Co-op, lined up neatly with their binders unwrinkled. I will not paint the fourth wall in my bedroom. I will probably never even find out the name of that curly-haired boy in my English seminar I've been flirting with all year.

It's hard to say even what I've learned here. I don't think I've finished adjusting yet. I have nothing striking to say about anything and it seems like I should. I've changed from a regular science major to a science major who only takes English courses (there was no time to change majors), learned about weenies, jocks, and turned-up collars, learned how to run, not fast but far enough to enjoy the sweat, learned how to do footnotes. Unlearned a lot too—like weenies and jocks don't exist and that turned-up collar means zilch. And I've learned how ridiculous it is to try to convince people that you are serious about something, that you have a direction. Best of all, I missed all the deadlines—LSAT, GRE, scholarships, grants, and fellowships—not enough time—so I guess I'll wake up Tuesday morning and start thinking about it. Or else just buy a plane ticket.

The one realization I have come to after four years is that I can still make all the mistakes I want and it doesn't matter. I remind myself of this often, whenever I feel the "let's get serious mood" coming on, or I lunch with law-business-medical school prospectives, or read an article about shopping bag ladies in the New York subway system. Not that there's anything at all wrong with going to law-business-medical school, but enough people stick up for it, and that's not the point anyway.

The point is that it doesn't matter if you mess up, choose the wrong road, flop in Vegas. What's important is to throw yourself in head first, to "go for the gusto." And if you blow it, you blow it. What we have to worry about now is success. Once you're successful, it becomes embarrassing to make mistakes, and more difficult to grab onto the nearest straw and hold on. You can always be a star, so what's the rush?

MARIE COLVIN—THE NATURAL

(By Allison Silver)

I have been reading all day about Marie Colvin, the terrific London Sunday Times foreign correspondent who was killed Wednesday in Syria. David Remnick wrote a lovely piece about her. It captures her coolness and professionalism.

Marie was a remarkable writer—and person. Talented and persistent: An unbeatable combo.

I knew her back at Yale, and she often cited me as the person who started her writing. And I think I was. Her mother, Rosemarie Colvin, described Wednesday how her daughter had decided to be a journalist back when she was writing for *The Yale Daily News*.

I was an editor on the Yale Daily when Marie was in a seminar with me. She was funny and savvy and amazing looking. Tall and slim, with a baby face surrounded by masses of black corkscrew curls. Her best friend was equally tall—and they stood out on campus.

She hung out with all the campus "writers"—who took prestigious writing classes but wouldn't deign to take part in the hurly-burly of daily campus journalism. They were serious writers—and serious partiers. I knew most of them—but her least of all. She was not quite regarded as a "writer," like they were.

In that class, I realized Marie had a clear, clean talent for writing. So I kept on her to write for me at the *News*. She started doing longer reported feature pieces—and thrived.

I could see she was jazzed by the process of reporting. She had started off insisting that she was not the writer of the group. And I kept saying to her you can do this. So do it! And she did. She was a natural.

With all that persistence, of course she pursued it and went on to serious international reporting. I remember, back in the 90s I think, she was one of the elite Middle East reporters who attained an interview with Qadhafi—a feat she pulled off again recently.

Meanwhile, I'm still a desk jockey. As my career took me to Los Angeles, New York and DC, she was reporting from hot spots around the globe. I rarely saw her, which is something I will always regret. But whenever I ran into her, we talked about Yale and our varied paths from there.

She lived the life she wanted to. And that is to be admired.

TRIBUTE TO MARIE COLVIN

(By Gerald Weaver)

Marie Colvin sat across the table from me in the kitchen of her Thames-side home in the Hammersmith neighborhood of London on October 18, 2011, as she looked me in the eye and gave me a completely unexpected answer to a question I had long planned to ask her. "So, Marie, do you have some kind of a death wish or something?" I had asked, waiting and watching her intently. I had expected that she maybe she would react a bit too defensively or that she might have otherwise partially admitted to the premise of the question. But I realized immediately that it had been the quintessential stupid question. The gist of her answer was that

these were normal people who were being attacked, bombed, uprooted and murdered in the stories she was uncovering and reporting. The normal people who would read her reports should have a normal reaction to them, she said. And by that, she meant they should be appalled and horrified. So for Marie it was merely normal to pick up and go find the most terrible story that no other reporter would cover and then report it as a matter of fact. The danger simply did not occur to her. She neither feared nor courted it. As I listened to her, I heard the word "human" for the word "normal."

