

The result was announced—yeas 12, nays 86, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 45 Leg.]

YEAS—12

Ayotte	Crapo	Murkowski
Carper	Kyl	Portman
Coats	Lieberman	Risch
Coons	McCain	Toomey

NAYS—86

Akaka	Gillibrand	Moran
Alexander	Graham	Murray
Barrasso	Grassley	Nelson (NE)
Baucus	Hagan	Nelson (FL)
Begich	Harkin	Paul
Bennet	Heller	Pryor
Bingaman	Hoeven	Reed
Blumenthal	Hutchison	Reid
Blunt	Inhofe	Roberts
Boozman	Inouye	Rockefeller
Boxer	Isakson	Rubio
Brown (MA)	Johanns	Sanders
Brown (OH)	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Burr	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Cantwell	Kerry	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shelby
Casey	Kohl	Snowe
Chambliss	Landrieu	Stabenow
Coburn	Lautenberg	Tester
Cochran	Leahy	Thune
Collins	Lee	Udall (CO)
Conrad	Levin	Udall (NM)
Corker	Lugar	Vitter
Cornyn	Manchin	Warner
DeMint	McCaskill	Webb
Durbin	McConnell	Whitehouse
Enzi	Menendez	Wicker
Feinstein	Merkley	Wyden
Franken	Mikulski	

NOT VOTING—2

Hatch Kirk

The amendment (No. 1742) was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 1830

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I send a managers' package to the desk which has been approved by both managers and both leaders. Under the provisions of the previous order, I ask unanimous consent that it be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I understand that Senator SHAHEEN no longer intends to offer her amendment, so we can strike that from the list.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Republican leader and I have had discussions this afternoon, but I think it is fair to say he and I both believe we should finish this bill tomorrow. There is a very important event tonight—it may not mean much to anyone outside the Senate family, but it is to us, being able to recognize SUSAN COLLINS on a very special occasion in her life—and we are going to leave here so people who want to go to that event can do so.

We will come in tomorrow, and we will have about three or four votes to complete. We are having some other

conversations, Senator MCCONNELL and I, about other matters, and we will discuss that later. There will be no more votes tonight.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. For the information of the Senate, the managers' package just agreed to is amendment No. 1830, offered by Senator BOXER.

The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I just wanted to go on record tonight as saying we have made just incredible progress on this bill, and I look forward to tomorrow, where we will complete work on it. I think we are showing bipartisan spirit here and bipartisan cooperation. It is important to note that 2.8 million jobs hang in the balance.

So we will see everyone tomorrow. I feel very good we are going to pass our bill, and with that I suggest the absence of a quorum—I withdraw that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

VISIT TO THE SENATE BY JEAN-PIERRE BEL, PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH SENATE

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the president of France's senate be permitted to join us on the floor for a few minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, with that, I would say au revoir, and I will see everybody in the morning.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess subject to the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:36 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 5:49 p.m., when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. CASEY).

MOVING AHEAD FOR PROGRESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY—Continued

CHANGE OF VOTE

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, on rollcall vote 28, I voted aye. It was my intention to vote nay; therefore, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to change my vote since it will not affect the outcome.

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

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

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent that I can speak in morning business for 20 minutes.

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

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to talk about judicial nominations. I come to the floor many days to talk about judicial nominations. Most of my remarks at those times as well as this time are to respond to some of the claims made by my colleagues from the other side of the aisle. If you listened to some of my colleagues over the last couple of days, you would think the sky is falling on the issue of judicial nominees. They act as if the Senate is treating President Obama's judicial nominees differently than nominees have been treated in the past. This is simply not true.

A fair and impartial look at the numbers tells a far different story. The fact of the matter is that President Obama's nominees are being treated just as well, and in many cases much more fairly, than the Democrats treated President Bush's nominees. I want to take a few minutes to set the record straight.

Let me start by taking a brief look at 17 cloture motions that the majority has filed. Seven of those nominees were reported out of the Judiciary Committee within the last month and three of them were reported just last week. That is without precedent. To our knowledge the majority, Republican or Democrat, has never filed cloture on district court nominees within a month of them being reported out of the Judiciary Committee. That accounts for 7 of the 17.

