

The first surge came into Kodiak harbor at low tide, about half an hour after the quake. It didn't reach much past the docks and is thought to have been a landslide tsunami. "It came much sooner than we would have expected from a tectonic tsunami," said Preller. Most of the affected towns experienced both types of wave, she said.

Thirty minutes later a second wave came into the city, pushing boats into the city streets, floating cars away, wrenching buildings from their foundations and causing walls to collapse. It was not the towering breaker that swept up the Chena in Valdez or wiped out a sawmill and its workers in Whittier, but more on the lines of a large swell.

"Survivors most often describe tsunamis as a rapidly rising tide," said Haeussler. "They're like a continuous rise of the ocean that never stops. Often you cannot outrun it. It just overwhelms everything in its path."

At least three more waves ripped through the town in the next few hours. It's presumed that the highest reached 26 feet above mean low tide level. But no one saw it. It came in pitch dark after midnight when most of the population had moved up the hill. Kodiak fatalities tended to come not from people on land, but from those who were in fishing boats caught in the surge.

LONG-DISTANCE KILLER

Kodiak was luckier than Crescent City, Calif. Residents there received a warning three hours after the Alaska quake began. Many evacuated before the tectonic wave came in, just before midnight. Half an hour later a second wave, lower than the first, rolled into the harbor.

"People thought that was it," said Lori Dengler, a professor of geology at Humboldt State University in Northern California. "They came back."

At 1:20 a.m., a wave swirled into the waterfront that broke the tide gauge. The fourth wave is estimated to have reached 22 feet, Dengler said. "It was terribly timed. It came just at the top of the tide."

More than 100 homes were destroyed. Eleven people died. Total damage was estimated at \$23 million.

Others died in the rising waters at Newport, Ore. and Klamath River, Calif. \$600,000 in damage was sustained by boats and harbor facilities in San Raphael, Calif.

In Hawaii, tsunamis from the Alaska earthquake caused about \$70,000 in damage. Waves in several places were as high as the one that devastated Crescent City.

But no lives were lost. When the tsunami warning sirens went off, the Hawaiians paid heed. They had learned their lesson from another Alaska earthquake 18 years before.

On April 1, 1946, an Aleutian quake with a magnitude perhaps as high as 8.1 set off a wave that wiped out the concrete, five-story high Scotch Cap Lighthouse on Unimak Island. Hours later, Hawaiians flocked to the shores to observe the peculiar super-low tide. Curious crowds gathered on the beach at Hilo. Children ran to explore the exposed sea bottom. By the time they saw the wave coming it was too late to get away; 165 people died, including six in Alaska.

As a result, a system of ocean-based alarms was established to detect tsunami activity in areas particularly prone to seismic shifts. A line of detectors follows the Alaska coast where earthquake activity is particularly high.

EARLY WARNING

The detectors do a good job of alerting populations far from where the earthquakes take place, Dengler said. She noted a tsunami that hit Crescent City following the 2011 Japan quake was within inches of what the data predicted.

"But near the source area, they're not helpful," she said.

That's because a landslide tsunami will get to shore before the warning does, if there's any warning at all.

"We cannot detect when a landslide has happened," said Preller. "If you're near the ocean when there's an earthquake, get to high ground and stay there. Don't wait for a warning. The earthquake is your warning."

Nonetheless, Dengler said, the progress in long-distance tsunami warning has come a long way since 1964. "Back then it took three hours after the quake for Crescent City to get the warning. Today it would be two or three minutes."

Preller called the Japanese tsunami warning system "the best on the planet." That country has made some intriguing progress in providing early warnings for earthquakes.

"From the moment an earthquake initiates, you usually have some period of time before the shaking reaches you," said West. "If you can nail down that earthquake immediately when it happens, there's the potential of providing several tens of seconds of warning. That's enough time to shut down transit systems or have a surgeon put down his scalpel."

West is impressed by Japan's combination of good instrumentation and a warning notification system. "It was quite successful in the 2011 earthquake," he said. He sent a link to a Youtube video that shows a computer screen just before the massive earthquake and tsunami of March 11 that year. An automated voice is counting down from 29 seconds. At the moment the countdown reaches zero, the rattling begins.