She also had no interest in romanticizing or aggrandizing what it was that she did in her work. She used to laugh it off when I would call her "the distaff Ernest Hemingway of Great Britain." I was in London those four months ago at her urging, because I had just written the first three chapters of a novel that I had only started and only because she had urged me to write it, and which I have only recently completed with her encouragement and through her help. She then started talking to me about us contacting literary agents in London that she knew and it occurred to me ask her when she was going to write her own book about her very interesting, exciting and inspiring life. I knew that the possibility of such a book would be why agents would have wanted to court her. She only laughed and suggested that maybe I should write her book. She was only interested in reporting, not in making herself the story. She was in her life and in her death utterly heroic, but she would have been the last person to think that or to want to even talk about it.

Marie also had that same good natured disinterest when it came to politics, or to her more difficult role as a woman in her profession, or to moving about in a part of the world that was not particularly easy for a woman. For the almost forty years that I knew her, she only ever addressed politics obliquely. I always assumed she was a liberal. But it was more than that and it was much different. She was, through her work and her life, a liberalizing force within the world. She hoped to speak to a better part within us all that she felt simply must empathize with the least fortunate, the terrorized, the forgotten and the innocents who are under attack. And when she called me on her satellite phone one night this past December, it was only in passing that she mentioned how she had been chased through Tahrir Square on the same night that many women had been assaulted there. And even then she only spoke of her gratitude to the Egyptians who had saved her and not of the special dangers to her as a woman.

She used to always apologize for often being out of touch, for answering with one phone call three or four weeks of daily emails, for disappearing for weeks or months on end. I have no doubt that for many of us who were even her closest friends that her columns in the Sunday Times were perhaps the most reliable way for us to hear her voice and know what was on her mind. It was almost as if she was expressing her worry that her relationships were like her politics or what she might say about her work or what it meant to her to be a woman war correspondent. They came after her need to tell the story. My best insight into this came the day after I had asked my stupid question, on October 19, 2011, the day it was reported that Muammar Gaddafi had been killed.

I watched her at her home in that morning as she accomplished what would have taken anyone else several days. She juggled several phones, gave an interview to National Public Radio, made calls in English and French to

make arrangements for two separate clandestine border crossings, made flight arrangements, coordinated with other reporters, communicated with her office, dug up leads, tracked down reports. And that was all the while she was packing and gathering up several different phones and communications uplinks, taking deliveries at the front door, and pulling out her helmet, her flak jacket and all her other protective gear, which was all marked, "Marie Colvin, O +," for her blood type. She laughed about that too, and all the time she was apologizing for cutting our visit short. She was generous to a fault and she showed her idiosyncratic disinterest when it came to compliments. And when I pitched in and helped her prepare to leave in what limited ways I could, she was surprised by it and slightly embarrassed.

But what I noticed that morning has stuck with me now that she is gone. There can be no doubt of the magnitude of the loss that is encompassed by her death, personally to her family and friends, professionally in the realm of journalism, and even to the world in what has been lost in the reporting of stories that are the most harrowing and dangerous to reporters and perhaps the most important for the rest of us to know. When I read what has been written and what I write about her passing, and even when I read what has been reported about what Marie herself had said about the importance of reporting these stories, I realize that all of it is true but that all of it is necessarily a reduction of what she actually was. That morning she was incredibly alive with a passion to get to the story and to tell it. And she was filled with what can only be called joy. In all the moods and stages of her life in which I had witnessed her, at that moment of going to cover the story she was the most of who she really was, and she was at one with it.

She was a tirelessly brave and compassionate female war correspondent, true. But to me she really was what few people ever get the opportunity to be and what almost none of us have the will to be. She was a free artist of herself and of her life. Her commanding if almost sole interest was in being our eyes and ears in places where most people would be afraid to look or to go. I think the joy I saw in her was that she knew how rare such a life can be, and that she was fortunate to be living it. That is the small personal consolation that I draw from her death. It would be tremendous if something positive would come out of it in terms of expediting the end of the massacre in Syria, but I believe that is something even she would not have expected and would have been something for which she had only hoped. The possible larger consolation would be to the way in which her death might speak, in the same way that her life and her reporting had, to that part of us that should care for the world's innocent and obscure victims. And I also hope that it might speak to some others who might be inspired to go in her wake and report those same kinds of stories to the world, and do so regardless of the personal risk and do it heroically, as did my friend, Marie Colvin.

FOR MARIE COLVIN
(By Katrina Heron)

I've spent my adult life refusing to envision an obituary for Marie. I planned with all my conscious powers never to read one, and I promised myself that I would never have to write one. Along with her family and her great caravan of other friends, I celebrated Marie's determination to put herself in harm's way, to "bear witness" as a foreign correspondent in so many parts of the world—Lebanon, Libya, Israel, the Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank,

Chechnya, Sri Lanka, East Timor, Iraq—and waited each time she went out on assignment, fretting, for her to signal the all-clear. "Will call when I'm outta here," she would write as she filed her last story from the danger zone.