What about the other 10 nominees? What our colleagues fail to mention is that they could have gotten a majority of those nominees confirmed at the end of the last session, just before recessing at Christmastime. Our side cleared quite a few nominees and we offered to confirm them as a package the end of last session. However, the President refused to offer assurances that he would not bypass the Senate and make so-called recess appointments.

I made a mistake when I said when the Senate adjourned just prior to Christmas, or recessed just prior to the session. We did neither. We stayed in session during the period of time from December 18 until January 24. In other words, the President was not in a position to make recess appointments because we were not in recess.

And of course, the President does not have the power, under our Constitution, to determine whether or not the

Senate is in session. Only the Senate can make a determination of when we adjourn. The President of the United States cannot do that. But he presumed that he could and he went ahead and made what he called "recess appointments." So he shredded the Constitution once again.

In regard to what we are talking about here, it was the President who chose not to confirm those nominees at the end of last session because he refused to give us assurances that he would not make recess appointments. The bottom line is this, if the President believes we should have confirmed more nominees last fall, he should look to his own administration for that explanation.

That is the background of the 17 cloture motions before the Senate. Let me comment on something I read in one of our daily newspapers that covers the Congress. A famous reporter said, in the second paragraph of a report I read today, that the Republicans are filibustering nominations. I told the writer of that article that you can't filibuster anything that is not before the Senate and these nominees were not before the Senate until the leader of the majority filed these cloture motions.

Wouldn't you think, if you believed you needed to stop debate, that you would at least let debate start in the first place? But no. The game that is played around here is that, in order to build up the numbers, you claim the minority is filibustering, when in fact they are not filibustering.

I wish to take a step back and address some of the claims I've heard from the other side. I cannot believe some of the comments I am hearing, so I believe it is important to set the record straight. First of all, everyone around here understands that it takes a tremendous amount of time and resources for the Senate to consider Supreme Court nominees. For that reason, when a Supreme Court nomination is pending before the Senate, the Judiciary Committee considers little else. During President Obama's first 3 years in office, the Senate considered not one but two nominations to the Supreme Court. Those nominations occupied the Judiciary Committee for approximately 6 months. The last time the Senate handled two Supreme Court nominations was during President George W. Bush's second term. During President Bush's entire second term we confirmed only 120 lower court nominees. Under President Obama, as you can see from the chart we have here, we have already confirmed 129 lower court nominees. I think that is a pretty explicit picture of how the other side's arguments do not hold water.

For repetitive purposes, but to drive a point home, we have confirmed 129 of President Obama's judicial nominees in just over 3 years. That is more than were confirmed under George W. Bush's entire second term of 4 years. Again, the comparison between President Obama's first 3 years to President

George W. Bush's second term of 4 years is the appropriate comparison. These were the only two time periods in recent memory when the Senate handled two Supreme Court nominations during such a short period of time—obviously consuming a great deal of time of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Even if you compared the number of President Obama's nominees confirmed to President Bush's first term, it is clear that President Obama has fared very well. More specifically, even though the Senate did not consider any Supreme Court nomination during President Bush's first term, we have confirmed approximately the same number of President Obama's lower court nominees as we did President Bush's, relative to the nominations President Obama has made.

In other words, although fewer lower court nominees have been confirmed under President Obama, the President made approximately 20 percent fewer judicial nominations during his first 3 years than President Bush did during his first term of 4 years. I think it is pretty simple, isn't it? You cannot complain that we have not confirmed enough judges, if they have not been sent up here in the first place.

As a practical matter, if the President believes he has not gotten enough confirmations, then he should look no farther than the pace at which he has been making nominations. Maybe he should have spent less time on the 100 or so fundraisers he has been holding all over the country recently and more time making judicial nominations. Or, at least he should have his political party in the Senate give us a little leniency, and quit complaining about nominations not being approved. The fact of the matter is this: If a backlog exists, then it is clear that it originates with the President. The Senate cannot confirm anybody the President has not sent up here in the first place.

If you need even more evidence that the President has been slow to send judicial nominees to the Senate, all you need to do is examine the current vacancies. My colleagues have been on the floor talking about the so-called vacancy crisis. What my colleagues fail to mention is that the White House has not even made nominations for over half of the vacancies. To be specific, of the 83 current vacancies, the White House has not submitted nominations for 44 of those vacancies. Once again, the Senate cannot confirm anybody who is not sent up here. How can my friends on the other side of the aisle complain about a vacancy crisis when the President has not sent up a nominee for over half of the vacancies?

