

fuel oil—all with a COLA of zero percent.

The numbers show what Rhode Island seniors know: The problem with the Social Security COLA is that it is too low, that it doesn't meet the real costs seniors experience in real life.

Why does this happen? The existing cost-of-living formula considers prices across the whole economy, including products seniors are not so likely to buy, such as flat-screen TVs and smart phones and sporting equipment. Their prices may have fallen, but seniors don't benefit much from those lower prices.

The problem is that the current system fails to account for seniors' true costs in these areas. So my position is that we should move on to a more accurate formula for seniors, one that focuses on food, medicine and heating oil and gas and the other things seniors actually buy. I have been proud to support legislation to change the Social Security COLA formula to one that is geared more toward seniors, and I will continue to fight for the adoption of that new formula.

Chained CPI takes us in the opposite direction. It assumes consumers will alter the types of goods they buy as prices rise. But seniors on fixed incomes have little ability to shift their buying habits away from these basic expenses, things such as food, medical care, gasoline, and fuel oil. It is hard to shift away from those. The lower COLAs that chained CPI would produce will only cut into seniors' already tight budgets, and force seniors to bear the burden of reducing deficits that Social Security had no part in creating. A 0.3-percent reduction each year might sound small, but over time the power of compound interest makes those benefit cuts significant.

For people currently nearing retirement, these cuts would amount to annual benefit reductions of \$658 by the time they reach age 75, \$1,147 by the time they reach age 85, and \$1,622 by the time they reach age 95. That same power of compounding makes these cuts even larger for future generations of seniors. Perhaps \$658 or \$1,622 doesn't sound like much money to some folks around here, but to a senior in Rhode Island living on Social Security, that is real money.

After getting no COLA for 2 years in a row, Bethany, a senior from Smithfield, RI, wrote to me:

My health is not the best and it's not easy trying to survive on my Social Security and the increasing prices of gas, food, etc. and co-pays for medical. . . . The COLA calculation for Social Security doesn't work. We need an increase yearly to stay even with rising premiums and everyday expenses. Please continue to fight for Social Security and Medicare.

Deanne from Coventry, RI, wrote to me in February:

I am 68 years old and retired. I cannot work even part time because of severe Arthritis. My son lives with me who is permanently disabled due to an accident when he was 9 years old. He is now 44 years old. We

just make ends meet with Social Security as we have no other income. We wear sweat shirts and pants to bed and coats in the house during the winter because we can't pay the high prices of oil. If Social Security gets cut, I don't know how we will make it. I have worked all my adult life until the last two years. I NEED my Social Security. . . . In the face of ever-increasing prices for health care, home heating, prescription drugs and grocery bills, asking seniors to give up more and more of their Social Security benefit as they age when every dollar counts is just plain wrong.

These are real-life experiences of people who are the kind of folks chained CPI would affect. Yes, we need to make additional sacrifices to complete the job of deficit reduction; no, those burdens should not fall on our elderly and disabled constituents. Our deficits come from unnecessary Bush-era tax cuts that virtually exclusively benefited the wealthy, they come from a decade of wars we didn't pay for, and they come from the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. They have nothing to do with Social Security, so don't take it out on the seniors.

As the Senate budget shows, we can complete the task of stabilizing our Nation's finances in smart ways, in fair ways, in balanced ways, in ways that don't put the burden on those who can least afford it.

When I ran for this office, I pledged to the people of Rhode Island that I would oppose cuts to Social Security, and I will keep that promise.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CONGRATULATING THE STILLER FAMILY FOUNDATION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Bob and Christine Stiller and their Stiller Family Foundation for receiving the Most Outstanding Foundation Award of 2013 from the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

The Most Outstanding Foundation award is given annually to honor a foundation that demonstrates outstanding commitment through financial support, innovation, encourage-

ment, and motivation of others to take leadership roles in philanthropy and community involvement.

Previous recipients of this prestigious award include the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, among many others.