From our mid-20s until yesterday, that fragile insistence of mine mostly held. There were terrifying moments, and Marie was gravely wounded in 2001; caught in a firefight in Sri Lanka, she lost sight in one eye and nearly died from shrapnel wounds. But she survived, and when she arrived back in New York, we went together to interview ophthalmological surgeons (waving away, regretfully, the very handsome young doctor who eagerly auditioned with his grasp of geopolitics), shopped for eye patches and drank quite a lot of Champagne. I didn't stop worrying after that, but my hope swelled to a greater confidence. Marie took the greatest possible precautions in conflict areas, so far from rash or merely impulsive that other journalists often looked to her for guidance on the risk calculus of a given situation. She focused on bringing back the story and didn't dwell personally on the dire circumstances in which she found herself except insofar as they served her formidable powers of description and, often, hilarity.

I look back over the last year or so of scattered emails, sitting there innocently in the queue. She wrote last June: "I am STILL in Misrata, Libya, and the ever brutal Gadaffi is ruining any chance of a social life or indeed a life by selfishly refusing to Go. Despite all the graffiti on walls here giving excellent advice, 'Just Go!'"

I had one of my best offers ever today. A rebel fighter on the front ambled over, on his break from firing, so to speak, and said, "Hey, do you want to shoot the mortar?" It is definitely a sign that I may have been here too long because I REALLY WANTED TO SHOOT THE MORTAR. I mean, when will I ever get a chance to shoot a mortar again?"

A couple of days later: "I am sitting in the gloaming on the stern of a Turkish boat in Misrata harbor, looking out over an ugly seascape of cranes and broken concrete and blasted buildings from months of bombing. I am finally homeward bound, a day's journey to Benghazi, a few days in the rebel capital for a story then an overnight drive to Cairo. It gives one respect for travel, having to run the spectrum of transport. It will be strange coming out of this world that, however mad, has a simplicity to it of sand and courage and bombs and sleep and canned tuna and a few shirts, washed out in a bowl when the dust threatens to take over."

A bit farther on, there's an invitation to connect with her on LinkedIn, which prompted some hazing about whether she was trying to beat the rap on her famously abysmal grasp of basic networking technology (she used a satellite phone but was flummoxed by her iPhone). In truth, she was a technical wizard of a different sort, a skilled sailor who had done a lot of deep-water racing and had recently, proudly, earned her yachtmaster qualification. She grew up sailing in Long Island Sound, and the loss of vision had slowed her down not a bit.

There's a quick back and forth toward fall on a subject we talked about often by phone and during our last couple of visits—me going to London, where she lived, or her coming to California, where I am. She kept saying she wanted to spend less time in the Middle East and more time at home—and on the ocean. She had briefly tried a desk job at her paper, the *Times* of London, but of course it drove her nuts. Still, the job was getting more perilous. Tim Hetherington, the photojournalist killed in Misrata in April 2011, had been very generously helping

me on a book I was editing about Liberia, where he'd spent a good deal of time. Marie knew about the project and had written me: "Weirdly, I went by the place today where Tim and [photographer] Chris Hondros were killed. A shiver of mortality. The forecourt of the car repair shop still bears the mark of the mortar shell that killed them, and a starburst of chips in the concrete where the metal flew out as shrapnel."

Around Thanksgiving, the messages trail off for a bit, as they often did. But even when I didn't know exactly where she was, I didn't worry desperately. I was used to periods of silence, plus there was a group of us that always passed around bits of her itinerary. Sightings by other journalists would filter back or someone would see her on CNN or hear her on NPR. She knew she could call day or night, and I could always reach at least her voice—I was thinking tonight that her cell is probably still on, with its years-old, soft and slightly lilting greeting. But I couldn't bear to hear it now so I won't try. Christmas Day she there in my inbox, brief but joyful.

A couple of weeks ago, Marie wrote that she was going to Syria. I think her colleagues were uneasy, and I know now that several of our friends tried to talk her out of it. I felt fairly calm, which just goes to show you how great is the power of willful optimism. In the last email I have from her, she wrote: "I am now in Beirut, negotiating with smugglers to get me across the border. After six weeks in Libya this year, under shelling and that low level of anxiety every day brings, I had said I'll do a bit less of the hot spots, but what is happening in Syria, especially Homs, is criminal, so I am once again, knapsack on back with my satellite phone and computer, clambering across a dark border."

I was fast asleep in my bed in Berkeley yesterday when Marie was killed in Homs. I woke up to what the world was learning—that the house she and several others were camping out in had been hit by rockets; that with Marie in the lead, the group had just run down the stairs to the front door when a blast obliterated the entryway; that a 28-year-old French photographer, Remi Ochlik, also died, and three others were wounded. Right now, all of us are panicked about the condition of the injured journalists, not knowing whether rescue workers will be allowed in to Homs to get them. It brings me back to those frantic, terrible hours in 2001 when all we knew was that Marie was wounded in Sri Lanka and had yet to be evacuated.