"California, Oregon and Washington are in the process of developing such systems," West said. "Gov. Jerry Brown has mandated that California will do this."

"There's a legitimate discussion to be held as to whether or not such an investment would be worth it here. But nothing like it is currently in development for Alaska."

Wednesday: Witness to destruction

Shortly after tsunamis destroyed much of Seward, school students recorded their experiences with pictures.

Tidal wave vs. tsunami

In 1964 the phrase "tidal wave" was universally used by both average Alaskans and experts quoted in the media to describe the giant waves that wrought so much death and damage. Today the preferred term for a wave generated by a solid physical force such as an earthquake, landslide or volcano is tsunami. Tidal waves refer to waves caused by extreme tidal action or wind, including tidal bores or storm surges.

Casualties

There are various numbers given for the number of deaths caused by the Great Alaska Earthquake. The most recent estimate is given by the National Geophysical Data Center as 139, 124 of which were due to tsunamis; however that database does not break down the fatalities by location. "The casualties are still under discussion," said Cindi Preller, Tsunami Program Manager, NOAA Alaska Region.

Is Anchorage in danger?

In theory, a tsunami is possible at any oceanside location. But it's considered improbable in upper Cook Inlet. "Generally speaking, tsunamis travel better through deep water," said Kristine Crossen, head of UAA's geology department. "Cook Inlet is fairly shallow. It creates a lot of friction on the base of the wave."

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 400) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I thank you for the opportunity to speak again on this historic event to recognize those who lost lives, lost family, and those who helped to not only ensure that Alaska was able to regroup and regain but knowing we have used these lessons learned 50 years ago to help us going forward.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINES

Mr. LEAHY. Over the past 20 years I have spoken many times about the toll inflicted on innocent civilians and U.S. soldiers from antipersonnel landmines. I have talked about it in the Senate, in Ottawa, and in most parts of the world.

The reason I have done so is that landmines, like booby traps, are inherently indiscriminate. They are triggered by whomever comes in contact with them, whether an unsuspecting child, a farmer, a refugee, or a soldier. They are the antithesis of a precision guided weapon.

One hundred sixty-one nations, including most of our allies and friends and every European member of NATO, have signed a treaty banning them. One hundred sixty-one nations had the courage to sign that treaty.

Unfortunately, the United States is conspicuously not among them.

In 1994, 20 years ago, in a speech to the U.N. General Assembly, President Bill Clinton called for the elimination of antipersonnel landmines.

Two years later, in 1996, President Clinton said: "Today I am launching an international effort to ban antipersonnel landmines."

President Clinton went on to announce a U.S. plan to develop alternatives to landmines, with the goal that the United States would end its use of antipersonnel landmines by 2006.

We had a meeting in Ottawa where nations came together and Canada's Foreign Minister, Lloyd Axworthy, called for an antipersonnel landmine treaty. But in 1997 the United States missed an opportunity to be a leader in the international effort to ban antipersonnel mines, when it failed to sign the Mine Ban Treaty.

The year 2006 came and went. President Clinton's administration ended and President George W. Bush served for 8 years. President Obama was then elected and then reelected. In the meantime, U.S. troops fought two long ground wars. They fought those wars without using antipersonnel landmines.

In 2010, along with 67 other Senators, Democrats and Republicans, I sent a letter to President Obama. We commended him for agreeing to review the U.S. Government's policy on anti-personnel mines, and we urged him to conform U.S. policy to the Mine Ban Treaty as a first step. That was 5 years ago. Five years since the start of that review we are still waiting for the results.

After 20 years and three U.S. Presidents, there is no evidence the United States is any closer to joining the treaty than when President Clinton made that speech.

I find it disheartening as an American to think that my country is unwilling to stand with these 161 other countries, many of which real threats, and yet we will not join them.

The Pentagon has long argued that landmines are needed to defend South Korea. In 1996, then-Secretary of Defense William Perry said the Pentagon would "move vigorously" to achieve alternative ways to prevent a North Korean attack so they would no longer need landmines.

In the last century, in 1996, they pledged to vigorously. I don't know what their definition of "vigorous" is, but after 20 years there is no evidence they have done anything to revise their Korea war plans without antipersonnel mines or that any President has told them to do so.

