

being developed to address Alzheimer's is carried out. We want to reinforce the initial steps to a greater investment in finding answers, and I think everyone is on that same track.

We believe that supporting the goals and implementation of the National Alzheimer's Project Act and the National Plan to Address Alzheimer's Disease is the right course to follow.

Achieving these goals means Federal funding must be there to implement it. I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan resolution and reinforce our national commitment to turning around the seeming inevitability of this terrible disease.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure investments are made in Alzheimer's research.

Let me just say parenthetically, if you think we can sequester funds for the National Institutes of Health and honestly deal with the challenge of Alzheimer's, you are wrong. You cannot cut funding at the National Institutes of Health in the name of sequestration, cutting grants that could find breakthrough cures for many diseases. You cannot cut those funds and discourage researchers from even participating in future research and expect to solve the medical challenges that face us, including Alzheimer's.

I am urging my colleagues to look at this not as just a matter of resolutions, which are important, but also funding which is critical so we can find the solutions to these problems in a manner that is reasonable and quickly done.

ILLINOIS STORMS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, before I give a statement on another topic, I would like to note that we continue to focus on the damage that was caused last Sunday by deadly tornadoes and storms in Illinois, estimated to have exceeded \$1 billion in cost.

We have seen some scenes from that wreckage in places such as Washington, IL—the hardest hit in our State. They experienced an EF4 tornado, with wind speeds close to 200 miles an hour.

I can recall one news report where a man went home and could not find his SUV—an indication of the ferocity and the intensity of the winds that wiped a swath of devastation through this great town in central Illinois.

Power lines are still down, and there are gas leaks. There is still danger there. But the first responders were there. The obvious helpers, the Red Cross and Salvation Army, are on the scene. Federal, State, and local agencies are pitching in.

Equally important—I spoke to the mayor—the people are pitching in. Those who survived are helping those who have had the most damage: finding them a place to sleep, making sure they have enough to eat, trying to put their lives back together and go through the salvage and recover the important items to their families.

The EF4 that tore through Washington was one of two that touched down in my State that day. The other one struck New Minden, which is down near the metro East St. Louis area, and caused unbelievable damage.

All told, 84 tornadoes were reported throughout the Midwest on Sunday.

We know more about the people whose lives were lost in this terrible event. Three died in Massac County, in deep southern Illinois: Kathy George, who was 58 years old, a devoted wife and mother; Robert Harmon, an avid motorcyclist; Scholitta Burrus, who was excited to visit her son for Thanksgiving. In Washington County, a brother and sister—Joseph and Frances Hoy—died in a tornado. They lived together on a farm near New Minden.

Joseph Hoy was president of the Midwest Bird and Animal Breeders Association. In Tazewell County, Steve Neubauer, of Washington—he was a mechanic and often helped his neighbors repair their tractors and lawnmowers.

My thoughts and prayers are with their families and friends. It is bad enough to lose your home, but someone you love is irreplaceable. I want them to know we are thinking of them at this moment.

There is a lot to do. We have to pitch in and help the communities that have been so heavily hit. I said before and I will say again that there are certain occurrences that come through these disasters that are inspiring. I know a year from now we will go back to these neighborhoods and marvel at the progress that has been made as people rebuild their homes and their lives and their playgrounds and their churches and their schools. They do not quit; they do not give up.

Secondly, we will have a litany of examples of people who reached out and helped others in a selfless, caring, compassionate way. As I said, it is not unique to Illinois; it is not unique to the Midwest; it may not even be unique to America. But each time we go through one of those tests, it warms our hearts to know that people do respond so well to help one another.

We are going to continue to keep in touch with the Governor and local officials and provide the Federal assistance on a bipartisan basis that will help these communities and families get their lives back together.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. DURBIN. The Presiding Officer knows better than most what it means for someone to enter our military, to raise their hand and take an oath in service to the United States. It is the giving of their time and their lives. Equally important, they are risking their lives. They know they can be called upon in that capacity to defend this country. They can be injured. They can lose their lives in the defense of this Nation, and many have. But

they still do it on a voluntary and selfless basis. We realize that for most of them they have viewed their threats as the enemies who are going to attack the United States or their units. But we have come to learn that there are other enemies within the military who are equally troublesome and worrisome.