I have been walking around all day talking to her, asking her dumbly where she is. Ever since we first met and became roommates in college, we've been inseparable in one way or another. In that same last email she said we should charter a boat this summer—sail merrily to the ends of the earth: "More when I am back from Syria. I love you very much."

The phones and email and all the rest have been humming with misery, and with Marie's love. So many wonderful people adored her and she them that I've been swathed in stunned, overflowing warmth all day. At the same time, it's impossible to believe she's dead, but then I'm scared of the moment when it will be impossible not to.

Further tributes to Marie Colvin can be found at <http://whitehouse.senate.gov/>.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. On behalf of a group of old friends who are stricken by her loss, I offer this in affection, in appreciation, and in memorandum.

Marie's mother, Rosemarie Colvin, said of Marie:

Her legacy is: be passionate and be involved in what you believe in. And do it as

thoroughly and honestly and fearlessly as you can.

Indeed.

With those words, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I did not know Marie personally, as my friend and colleague from Rhode Island did. But his words, his passion, his emotion allow us all to know her a little bit better.

Even just reading the newspaper accounts, she was a remarkable person. But hearing from SHELDON, both here and speaking to him privately, it is obvious that those who knew Marie were privileged and were touched by her life long before her untimely death. She leaves an amazing mark.

I just wish to say to my colleague SHELDON, there are times that measure the mettle of a person and one of them is when they go through grief and tragedy. My respect for him, as high as it was before, is higher still knowing what he is going through and how he has worked to handle this difficult situation.

I rise simply as a New York Senator who represents the area, Long Island, where Marie Catherine Colvin came from. We are working—SHELDON above all—desperately, to bring her home to her mother Rosemarie, so her family can provide her with a final resting place, providing her with the dignity she deserves.

Marie had a remarkable career. It is no doubt that not only, as SHELDON said, the small band of journalists but many larger than that and anyone she knew will mourn her death for years to come because we have not just lost a daring journalist, but we also have lost a humanitarian, one who took her abilities as an investigator and a storyteller to speak for the voiceless. It is clear from SHELDON's remarks and from reading the biographical accounts and her obituary that this was a woman of both courage and passion who managed to sort of weave the two into an amazing life where she served so many.

Marie grew up on Long Island, attended Oyster Bay High School, and of course, as we know from what SHELDON has said, went on to study at Yale. She studied anthropology. She moved to New York City, worked as a UPI police reporter on the midnight to 6 a.m. shift. That is the time when most crimes occur. That is the times in the dark, particularly in those days in New York City, to be a journalist was difficult. It took courage. But even then, Colvin didn't shy away from tough jobs.

She worked her way up, moving to Paris and later to work for the UK's Sunday Times and became their Middle East correspondent in 1968. She has been doing this kind of dangerous and important work that inevitably and inexorably saved lives for so many years, 27 years. Colvin focused on years when the Middle East was not calm. It hasn't

been the warmest climate for women and certainly was not an area for the weak of heart. But she didn't just stay for a year or two. She stayed at the front, and after each conflict ended, she went to the next one because I think she knew—and, again, SHELDON would know this much better than I. But just reading about her, she knew her talents were unique; that there wasn't anybody else who might fill those gaps and be able to do the kind of reporting that might bring change. So she followed the conflicts in Chechnya and the Balkans, East Timor, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe. She was not just in the Middle East. She was there.

For those who cannot instantly remember some of her coverage, I am sure they remember her eye patch. This is from her work in Sri Lanka, where she defied a government ban on journalists' access, traveled over 30 miles through the Vanni jungles to report on the terrible war crimes of the Sri Lankan civil war. I remember reading them at the time and being moved to try and do something.

Colvin suffered. She never threw in the towel. If anything, it pushed her to work even harder. Her quests to help the women and children from every single war-torn country she entered endeared her to those women, those communities, those members of our global community who knew and know that her type of bravery was so rare indeed.

This brutal regime has broken families, torn apart homes, and forever changed the way of life for the Syrian people. There is darkness that has descended over Syria by design, by this awful regime. There was Colvin, shining a candle, letting the world know, and now we are all deprived of an incredible journalist.

With her, we lose an international role model. We lose the story she would tell, the light she would bring to the darkest lives, most recently in Syria but throughout the world, and we lose the voice she would have found wherever the next merciless regime tried to suppress it. Yes, Marie Colvin would have been there.

While there is currently no official U.S. diplomatic presence in Syria due to the awful human rights tragedy being carried out by the Assad regime, we are working as best we can to explore every avenue to help SHELDON and her family bring closure and to help her mother, in particular, who made clear that she will not rest until her daughter returns home.