One could ask what difference it would make if the United States joins the Mine Ban Treaty. As I said, we have not used antipersonnel mines for 23 years. The United States has done more to support humanitarian demining than any other country in the world. We have not exported antipersonnel mines since the Leahy law was passed in 1992, and we have spent many tens of millions of dollars through the Leahy War Victims Fund to aid those injured by mines.

If we are not causing the problem, why bother signing the treaty? Because antipersonnel mines continue to kill and cripple innocent people and because indiscriminate, victim-activated weapons have no place in the arsenal of a civilized country.

Countries as diverse as Afghanistan and Great Britain have signed it.

The United States has by far the most powerful military in the world, and this treaty needs the strong leadership of the United States.

As President Obama said in his acceptance speech for the Nobel Peace Prize:

I am convinced that adhering to standards, international standards, strengthens those who do, and isolates and weakens those who don't.

Twenty years after President Clinton's U.N. speech, President Obama can give real meaning to his words by putting the United States on the path to join the treaty. That means destroying what remains of our stockpile of mines. We are never going to use them. Get rid of them. It means revising our

Korea war plans to eliminate anti-personnel mines.

President Obama is the only one who could make that happen. Time is running out.

Let me tell a story. During the ill-fated contra war, during the time of the Reagan administration, I was visiting one of the contra camps along the Nicaragua-Honduras border. As I looked from a helicopter, I saw a clearing inside Nicaragua where there was a field hospital. So we decided to land. I talked to the doctors who were treating victims. There was a little boy, about 10 or 12 years old, who came out, and he had a makeshift crutch. He had one leg.

He came from a family who survived from what they could hunt and gather in the jungle along the border. We talked to him, and it turned out he had lost his leg by stepping on an antipersonnel mine—mines that were not going to stop any army, they were just there to terrorize and injure civilians.

This is not a picture of that little boy, but this is an example of what happens. I asked the boy which side put this mine there. He had only a vague knowledge of what the two countries were, that there was a border there. All he knew was that his life was changed forever. He would not be able to earn a living as his parents and grandparents and others had. He had a place to stay only because the doctors had put a pile of rags and sheets in the corner on the dirt floor where other people were recovering from their war wounds.

I became more and more interested in the horrifying toll of landmines around the world, and I met other innocent victims like this young girl her legs and a hand missing. I think of those in conflicts especially children—who saw what they thought was a pretty and shiny toy on the side of the road, and they touched it only to have their limbs blown off or their eyesight lost.

I think of the teenage girl I met in an area where there was a war. I met her at a hospital where she was getting artificial legs through the Leahy War Victims Fund. Her parents had sent her away during the war, where she would be safe. The war ended and she was walking home and saw her parents and started running toward them, and in a flash a landmine explodes and she both her legs were blown off.

After World War I, countries came together to ban poison gas. We had international negotiations to do that. The Pentagon was against it, arguing that they might need to use poison gas sometime. We get the same reaction today about antipersonnel landmines: we might need them some day.

This photograph show one of the places supported by the Leahy War Victims Fund—where they make artificial legs. If any one of the Senators in this body were to lose a leg, our insurance would buy us a high-tech leg to replace it or we might be told: You can have an even better one but it will cost

\$500 or \$1,000 more than your insurance will pay. We would all take out our checkbook and pay it. Here, we are talking about countries in which the per capita income is maybe \$300 or \$400 a year.

Signing a landmine treaty is not going to by itself stop everything. There are millions of mines still littering countries where the wars ended decades ago.

As I said earlier, the United States, to its credit, has spent hundreds of millions of dollars to clear mines and to help people who have been injured. But why shouldn't the United States of America—the country that should be the moral leader—why shouldn't we step up and sign the treaty? How do we credibly tell others not to use them, when they say: Yes, but you never signed the treaty. You have reserved the right to use them. You are the most powerful Nation on Earth; we are not.

Why shouldn't we?

I am proud of the Leahy War Victims Fund, but I would give anything to think there was no need for it. Maybe that day will come.

I tell President Obama: Time is running out. You know what you should do.

I think if he talked to President Clinton, he would find that President Clinton wishes he had signed it. Let's sign it now. Do that. That can be part of his legacy.

