

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

interests and enabling them to continue to profit from the harm they are imposing on our oceans and on our atmosphere.

It would be nice if the laws of government could supersede the laws of nature. It would be nice if we could repeal the laws of physics, the laws of chemistry, the laws of biology, but we can't. It is arrogance to presume we could. The fact of what the carbon pollution is doing to our world can be denied in this Chamber, it can be denied down the hall in the House of Representatives all day long and all night long, and it is not going to change the result. It is actually only recently that there was a denial industry attacking the problem of climate change and trying to minimize it, trying to mock it, trying to distract people from it.

In the past, the denial industry was pointed elsewhere. In the past, the denial industry was supporting the tobacco companies in convincing people it wasn't that bad for them. The science isn't complete yet. Don't worry. There is still doubt.

It deployed itself against lead. When the dangers of lead paint became known, the denial industry went to bat for the lead industry. It denied that lead was very poisonous, said it only happened to very poor people, went through all their rigmarole. The same process: create doubt about a scientific concern in order to prevent action being taken to protect people. Now they have turned on carbon pollution.

But before they turned from tobacco and lead to carbon pollution, it was pretty well accepted how basic this science is. The first scientist to determine that carbon dioxide would have the effect of warming the atmosphere if its concentration increased was a scientist named Tyndall. I think he was Irish and wrote in England in 1865. Around the time of the Civil War, this was discovered.

By the year I was born, in 1955, there are basic texts that describe that the more carbon pollution we put into the air, the more it traps heat, the warmer the climate gets.

It is virtually indisputable what is happening to the oceans. We are not talking projections. We are not talking estimates. We are talking measurements, and the measurements show the acidity of our oceans and the increase in acidification is happening faster than it has in 3 million years. The extent of the carbon dioxide in our atmosphere now, measured, is outside of a bound that has been maintained on the surface of our planet for 800,000 years—8,000 centuries. That is a long time. We have only been farming as a species for about 10,000 years. So 800,000 takes us way back to a very primitive species. Through all that time, we have been in this bandwidth of carbon in our atmosphere and now we are out of it. We are flying out of it, and it is getting worse all the time.

Instead of taking it seriously in this building, we are listening to the siren

song of the big-money polluters, as if the laws of government, the laws of Congress could repeal the laws of nature that we know—the laws of physics, the laws of chemistry, the laws of biology that are causing this to happen.

I appreciate very much the Presiding Officer, the junior Senator from Minnesota, having been so energetic and helpful in continuing to bring this thought to the Senate floor. I think we had an effective and important colloquy on the floor several weeks ago discussing this very point. I think it is important that from time to time we stand and remind our colleagues that there is a truth to this matter. The truth is that we are releasing unprecedented, massive amounts of carbon pollution into our atmosphere that, as a matter of science, the laws of physics, warm the atmosphere, and that warming atmosphere creates dramatic changes in our weather, in our coasts, in our sea levels. Our coasts are probably going to be hit the hardest of any place, and Rhode Island is a coastal State.

The ocean absorbs the pollution, so the harm is not just in the atmosphere and to the climate, it is to the ocean itself as its pH level changes from the absorption of carbon. Nobody doubts that the ocean absorbs carbon. There is no credible debate on that. You can measure the ocean's pH.

It is important that every once in a while we tell the truth on this because the time is coming very close when it will be past the tipping point of taking the action we need to take to protect ourselves, protect our coasts, our economy, our national security.

I wanted to take this moment as the week ended to come and share my thoughts again on this subject. I will continue to do it from time to time because I think it is important that America be a country that tells the truth about problems, and I think it is important that Rhode Island, as an ocean State, be as protected as we can from the changes we see coming.

The IPCC just reported on the weather effects of climate change and said that you cannot assign a particular storm to the effects of climate change, but in various areas you can connect the threat to climate change with varying degrees of certainty. With respect to the threat from sea-level rise and from worsened storms driving that raised sea ashore and causing flooding and damage, the certainty range was 90 to 100 percent. If we are not going to listen to warnings that the scientists now tell us are 90 to 100 percent certain, we are really making a grievous mistake.

I will conclude by thanking the Presiding Officer again for his support and help. I hope the time comes when this body can actually treat this problem in a serious and sober way and the dark hand of the polluting industry tapping on our shoulders and whispering in our ears and telling us what we can and

cannot say is pushed back and instead we stand in the light of day, in the light of science and fact, and behave responsibly about the changes that are coming and our role in causing these changes.

I see the distinguished Senator from Georgia in the Chamber, and I yield the floor.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO FURMAN BISHER

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, next week the annual Masters Tournament will begin in Augusta, GA. It is a beautiful time of the year in our part of the world, and certainly Augusta is a little piece of Heaven, particularly this time of year.

As that tournament begins next week, there is going to be a sad note in the air because of the fact that Furman Bisher, a giant in the world of journalism, a man who has covered the Masters for the last 50 or so years, died last week at his home in Atlanta. He died at the age of 93 and passed away peacefully in his home after a storied career as one of the Nation's foremost sports writers. It was a career that lasted an astonishing 60 years.

After nearly six decades of elegant observations of the sports world for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Furman pecked out his final column before his October 2009 retirement on the thinning keys of his trusty Royal typewriter. His choice of instrument to convey his thoughts in this age of instantaneous, inane chatter says a lot about why newspaper readers after so many years continued to seek out Furman's Bisher's column in the AJC's sports pages.

It all came down to this: Furman's graceful prose, courtly voice and sharp observations were unfailingly backed up by old-fashioned shoe-leather reporting. He gloried in doing his homework, making that extra call, interviewing one more player or assistant coach or trainer, in order to breathe even more life into the game or the race or the fight for his readers.

It's also why Furman became a Georgia—and an American—institution. Simply put, Furman loved sports. And he loved journalism. At age 90, he was still driving out on summer nights to cover minor-league ballgames.

In his career, Furman scored many journalistic knockouts, including a 1949 interview with Shoeless Joe Jackson—the only one Jackson ever gave—regarding his involvement in the 1919 Black Sox scandal.

He got stock tips from Ty Cobb and watched Jack Nicklaus' 1986 Masters