On behalf of all my colleagues, I offer my condolences to Rosemarie Colvin in East Norwich, Marie's mother, and to the many people who will miss the work of one of the greatest correspondents of this generation.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant editor of the Daily Digest proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

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

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

Mr. BROWN of OHIO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes and to yield at the conclusion of my first 10 minutes to Senator PORTMAN.

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

HIGH SCHOOL TRAGEDY

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam President, I join my fellow colleague from Ohio Senator PORTMAN to offer our condolences and prayers to the people of Chardon, OH, who experienced a terrible tragedy earlier this week.

On Monday morning, February 27, a troubled young boy opened fire in the crowded cafeteria at Chardon High School. Three students were killed. Two students were wounded. The entire community remains shaken.

As fathers, we cannot imagine the loss of a child and the loss of innocence of children who will now grow up knowing tragedy all too early in life. As Members of the Senate, we couldn't be more proud of the resiliency and the love and the compassion the people of Chardon have shown in the wake of such fear and sorrow.

During the shooting, teachers and school administrators risked their lives to protect and save the lives of their students. Assistant Football Coach Frank Hall chased the gunman out of the cafeteria, Principal Andy Fetchik called 911, and countless other teachers and students provided safety and comfort until help could arrive.

Chardon law enforcement and first responders—from the 911 dispatchers to the police, to the emergency medical people—arrived at the scene to apprehend the suspect and restore calm and order.

Chardon Police Chief Tim McKenna and his team—especially the three officers who rushed to the school—did an outstanding job. Hospital staff at MetroHealth and Hillcrest cared for the victims and counseled the families of lost ones. Out of this week's turmoil and tragedy, we remain proud of the community that has come together through vigils and prayer services, through support and red ribbons worn.

The day after the shooting, more than 1,000 people crammed into the St. Mary's parish across from Chardon High School. The overflow crowd of another 1,000 was outside listening to Principal Fetchik express how proud he was of the students.

Yesterday, President Obama spoke to Principal Fetchik to say how proud he was—as Senator PORTMAN and I are—of the school and of the community.

At the prayer service, Superintendent Joseph Bergant explained why the school would close for a few days this week to reflect, for students and families to get the help they need, for parents to hug their children, and for children to hug their parents.

Yesterday, I spoke with Superintendent Bergant to express Connie's and my gratitude and prayers. The investigation into how and why this happened continues, but resilience, compassion, and love, we know, will remain.

Tomorrow classes resume in Chardon and at Lake Academy and Auburn Career Center, where students and staff are also dealing with this tragedy. Tomorrow, Chardon High School students will march together from the town square to the school in a show of solidarity and unity. They will remember Joy Rickers and Nicolao Wajczak, who are still recovering from their injuries. They will honor those fellow students no longer with them. Daniel Parmertor was a 16-year-old high school junior. Known as Danny, he was a student who loved snowboarding and video games and computers. He enjoyed wing nights at Cleats with friends and was excited about starting his first job in a bowling alley and picking up his first paycheck.

His father Bob, a boiler technician with First Energy, and his mother Dina, a nurse at Hillcrest Hospital, were finishing their night shifts. If we can imagine, they were finishing their night shifts when they learned of the shooting.

In their statement, the family said:

Danny was a bright young boy, who had a bright future ahead of him. The family is torn by this loss.

He is survived by his parents, siblings, grandparents, a great-grandmother, and numbers of aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Russell King, Jr., was 17 years old. His friends described him as sociable and who got along with everyone. A junior, he was enrolled in Chardon High School and the Auburn Career Center. He was studying alternative energy such as solar and wind power as so many young people are today.

Demetrius Hewlin was 16 years old, affectionately known as "D" to his family and friends. Demetrius was interested in healthy living, staying active, playing computer games, and reading books.

In their statement, his family said:

We are saddened by the loss of our son and others in our Chardon community.

Demetrius was a happy young man who loved life and his family and friends.

We will very much miss him, but we are proud he will be able to help others through organ donation.

Imagine that, the parents and the family thinking of others so immediately.

He is survived by his parents, grandparents, a brother and sister, and numerous aunts, uncles, and cousins.

On behalf of all Ohioans, the Senate, and joining with Senator PORTMAN, we offer our continued prayers and condolences to the Chardon community.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I rise with my colleague Senator BROWN,

who has just spoken about this terrible tragedy that occurred in our State on Monday at Chardon High School in Geauga County. I was calling into a radio program in the Cleveland area on Monday morning when the first reports started to come in. Frankly, it was unbelievable that there could be a shooting anywhere but certainly in a high school and in this community that I visited that Senator BROWN and I both know. Unfortunately, the rumors ended up being true and the tragedy is—as Senator BROWN has just described so well—that lives were cut short and these were lives full of promise. We will never know those young people Senator BROWN was just talking about as adults, but we will always remember them, and now they are memorialized in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

My wife Jane and I have been keeping the families in our prayers, and for that matter the entire Chardon High School community. We continue to pray for the healing of those who were injured in flesh and in spirit through this terrible act. As the parent of a high school student who is about the same age as these young people, I cannot imagine what the parents have gone through over the last 4 days. Chardon is a beautiful community. It is almost a New England-style town on the Western Reserve, with a beautiful town square. It is a place of certainty, and that certainty, of course, now has been shattered. It touches so many people around Ohio.