Madam 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. BEGICH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

GREAT ALASKAN EARTHQUAKE

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I rise today to remember the Great Alaskan Earthquake, which struck 50 years ago today on Good Friday, March 27, 1964. Over 100 Alaskans died in the earthquake and the resulting tsunami. Entire coastal towns were literally wiped off the map.

I was very young—only 2 years old—but I remember my family telling stories as I was growing up and showing pictures. In those days it was not like we see today—pictures on a computer—because there was none of that existing. I remember in our family of six we always had slideshow night. We had these little slides my mother would put in this carousel, and off it would go and we would be reminded of all the vacations and things we went on, but we would also see these slides about what happened in the earthquake in 1964.

We were lucky. We lived in East Anchorage in half of a small apartment complex, and the only things that broke in our house were these three swinging lights that went back and forth because our house was built on

gravel soil and was very strong and sturdy, in many ways, in its development. But when you look back at the houses on Third Avenue that literally disappeared or Fourth Avenue that collapsed downtown, it was a different story, or around Turnagain, the community out in West Anchorage, that literally fell off and sank.

Today I am honored to join my colleague Senator MURKOWSKI—who I know was on the floor earlier—in cosponsoring a resolution marking the tragic yet important event in our history and thanking those who helped us survive and recover. In those days we had limited access anyway, but when there was an earthquake, especially in a small town or community, the first responders sometimes couldn't get there because of the uniqueness of the situation from the earthquake. But every Alaskan, every first responder, everybody who was available got down to the business of doing everything they could to help people in need. We were coming out of a winter—still cold and yet spring, what we would call a spring winter day.

Alaskans know the importance of tsunami preparedness and warnings and making sure we are prepared for what can happen. Today we are proud to host NOAA's National Tsunami Warning Center in Palmer, AK. I have been there, and it is the most amazing technology, to see what we can do and what we can see or sense through the sensors and other scientific equipment we have to tell us when a tsunami may be occurring or the magnitude of the tsunami. We monitor on a 24-hour basis with scientists.

The tsunami's impact was felt, from our earthquake, as far away as Hawaii, California, and Washington. That is why today I join Senator CANTWELL and Senator SCHATZ in introducing the Tsunami Warning and Educational Reauthorization Act for 2014. This bill would improve NOAA's Tsunami Warning Center, bringing supercomputing power to the tsunami modeling. It would ensure that all coastal weather forecast offices are better prepared to issue tsunami warnings.

The bill also ensures that coastal communities will be more tsunami-resilient through the National Tsunami Hazardous Mitigation Program. It ensures that communities understand tsunami risks, planning to minimize damages, and are ready to bounce back quickly after the damage occurs.

The bill also recognizes the critical role that advancing our understanding and technology through scientific research plays in meeting the tsunami threat.

This bill was originally envisioned by the late Senator Inouye. I have been proud to pick up where he was unable to continue on an issue I know is critical in his home State.

Fifty years ago Alaska was a young State with a bright but uncertain future. We still had foreign fishing vessels coming in and taking our fish just

a few miles off the coast. The trans-Alaska oil pipeline and the energy it delivers was just a dream. After the damage from the quake and tsunami, there were serious questions from outside whether Alaska could survive. Keep in mind that this was only a few years after becoming a State. But Alaskans already knew the answer. They knew we would rebuild and become stronger, and we have. Alaska is now the Nation's Arctic energy storehouse and feeds the Nation with sustainable seafood stocks. I know the Presiding Officer understands the value of fisheries and that they are an incredible element of our food inventory and storage for our country. Alaska is a State that is important in this regard, as is the State of Massachusetts.

But we must still be very vigilant against the threat of earthquakes and tsunamis. That is why I introduced this bill, joining again with Senators CANTWELL and SCHATZ in this endeavor. We encourage its swift passage, as it is important to make sure, when it comes to these issues, that no matter where one lives, safety is protected because the devastation is incredible.

Let me end on another personal note. When I think of growing up in Alaska—someone born and raised there—and living in East Anchorage, I can still remember growing up and my dad thinking about where he bought land to build this house, and this apartment building was on incredible soil. But years later, when I became mayor of Anchorage and sat on the city assembly, I remember the great debate on building codes and earthquake capacity and stability and making sure buildings were designed right.

