

Armed Services, because I know how much he wants to get to this bill. I do not understand the objection that I know is not his personally but comes from his side. I do not understand how we are advancing this bill and advancing the cause of reaching debate on amendments on this bill by objecting to move to the amendments that I think everybody wants to debate. I do not understand how that advances any cause. I know this is not the approach of the Senator from Oklahoma. We have a very bipartisan committee.

Anyway, I will leave it at that. I hope in the morning we can find a way to do what I think everybody says they want to do, which is to begin an amendment process on this bill.

I want to end by again thanking him. He has not only had his personal health issue, but, as the majority leader and all of us know in this body, he has had a very tragic loss, and he is working very hard through that. We doubly and triply appreciate his service to this body and his bipartisan work on the Armed Services Committee. It is invaluable. I don't want anything that I say tonight about being frustrated that we cannot start debate on two amendments that everybody wants to debate in any way to imply anything other than a very positive relationship that we have.

Mr. REID. Reclaiming my time, I ask unanimous consent to yield back all postcloture time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is on the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1197) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

##### AMENDMENT NO. 2123

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. On behalf of Senator LEVIN, I have an amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] for Mr. LEVIN, for himself and Mr. INHOFE, proposes an amendment numbered 2123.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To increase to \$5,000,000,000 the ceiling on the general transfer authority of the Department of Defense)

On page 310, line 14, strike "\$4,000,000,000" and insert "\$5,000,000,000".

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays on that amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

##### AMENDMENT NO. 2124 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2123

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator LEVIN, I have an amendment at the desk. I ask the clerk to report.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], for Mr. LEVIN, for himself and Mr. INHOFE, proposes an amendment numbered 2124 to amendment No. 2123.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To improve the amendment)

On page 1, line 2, strike "\$5,000,000,000" and insert "\$5,000,000,001".

Mr. REID. I have a motion to recommit S. 1197 with instructions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] moves to recommit the bill to the Committee on Armed Services with instructions to report back forthwith with the following amendment, No. 2125.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 3 days after enactment.

Mr. REID. On that motion, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

##### AMENDMENT NO. 2126

Mr. REID. I have an amendment to the instructions at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], proposes an amendment numbered 2126 to the instructions of the motion to recommit.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike "3 days" and insert "2 days".

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays on that amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

##### AMENDMENT NO. 2127 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2126

Mr. REID. I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], proposes an amendment numbered 2127 to amendment No. 2126.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike "2 days" and insert "1 day".

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for 10 minutes each until 8 o'clock this evening, and

as I thought I said, Mr. President, this will be for debate only.

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

The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, what we have just seen on this floor tonight is just more and more of the same obstruction. This is now the fourth DC Circuit judge the Republicans have filibustered. That means they have not allowed us to have an up-or-down vote.

I am not going to go into the qualifications of these people; they are stellar. We will have more time to debate that. But it is extraordinary. We never heard that the DC court should become a smaller court when George Bush was President, or any other President. Now, all of a sudden they want to shrink the court when, in fact, this is probably—I would say it is the most important circuit in the country, and it has a very important caseload.

First we see that obstructionism, the filibuster of the court nominees, and then we see my dear friend the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee I think reluctantly object to moving forward with two amendments that are essential to the bill. There are two amendments; one has to do with Guantanamo, one has to do with sexual assault in the military.

My friend from Oklahoma, representing the Republicans, said: We want an open amendment process. Just so people know what that means, when someone says: We want an open amendment process, it means they want to offer amendments that have nothing to do with the Defense bill, to this particular bill. Again, we are stymied.

I was just home. People are saying: Why don't you guys get along? Why don't you get things done?

We are trying. We did not have one Democrat filibuster the judges. We didn't have one Democrat oppose moving forward with two critical amendments.

Mr. President, we see obstructionism here from my Republican friends. They are my friends. They are my friends, but I do not get this. This is a military bill. This is a dangerous world. We are bringing our troops back from hot spots around the world. They are still in great danger. We have sexual assault in the military that I am going to talk about that is rampant. We have so many issues we want to address. Yet we hear objection.