One of my staff has two cousins who attend the school, and along with two other cousins who have already graduated from the school, fortunately, their family members are all OK. But it shows that despite being a big State, all of us in Ohio are tied together.

We have been in touch with the Chardon officials offering to help where it is appropriate. I know Senator BROWN has made a call, as has the Governor, and the President has made a call. We all want to be there and help in any way we can. We can draw some hope from the heroism of the day.

Unbelievably, the assistant football coach and teacher, Frank Hall, chased the shooter with his gun and showed a lot of bravery. A math teacher, Joe Ricci, rescued one of the injured students. We draw hope from the rank and leadership of Principal Andy Fetchik, Chardon schools Superintendent Joe Bergant, Geauga County Sheriff Dan McClelland, Chardon Police Chief Tim McKenna, and the first responders who responded as they always do, and we appreciate and commend them for their reactions and their ability to deal with a very difficult situation.

The community has received a lot of support and will need it as they come together to grieve and to heal. The reports I have heard about, the vigils and gatherings over the last week have been moving. I am told as students returned to school for the first time today, they gathered in that town square I talked about and walked together in unison.

We need to make sure we continue to pull together and continue to support the community and school. For the parents to heal is a journey, and the journey has just begun.

I have been moved by the expressions of support from other local high school students too. Apparently, other students of the Cleveland area have gone Hilltopper red and black, which is the mascot, to show their support for other students. We are in the Chamber with some of our pages who are about the same age as these students and that show of support and love is appreciated and it shows the character of our State. We pull together in Ohio. We pull together in times of tragedy, through tears and through pain. We will get through this.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to speak with my colleague about the tragedy and to be sure that in the RECORD we are memorializing this event and ensuring that those students whose lives have been cut short will all be remembered.

God bless Chardon and the Chardon community.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

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

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

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

ENERGY POLICY

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about our Nation's energy policy.

Georgians, as well as folks all across America, are shocked every time they pull up to the gas pumps, both at the price of gas per gallon and at the jaw-dropping total cost each time they fill up their tanks. With rising food prices and a weak economic recovery, skyrocketing gas prices could not come at a worse time. This situation illustrates why it is imperative for Congress to focus on creating a policy to expand and diversify our energy sources so the American people are no longer held hostage by prices at the pump.

The necessity of congressional action has become all too clear as gas prices continue to rise and unrest in the Middle East threatens the global economy. We cannot afford to keep sending hundreds of billions of dollars per year to foreign countries, many of which are not America's friends, to meet our energy needs. Doing so poses a threat to our national security and further harms our Nation's struggling economy.

Unfortunately, the President and his administration have made some decisions that contribute to rising gas prices and that prevent us from being able to take advantage of vast energy

resources located right here in North America.

First, the President's recent decision to reject the Keystone XL Pipeline was extremely disappointing. Canada is a trusted ally and friend to the United States, and by tapping into its vast oil reserves, we could have substantially lessened our need to import oil from other, potentially hostile, nations. Not only would this project instantly have created many jobs, it would also have helped secure our Nation's energy future.

In addition, the long line of burdensome regulations coming from the administration threatens both economic growth and energy costs in the United States. Instead of navigating through this unprecedented regulatory environment, more and more industries will choose to take their business overseas. This could potentially include refiners and other businesses essential to domestic energy production. In fact, we are already seeing the movement of the deep oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico to China—a classic example of what could happen even more so in the future.

Rather than hindering domestic production of oil and gas, we must encourage the development of the abundant energy resources we have right here in the United States, and we must do so in an environmentally responsible manner. I will continue to support domestic oil and gas exploration and production. It is an essential component of a comprehensive energy policy that will enable America to become more energy independent.

As I hear more reports of new oil and natural gas deposits found within our borders and off America's shores, I am stunned that we are not doing more to encourage the development of these resources. I can't think of a better means of improving our economy, by both reducing America's energy imports and encouraging job growth. Unfortunately, the administration continues to hold up and unnecessarily delay the approval of drilling leases and permits. Now is not the time to tie up valuable and much needed American energy production in bureaucratic redtape.