I remember the Federal building, which is now city hall—and I was on the Anchorage Assembly then—and the great debate came up as to whether we were going to renovate or move or something else in regard to the location. But we decided we wanted to stay downtown to keep downtown vibrant. Well, the building was built during a time when it would probably not withstand an earthquake of the magnitude that occurred in the 1964 earthquake.

I remember when we vacated the building and they stripped the building down and left the shell. I walked in to take a tour of the building with the developer. He was showing me what he called the shock absorbers—these incredible columns within the building that, if an earthquake hit, not only would they try to absorb it, they would help the building move up or side to side, absorbing the impact of the earthquake and preserving the building, ensuring that the investment and lives would be saved. To me, it was the most amazing thing because in the old days—as I said, when I grew up—we just put the buildings together, slapped them up, and thanked God we had a home to live in during a cold winter. So the technology has advanced significantly so as to ensure safety in an area that is clearly an earthquake zone.

It is not uncommon for me to be back home and be at a meeting in a hotel or giving a speech in a ballroom or sitting in a home with someone and having a conversation and an earthquake kind of comes through. It is always amazing to me that if I am there with visitors from out of town, they get a little nervous. But as Alaskans, we know we have improved our building codes, we have improved our warning systems, and we have continued to make sure we can minimize or mitigate the damage from those natural disasters that could occur. Again, this bill reauthorization on tsunamis focuses on that. We saw a whole city or town washed off the map—gone—because of the power of a tsunami.

So today I appreciate and remember the history of Alaska and the uniqueness of being there during times of growth and also times of tragedy, but today being part of legislation which in an odd way comes full circle: As a 2-year-old experiencing an earthquake, to where I am today, being able to ensure that not only my State but any coastal State has the capacity to ensure a tsunami warning system is not only the best but the best in the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

WEALTH DISTRIBUTION

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, as the longest serving Independent in the history of the U.S. Congress, I wish to address an issue which I believe does not get the kind of discussion it should from either political party but certainly not from our Republican colleagues—the moral, economic, and political dimensions of the kind of income and wealth inequality which we have in our country today. In my view, this is the most important issue facing the United States because it impacts on virtually every aspect of our lives. It is an issue we must be discussing thoroughly and one in which the American people have to be engaged.

The fact is that while we often speak of the United States of America being the wealthiest Nation on the face of the Earth, that is only partially true, because within the context of total wealth is the reality that the great middle class of this country is disappearing. The reality is we have more people living in poverty today than at any time in the history of the United States of America. The fact is we have by far the highest rate of childhood poverty of any major industrialized nation on Earth. So if we add it all together, yes, we are the wealthiest Nation on Earth, but the reality is the people on top own a huge amount of this wealth while the middle class is shrinking and poverty is increasing.

I will speak to our colleagues and the American people about some of the realities in terms of income and wealth distribution.

Today the top 1 percent owns 38 percent of the financial wealth of America. I wonder how many Americans

know how much the bottom 60 percent owns. I want people to think about it. The top 1 percent owns 38 percent of the financial wealth, and the bottom 60 percent owns 2.3 percent. One family in this country—the Walton family, the owners of Walmart—are now worth as a family \$148 billion. This is more wealth than the bottom 40 percent of American society. Today the richest 400 Americans own more wealth than the bottom half of America, 150 million people. This is distribution of wealth—what we own.

The latest information we have in terms of distribution of income is from 2009 through 2012, which says that 95 percent of all new income earned in this country went to the top 1 percent. When we talk about economic growth—2 percent or 4 percent, whatever it is—it doesn't mean much, because almost all of the new income generated in this growth has gone to the very wealthiest people in this country. The top 25 hedge fund managers made last year over \$24 billion. This is enough to pay the salaries of more than 425,000 public schoolteachers. Over the past decade, the net worth of the top 400 billionaires in this country has doubled by an astronomical \$1 trillion in the last 10 years.

In a moment I will discuss the extraordinary political power of the Koch brothers, a family investing very heavily in the political process, spending hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars to elect rightwing candidates who will protect the interests of the wealthy and the powerful.

To give some idea of what is going on in this economy, everybody should understand that Charles and David Koch—the Koch brothers—are the second wealthiest family in this country. In the last year alone, this one family saw a \$12 billion increase in their wealth, bringing their total wealth to \$80 billion.