We can only hope that in the light of day tomorrow, cooler heads will prevail and we can begin debating and voting on these critical amendments. It is puzzling. It took us days and days to do the compounding bill, which is a bill necessary to make sure the pharmaceutical outlets that compound drugs are safe. It passed the House. It is uncontroversial—days and days because a Senator wants to talk about the health care of Members of Congress.

We better start doing the work of the people because that is why we are here.

We cannot go down any lower in public opinion. It is embarrassing—9 percent of the people think we are doing a good job. At first I thought it is our families, but now I am even doubting they think we are doing a good job. I don't know who the 9 percent is, but thank you, thank you, thank you. It will get better when we start working together.

I am very hopeful. I am going to chair the Water Resources Development Act conference. We are going to conference on that bill. It is 500,000 jobs. A bill passed the House. We have a good bill here in the Senate that passed. We hope to iron out our differences. I know Senator MURRAY and PAUL RYAN are trying to bring us agreement on the budget. I pray they get that done.

Meanwhile, we have a bill that should bring us together, the Defense Authorization Act. Yet what happens? Stymied. We have supremely qualified judges for the circuit court. What happens? They are filibustered. We cannot vote on them and they are left out there hanging, with all their qualifications. It is ridiculous.

Something has to give.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 2181

There are a couple of issues I have worked hard on in terms of this bill. I have a number of amendments, but I want to talk about two with which I have been very involved. One is my own amendment No. 2181, which is based on a bill I wrote with Senator GRAHAM, LINDSEY GRAHAM. The bill is quite bipartisan. We have an amazing list of cosponsors. I am going to read them in alphabetical order: AYOTTE, BAUCUS, BLUMENTHAL, BLUNT, CARDIN, CHAMBLISS, COLLINS, COONS, DONNELLY, FISCHER, GILLIBRAND, GRAHAM, HIRONO, KLOBUCHAR, MCCAIN, MCCASKILL, MURKOWSKI, SHAHEEN, TESTER, and WARNER. This is wonderful.

The amendment I have written is going to reform what we call the article 32 proceeding. In the military, when there is a sexual assault and the decision is made to move forward with a trial, there is first a pretrial investigation. This is called an article 32 proceeding. It is the equivalent of a civilian pretrial hearing. Even though there is supposed to be a rape shield law in place, it does not work. What is happening is these article 32 proceedings have become their own trials, an opportunity for the defense counsel to harass and intimidate sexual assault victims. In fact, according to the DOD, 30 percent of sexual assault victims who originally agree to help prosecute their offenders change their minds before the trial because they know and they told us they are revictimized by the process. I am going to give a few examples.

In April 2012, a 20-year-old female midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy was raped by three football players at an off-campus party. The young woman testified during the article 32 proceeding, where she was forced to endure roughly 30 hours of relentless questioning by attorneys for her

attackers. The questioning included graphic questions about her sexual history and even what she was wearing under her clothes. Anyone who knows anything about the civilian legal system knows this would never, ever be allowed—never.

In October 2008, while stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in San Diego, Elizabeth Lyman was raped in her barracks by another marine. She was 11 weeks pregnant at the time. She was forced to testify at two article 32 proceedings before her case was sent to a court-martial. This is what she said:

My rapist hired a civilian attorney who asked me outrageous questions. . . . These questions were extremely upsetting to me. I had just been discharged from the hospital when I was told I had to take the stand for a second time and I was told I had no choice if I wanted the charges to go forward. This is what has become of the procedure for article 32.

I went to Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM because he is an expert and indeed an attorney. He has served in the position of counsel, and right away he said it was revictimization. It is wrong, it is a runaway train, and we have to fix it. I am so grateful to him for helping us.

In July 2012, a 23-year-old marine named Karalen Morthole was raped by a master sergeant in a bar on the grounds of the Marine Barracks in Washington, DC. Earlier this year she testified in an article 32 proceeding against her alleged attacker. According to her, "The overall experience was painful. It was the first time since the night of the rape that I saw the man who hurt me. It was a terrifying and uncomfortable experience. I felt dehumanized being made out as a liar, and blamed for everything that happened to me. . . . The intimidation tactics, the blaming, all in front of the man who raped me were completely overwhelming."