A responsible energy policy that includes increased domestic energy production; improved energy efficiency through technology; improved conservation; and a diversified energy supply with the use of renewable fuel sources will keep gas prices low, lessen our dependence on foreign oil, and strengthen our economy. I am hopeful we will take action on some form of comprehensive energy legislation during this Congress. For the sake of our national security and our economy, we need to tackle this issue now instead of procrastinating and letting others handle it.

I made this same speech 4 years ago when we saw gas prices approach \$4 a gallon. Here we are 4 years later with the same hurdles standing in front of us with respect to the lack of a long-term energy policy in this country. So

I hope that in a bipartisan way we can develop an energy policy, even if it is short term and even if it is narrowly focused, that will provide relief to Americans with respect to the rising gas prices, which are going to impact every single product that is made in America today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia is recognized.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Senator CHAMBLISS pertaining to the introduction of S. 2151 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I yield the floor and ask that I be followed by Senator BROWN of Ohio, who assured me he would be waiting in the Chamber when I concluded.

But since I see he is not here, 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. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about my amendment to the transportation reauthorization bill that I have introduced with Senator BLUNT. I am grateful this amendment has been included in the base bill of Leader REID's substitute amendment.

I will take a couple of minutes to explain this amendment. It is a simple commonsense amendment. I am glad it has been accepted. It is also particularly significant to my home State of Minnesota.

On August 1 of this year, we will mark the fifth anniversary of the tragedy in my home State of the collapse of the Interstate 35W bridge in Minneapolis. The collapse killed 13 people and injured 145. That tragedy should have been a wake-up call in America and in this body. Bridges should not collapse in the United States of America.

Unfortunately, the state of many of our bridges today is still extremely concerning. According to the most recent data compiled by the Federal Highway Administration, one in nine highway bridges in this country is classified as "structurally deficient."

Let me say it another way. One of nine bridges in our country needs significant rehabilitation or replacement and requires yearly inspection.

In Minnesota alone, more than 1,100 bridges were listed as being structurally deficient. The bill we are debating today consolidates many varied surface transportation programs into five main pots of money. The Highway Bridge Program would be consolidated in the new National Highway Performance Program, and of this new program, 60 percent would have to be spent on restoring National Highway

System roads and bridges into a state of good repair. The other 40 percent is more flexible and can be spent on a variety of projects, including Federal-aid highways that are not on the National Highway System, or the NHS.

However, if those non-NHS roads have a bridge that needs repair, that project would not have been an allowable use of this flexible pot of money. My amendment, which is now included in the base bill, fixes that. It allows the 40-percent pot of money to be used to repair bridges on non-NHS Federal-aid highways.

It is common sense. If roads are eligible for this funding, then bridges along these roads should be eligible as well. This is a no-brainer to me, especially given the poor state of our bridges today. The I-35W bridge collapse was a tragedy. It was a monumental failure of policy. I am determined not to let that happen again.

I thank Senator BLUNT for joining me in this effort. I also wish to thank Transportation for America and Smart Growth America for their support on this important fix.

I yield the floor and 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. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I would like to talk about an important part of the transportation jobs bill the Senate is debating this week. The bill is about creating jobs by modernizing our roadways and highways, about making our bridges safer—we know what that means in Minnesota, the State of the Presiding Officer—and about improving public transportation and reducing congestion across the country. But it is also about improving the public safety of the vehicles that travel our country.

We know about the success we have had as a nation because of the partnership between the auto industry and the government and adopting safety rules and working with the industry and making our travel safer. We know about the very impressive increase in safety on our Nation's highways. And there is still work to be done.

Five years ago tomorrow, a fatal motorcoach accident rocked a small Ohio community and brought national attention to the need for commonsense safety measures that could save lives.

Bluffton University is a small university in Bluffton, OH, near Interstate 75 in Allen and Hancock Counties in the northwest part of the State. The school's baseball team was on their way to Florida for spring training when their bus lost control on a poorly marked exit ramp outside Atlanta. The bus toppled from the overpass. Like the

majority of fatal motorcoach accidents, when the bus rolled over, the passengers were ejected from their seats and thrown through the bus windows. Seven people were killed and dozens were injured.

John and Joy Betts of Bryan, OH—a couple who have become friends of mine—lost their son David, one of the students who died that day. He was a baseball player and student at Bluffton. I have gotten to know the Betts family since the accident. They have been courageous advocates in raising awareness of motorcoach safety and demanding congressional action. To the family's credit, they used the loss of their son to save the sons and daughters of many others who will not face those tragedies because of the work the Betts family is doing on behalf of this motorcoach safety legislation.

The National Transportation Safety Board's final report from the Bluffton motorcoach accident—released almost 4 years ago—echoed recommendations the NTSB has been urging for years. For nearly 5 years, I have been working with Senator HUTCHISON, whose State has seen its share of tragic motorcoach accidents, to put those recommendations into law. In a bipartisan manner, we are fighting to make motorcoaches safer for the millions of passengers who ride them every day.