The other day in the Washington Post there was an article talking about the Adelson primary. When we talk about a political primary, what it means is we have candidates in the Democratic Party and the Republican Party competing against each other to get the support of the people in their respective parties. Well, forget about that. That is old news. Now the goal is to appeal to one multibillionaire so this individual can contribute hundreds of millions of dollars into the campaign. This is what is going on right now in the Republican Party.

While the wealthiest are doing phenomenally well, while the United States today has the most unequal distribution of wealth and income of any major country on Earth, and while that income inequality is worse today than at any time since 1928, what we are also seeing is the collapse of the middle class and an increase in poverty.

Since 1999, the typical middle-class family has seen its income go down by more than \$5,000 after adjusting for inflation. The typical middle-class Amer-

ican family earned less income last year than it did 25 years ago, back in 1989. The Presiding Officer is probably the last person in the world I have to explain this to, having written several books on this subject.

Why are people angry in this country? The median male worker in this country made \$283 less last year than he did 44 years ago, and the typical female worker earned \$1,700 less than in 2007.

The question I think every American should be asking is: How does it happen, when we have a huge increase in productivity—everybody has a cell phone, everybody has a sophisticated computer, we have robotics in all of our factories, we have a huge increase in productivity—where is all of the wealth going which increased productivity has created? The answer is pretty clear: It has gone to the top 1 percent.

So the moral issue we have to address as a nation is: Are we comfortable as a nation in which in recent years we have seen a huge increase in the number of millionaires and billionaires, while at the same time we have more people living in poverty than we have ever had before?

This is an incredible fact: As an aging nation with more and more people reaching retirement, half of the American people have less than \$10,000 in their savings accounts and in many ways have no idea how they are going to retire with dignity. So the first issue we have to deal with is a moral issue. Are we comfortable living in a nation when so few have so much while so many have so little, and so many of our brothers and sisters—our fellow Americans—are struggling economically every single day?

Today we are addressing the issue of extending long-term unemployment benefits. There are millions of workers right now, including people who have worked their entire lives and who no longer can find a job. They have virtually no income coming in and are struggling to survive. Single moms are trying to raise families with very limited income. Is this the nation we are comfortable being?

I don't think we are. But it is not just an issue of individual income. Today, corporate profits are at an all-time high while wages are near an all-time low.

Then when we look at issues about how can we fund early childhood education, how can we make sure every American has health care as a right—how do we make sure that when people lose their jobs they are going to get the unemployment they need, we should remember that every single year corporations—large, multinational corporations—avoid paying at least \$100 billion a year in taxes because they stash their cash in the Cayman Islands and other offshore tax havens. The result is one out of four American corporations pays nothing in Federal income taxes. In fact, over the last 5

years, huge companies, profitable companies, such as General Electric, Boeing, and Verizon, pay nothing—zero—in Federal income tax, even though all of those companies have made a combined profit of \$78 billion since 2008.

Here is the irony of all ironies. It is one thing to understand that the very wealthy are becoming wealthier while everybody else is becoming poorer, but it is another thing to understand that the people who have the money, the billionaire class, are going to war against working Americans. If one has \$80 billion, do they really need to invest in the political process so they can elect candidates who will give even more tax breaks? Do they really need to invest in rightwing candidates who are out there trying to cut Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the Environmental Protection Agency, nutrition, food stamps, and education? Why, if somebody has \$80 billion, are they working so hard for more tax breaks for themselves and for more cuts to the middle class and working class in terms of programs people desperately need?

Frankly, I think this is not an economic issue. I think it is a psychiatric issue. I think it is an issue which suggests people are simply power hungry. They need more and more. I think this is a very sad state of affairs.

The struggle we are engaged in now is stopping the billionaire class from cutting Social Security, from cutting Medicare, from cutting Medicaid, and from preventing us from creating the millions of jobs our economy desperately needs. But at the end of the day, what we are really talking about is whether this Nation is going to become an oligarchic form of society, and what that means, what an oligarchic form of society is about and which has existed in many countries throughout the world, historically—in many countries in Latin America, although that has recently changed—is a nation in which both the economics and politics of the nation are controlled by a handful of very wealthy, billionaire families. It doesn't matter what party is in power because the real power economically and politically rests with a billionaire class. It clearly seems that unless we act boldly to reverse this trend, we are seeing this country moving in exactly that direction.

