

I salute Matt Rutherford for his courage, for his love of sailing, and being willing to share that with the disabled community, and for using this adventure, this almost death-defying trip. For anyone who knows what it is like to be on a 27-foot boat, to go from here all the way down to Cape Horn, that is incredible. Any one of numerous storms or anything could have sunk his little boat. He has had a lot of different adventures. He sprung a leak. He has been working on that leak ever since. Someplace around here, South America, he lost his engine, so he no longer has an engine, and he keeps patching his leak all the time. Every day he has to patch his leak. So he is fighting a leak every day in his boat. Just going around Cape Horn with the tremendous waves and cross currents around Cape Horn—to take a small boat through there singlehandedly is, as I said, death-defying.

Right up in here, right off the coast of Brazil someplace, he almost got run over by a freighter. At night, he had gone to sleep for a little bit. He has a light in his boat so people can see him at night. He woke up and he looked out and saw this red light and a green light with nothing in between it coming at him. Well, it was a huge freighter, and as the Presiding Officer knows, red on one side, green on the other, bearing down on him. He turned, and it missed him just by a few feet and almost sunk him in the bow wave of the freighter that went by. So those are the kinds of things Matt has lived with almost every day for 289 days.

Matt has great skill, great courage. He is making a difference. He is going to make a difference for a lot of people. I especially think of young people with disabilities who would like to sail, and because of this organization, Chesapeake Bay Accessible Boating, they will have the opportunity to do so.

So, again, this is one of the nice things we see happening in America. We think there are no individuals with that individual kind of courage to take on the elements, to risk their lives. Well, we still have them, and Matt Rutherford stands in a line of great adventurers in our history. I applaud him for his brave spirit, and I wish him safe passage on his home stretch and on the final leg of his epic journey.

He joins the ranks of Joshua Slocum who, on Spray, was the first person to circumnavigate the globe solo. He wrote a wonderful book: "Sailing Alone Around the World." He did it before the turn of the last century. He did it in the 1890s. He also joins the ranks of the next great person who sailed alone, Sir Francis Chichester, on the Gypsy Moth IV not too many years ago, who circumnavigated the globe. So to Joshua Slocum and Sir Francis Chichester we can now add Matt Rutherford, on St. Brendan, for an incredible journey around both of the Americas, solo and nonstop. It has never been done before, and it may never be done again. And he is doing it for the best of all reasons.

A courageous young man, Matt Rutherford. He is going to be back, as I said, hopefully by April 12. I hope to meet him. I have never met the young man, but I have followed his journey and his courage. He is the kind of person who just gives heart and spirit to all of us, to know there is nothing we can't do if we set our minds and our hearts to it and if we have the willpower and the courage to take it on. So I hope to meet him when he comes back—again, this young man of great courage. I hope the home stretch is one with fair winds and following seas.

Before I yield the floor, I mentioned that Matt Rutherford was doing this for the Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating organization that provides boating for people with disabilities. I would urge anyone who is interested in this and who wants to see what a great organization it is, they can go to their Web site—it is very simple—www.crabsailing.org. It is a great organization that helps people with disabilities to take up sailing and learn the art and the craft of sailing.

So, again, hats off to a remarkable young man on a remarkable journey. I wish him fair winds and a following sea in his home stretch.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

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

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

(The remarks of Mr. DURBIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 2280 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRANKEN). The Senator from Rhode Island.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT DENNIS WEICHEL

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today, along with my colleague from Rhode Island, to pay tribute to SGT Dennis Weichel, a Rhode Islander who served in the Rhode Island National Guard.

On March 22, Sergeant Weichel was in a convoy with his unit in Laghman Province, Afghanistan. Some children were in the road and Sergeant Weichel and other troops got out to move the children to safety. Most of the children moved out of the way, but one little girl went back to the road. As an MRAP approached, Sergeant Weichel pulled her out of the vehicle's path, but

in doing so he was hit by the vehicle. He was medically evacuated to Jalalabad Medical Treatment Facility, where a surgical team worked to stabilize him. But, tragically, he died from his injuries. Because of his heroic actions, the little girl he saved was unharmed in the accident. He will be laid to rest this Monday in Rhode Island, a hero—someone who exemplifies the qualities of the American soldier: selfless sacrifice for others.