She supports this bipartisan amendment to reform article 32. She said people don't come forward because they know they are going to be revictimized, and so they walk away.

I am very pleased we have strong bipartisan support for this amendment. I know we have a very big debate going on and everybody is torn asunder on the other issue of whether to keep the prosecution decisions in the chain of command for serious offenses. But on this one—limiting the scope of article 32—we have broad support. I am proud to say that I even have support of Chairman LEVIN and Senator INHOFE. We have a tremendous group of people who have helped us.

We will have these proceedings presided over by a military lawyer when possible. The proceedings are going to be recorded. We will prevent victims from being forced to testify in these proceedings. They can have alternative forms of testimony instead. So these are the basic commonsense reforms.

I am very happy to say that with the strong support we have from so many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, as well as the support of Chair-

man LEVIN, I feel very positive. But to get this done and stop this revictimization of people who are distraught after having been attacked and brutally raped and hurt, we need a bill to come up, and we don't need objections so we can move forward. We need to move forward with this bill, and I truly hope we can.

This article 32 reform brings us all together. It brings CLAIRE MCCASKILL and KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND together. It brings Senator BLUNT and myself together. It is a very bipartisan reform. There are already several reforms in this bill we are proud of. Senator MIKULSKI is organizing us tomorrow to talk about those reforms, and this is one more we can add.

In closing my remarks tonight, I wish to take on the issue of the Gillibrand amendment No. 2099. I am so very proud to stand with a very bipartisan group of colleagues in support of KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND's amendment. These colleagues perhaps don't agree on much. When I am on the same side as TED CRUZ, that is something; right? When KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND is on the same side as RAND PAUL, that is something. It goes on and on down the line. We also have Senator GRASSLEY's support.

By the way, 17 of 20 women Senators support the Gillibrand amendment. I hope that is a message—that this is the right way to go, and I am going to explain it.

My involvement in this is deep and long. Twenty years ago we were all outraged to learn that nearly 100 women and men had been sexually harassed and assaulted by a group of naval aviators during a convention of the Tailhook Association. I think a lot of us who were around then remember that. I was a new Senator at the time, and I was completely shocked at what happened. They had a gauntlet that people walked through. They were harassed, hurt, and distraught when it was over.

In the wake of the Tailhook scandal, senior military leaders promised to crack down on the crime of sexual assault with then-Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney declaring a zero tolerance policy.

I will show how many times different Secretaries of Defense—Democrat and Republican—have promised they were going to take care of this. When the military comes to lobby us against this, I say to them: When are you going to embrace true reform? Because for 20 years we have been hearing this baloney, and I will read now.

Secretary Rumsfeld, who served from January 2001 to December 2006, said: "Sexual assault will not be tolerated in the Department of Defense."

Secretary William Cohen, who served from January 1997 to January 2001, said: "I intend to enforce a strict policy of zero tolerance of hazing, of sexual harassment, and of racism." He said that on January 31, 1997.

Secretary William Perry, who served from February 1994 until January 1997,

said: "For all of these reasons, therefore, we have zero tolerance for sexual harassment."

Secretary Cheney, who served from 1989 until 1993, said: "Well, we've got a major effort underway to try to educate everybody, to let them know that we've got a zero-tolerance policy where sexual harassment's involved."

I wish to correct the RECORD.

When Tailhook happened, I was in the House. I got to the Senate right after that because it was 1991, and I was elected in 1992. I continued my work on this when I got to the Senate. I have to be honest and say I believed the military when they said it would never happen again. I said: Well, that is it. This thing is out and it will never happen again. I was wrong. By the way, that is the worst thing a politician ever wants to say: I was wrong. Those are three words you never want to say: I was wrong.

I believed the Pentagon. I thought they would take care of it. They have never taken care of it. Now we have Chuck Hagel, who, to my knowledge, is now lobbying against the KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND approach.