One of the reasons is as a result of the disastrous Citizens United Supreme Court ruling, which regards corporations as people and allows the super-wealthy to spend as much as they want on elections. The billionaire party, which is obviously aligned with the Republicans, is now, in fact, the major political force in this country. It is not the Republican party, per se. It is not the Democratic party, per se. It is the billionaire party led by people like the Koch brothers and Sheldon Adelson. They are the dominant political force in this country because they can spend unbelievable sums of money on elections. They can spend as much money

as they need, setting up think tanks and various organizations which will support their extreme rightwing point of view.

In the last presidential election Barack Obama's campaign spent a little bit over \$1 billion. Mitt Romney spent somewhere around there, maybe a little bit less, but about \$1 billion. The Koch brothers' wealth increased by \$12 billion in one year.

Is there any reason to doubt that in the future this one family will be able to spend more money on a campaign than the presidential candidates themselves, receiving donations from hundreds of thousands of people? That is where we are today. Where we are today is that the very foundations of American democracy are being threatened by a handful of incredibly wealthy people who are saying: You know what. Eighty billion is not enough for me. Yeah, I made \$12 billion more than last year—not enough for me. I have to have more, and I am going to get more tax cuts for myself, and in order to do that we may have to cut Social Security; we may have to cut Medicare; we may have to cut Medicaid; we may have to cut education for middle-class families.

We are in a debate about whether we raise the minimum wage. My view—and I know the Presiding Officer's view—is that we should raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour so that every working person in this country at least—at least—can have a minimal—minimal—standard of living. Many Americans don't know that it is not just that virtually all Republicans in the Congress are opposed to raising the minimum wage. The truth is many of them want to abolish the concept of the minimum wage.

The theory of the minimum wage is that nobody should work for below a certain wage. For many of my extreme conservative friends, they think it would be perfectly fine in a high unemployment area if we abolish the minimum wage. People today are working in this country for \$3 and \$4 an hour.

It is not only economics. Many of these billionaires are involved, as the Koch brothers are, in energy, in oil. What they want to do is abolish agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency so they can pollute more and more and more. The scientific community tells us in an almost unanimous fashion that climate change is real, climate change is made by human activity, climate change is already creating problems in our country and around the world, and that if we don't get our act together and significantly cut greenhouse gas emissions, the problems will only become worse. Yet you have families such as the Koch brothers and other energy-related billionaires spending huge sums of money trying to confuse people about the reality of climate change.

So to my mind the issue that we have to focus on as a Congress, the issue that we have to focus on as American

people is: What kind of nation do we wish to live in? Do we want to live in a nation where a handful of billionaires own a significant amount of the wealth in this country while the middle class has less and less, where families cannot afford to send their kids to college or get decent childcare for their little ones, where people are reaching the age of 65 with virtually nothing in the bank in order to provide a dignified retirement? Is that the country we want to live in or do we want to see the middle class grow and have a more equitable distribution of wealth and income, a fairer tax system where the millionaires and billionaires and large corporations start paying their fair share of taxes.

From a political point of view, which is equally important: Do we want to have a nation in which the concept is one person, one vote; that we are all equal; that you have as much say about what happens in government as anybody else or do we want to have a political system where a handful of billionaires can sit around the room and say: OK, put \$100 million into that State. Let's put \$50 million into that State—where a handful of billionaires will determine who gets elected President, who gets elected Senator, who gets elected Governor, and have Members of Congress crawling up to these billionaires: What do you need, Mr. Billionaire? How do I get the hundreds of millions of dollars you can give me?

Is that really what American democracy is supposed to be about?

We have some very fundamental issues we have to address as a Congress. So I would suggest that we put on the agenda the issue of distribution of wealth and income and the implication of that grossly unfair distribution of wealth and income that we have right now.

With that, Mr. President, I would yield the floor, and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

BOSTON'S LOST HEROES

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, this is a difficult day for the city of Boston. Yesterday Boston lost two courageous firefighters who gave up their lives battling a terrible fire in the city's Back Bay.