As a result, it is clear if there is a vacancy crisis, once again the problem rests with the White House. If the President believes there are too many vacancies in the Federal courts, he should look no further than his own administration for an answer.

What about the other side's claim that nominees are waiting longer to

get confirmed than they have in the past? Once again, this is not true. The average time from nomination to confirmation of judges during the Obama administration is nearly identical to what it was under President Bush. During President Bush's Presidency, it took on average approximately 211 days for judicial nominees to be confirmed. You can see from the chart that, during the first 3 years of President Obama's Presidency, it has taken 218 days for his judicial nominees to be confirmed. I am sure this will be news to many of my colleagues. If you had listened to the other side you would think that we have somehow broken new ground. We have not, obviously. We are treating President Obama's nominees virtually the same as President Bush's nominees.

It is not our primary concern to worry about whether one President is being treated differently than the other. We just proceed with our work. But the numbers you see here are the result of our work. And the fact of the matter is that the numbers are not much different than for other Presidents. To suggest we are treating President Obama's nominees a whole lot differently is intellectually dishonest. The fact of the matter is that the Senate has been working its will and regularly processing the President's judicial nominees in much the same way it has in the past.

Given that the President's nominees have received such fair treatment, why would the majority leader then choose to take the unprecedented step of filing 17 cloture motions on district court nominees? Why would the majority leader choose to manufacture controversy that does not exist—because there is no doubt in my caucus, even if there are a few votes against some of these nominees, there is very little doubt that most if not all of these 17 nominees are going to be approved by the Senate. These votes are a stunt. They are a smokescreen. They are designed to accomplish two goals. First, as even Democrats concede, the President cannot run for reelection on his own record so these votes are designed to help the President's reelection strategy by somehow portraying Republicans as obstructionists. But how can you obstruct when there are 83 vacancies, and the White House has failed to nominate someone for over half of those slots? How can you be considered as obstructionist when these judges will be approved just as we have already approved seven?

Second, the other side simply does not want to talk about the extremely important things and very real problems facing this Nation. Look at any poll, go to any town meeting, and what people in this country and my State of Iowa are concerned about is the economy and jobs. With 8.3 percent unemployment, why wouldn't they be expecting us to work on jobs? There is a small business tax bill that passed the other body. How come we are not

taking that up? It is ready to take up. It would probably pass here without much dissent.

Why aren't we taking up a budget this year? It has been 4 years without taking up a budget. This is budget week for most years in the Senate. We are spending more time on deciding judicial nominees who are not going to be filibustered to stop a filibuster that doesn't even exist when we ought to be taking up and spending about the same amount of time on a budget, but no budget for 1,040-some days.

The American people are sitting at home listening to the debate. They want to know how we are going to get the unemployment rate down. They are not concerned about whether the Senate will confirm one of the President's district court nominees this week rather than next week. They are not concerned about this debate we are going to have over the next couple of days. They want to know what we are doing to help their father, mother, brother, and sister get back into the workforce. Given the millions of Americans who remain out of work, why aren't we considering and debating the jobs bill the House just passed?

Why aren't we tackling the energy crisis? With \$4 gas in this country, we ought to be talking about drilling here and drilling now. We ought to be talking about building a pipeline. We ought to be talking about, how can we stop sending \$833 million every day overseas to buy oil? We ought to be talking about extending the energy tax extenders that have sunset as of December 23.

Unlike the so-called vacancy crisis, the energy crisis is not manufactured. It is real. The rising cost of gasoline matters to millions and millions of Americans. If they are fortunate enough to have a job in this economy, millions of Americans are trying to figure out how they can afford to get to work with the rising cost of gasoline. Rather than spend time working on the energy crisis, which is all too real for millions of Americans, we are spending time on this manufactured controversy of somehow a vacancy crisis, somehow a filibuster against judges. And not one of these judges has had one speech given on the floor of this Senate against them, and probably won't.

What is even worse, this is the week we are supposed to be debating a budget, but you'd need a high-powered microscope to find any budget the majority has put together. The majority has failed to produce a budget, so they manufactured a so-called crisis on nominations to throw up a smoke-screen to hide their failure.