Sergeant Weichel joined the National Guard in 2001. He was posthumously promoted to sergeant. He previously deployed to Iraq as a member of Detachment 2, Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, of the 172nd Infantry, Mountain. In November 2011, he mobilized for deployment to Afghanistan with the 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry Regiment.

Each generation of Americans is called upon to protect and sustain our democracy, and there are no greater heroes than the men and women who have worn the uniform of our Nation and who have sacrificed for our country to keep it safe and to keep it free.

It is our duty to protect the freedom they sacrificed their lives for through our service, our citizenship. We must continue to keep their memories alive and honor their heroism, not simply by words but by our deeds as citizens of this country.

Today our thoughts are with Sergeant Weichel's mother Linda, his father Dennis, brother Craig, his sisters Christine and Charlene, his children Nicholas and Hope and their mother Amanda, and his fiancée Ashley and their daughter Madison, and all his family and friends and his comrades-in-arms. We join them in commemorating his sacrifice and honoring his example of selfless service, of love, of courage, and of devotion to the soldiers with whom he served and the people of Afghanistan he was trying to help.

Sergeant Weichel is one among many Rhode Islanders who have proven their loyalty, their integrity, and their personal courage by giving the last full measure of their lives in service to our country in Afghanistan, in Iraq, and elsewhere around the globe and throughout the years. Today we honor his memory and all those who have served and sacrificed as he did.

Sergeant Weichel joins a roll of honor that includes the following Rhode Islanders killed since September 11, 2001:

SPC Dennis Poulin, Army National Guard; SGT Michael Paranzino, Army; PFC Kyle Coutu, Marine Corps; LTJG Francis L. Toner, IV, Navy; PO3 Ronald A. Gill, Jr., Coast Guard; SGT Michael R. Weidemann, Army; SGT Moises Jazmin, Army; SSG Dale James Kelly, Jr., Army National Guard; SGT Brian R. St. Germain, Marine Corps; SGT Dennis J. Flanagan, Army; 2LT Matthew S. Coutu, Army; LCPL Holly A. Charette, Marine Corps; SSG Christopher S. Potts, Army National Guard; LCPL John J. Van Gyzen, IV, Marine

Corps; CPT Christopher S. Cash, Army; LCPL Matthew K. Serio, Marine Corps; MSG Richard L. Ferguson, Army; SFC Curtis Mancini, Army Reserve; CPT Matthew J. August, Army; CW5 Sharon T. Swartworth, Army; SPC Michael Andrade, Army National Guard; SGT Charles T. Caldwell, Army National Guard; SSG Joseph Camara, Army National Guard; and SGT Gregory A. Belanger, Army Reserve.

All of these men and women have given their lives in the last decade in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is a roll of honor. It is a roll that Sergeant Weichel joins. It should be, for us, a roll not just to recognize and remember but to recommit to trying in some small way to match their great sacrifice for this great Nation.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, it is with great sadness but also considerable pride that I join Senator REED today to honor the service of SGT Dennis P. Weichel, Jr., of the Rhode Island National Guard, who died 1 week ago today while serving our country in Afghanistan.

Dennis' actions in defense of the lives of vulnerable civilians embody the most noble spirit of service, sacrifice, and loyalty found in the hearts of the men and women serving our Nation in uniform in the most dangerous corners of the globe. In particular, they reflect the spirit of service of the Rhode Island National Guard, which is the second most heavily deployed State guard in the country.

Dennis, who was 29 years old, lived in Providence. He had joined the Rhode Island National Guard in 2001, and he deployed to Iraq in 2005 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as a member of Company D, 3rd Battalion, 172nd Infantry, Mountain, Regiment. In November 2011, Dennis mobilized with Company C, 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry Regiment, 56th Troop Command, to Camp Atterbury, IN. His unit deployed forward to Afghanistan just this month.

He had only been in Afghanistan a few weeks when his unit encountered a group of children on its way out of the Black Hills Firing Range in Laghman Province. The children were scavenging in the road for brass shell casings, which are recyclable for money in Afghanistan.