Secretary Hagel said:

It's not good enough to say we have a zero tolerance policy. We do, but what does that mean? How does that translate into changing anything? I want to know.

He wants to know. I will tell him. Support the KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND amendment. Change and reform this. Take these serious offenses outside of the chain of command. It is not working.

Leon Panetta, who served from July 2011 until February 2013, said: "We have absolutely no tolerance for any form of sexual assault." He didn't take anything outside the chain of command either.

Secretary Robert Gates, who served from 2006 until 2011, said: "This is a matter of grave concern. I have zero tolerance for sexual assault."

Really? Every one of these men had zero tolerance for sexual assault. Yet not one of them ever lived up to the promise. Sexual assault is running rampant. We have 26,000 cases a year, and do you know what percent get reported? Ten percent get reported. Do you know what percent of cases don't get reported? Ninety percent. We have a 90-percent problem. There are 26,000 cases and only 10 percent get reported. Ninety percent don't get reported.

So then you say: Why? Why is it? The answer comes back from the victims: Nothing will happen. We will be re-victimized. We will get blamed. They will blame us. We will get kicked out. We have to go to our commander. He is not trained in this. Please change it.

If a whole group of people who have been victimized tell you the reason why they will not report the crime, you ought to listen. They know better than any Senator. They know better than any Defense Department blue ribbon panel.

Speaking of panels, there is a panel that has a funny name called

DACOWITS, which stands for Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services. They have one job; that is to provide recommendations on policies relating to women in the military. Guess what. They endorsed the Gillibrand amendment. There was not one vote against it.

How can Senators—and I have friends on both sides of the aisle—stand with a straight face and say we can keep the status quo, when all the victims are saying no, and the one committee that has advised the military on women for over 60 years says no. I say listen to the victims, listen to the military's advisory committee. Don't listen to the top brass who are running around, going to everybody's offices trying to undermine us. Just for the record, they have not come to my office because they know where I stand.

If they came to my office, the first thing I would do is look at them and say: What would you do if this happened to your daughter? What would you do? Would you tell her to report it to a commander who may be very friendly with the guy who did this?

Let me tell you, there is a moment in time when you see an issue clearly, and it happens in funny ways. The woman who has been nominated to be Under Secretary of the Navy made a statement about this issue. When I read this statement, you will understand why the victims are so right.

I know the Presiding Officer has worked hard on this issue as well. Dr. Jo Ann Rooney, the nominee to be Under Secretary of the Navy was asked the following question: In your view, what would be the impact of requiring a judge advocate outside the chain of command to determine whether allegations of sexual assault should be prosecuted?

In other words, she was asked about the Gillibrand amendment. Should we take the prosecution of military sexual assault and other serious crimes outside the chain of command? Listen to her answer. This is the advertisement for the Gillibrand amendment.

She said:

A judge advocate outside the chain of command will be looking at a case through a different lens than a military commander. I believe the impact would be decisions based on evidence . . .

Can you believe that? She said: "I believe the impact would be decisions based on evidence . . ."

I ask rhetorically: Isn't that what justice is about, decisions based on the evidence? She goes on to say, ". . . rather than the interest in preserving good order and discipline." I would argue, A, you base these decisions on the evidence; and, B, there is no good order and discipline when there are 26,000 cases of sexual assault and only 10 percent are reported.

What kind of order is that? We have thousands of perpetrators running around the military, and there are thousands of victims scared to death. They are brokenhearted, broken down,

and their spirit is broken. How do Senators actually stand here and say: We are going to just keep it the way it is. We are going to turn our backs on these victims.

Listen to this story from a young woman in my State. I stood next to her and held her hand when she told this story. Stacey Thompson was drugged and brutally raped by a male sergeant while stationed in Okinawa, Japan. She reported the rape to her superiors, but her allegations were swept under the rug. While her attacker was allowed to leave the Marine Corps without ever facing trial, Stacey became the target of a drug investigation, and this is why. Her perpetrator drugged her and he dumped her on the street. He left her on the street after being raped and drugged. He gets out of the military scot-free and they start an investigation on her drug use, even though she never used drugs, except the drugs her perpetrator gave her.