I will have more to say on this subject when we move forward on this debate, but for now I conclude that a fair and impartial examination of how the Senate has treated President Obama's nominees reveals that, contrary to what you hear from the other side, the President's nominees are being treated more fairly. Rather than waste time on the so-called crisis that everyone real-

izes is entirely manufactured, we should be focusing on those issues that matter deeply to the American people. And according to what I hear at my town meetings, what I hear and read in the papers about what polls show, what candidates for Presidents are talking about—even the President of the United States—is about jobs, about the economy, and tackling our energy crisis.

I urge my colleagues to reject these cloture petitions that have no legitimacy for existing in the first place so we can get back to the business of the American people—the economy and jobs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is not in morning business.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I wish to thank my colleagues today for supporting an amendment by voice vote showing overwhelming support to the Transportation bill that improves "Buy American" provisions by making the waiver process more transparent, giving U.S. manufacturers fair and clear notice when a waiver is sought. It tells the Department of Transportation to report annually on waivers, analyzing what taxpayer dollars are spent on foreign materials and infrastructure projects. While some Members of the Senate may oppose it, it passed in a voice vote, so, in some sense, unanimous almost. But while some Members may oppose it, I hardly ever met anybody in the American public who thinks taxpayer dollars should not go for any infrastructure projects. That is the way you want to do it, and this legislation will move us closer to it. The San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge was the most outrageous example, where much of that steel was made in China when U.S. steelworkers weren't all back at work the way they should be.

I thank Senator BOXER and Senator DURBIN. I thank Senator GRAHAM from South Carolina and Senator MERKLEY for their help on this legislation.

Today President Obama signed into law a trade enforcement measure that last week passed this Chamber by unanimous consent. It is bipartisan legislation—which I cosponsored with Senators BAUCUS and THUNE, primarily—which gives the Commerce Department authority to impose what are called countervailing duties on imports from countries that are nonmarket economies, and that means countries with sort of command-and-control economies, such as the People's Republic of China.

Last year the Federal appeals court issued a ruling that hamstringing our Nation's ability to fight back against ille-

gal Chinese trade practices. Here is why Congress passing this bill is so important. We know China doesn't play by the rules, from direct export subsidies, to currency manipulation, to providing below-market loans to exporters. China does things our country doesn't and many other countries don't. It gives its exporters an unfair advantage.

American industries fight back by petitioning the Commerce Department to investigate these subsidies. Sixteen Ohio companies have petitioned for this relief, including steel pipe companies in Youngstown, paper companies in Miamisburg, aluminum companies in Sidney, and tire manufacturers in Bryan, which is in northwest Ohio near the Indiana-Michigan border. These are good companies. They are not looking for handouts or an unfair edge; they want a level playing field. This legislation does this. When countries such as China don't play by the rules, they suffer. This helps to fix that.

Also today, President Obama announced that his administration would pursue a case at the World Trade Organization against China's hoarding of rare earth materials. Rare earth hoarding is one of the many illegal trade practices China employs to tilt the playing field in its favor. U.S. Manufacturers rely—as they do around the world—on rare earth materials for the production of a number of products, including wind turbines and electronics.

China currently accounts for 97 percent of the world's materials. They impose quotas and heavy tariffs on their export, putting American manufacturers at a severe disadvantage. This almost forces companies to go to China to do the manufacturing because of subsidies the Chinese give to themselves, their own companies, and because of the tariffs they can extract from these companies for export, these raw-material makers for export, our companies are at a severe disadvantage.

Today the administration said that enough is enough. One Ohio CEO told me when I visited his company in northeast Ohio:

As an Ohio-based manufacturing company with roughly 80 percent of our sales outside of the United States, GrafTech has a keen interest in protecting our ability to compete aggressively in the global marketplace. Obtaining key raw materials at a reasonable cost is critical to our mission.

They are not asking for handouts; they are not asking for subsidies; they are just asking others to quit cheating.

Senator PORTMAN and I have repeatedly urged the Obama administration to take this case. Senator PORTMAN, who was a former Bush Trade Representative, who almost always is on the other side of major trade issues from where I am—we came together on this, as we have on other trade issues that matter for our country.

In 2001 the United States had an \$83 billion trade deficit with China. Ten years later, last year, there was a \$295 billion trade deficit with China. President Bush once said that \$1 billion in

trade surplus or trade deficit translates to 13,000 jobs. So if our trade deficit grew from \$83 billion to \$295 billion just with that one country, think of what it does to manufacturing in Springfield and Akron and Cleveland and what it means to a State such as Colorado, what it means to any States that make things in this country. Jobs are at stake, and addressing our trade imbalance with China is essential. To do that, we must make China play fair with the United States.

