

period of doubt and confusion, finding Christ when I was not even looking for him so many years ago; possessing so many shortcomings that have been overcome by the simple grace of God. And the fact that I would ever be on top of a mountain, saying a prayer for Billy Graham—a man whose faith had changed the world and that had sustained him through triumphs and tragedies, and movements and milestones—that simple fact humbled me to my core.

I have fallen on my knees with great regularity since that moment—asking God for guidance not just in my personal life and my Christian walk, but in the life of this nation and in the values that hold us together and keep us strong. I know that He will guide us. He always has and He always will. And I pray his richest blessings on each of you in the days ahead.

Thank you very much.

Senator PRYOR: Thank you, Mr. President, for sharing your heart and your faith with us. You have a room full of people here who are praying for you and your family. God bless the President of the United States of America.

Speaking of powerful people, let's hear one more time from Jackie Evancho.

"The Lord's Prayer" sung by Miss Jackie Evancho.

Senator SESSIONS: Thank you, Jackie, and may God's blessings continue with you. My thanks to the President, Eric, all our speakers up here this morning. You have given us a lot to think about. Now it is our job to ponder these things in our hearts and to turn those good ideas into action.

Senator PRYOR: Being a part of this National Prayer Breakfast is a great privilege and now it becomes a great responsibility. I believe God is counting on you and me to love and pray where we are. Let's complain a lot less and let's pray and love a lot more so God can use us to make a better world. And now to close us in prayer is Robert Griffin III of Baylor University.

Mr. Robert Griffin, III: Before I close in prayer, I would just like to say, "Sic em, Bears." And to the President, if you ever get a little tired of running the country or anything like that, a little bored, I would love to play you in basketball. It would be a friendly competition because I wouldn't want anyone to feel like I was trying to hurt you or anything, so I wouldn't dunk on you at all. This has been a really long breakfast. The longest I have ever been a part of. I guess everyone up here got the memo except for me because both of my cups are empty because I drank them. No one else drank anything and I really have to use the bathroom. So will go ahead and close this out so we can all go ahead and do that.

If you could bow your heads, please. Father God, we thank you for this day as a day you have made and we rejoice and we are glad in it. Today has truly been a great day, many great speakers and a lovely singer who has blessed all of our hearts and brought many to tears. Father God, in Jesus' name, we thank you that we could sit up here and thank you for so many different things and be here all day. But most of all, we thank you above all for having the ability to make a difference in everyone's lives and giving us the power to go out and change the world. And we thank you for your love, your grace and your mercy and as we leave today, we thank you that we take those qualities that can show the world not only with our words but with our actions. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

CONVICTION OF DHARUN RAVI

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last week, a jury in New Jersey convicted

Dharun Ravi for violations of New Jersey criminal laws against bias intimidation and invasion of privacy. Mr. Ravi had used a Webcam to spy on and then publicize an intimate encounter between his college roommate, Tyler Clementi, and another man. Tragically, Mr. Clementi became so distraught that he took his own life.

Young men and women should not be bullied or shamed because of their sexual orientation. It is incumbent on every segment of society to do what we can to stop bullying in schools and in our communities. As Tyler Clementi's father said after the jury verdict was announced:

To our college, high school and even middle school youngsters, I would say this: You're going to meet a lot of people in your lifetime. Some of these people you may not like. But just because you don't like them does not mean you have to work against them.

I can only imagine the Clementi family's grief and suffering over their loss. I applaud the efforts they are making to raise awareness about the real dangers of bullying on American campuses.

The Senate is also taking steps to address the growing problem of bullying. I am pleased to be a cosponsor of Senator CASEY's Safe Schools Improvement Act, which requires schools to establish bullying prohibition policies and would help educators identify and address any conduct based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. Another bill that I support is the Student Non-Discrimination Act introduced by Senator FRANKEN, which would define harassment as a form of discrimination in our public schools. Both bills have more than 35 cosponsors and deserve full consideration by the Senate. It has been well documented that students who are paralyzed by fear of bullying cannot effectively learn. Congress should help ensure that States and schools have the tools they need to prevent or punish bullying in any form. We must do more to ensure that all students are protected and can thrive in their schools.

In the aftermath of Dharun Ravi's conviction in New Jersey, there has been some commentary on hate crimes laws generally. Some have wondered whether hate crimes laws criminalize thoughts or beliefs and have the effect of chilling free speech. Others have expressed confusion whether Mr. Ravi could have been prosecuted under our recently passed Federal hate crimes law.

As chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, let me clarify the scope of Federal hate crimes statutes. First, the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act protects the constitutional right of every individual to have her own thoughts and beliefs and express them in a lawful manner. The law does not prohibit or punish speech, expression, or association in any way—even hate speech. The

Constitution does not permit us in Congress to prohibit the expression of an idea simply because we disagree with it.

The Matthew Shepard Act punishes physical violence, not speech. The law requires the defendant to have caused or attempted to cause bodily injury to the victim while being motivated by the victim's sexual orientation or another defined characteristic. Importantly, the defendant in a Federal hate crimes case must have acted willfully. In other words, the defendant must have voluntarily and intentionally caused bodily injury to the victim. From what we know of the Ravi case, the defendant could not have been prosecuted under the Matthew Shepard Act because Mr. Ravi did not willfully cause bodily injury to Tyler Clementi, nor did he willfully cause the victim to take his own life.

We know that the consequences of bias-motivated violence extend beyond the victim. Hate crimes instill fear in those who have no connection to the victim other than a shared characteristic such as race, religion, national origin, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. Preventing such consequences is the reason I offered the Matthew Shepard Act as an amendment to the Defense authorization bill more than 2 years ago. The law has already resulted in several Federal criminal convictions. For example, two Arkansas men were convicted after they targeted five Hispanic victims at a gas station and rammed their car off the road causing serious injuries. Two other men in New Mexico were convicted under this statute for branding a disabled Navajo man with a swastika while writing the words "KKK" and "white power" on his body.

The Ravi prosecution was brought under New Jersey's laws, which are different from our Federal hate crimes laws.

TRIBUTE TO ADMIRAL ROBERT F. WILLARD

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I rise to honor a distinguished naval officer and a true patriot. Having just passed the torch of command for U.S. Pacific Command, Admiral Robert F. Willard will hang up one last time the uniform he first donned almost four decades ago. On the eve of his retirement, it is fitting to memorialize in the annals of this chamber Admiral Willard's years of selfless service to our Nation.

A Los Angeles native, Admiral Willard graduated from the United States Naval Academy and was commissioned in 1973. After he completed flight training and qualified as a naval aviator, he served in F-14 fighter squadrons operating off of the aircraft carriers USS *Constellation*, USS *Ranger*, and USS *Kitty Hawk*. Admiral Willard's proficiency in the cockpit led to his assignment to Navy Fighter Weapons School, more commonly known as

TOPGUN, where he served as the operations and executive officer. Many may not know that Admiral Willard was the aerial coordinator for the 1986 movie *Top Gun* and also appeared in it as a flight instructor. Admiral Willard later commanded the famous Screaming Eagles Fighter Squadron operating off of the USS *Carl Vinson*.

In 1992, following his successful completion of nuclear power training, Admiral Willard rejoined the USS *Carl Vinson* as its executive officer. He went on to command the amphibious flagship USS *Tripoli* and the aircraft carrier USS *Abraham Lincoln*. As a flag officer, Admiral Willard twice served on the Joint Staff, was deputy and chief of staff for U.S. Pacific Fleet, commanded Carrier Group Five embarked upon the USS *Kitty Hawk*, and commanded Seventh Fleet in Yokosuka, Japan. In March 2005, Admiral Willard became the 34th Vice Chief of Naval Operations, and in May 2007, he became Commander of the United States Pacific Fleet.

On October 19, 2009, Admiral Willard was appointed as Commander, U.S. Pacific Command. He assumed command when much of our focus was still on the Middle East and North Africa, and rightly so. Conflicts there, however, in no way diminished the importance of the Asia-Pacific, where strategically important events unfolded during Admiral Willard's command. As the United States rebalances its national security strategy and realigns its forces with a greater focus on the Asia-Pacific, Admiral Willard's leadership over the last 2 years has laid a critical foundation for our security and that of our allies, now and in years to come.

Pacific Command is personally resonant with me. Between 1968 and 1972, my father held the position, then known as Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Command, that Admiral Willard has just relinquished. The running joke between Admiral Willard and me has been that he was living in my father's old house. And so, of all the praise and accolades I could bestow on Admiral Willard for his service to our Nation, the best and most appropriate would be: the command undertaken by my father and other great men has been admirably served by the leadership of Admiral Willard.

