

So I stand before you today with a call—a call to Secretary Salazar, a call to this administration to listen to the people. Listen to the people who have lived in an area for a thousand-plus years who want to continue to call this place home and who are looking for very basic accommodations—very basic accommodations.

We have refugees all over this country. I got an e-mail from a friend of mine who said, as I am sending you this text, I am driving through a refuge in Florida—driving through a refuge in Florida. It is a paved road. There are signs along the road. There are two lanes and it is a refuge. We are asking for a 10-mile, 1-lane gravel, basically emergency access road for the people of King Cove.

Sometimes I think because King Cove is so far out of the way—at the end of the world as far as some people are concerned—it is kind of out of sight, out of mind, and that maybe what we do is we say in this part of the country the birds are more important than the people. There is sensitive habitat out there, I agree, and we need to be responsible in how we protect habitat. But we can protect habitat and we can also let the human beings who live there exist or coexist side by side and do it respectfully. The people in King Cove respect the land more than you and I can ever appreciate, because if they fail to respect the land, they do not live.

So when we talk about how we can reach an accommodation, the people of King Cove say, we are asking for a simple level of safety, and in order to gain this level of safety, we are willing to give up our lands. We are willing to give up other lands we own in exchange for this small corridor. So when we are talking about this trade, this land conveyance exchange we signed off on in 2009, it is a 300-to-1 exchange. The Federal Government gets 300 times more than the Aleuts get—300 times more—or basically 56,000-plus acres going to the Federal Government. This will be the first new wilderness created in Alaska since INILKA back in the 1980s.

What is being asked for is this small corridor, basically 206 acres, all told. Yet the Fish and Wildlife Service has said, Nope, 300-to-1 isn't good enough for us. They think there are other alternatives. They say: Well, why can't you have a ferry? Put a lightweight aluminum ferry out there. And do you know what the Fish and Wildlife Service did? They actually went out, when they were looking at the EIS, and they decided they were going to cost out what an aluminum ferry might cost. So when the Director of Fish and Wildlife sat down with me, he said: Senator, there is another alternative out there.

Well, he should talk to the people of King Cove about how viable an across-water alternative is when, during the wintertime, you can't get into these areas because it is all iced over. You can't get into that area. Talk to the people in King Cove about what it

means to be very sick, to have double pneumonia, to be 8½ months pregnant, to have broken bones or a broken body, and have to fight 20-foot waves for 3 hours and then climb up a ladder, such as the one I have shown here, in those elements, to get to an all-weather airport that can get you safely to Anchorage. All they are asking for is a 10-mile gravel road.

I have suggested to the Secretary—and I have suggested this to the President's nominee to be Secretary of the Interior—that sometimes I think there is a double standard; that we allow things to go on in other parts of the country, but in Alaska there is a different standard. The standard for the safety of an American should never be changed. It should not be higher for someone in the eastern part of the country than it is for somebody out in King Cove. We are talking about the safety of Americans, with a reasonable alternative. We shouldn't be having to fight our government this way.

But the people of King Cove are willing to travel all the way to make their case. I thank the Secretary for hearing them out. I think the Secretary is a compassionate man, and my hope is that when he looked in their eyes and he heard their stories his heart was moved to respect the people of King Cove, to respect the Alaska Natives, to respect them as much as he has shown respect for the public lands he has been entrusted to protect these past 4 years. Here is an opportunity to issue this best-interest finding and to reverse the decision from the Fish and Wildlife Service which says that no action is the way we go forward.

No action compromises the safety of these Americans. That is not acceptable.

We will keep working. We will keep fighting. But I believe that in the end, right will prevail and the people of King Cove will have their safety.

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

(Mrs. GILLIBRAND assumed the Chair.)

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, tomorrow we will begin commemoration of Women's History Month—an annual occasion to celebrate and honor the many contributions of women to American history, culture, and society. Since our Nation's founding, generations of women have fought injustice and broken down barriers at home, in the workplace, and in their communities in pursuit of the American dream. During Women's History Month, we remember these struggles, celebrate our collective progress, and renew our commitment to protecting the rights of all women.

Earlier this month, the Senate came together in the best tradition of the Chamber to pass the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act with a strong bipartisan vote. This

bill would not have passed without the strong leadership and support of every woman currently serving in the Senate. And today the House of Representatives passed our bipartisan bill to help survivors of rape, domestic violence, stalking, and human trafficking. On the eve of Women's History month, Congress's actions will prevent terrible crimes and help countless victims rebuild their lives.