Not too long ago, the Senate passed the largest bipartisan jobs bill. In 2011 we passed my legislation on currency. The bill would curtail China's ability to illegally manipulate its currency so they could flood our markets with cheap goods, undermining our workers and making it much more difficult for our companies to sell there. After years of China gaining the benefits of WTL membership without adhering to the rules, it is time for the House of Representatives to again pass—as they did when Speaker PELOSI was Speaker—they passed it with an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote. It is time for Speaker BOEHNER to bring up that legislation so we can vote for it. It will mean more companies around my State and around the country will be able to manufacture, will be able to be competitive, will be able to export, will be able to play in the global economy in a fair and balanced way.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to the Baucus amendment No. 1825. Although I wholeheartedly support full funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes, PILT, Program, I have to oppose this amendment because it also includes a reauthorization for what is known as the Secure Rural Schools, SES Program. The SES Program was created in 2000 as a 5-year temporary funding measure to assist rural communities suffering from the loss of timber sale revenue caused by policies that decimated the timber industry in the 1990s. Because it has operated for more than a decade, communities have now come to rely on it, turning it into a “would-be” entitlement program. Though, the program expired last year, and, as painful as it is, we must let it sunset for good. The Federal Government can ill afford to continue to forever finance what was supposed to be a short-term safety net.

I support extending full funding of PILT payments. These payments to local governments help offset losses in property taxes due to nontaxable Federal lands within their boundaries. I recognize that the inability of local governments to collect property taxes on federally owned land can create a negative financial impact, particularly in States like mine that are dominated by Federal land. In Arizona, more than 85 percent of the State is under Federal control. PILT payments are one of the ways the Federal Government can fulfill its role of being a good neighbor to local communities. Had this amendment been limited to full funding for

PILT, I would have voted in favor of the amendment.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on the Keystone XL Pipeline project.

I support moving forward with the Keystone Pipeline. TransCanada needs to resubmit an application with a route that resolves Nebraska's local concerns before we make the decision to approve this project. The company has said they will submit the application soon. I have voted to expedite the approval process, and once the new application that resolves the Nebraska issues is submitted, the approval should be granted.

UNITED STATES RECOGNITION OF CROATIA

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, thank you for giving me the opportunity to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the recognition of Croatia by the United States. On April 7, 1992, the United States recognized the Republic of Croatia, setting the stage for our two nations to build lasting U.S.-Republic of Croatia bilateral relations.

Today, we remember all of the people who are responsible for creating a democratic and free Croatian state and celebrate the enormous achievements since independence.

Twenty years ago, the people of Croatia had the willpower and endurance to fight for a democratic nation. Filled with the hopes and dreams of a prosperous, new sovereign state, the struggle was not an easy one. Independence never comes easily. Each country can attest in their own history to the enormous sacrifices and the period of unstable, unclear direction their nation was headed. However, we must not forget those who persisted with their self-determination dreams. We can now look back with immense pride in the founding of a country that has accomplished so much in so little time.

After years of war and occupation, Croatia has made remarkable political progress since the end of the war more than 15 years ago. Croatia is a welcomed member of NATO and will soon become the 28th member of the European Union, EU. At the end of 2011, Croatia completed the negotiation process of EU accession, another milestone accomplished. Both of these landmarks came with enormous challenge, and I salute your achievement. There will be challenges on the road to this new future as there have been in the past, but I am confident Croatia will face and overcome them.

Croatia is in a position to play a positive and leading role in assisting countries in the region in their efforts at Euro-Atlantic integration. With the ambitious goal in mind of implementing objectives, which are in line with the highest standards of good governance and partnership, I am optimistic Croatia will lend her expertise to her neighbors. Joining the EU and NATO, with their shared values of democracy, human rights, and rule of law, is perhaps the best way to ensure security and prosperity in the region.

I use this opportunity to state how proud I am of my heritage. As the only Member of the Senate of Croatian descent, I am deeply honored to commemorate and celebrate the remarkable successes of Croatia. I am equally grateful to be witnessing such a pivotal moment in the many advances of our two nations and to highlight the extraordinary cooperation between the United States and Croatia. Our relationship is one to be admired.