It is one thing to have a son or a daughter—someone you love very much—take an oath to serve in the military and run the risk of a dangerous encounter with an enemy. But it is absolutely unacceptable to think that these men and women in the military would run the risk of a dangerous attack by someone else in the military.

Speaking to the issue of sexual assault, it is one which is topical because we have finally, finally started to come to grips with the reality of what it means. Our responsibility is to ensure that the men and women of the military have everything they need. Sexual assault threatens it. It erodes the basic trust, respect, and professionalism that our troops uphold and rely on to perform their duties. In a more fundamental sense, it also cuts to the heart of the basic questions of safety, dignity, and justice as Americans.

However we measure it, the current system has failed our servicemembers. The evidence is overwhelming. It has been estimated that 26,000 incidents of sexual assault occurred in the military in a recent year. Only 3,400 reports were made from victims. The Institute of Medicine estimates that 21.5 percent of Active-Duty women and literally thousands of Active-Duty men have been sexually assaulted. We also know that 60 percent of the victims who do report these sexual assaults say they are retaliated against for doing so—60 percent. Overwhelming majorities of victims say they often do not report an incident because they do not think it will make any difference. It is a sweeping and comprehensive indictment of the current system.

I have a responsibility as chairman of the Appropriations Defense Subcommittee to work more closely with members of the military and their leaders than ever before. I have come to know them, to like them, to respect them. When they tell me, as they all have to a person, that they are doing everything conceivable to deal with this problem, I believe them, but I also believe there are elements within the culture of some parts of our military which are almost intractable and which have to be dealt with in a new and more definitive way.

Let me share one example. It came to light recently. I attended a Freedom Salute Ceremony for an Illinois National Guard unit that recently returned from Theater Gateway operations in Kuwait. They had been gone a year. It was a small unit, fewer than 20. They came home, and their families were with him. They were out at Camp Lincoln in Springfield, IL. This unit was in charge of transportation, making sure that 100,000 servicemembers

who came through that theater had what they needed to make it to their next destination and ultimately back home. Some of these people were being redeployed, do not get me wrong, but many were headed home. I heard from these members of this unit.

Among the servicemembers they helped move through this hub was a young woman who had been sexually assaulted somewhere in the region. That was not the first stop. The first stop for this sexual assault victim was a barracks situation where she literally had to walk through the men's restroom facilities to go the women's restroom facilities. This is a victim of sexual assault. She told us—the person I spoke to in the unit—that this victim said to her that these were the first sympathetic faces she had seen or worked with since this terrible incident and she was grateful to this Illinois Guard unit for standing by her in this emotionally trying time.

I was happy to hear that this Guard unit had stepped up to give this young woman the help she needed, but it is inexcusable—in fact, it is shameful—that the rest of the system failed her. It is a story repeated too many times across the services.

This current system has to change, and it will. I thank for their extraordinary advocacy Senator CLAIRE McCASKILL of Missouri, Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND of New York, Senator PATTY MURRAY of Washington, and many others. They put into the pending bill on the Defense Authorization Act many effective and necessary reforms.

I supported them. I appreciate Chairman LEVIN and Ranking Member INHOFE for including 26 reforms in the underlying Defense authorization bill. I would like to highlight one reform in particular in which I played a small part—the special victims' counsel. I wish to highlight this reform because victims need and deserve someone in their corner helping them through what is probably one of the toughest moments of their lives.

In testimony earlier this year in the Appropriations Defense Subcommittee which I chair, the head of the Air Force General Welsh talked about how effective this pilot program of special victims' counsel has been. The bill that is pending before us would expand their services. My subcommittee's appropriation spending mark ensures that it will be fully funded.

The bills other reforms are equally powerful: improving prevention; holding leaders accountable for the climate in the military on this issue; reforming the military justice code. On these reforms, there is strong bipartisan agreement.