A few days from now, on March 3, 2013, we will mark the centennial celebration of the 1913 women's suffrage procession—a watershed moment in the struggle for women's right to vote. On March 3, 1913—the eve of the inauguration of President Woodrow Wilson—more than 5,000 women from every State in the Union assembled in Washington, DC, to march for the right to vote. They did so in the face of widespread opposition to their cause, and some were hospitalized after violence erupted along the parade route. A century later, this courageous public act is recognized as the key turning point that led to the ratification of the 19th amendment to the Constitution, giving women the right to vote in 1920.

In the coming days, we will witness the arc of American history, as thousands of women retrace the steps of the heroines of 1913, by reenacting the Women's Suffrage March. This "Centennial Women's Suffrage March" will be led by the women of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated—the only African-American women's organization to participate in the 1913 march. I commend Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, UniteWomen.org, the American Association of University Women, the Daughters of the American Revolution and the many other women's organizations that will join forces to reenact this historic event. I also commend the many government and private sector institutions that will support this event, including the National Archives and Records Administration, the National Park Service, the National Women's History Museum, and the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

Like the many Americans who will commemorate the women's suffrage march this weekend, I celebrate the progress that we have made towards justice, fairness, and equality for women—and for all of our citizens. But, while we have made remarkable strides towards gender equality, gender discrimination still exists. According to a recent study by the American Association of University of Women, full-time working women who are recent college graduates earn, on average, just 82 percent of what their male counterparts earn in the workplace. This gender wage gap directly affects the economic stability of American families. A Center for American Progress report on women in the workplace found that in 2010 nearly two-thirds of all American mothers were either the primary breadwinner for their family or shared that financial responsibility with a spouse or a partner.

As we celebrate Women's History Month, the courageous acts of the American heroines of 1913 should inspire us all to work to eliminate the gender inequalities that still exist in our society today. I join all Americans in celebrating the countless contributions of women to our Nation's history and culture and in working towards a more just and fair society for future generations of American women and girls.

REMEMBERING LORI ACTON

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, it is with deep regret and grief that I inform my fellow senators of the passing of my personal friend, Lori Acton. Mrs. Acton was a dynamic and dedicated woman whose absence in the community of Laurel County will be immediately and acutely felt.

Lori is someone who cannot be replaced. As the executive director of the Laurel County Public Library, she was a passionate leader who was visionary without being reckless, infectiously funny without being frivolous, direct and driven without being rude or mean-spirited, and a tireless worker who fully enjoyed the life and work she participated in. Her work with the library spanned nearly three decades, but the impact of her influence and passion cannot be measured by the usual metrics. Indeed, as one local writer noted, "what people like Lori mean to a community cannot be seen by those who do not know her." She revolutionized the library system through hiring a stellar staff, instituting new, creative, and interesting programs, and constantly improving every issue she addressed.

Lori made an impact on people's lives. Not only did the library benefit from her enthusiastic approach to fostering a love of reading and learning, but her very presence and constant smile became signatures of her community. Countless testimonies from those who knew her speak to what an incredible impact she had as both a librarian and a friend.

At this time, I ask that we join together with the community of Laurel County, KY, in mourning the loss of my friend Mrs. Lori Acton. I believe that others can aspire to emulate Lori's character, enthusiasm, love and involvement with the community she lived in.

I also ask unanimous consent that an article lauding Lori from the Laurel County-area publication the Sentinel Echo appear in today's RECORD.

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

[From the Sentinel Echo, January 30, 2013]
LAUREL LIBRARY DIRECTOR DIES MONDAY
(By Jeff Noble)

CORBIN.—For more than a quarter-century, Lori Acton gave people of all ages a window to the world and beyond by opening the doors to them at the Laurel County Public Library.

On Wednesday, her colleagues and friends remembered Acton as a passionate advocate for inspiring others through the library's staff, service, and outreach programs.

Acton, the library's district director since 1985, died Monday at her home in London. She was 57.

"The library was more than a job to Lori—it was her passion, and she worked tirelessly to make the library a place everyone could come and enjoy and learn. From babies to seniors, she wanted this library to offer whatever it could to enrich their lives and the community. We plan on working our hardest to make sure that Lori's vision to the future continues," the library's deputy director, Peggy Mershon, said Wednesday.

Another who knew Acton said she was the driving force in moving the library from its 4th Street location to its present home on College Park Drive in London, which opened in 2003.