Fifteen years ago, Croatia was a security consumer, with United Nations peacekeeping troops deployed throughout the country. It is now a security provider, with 481 troops deployed across the globe, including in Kosovo, the Golan Heights, Afghanistan, Western Sahara, India-Pakistan, Haiti, Lebanon, East Timor, and in counterpiracy operations in the Gulf of Aden. They even had staff officers assigned to NATO operations in Libya, a major accomplishment as we have seen history unfold in Libya just this past year. Croatia contributed to our efforts, and together, we have accomplished much.

Croatia's troop commitment in Afghanistan—350 is one of the highest per capita contributions in the International Security and Assistance Force there. Croatia has taken the lead in establishing a military police training center in Afghanistan, to which other members in the region also contribute trainers. This cooperation alone, in far away Afghanistan, involving countries that not long ago were embroiled in a vicious war, brings a certain stability to the region of the former Yugoslavia and creates a unique opportunity. In our joint efforts to combat global terrorism, the United States and Croatia have important tasks left ahead.

We are continuously working with Croatia today to create a great, lasting partnership. Cooperating with our southeastern ally has proved to be positive, with enormous payoffs for both countries. Together, our nations continue to work on all issues, including security, trade, business, development, and diplomacy.

I want to reiterate my highest commemoration of Croatia's accomplishments in recent years of our history and express my sincerest appreciation for Croatia's determination in achieving the highest standard of diplomacy with our Nation. It is my hope to see even more increase in our exchanges, dialog, and joint bipartisan efforts between our two countries, with many more opportunities for cooperation in the future.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE USA

Mr. LEVIN. A century ago, Juliette Gordon Low proclaimed, “I’ve got something for the girls of Savannah, and all of America, and all the world, and we’re going to start it tonight!” This was the phone call to her cousin that started it all. Ms. Low believed in the power and spirit of young women and was determined to make a difference. And Ms. Low's dream of creating an organization to develop young

woman for pursuits out of the house began with a simple call.

A century later in Congress and across our Nation we celebrate this wonderful organization that has built a significant and undeniable legacy of empowerment. The Girl Scouts of the USA is one of the largest educational organizations for girls in the world and seeks to foster self-reliance and resourcefulness through outdoors activities and volunteerism. The leadership skills and sense of civic awareness nurtured through an array of Girl Scouting activities has touched many lives, helping to mold strong, confident women.

I am a proud cosponsor of S. Res. 310 that designates 2012 as the "Year of the Girl" and congratulates the Girl Scouts of the USA on its 100th anniversary. In addition, I supported legislation authorizing the minting of a commemorative silver dollar coin in 2013 recognizing this centennial celebration. These honors are richly deserved and a fitting tribute to the Girl Scouts. In Michigan, where more than 53,000 active Girl Scouts reside, there are a number of celebrations planned.

Since its inception, more than 50 million women have taken part in Girl Scout activities. These young women have made a difference in the lives of others and in communities across the nation. From a group of 18 in 1912 to an organization of 3.7 million today, the Girl Scouts has consistently sought to shape the lives of young women through fun and diverse scouting activities. The Girls Scouts of the USA has stayed true to its mission to "build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place." And we don't have to look very far to see results. Impressively, near 60 percent of women in the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives are former Girl Scouts. Indeed, successful women from all walks of life can surely point to their Girl Scout experience as a valuable part of their formative years.

As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Girl Scouts of the USA, I am delighted to offer my sincerest gratitude for the difference the Girl Scouts has made in the lives of young women. From their humble beginnings in Savannah, GA, to the impressive service organization we honor today, the Girl Scouts has had a positive impact on our nation. I look forward to the next 100 years of this remarkable organization and its members.

TRIBUTE TO BISHOP TIMOTHY CLARKE

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Bishop Timothy Clarke of Columbus, OH for his 30 years of dedicated leadership and service to First Church of God. This past Sunday, March 11, 2012, marked both Bishop Clarke's 30th year as Pastor and First Church of God's 75th Anniversary.

Bishop Clarke began his work in January 1974, serving as Associate Minister at First Church of God in his hometown of Far Rockaway, NY. In

November 1977, Bishop Clarke began his pastorate at York Avenue Church of God in Warren, OH, where he served for 4 years.

In February, 1982, he became the Senior Pastorate of First Church of God in Columbus, OH. He was later consecrated to the office of Bishop in September 2001.