The Stiller Family Foundation has benefited youth centers, arts organizations, urban renewal projects, and education institutions throughout Vermont. The foundation recently announced a major grant to create the Robert P. Stiller School of Business at the Champlain College of Vermont and established a permanent endowment for the study of appreciative inquiry at the school.

My wife Marcelle and I have known Bob and Christine a long time. As life-long philanthropists, they have made a positive impact in communities around the globe through their pointed leadership, innovative ideas, and generous funding. It is hard to mention all of their many achievements. As founder of the highly successful Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Bob continues to promote sustainable business practices through environmental and fair trade initiatives all over the world. And Christine has been a strong advocate for Champlain College's Single Parents Program, which offers single parents the opportunity to break generational cycles of poverty by helping them fund a college education. Vermont is a better place because of all the work done by Bob and Christine Stiller.

I request unanimous consent that this article from the Burlington Free Press be printed at this point in the RECORD.

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

[From the Burlington Free Press, Apr. 12, 2013]

#### STILLER FAMILY FOUNDATION RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION

The Association of Fundraising Professionals recently honored Green Mountain Coffee Roasters Founder Bob Stiller and his wife Christine and their Stiller Family Foundation with the Most Outstanding Foundation Award of 2013.

The award was made at the Association's international conference in San Diego on April 6.

The Most Outstanding Foundation award is given annually to honor a foundation that demonstrates outstanding commitment through financial support, innovation, encouragement and motivation of others to take leadership roles in philanthropy and national, international and/or community involvement.

The award dates back to 1989, and has previously been given to the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, among others.

The Stiller Foundation's initiatives are primarily focused on people and communities in Vermont and Florida. The Stillers

have a home in Palm Beach. In Vermont, the Foundation supports local organizations and institutions including King Street Youth Center, Burlington City Arts, ReBuild Waterbury and Champlain College.

Champlain College in Burlington has been one of the largest beneficiaries of the Foundation, which recently granted the college \$10 million for the creation of the Robert P. Stiller School of Business and establishment of a permanent endowment to promote programs in Appreciative Inquiry and other positive psychology-based management approaches.

#### OBSERVING ARMENIAN GENOCIDE REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, 98 years ago today, the Ottoman Empire in Turkey launched one of the most horrific episodes in human history. The detention and eventual execution of hundreds of members of Turkey's ethnic Armenian minority launched a genocidal campaign of deportation and starvation in which more than 1.5 million people ultimately perished.

We mark Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day, first, because those who perished deserve to be remembered, but we also do so as a reminder: a reminder of the horrible violence that ethnic hatred can inflame; a reminder that too often, governments have employed those hatreds and passions; and a reminder that the world's silence in the face of one such episode of atrocity can embolden others who would seek to emulate it. It is often noted that Adolph Hitler, in justifying his invasion of Poland in 1939, told his commanders: "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?" Silence in the face of governments that abuse and oppress their people simply enables the perpetrators of violence and injustice.

I join the many members of the Armenian-American community and Armenians around the world in the hope that the Government of the Republic of Turkey which we should remember played no role in the Armenian genocide can work together with the Government of Armenia to heal the divisions that remain nearly a century after this dark episode. That should include an honest and forthright dialogue about the nature of the events and the impact that it has had which is still with us today. Already, the governments of these two nations have negotiated an agreement to open the border between them, an agreement that includes a pledge to establish an independent commission of historians to review and come to a common understanding of the events of a century ago. I am hopeful that this agreement can be ratified and implemented.

It is also worth remembering that Turkey, a vital U.S. ally, is playing an enormously important role in confronting a more recent atrocity: the death of thousands of Syrian civilians at the hands of a dictatorial government seeking to hold on to power at any cost. More than 75,000 Syrians have

died in this strife, and more than 1 million of them are refugees. Many of those refugees have sought shelter in Turkey. I have joined with Senator McCAIN and others in calling for our government to explore additional ways of supporting the efforts of Turkey and other nations to protect Syria's people. That call is motivated, in part, by the memory of historic episodes in which the community of nations has failed to act when confronted by such evil.