"Her visionary leadership, enthusiasm, and energy have been pivotal in creating a model of what a library can become in the 21st century," said R. W. Dyche III, president of the Laurel County Public Library's Board of Trustees.

In a phone interview Wednesday, Dyche said two traits made Acton stand out above the crowd.

"Number one, she was full of enthusiasm. Lori pursued all goals with enthusiasm. It was her determination that led directly to the opening of the new library. Second, she had a lot of strengths. One of them was she was not afraid to hire extremely talented people to work for her. She'll be remembered as a very happy person, so pleased to help people in Laurel and surrounding areas with their educational needs."

To honor her memory, the main library and their branches in Corbin and North London were closed Tuesday.

A picture of Acton, along with the dates of her birth and death in white letters over a black background, was posted on the home page of the library's website.

Kathryn Hardman was one of Acton's closest friends. Together the two worked on improving literacy in the county, and also were active in community activities as members of the London Rotary Club.

She said in a phone interview Wednesday the news of Acton's passing was still echoing over London and Laurel County.

"We're all pretty shocked. It's incomprehensible. She had a lot of friends in the community. She's been a vital part of our community for 28 years. The community mourns this loss," noted Hardman, who is the executive director of Laurel County Adult Education.

Hardman pointed out that because of Acton's direction, the library spearheaded the creation of the program in 1986 to promote adult literacy. Acton was also on the board of directors of the Saint Joseph London Foundation.

There were other roles in Acton's life. Hardman added, "Her most significant role was as mother, wife, daughter, sister, and friend."

"We've been having lunch for 25 years. We talked about our careers, our community, our nation, our families, and of course, politics. We both loved to talk about politics. It would be fair to say we both had strong opinions."

Acton's role as a Rotary member was extensive. At the time of her passing, she was looking forward to working on the annual Rotary International Dinner, a project Acton had headed for the past five years, and is sponsored by both the London and Corbin Rotary Clubs.

That passion Acton had with the library extended to her planning the dinner and to

helping worthy causes, said Corbin Rotary Club member the Rev. John Burkhardt.

"Lori had a lot of energy, high spirits, and she laughed a lot. She was very polite, sociable, and was an extraordinary Rotarian. She was lively, she'd ask a lot of questions to the speakers, and was very actively involved. Lori wasn't a wallflower."

Just before noon Wednesday, this message was posted on the library's Facebook page:

"Lori Acton had an unwavering passion for this library, always striving to give her community what she felt was needed and deserved. Her enthusiasm, leadership and commitment will be missed by all of us. Please remember her family and friends in your thoughts and prayers."

Several who knew Acton responded in kind. One person wrote, "Lori was a wonderful librarian and inspired me to become a librarian. I will miss seeing her on my visits home."

Another said, "I smile (through) my tears when I think of Lori. She just ALWAYS had a smile and a laugh when you saw her. Always making you feel real special. How I loved her passion for life."

Lori Holzworth Acton was a native of Sterling, Colorado, located northeast of Denver near the Wyoming border. She is survived by her husband and four children. Her mother, two sisters, and a brother also survive. Visitation is at 11 a.m. Saturday at House-Rawlings Funeral Home in London, with funeral services Saturday at 1 p.m. in the funeral home's chapel with the Rev. Wade Arp officiating. Burial will follow at A.R. Dyche Memorial Cemetery in London, with House-Rawlings Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

REMEMBERING JACK SIZEMORE

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I rise today to reflect on the loss of Mr. Jack Sizemore, an exemplary citizen of Kentucky and a genuinely good man. Mr. Sizemore, of Laurel County, was laid to rest on February 12, 2013, and is survived by his wife, 7 children, 20 grand-children, 16 great-grandchildren, and two sisters.

The words, "let me tell you what Jack Sizemore did for me" are commonly heard in Jack's beloved town of London, and represent just how sorely his presence will be missed. His legacy of goodwill is firmly established after years working in the Laurel County Detention Center, as he chose to build a reputation as a jailer who "liked the job he was doing and [who] took care of the prisoners in a humane way and with the utmost courtesy." This testimony comes from his former supervisor Edd Parsley, who admits that "you don't find many men like that."

Jack was known to always have people laughing, and the community he loved so much has looked back and seen all the ways he touched their lives. The health problems that plagued his final years cannot begin to take attention away from his legacy and reputation.

At this time, I ask that my colleagues in this United States Senate join me in honoring Mr. Jack Sizemore. Along with our condolences to his friends and family, we simultaneously offer our gratitude and praise of this truly wonderful man.