Dennis, a father of three, hopped down from his vehicle to help move the children safely out of the path of the convoy of trucks and armored vehicles. As the heavy trucks rumbled past, it appears a young Afghan girl darted back into the road to grab one last brass shell casing. Seeing one of his unit's Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles bearing down on the girl, Dennis reacted swiftly and selflessly, lifting the girl to safety and placing himself in the path of the 16-ton MRAP.

I am sure this was a parent's instinct and that Dennis had in mind his own children: Nicholas, age 8; Hope, age 6; and baby Madison. Dennis was evacuated to the Jalalabad Medical Treatment Facility, and there he succumbed to his injuries.

Dennis leaves behind his fiancée Ashley, the mother of their 8-month-old baby girl Madison. He leaves behind his former wife Amanda, who is mother to his son Nicholas and his daughter Hope. He leaves behind his mother and father Linda Reynolds and Dennis Weichel, Sr.

My deepest and heartfelt sorrows and prayers go out to all of Dennis's family and to his friends. Senator REED and I will join them this weekend to pay our respects when Dennis comes home for the last time to Rhode Island.

Dennis acted with instinctive bravery on that road in Laghman Province. His action reflected the selfless dedication of an American soldier and the heart of a father toward a child. Dennis has been posthumously promoted from the rank of specialist to sergeant, and his family will receive the Bronze Star he has been awarded for heroism.

The writer Joseph Campbell once described a hero as someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than one's self. In giving his life to save one small child, SGT Dennis Weichel has reflected great honor upon our military and its best traditions and this great Nation and the values for which it stands. He will justly be remembered a hero.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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

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

EPA

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I wish to take some time this evening to congratulate our Environmental Protection Agency and to thank them for the rule they proposed this week regarding new coal-fired powerplants.

They have taken a certain amount of heat over this rule and have been criticized. But I come from Rhode Island, and Rhode Island is a downwind State from the coal-fired powerplants of the Midwest. We pay the price for the coal power those Midwestern States burn. We pay the price in children coming in to our hospitals with asthma attacks. We pay the price in ozone levels that are outside our control. We are a State that contributes very little in pollution to other States, but we are on the receiving end. We are down the gun barrel of the big array of coal-fired powerplants in the Midwest.

They have not only continued to burn dirty coal, they have built par-

ticularly high stacks so the emissions from that coal plant get pushed into the high atmosphere and they move east toward Rhode Island in the prevailing winds and we experience that as smog, as ozone, as air pollution. So there is an element of deliberateness to this.

There are places in this country that are in compliance with air quality standards because they have put their emissions up high enough that it lands somewhere else. Rhode Island is often out of compliance with air quality standards, and it is not from emissions in our home State. So we hear a lot from the coal-burning polluters about all the terrible things the EPA rule is going to cause. It is going to cause nothing but good in Rhode Island.

It is outrageous that on a bright, clear summer day one can be driving in to work in Rhode Island and hear over the car radio the announcer letting us know that today is going to be a bad air day in Rhode Island. We look out the window and it looks absolutely beautiful, but it is going to be a bad air day, they tell us. Infants should be kept indoors in air-conditioning, seniors should not go outside, people with breathing difficulties should stay indoors, and everyone should avoid vigorous physical activity because the air quality is too poor. That is not a price a carbon polluter in one State should get to require the seniors, the children, the families in another State to have to pay.

I am delighted EPA has begun to apply this rule. Unfortunately, it only applies to new powerplants. So the existing coal-burning powerplants that create so much of this pollution in our State, we are going to need to continue to work to crack down on until these States are sufficiently responsible in their use of power and in how they burn fuel to generate their power that they are not exporting bad air and pollution to other States.

As important as this is to Rhode Island as a downwind State, as important it is to protect the lungs of our kids and our families, this is also an important step for EPA to have taken because of the global problem we have from carbon pollution. The carbon pollution we are unleashing as a country—frankly, as a species across the globe—is having a dire effect in our atmosphere. It is having a dire effect in our oceans. It is truly causing our climate to change and the changes are going to be very difficult and very dangerous for our country in the future. That is not just my opinion. That is the opinion of our military leaders. That is the opinion of our national defense intelligence establishment. It is treated as a fact in those responsible quarters of our government.

Unfortunately, here and down there in the House of Representatives, there is a campaign of denial that is being propagated that is clearly supported by the polluting industries and has the purpose of protecting their financial