Admiral Willard has always paid tribute to his spouse of 38 years Donna, who has been a tireless advocate for the men and women of the commands in which she and her husband have served, and a wonderful ambassador for the United States and the Navy. And so I extend a grateful Nation's thanks to the Willards and their children Jennifer, Bryan, and Mark for their exceptional service, best wishes for the next chapter in their life, and fair winds and following seas.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH PROGRAM

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, for 50 years, the United States Senate Youth Program, USSYP, has selected 2 remarkable high school students from each State, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Education Activity program to visit our Nation's capital for an inspiring week-long immersion in the workings of the Federal government and a mirror into public service. The students that participate in the USSYP have gone on to dedicate their lives to our country, including Senator SUSAN COLLINS, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, and former presidential advisor Karl Rove.

Started in 1962 through the adoption of S. Res. 324, this program is as crucial now as it was when it was first created. The USSYP acknowledges our country's need to encourage inspired and proactive youth. It takes a stand against complacency and apathy when it comes to learning, gives students a chance to see firsthand the hard work and dedication of appointed and elected officials, and sustains and heightens their passion for helping others after the program is finished. It also aims to instill a true understanding of the democratic process "and the vital importance of democratic decision making not only for America but for people around the world" (S. Res. 324), creating a cadre of young ambassadors who promote representative government in their own communities.

I wish to recognize the partners of the USSYP, most especially the Hearst Foundations, and my Senate colleagues who participated in Washington Week a few weeks ago. I thank the Hearst Foundations for their generous offer to fund this program as long as the Senate keeps it alive. Also, I express my gratitude for nonprofit organizations that are innovatively addressing the deficit of civic knowledge and public responsibility in our Nation's students. For example, iCivics, a project started by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, aims to use video games and other web-based tools to engage students and teach them about our government on all levels, including the importance of participation as a citizen, the power of a vote, the checks and balances of our three branches, and our founding documents. We must continue to remain invested in the knowledge and ideals our future generations bring forth.

The USSYP understands the importance of fostering the genuine interest in public service held by our Nation's youth, and only selects high schoolers to participate who have demonstrated a commitment to their student government or local civic organizations. I hope the USSYP's strong 50 years can serve as a model for similar programs—especially to reach those who may not have the support or resources to define or act on their passion for public service. The USSYP has created an alumni fund to assist delegates, who are enter-

ing college or the work force in a low-paying, public service capacity, by providing scholarships. This great first step provides support to our young constituents who are striving to realize their dreams, but are worried about the costs involved.

I enjoyed meeting with the Connecticut delegates during the annual Senate reception during Washington Week and appreciated our thoughtful dialogue. Their visit has left me inspired and hopeful about our country's future.

I know my colleagues will join me in recognizing the importance of the United States Senate Youth program for the next 50 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

JACKSON'S SUGAR HOUSE AND VEGETABLE STAND

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, each year as winter makes way for spring, across my home state of Maine you will see maple trees lined with metal buckets poised to collect delectable maple syrup. Maine is the third largest producer of maple syrup in America, and last year experienced a 14 percent increase, generating a remarkable 360,000 gallons. As maple sugar season commences and Maine looks forward to celebrating the time-honored Maple Sugar Sunday, I rise to commend Jackson's Sugar House & Vegetable Stand located in Oxford, ME.

Often times a small request sparks a marvelous business enterprise. For Roger Jackson, owner of Jackson's Sugar House & Vegetable Stand, his passion for maple syrup was reignited a few years ago when his granddaughter sought help for a school project on how to make the sweet liquid. Although Roger had been producing maple syrup on and off since he was 6 years old, his granddaughter's question renewed his love for this New England staple. And the results have been incredibly sweet.

As a veteran in maple syrup production, Roger is familiar with the trials and tribulations that go along with this endeavor. While it is often hard to turn a profit as a small producer, the smiles on his customers' faces truly make it all worthwhile. Further, compared to when Roger was a child, improvements in technology have certainly enhanced and eased the process of turning sap into maple sugar. For example, today Jackson's Sugar House uses a stainless steel evaporator—equipment that enables them to easily remove water and ensure better control over the quality of their product. This evaporation process is a vast improvement over Roger's childhood maple making experiences involving boiling sap over an open flame.

Roger's expertise in maple syrup has certainly not gone unnoticed. He was recently appointed by the Maine Department of Agriculture Commissioner, Walter Whitcomb, to the Maine