Today, because of the Betts family, other courageous families, and activists, we are taking a step in the right direction if we pass the bill.

In the 110th, 111th, and now the 112th Congress, Senator HUTCHISON and I have introduced the bipartisan Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act, which includes many of the NTSB's "most wanted" safety improvements. Specifically, the bill would address many of the major safety shortfalls from the Bluffton accident, which have plagued tour bus operations for too long. It would mean better protection systems for occupants and stronger passenger safety standards. It would improve safety equipment and devices and the need for onboard recorders with the capability to collect crash data. These safety measures are neither exotic nor complicated; they are commonsense safety features that have been and in many cases are widely used. But since they are not required by law, they have not been installed in most American motorcoaches. Instead of saving lives, the public safety remains at risk.

Some who oppose improved tour bus safety standards will tell you that this isn't a motorcoach problem, that they have a problem with rogue bus companies or bad drivers. Certainly, that is part of the problem, but we cannot simply look the other way and reject the idea that improving the safety of motorcoach manufacturing and motorcoaches is unnecessary or fiscally imprudent.

John Betts said:

It is necessary through our current regulations to get bad operators off the road. How-

ever, it is not sufficient as it does nothing to ensure safety once the crash has occurred.

I couldn't agree more. We can get bad operators off the road, but that is not enough to ensure passenger safety in the tragic event of an accident. If the technology to save lives and reduce injury in motorcoach accidents exists, we must put that technology to use. This bill does that.

Last year in Cleveland I was joined by John's sister and brother-in-law, Pam and Tom Bryan of Vermillion, OH. We met with a Greyhound bus driver who showcased new Greyhound buses equipped with some commonsense safety measures that clearly will save lives and protect both passengers and motorists on the road.

The Betts family and operators like Greyhound understand the urgent need and have too often relived the painful reminders that safety improvements for tour bus operations are long overdue. That is why this Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act is important, and it is why Greyhound's endorsement of this bill is so critical to turning public sadness and outrage into public action. Bus operators such as Greyhound think we can do this, and manufacturers do too. The technology is there.

The bill is common sense, bipartisan, and it will save lives. How many more motorcoach deaths—in Ohio, Texas, and most recently in New York and New Jersey—do we have to witness before bus companies start doing the right thing? As a father and Senator, it is disturbing to know that students are still traveling in motorcoaches without even the option of buckling up. Our laws should ensure that our vehicles and roads are safer, not less safe, for students, families, and elderly people, who often take motorcoach charters to events and concerts and such.

Tomorrow is the fifth anniversary of the Bluffton University tragic motorcoach accident. Our legislation is in the underlying Transportation bill we are debating on the floor. I urge its passage. I urge continued inclusion of these provisions, as Senator HUTCHISON and I have asked. It is commonsense, middle-of-the-road, bipartisan legislation that will save lives, undoubtedly.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The Senator from Alaska is recognized.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I thank the Chair. (The remarks of Ms. MURKOWSKI pertaining to the introduction of S. 2151 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for everyone's information, it is not as if we have been sitting around doing nothing. We have been trying to work something out on this highway bill. Hopefully, in the next little bit we can do it. We have not been very successful this day. I am glad we had that vote to try to move forward, but there are still some obstacles in the way.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

TRIBUTE TO SHERIFF'S DEPUTY JAMES I. THACKER

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a man who dedicated many great years of service to the residents of Pike County, KY, Sheriff's Deputy James I. Thacker of Elkhorn City, KY.

Sadly, Deputy Thacker was recently killed in a tragic automobile accident in the line of duty on Monday, January 23, on U.S. Highway 460 near Marrowbone, KY. He was 53 years old. I would like to take a moment to share with my colleagues the legacy that was left behind by this great man and humble public servant.

When asked to comment on the untimely death of Deputy Thacker, Pike County Sheriff Charles "Fuzzy" Keese said, "He was kind and compassionate; he treated everyone else like he wanted to be treated. He was that kind of person, just an excellent officer." Deputy Thacker was genuinely devoted to the people of Pike County, whom he had dedicated his life to serve. James has been described as the type of man you could call on day or night, with anything you may need, no matter how big or how small.

Deputy Thacker held an array of jobs in Pike County throughout his life. He served his country as a Marine early on in his life. Later on he became a Pike County road foreman. Next, he spent 8 years as Pike County's constable before assuming the role of Deputy Sheriff a little over a year ago.

Deputy Thacker most assuredly left an incredible legacy in each of the positions he held in his lifetime. He was cherished and appreciated by the citizens of Pike County, and this was proven when hundreds of friends, colleagues and family members attended his visitation to pay their respects. Among