Our remembrance of the Armenian genocide makes it incumbent upon us to bear witness to this and other modern atrocities against human and civil rights. By our refusal to remain silent in the face of today's violence and injustice, we honor the victims of the Armenian genocide and other atrocities against decency and humanity.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 98th anniversary of the Armenian genocide.

In 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide based in part on the horrific crimes perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire against the Armenian people in the early 20th Century.

Between 1915 and 1923, more than 1.5 million Armenians were marched to their deaths in the deserts of the Middle East, murdered in concentration camps, drowned at sea, and forced to endure horrific acts of brutality at the hands of the Ottoman Empire.

Yet, in the 65 years that have passed since the Convention was adopted, successive U.S. administrations have refused to call the deliberate massacre of the Armenians by its rightful name genocide.

For many years, I have urged both Democratic and Republican administrations to finally acknowledge the truth. I do so again today. It is long past time for our government to acknowledge, once and for all, that the Armenian genocide is a widely documented fact supported by an overwhelming body of historical evidence.

In fact, the Armenian genocide along with the Holocaust is one of the most studied cases of genocide in history. Tragically, Adolf Hitler even used the Ottoman Empire's action against the Armenians to justify the extermination of the Jews in the Holocaust, saying in 1939, "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?"

A number of sovereign nations, ranging from Argentina to France, as well as 43 out of 50 U.S. States have recognized what happened to the Armenians as genocide. Yet successive U.S. administrations continue only to refer to the Armenian genocide as an annihilation, massacre, or murder.

The entire Armenian community and the descendants of the victims of the Armenian genocide continue to suffer prolonged pain each and every day that goes by without full acknowledgement by the United States.

I hope that this is the year that we finally right this terrible wrong because the United States cannot and does not turn a blind eye to atrocities around the globe. In fact, the United States is often the first to speak out in the face of violence and unspeakable suffering and to urge other countries to respond. But sadly, our Nation is on the wrong side of history when it comes to the Armenian genocide.

So this April 24, as we pause to remember the victims and to celebrate the many contributions Armenian Americans have made to our great country, I hope that the United States will finally and firmly stand on the right side of history and officially condemn the crimes of 1915 to 1923 by their appropriate name.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### PLYMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I rise today in honor of Plymouth, NH—a town in Grafton County that is celebrating the 250th anniversary of its founding. I am proud to join citizens across the Granite State in recognizing this historic event.

Plymouth was built at the convergence of the Pemigewasset and Baker rivers amid the beautiful White Mountains.

Plymouth was granted a charter by Gov. Benning Wentworth in 1763 and incorporated later that same year. It is named after the original Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts.

The population has grown to include over 7,000 residents. The patriotism and commitment of the people of Plymouth is reflected in part by their record of service in defense of our Nation.

Some of Plymouth's most notable residents include U.S. Senator and Congressman Henry W. Blair, Pulitzer Prize-winning authors Robert Frost and John Cheever, as well as Harl Pease. Mr. Pease was a World War II pilot and recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

New Hampshire native, and then attorney, Daniel Webster, who went on to become one of the Senate's great orators, tried and lost his first criminal case in the Plymouth Courthouse.

Based in Plymouth, the Draper and Maynard Sporting Goods Company sold directly to the Boston Red Sox. Many early players would make the journey to Plymouth and select their equipment for the upcoming season.

Plymouth Normal School was founded in 1871 and became the State's first teachers college. This institution would subsequently become the Plymouth Teachers College, Plymouth State College, and is known today as Plymouth State University.

Plymouth is a place that has contributed much to the life and spirit of the State of New Hampshire. I am pleased to extend my warm regards to the people of Plymouth as they celebrate the town's 250th anniversary. •