Many of those reforms, including one we may vote on before we leave this week, were thanks to the leadership of Senator CLAIRE McCASKILL. She has been relentless in her efforts to lead on this important issue. Today is no different. She has an amendment which

she offered which empowers the victims of sexual assault to have a greater voice in how their cases are prosecuted. It would require commanders' promotion reviews to take sexual assault climate into account. It would eliminate the so-called good soldier defense by which commanders are permitted to consider the defendant's overall value to the unit. I really appreciate Senator McCASKILL's leadership. Her amendment is a positive one.

The crux of today's floor debate is whether the Senate pushes this reform even further. Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND of New York offered an amendment that aims to give victims greater confidence that the military justice system is free from any bias by giving the decision on these cases to a senior judge advocate general outside the victim's chain of command.

However we come down on this proposal, we all know this would be a significant change for a military justice code that has only undergone two significant changes since 1950, but I believe we must go forward with the Gillibrand proposal. I will vote in favor of her proposal. I did not come to this decision lightly. I have discussed this issue with my colleagues in the Senate, as well as every single military leader they have recommended I meet with. I have met with them publicly and privately. I have listened carefully. I have called the victims to hear their side as well. I considered the views of outside experts as well as my colleagues. Many of my colleagues have served in the military, and they have personal insights. After much deliberation, I have concluded that every single one of those reforms, including Senator GILLIBRAND's proposal, is going to be necessary if we are going to give victims the confidence they need and the support they need to come forward.

I would also note that Senator GILLIBRAND's effort is endorsed by a diverse and thoughtful range of outside groups. They include the National Women's Law Center, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, and the Service Women's Action Network.

I know our senior military leaders are committed to cracking down on sexual assault. Many commanders around the world are just as outraged as Congress and just as committed to prosecuting offenders and setting a new tone in the military. But it is the role of Congress to ensure that the system those leaders implement is fair and reasonable. It must put the victims of assault back in control and the perpetrators of these claims on notice. It must restore victims' confidence. These reforms accomplish this goal. I look forward to supporting them.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I am back again for now the 51st consecutive week that the Senate has been in session to urge Congress to wake up to the effects of carbon pollution on the Earth.

Today I wish to talk about how climate change is taking its toll on an important part of our way of our life, some of our long-cherished American pastimes that we do in the great outdoors.

New Englanders—and the distinguished Presiding Officer from Connecticut is very familiar with this—have fond memories of ski trips in Vermont, of ice hockey on frozen ponds in New Hampshire, and of fishing trips off the coast of Rhode Island. All of these activities are fun, they are fulfilling, and they leave us with indelible memories of the wonders of our natural world. But climate change is putting much of that at risk.

The New York Times records that declining snowfall and an unseasonably warm weather were a drag on winter sports and recreational tourism during the 2011–2012 winter. Before the end of the century, they report the number of economically viable ski locations in New Hampshire and Maine will be cut in half. Skiing in New York will be cut by three-quarters. I am sorry to inform the Presiding Officer from the great State of Connecticut that there will be no ski area left in Connecticut or Massachusetts. I assume from the report that means Rhode Island as well, because Rhode Islanders have been skiing our beloved Yawgoog Valley since the 1960s.

As drought and increasing temperatures reduce the snowpack in the Cascade Range and the Rocky Mountains, the future of ski and snowboarding there is also at risk.

The Park City Foundation in Utah predicts an annual local temperature increase of 6.8 degrees Fahrenheit by 2075, which could cause a total loss of snowpack in the lower Park City resort area. Beyond the loss to the skiing tradition in Park City, the report estimates that this will result in thousands of lost jobs, tens of millions in lost earnings, and hundreds of millions in lost economic output.

No part of the country will be immune from these changes our carbon pollution is driving. Studies have found that extremely warm days in the Southeast are on the rise. Ice on the Great Lakes is forming later and disappearing earlier. Rain will continue to decrease on the Great Plains. Wildfire