Bishop Clarke is a respected community leader in central Ohio and is the recipient of many honors and degrees for his service. He has served on the boards of various community organizations, and he has authored seven books.

Having worshipped with him and his congregation, I can attest to his significant impact on the community, and I am honored to call him a friend.

Mr. President, I would like to recognize Bishop Clarke for his dedicated service as he and his congregation celebrate this joyous occasion of his 30th year as Pastor and the First Church of God's 75th anniversary.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING ARKANSAS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, in 1912, the Arkansas Children's Home Society provided a safe haven for orphaned, neglected and abused children and opened the door to what is known today as the Arkansas Children's Hospital.

Children's welfare has always been the focus but over the decades, its approach evolved. What first started as an orphanage transformed into a hospital with the mission to help children most in need.

The facility has grown and thrived. The vision of the early hospital administrators has been realized and the dreams continue to get even bigger.

Today the Arkansas Children's Hospital is a destination for children from all over the country to receive the best medical care available. Just as important, it is a place that Arkansas children can go, in State and close to home, for treatment for their illnesses.

This is a state of the art facility that is using the newest technology and developing cutting edge treatments and cures for diseases affecting children. The scientists and doctors are advancing the world of medicine to help children lead a healthy and happy life.

Arkansas Children's Hospital consistently ranks as one of the leading employers in Arkansas. It is the only pediatric Level I trauma center in the State, and it is the sixth largest in the United States. Thousands of Americans have experienced the renowned care offered by the staff and facilities at ACH—many owe their lives to these world-class doctors and nurses that work here.

This hospital is something the people of Arkansas can be proud of, both its history and its vision for the future. I wish to congratulate Dr. Jonathan

Bates, president and CEO, as well as the administration, physicians, residents, and support staff on the 100th anniversary of Arkansas Children's Hospital and I hope for its continued success for another 100 years.●

REMEMBERING CASEY RIBICOFF

• Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, last year we were all saddened to learn of the passing of Casey Ribicoff, a remarkable woman and the wife of former Connecticut Senator Abe Ribicoff. In honor of Mrs. Ribicoff, I would like to have printed in the RECORD the moving tributes that were given at her funeral by some of those who knew her best.

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

SENATOR CHRIS DODD—CASEY RIBICOFF
EULOGY

(Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2011)

Thirteen years ago, I stood in this same spot to say goodbye and pay tribute to my friend and political mentor, Senator Abe Ribicoff.

Peter, I am deeply honored that you asked me to share some brief comments this morning to celebrate the life of one of the smartest, most generous, elegant, funny, and downright fascinating people any of us ever met—Abe's beloved partner, Casey.

I first met Casey Ribicoff in 1974, during my first run for Congress in Connecticut.

Senator Abe Ribicoff was himself up for reelection that year and he invited me to campaign with him in New London. I was excited. The former Judge, Congressman, Governor, Cabinet Member, and Senator, was a larger-than-life figure in Connecticut, and had been an influential force in American politics for the previous 30 years.

My parents, who were deceased by 1974, had been friends and colleagues of Abe Ribicoff's for many, many years, and I had been in his presence on numerous occasions.

Now, there were many appropriate adjectives to describe the Senator—able, thoughtful, perceptive, conscientious, courageous, and eloquent, to name a few. Funny, fun-loving, joyous—how shall I say this—were not exactly the words that jumped out to you when you thought of the Senator. Abe Ribicoff was a very serious guy.

So, on that fall day in 1974 when I first met Casey, right away, I knew this woman was different—a vibrant, vital force in any room. But on that day in 1974, something else was different—Abe Ribicoff was different. Different than I had ever seen him before. On that day, so many years ago, it was wonderful to see the effect this striking vivacious woman had on Abe Ribicoff.

I remember how much he laughed that day. In all the years I had known him, I had never seen Abe Ribicoff have as much fun as he was having with his lively Casey. What a difference she made in his life.

That year, 1974, Abe Ribicoff was running for what he and Casey knew would be his last term in the United States Senate. I would wager that those last six years were among the most enjoyable in their lives together. Casey and Abe traveled widely, while deepening friendships with people Casey brought into Abe's life and people with whom Abe had developed a strong relationship in his public life.

When that last term was up in 1980, Abe was so gracious to give the nominating speech for me to succeed him in the United States Senate.