I stood next to this young woman. She had never told her story until—and it happened in 1999—until KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND put her bill forward.

I want to make this point: Half of the victims are men. When I talk about 26,000 victims, half of them are men. These are violent crimes.

So here is the story of Amando Javier. He was serving in the Marine Corps in 1993. He was brutally raped and physically assaulted by a group of fellow marines. Ashamed and fearing for his life, he kept his rape a secret for 15 years. When he finally found the courage to share the story with a friend, he wrote it down, and I will read some of his words:

My experience left me torn apart physically, mentally, and spiritually. I was dehumanized and treated with ultimate cruelty, by my perpetrators . . . I was embarrassed and ashamed and didn't know what to do. I was young at that time. And being part of an elite organization that values brotherhood, integrity and faithfulness made it hard to come forward and reveal what happened.

So it is two decades later, and not one person—not one—has been held accountable for this heinous crime. The perpetrators are still out there and they are able to recommit these horrific crimes again.

Ariana Klay. Here is the last story. She graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy. She joined the Marines. She deployed to Iraq in 2008. Following her return from Iraq, she was selected to serve at the Marine Barracks in Washington, a very prestigious post. It is right down the street from here. At the Marine Barracks, Ariana was subjected to constant sexual harassment. When she tried to report it, do my colleagues know what her chain of command told her? "Deal with it." That is akin to telling a little child who is being abused somewhere to deal with it.

That is the culture my colleagues want to keep—"deal with it"? No. It is a crime. Help the person. Go after the perpetrator. Get a trained prosecutor in there to find out if it is true and if it is true, prosecute to the hilt.

In August 2010, she was gang-raped by a senior Marine officer and his friend who broke into her home. Ariana, despite all the warning signs, reported her assault. But a Marine Corps investigation determined she had welcomed the harassment. Do my colleagues know why? This is what they said: She wore makeup and she exercised in shorts and tank tops. What?

The Marine Corps did court-martial one of Ariana's rapists, but they never convicted him of rape. Do my colleagues know what he was convicted of? Adultery and indecent language. Please. How could anyone who listens to the victims say they are not going to vote for the Gillibrand amendment?

I stood with Ariana along with a large group of colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, right here the other day. Her husband is a former Marine Corps officer and he spoke at the press conference. This is what he said. It is so important to listen to what he said:

The first step to addressing sexual assault in the military is to remove its prosecution from the chain of command. It is unfair to expect commanders to be able to maintain good order and discipline as long as their justice system incentivizes and empowers them to deny their units' worst disciplinary failures ever happened.

In his statement—and it is on YouTube and I hope people will listen to it. In his statement, he talks about the fact that he was a commander and he was in the middle of war. He said, as a commander, I have one job to do; that is, to have a fighting machine that is second to none. I want you to know, when I am told to deal with sexual harassment or a crime of any sort, I am not trained to do it. It is a distraction.

I will read the exact quote so my colleagues don't think I am exaggerating. He said:

I used to feel a commander's disinterest in the law, too. During my training and deployments to Iraq, I focused on fighting. My life and those of my Marines depended on it. Legal issues were divisive, distracting, and confusing; they made me resent those who brought them to my attention, and feel bias as strong as my relationships with those involved. Commanders can be forgiven for thinking war is their most important job, and it should be expected that they'll manage the judicial process as a side-show and an annoyance.

This is someone who served as a commander and is telling us it is not right to keep loading these commanders up with all of these different responsibilities when their main responsibility is to fight and win wars.

So our amendment, the Kirsten Gillibrand amendment, would take the decision about whether to prosecute serious crimes such as sexual assault out of the hands of commanders and give it to professionally trained military prosecutors outside the chain of command. If something, God forbid, were to happen in the Presiding Officer's office or my office—something very bad, some crime, upstairs in a room somewhere in our office—we are not trained to deal

with that. We would immediately call law enforcement to deal with it, wouldn't we? We are not going to decide who is right and wrong. One person is saying he did it. The other one is saying she did it. People are crying and yelling in our office. We are not going to. It is not right. It has to be taken outside our office to the trained prosecutors to determine who was at fault. The chips will fall where they may. Maybe a Senator has a favorite of the two people involved in the altercation. We are not objective, and we are not trained for that—at least I am not. It would be similar to saying a CEO of a corporation should make a decision about whether one or more of her employees should be prosecuted for rape. That is not right. We don't have the decision made within the organization. It has to be outside.

Under our amendment, complex legal decisions would be made by experienced and impartial legal experts because the decision to prosecute serious crimes should be based on evidence. Nothing else should enter into it except evidence. Jo Ann Rooney made the point for us. She said, essentially, watch out if you take it outside the chain of command, it will be based on evidence, not on discipline. Some discipline. Some discipline: 26,000 cases and 90 percent go unreported. What kind of discipline is that? It is not discipline. People are getting away with it. They are getting away with it.

The men and women who risk their lives every day deserve a better system. I can't tell my colleagues how many victims I have met. They were destroyed by the system. They were destroyed by that culture. Men and women are begging us to act.

Tonight we had a chance to agree we would begin debate and voting on this important amendment. It was objected to by the Republicans. We need to get to the vote. I hope when we do that we will have the votes necessary.

I wish to make another point: There is a filibuster going on here. We are going to need 60 votes. We have over 50. Let's be clear. We have over 50. I am very sorry we have to get to 60, but there are those on both sides who are demanding that we get to 60. It is 20 years after Tailhook. This is our moment to make the change we should have made back then. It is time to stand up to all the people who say status quo, status quo, status quo. If the status quo was working, I would support it. If the status quo was working, the victims would come forward. They wouldn't run away and say: I can't deal with this.

Think about the thousands of perpetrators who are running around the military doing this over and over. Think about when they get out and now they are on the street in civilian life doing it over and over again. If they think they can get away with this behavior—this abuse of power, this violence, this hurt—they are going to continue.

I hope colleagues will make the decision to stand with us, with our terrific bipartisan group we have lined up behind this amendment, this Gillibrand amendment. I am very proud to have been working on this for a long time, and I think we are moving in the right direction. We are very close to 60 votes. I urge any colleague who might be within the sound of my voice, if they haven't decided, meet with a victim, meet with a victims' group, listen to their pleas. Listen to how smart they are. They understand what happened to them and they are begging us to stand up to the status quo, to the powerful Pentagon. We are taking on the most powerful organization in the world. But on this, they are wrong. They are right on a lot of other things, but on this they are wrong.

I look forward to proudly casting my vote for the Gillibrand amendment.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO CLAY LARKIN

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the outstanding work of Clay Larkin, who is retiring after serving for 13 years as Mayor of Post Falls, ID.

Mayor Larkin has dedicated immense time and covered considerable ground serving the people of Post Falls. He has devoted nearly 18 years to advancing the community, and Post Falls has thrived under his leadership. He served on the city council for 5 years before becoming mayor. As a strong and consistent advocate for the city, he helped bring considerable commerce to the area. His efforts also helped establish a foundation for further economic development and infrastructure improvements.

Additionally, under his leadership, community resources, including a library, city hall and police station, have been constructed, and he has worked to protect essential resources. Further, he has invested time and effort into emphasizing opportunities for youth, who are the future of our communities, State, and Nation. Mayor Larkin's work has understandably been recognized through numerous awards and honors. He is acknowledged for his devotion to making progress, his ability to adapt to changes, and his perseverance.

Post Falls and Idaho have been blessed to benefit from Clay's sound leadership. I thank Clay Larkin for his exceptional service, congratulate him on his retirement, and wish him all the best. I hope that retirement provides him more time with loved ones and the time for fishing he so greatly deserves.●

##### TRIBUTE TO REBECCA SPENCER

• Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, for the past 25 years, Rev. Rebecca Spencer has provided parishioners at the United Church of Christ's Central