When others flee, our firefighters rush headlong into danger, concerned only for the safety of others. They put their lives on the line every time. Today we mourn the loss of two brave men, two heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Lieutenant Ed Walsh and firefighter Mike Kennedy were highly respected and committed members of the Boston Fire Department who dedicated their

lives to keeping our families safe. Firefighter Kennedy of Ladder Company 15 on Boylston Street was a member of the Boston Fire Department for 6½ years. He grew up in Roslindale, served our country as a U.S. Marine Corps combat veteran in Iraq, and was a first responder to the Boston Marathon attacks last year. He wanted to run in this year's marathon, so to be admitted he wrote an essay about his experiences responding to the marathon bombing. He had been at training for the big day, but he won't be running this year.

Lieutenant Walsh served on Engine 33, also based at the Boylston Street Fire Station. He was a firefighter in Boston for 9½ years and lived in West Roxbury with his wife Kristen and their three young kids. Lieutenant Walsh came from a firefighting family and followed in the footsteps of his father and his uncle, both of whom served on the Watertown Fire Department. He will be missed.

I know I speak on behalf of the city of Boston and the people of Boston when I say that all our thoughts and prayers are with Lieutenant Walsh's and Firefighter Kennedy's families at this very difficult time. Boston is deeply grateful to Lieutenant Walsh and to Firefighter Kennedy, and to all our policemen, firefighters, and first responders who put their lives at risk to protect our families every single day, and to all of our firefighter families who face the risk that a loved one will rush into a burning building and give up everything to keep all of us safe.

Thank you, Mr. President. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, every day firefighters and other first responders around our country put their lives on the line to protect the public. Yesterday members of the Boston Fire Department bravely entered a burning building in Boston's Back Bay in a selfless effort to save lives and keep the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts safe.

Firefighters head toward the danger as ordinary citizens run away from danger. They are a very special breed, these firefighters. It is with a very heavy heart that I come to the floor today, along with Senator WARREN, to honor two of these courageous men, Lieutenant Edward Walsh and firefighter Michael Kennedy, who became caught in the fire and heroically sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. Thirteen other firefighters were injured in the blaze and are expected to survive.

Firefighter Michael Kennedy was 33 years old. A native of the Roslindale

section of Boston, he lived in Hyde Park and had been with the Boston Fire Department for the past 6 years. A former marine, Michael was among the first responders who nobly and bravely served those injured in the Boston Marathon bombing almost 1 year ago.

Lieutenant Edward Walsh was 43 years old. He lived in West Roxbury with his wife and three children. Lieutenant Walsh came from a firefighting family. Both his father and uncle were fire lieutenants in nearby Watertown. He had been with the Boston Fire Department for 9½ years and was stationed at Engine 33, Ladder 15, just blocks from the building where the fire occurred.

Lieutenant Walsh and Firefighter Kennedy are American heroes. Their memories will live on forever as everlasting examples of the extraordinary courage and dedication that is at the very heart of the Boston Fire Department and in the hearts of firefighters everywhere. Boston is strong because of heroes such as Lieutenant Walsh and Firefighter Kennedy who place the safety of others before themselves.

In this nine-alarm fire, there were zero civilian casualties. These two brave men put their lives on the line so that others may go on living. I offer my condolences to the families of Lieutenant Walsh and Firefighter Kennedy and to the Boston Fire Department. Massachusetts has lost two of its finest sons, and I grieve along with the rest of the Commonwealth, along with Senator WARREN, and along with everyone else for the loss that has been suffered.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, George Holland was a pretty exceptional kid. When he was 14 years old, he went through something that I do not think any of us can even imagine what it is like to go through. His parents got into a heated argument. They were estranged at the time. It became so violent that it culminated in his mother fatally stabbing his father. He was 14 years old, and he lost his dad and then saw his mother get sent away to prison.

He then went to live with his aunt. His aunt attests to the fact that even in those dark days, he was full of a positive attitude. He refused to dwell on the murder, to use it as a crutch. He excelled.

His friends said his smile was infectious. He was always hugging everybody.

He played center on the high school football team in Providence, RI, which

is where he is from. His coach says that he was a great team player, he was a leader, and he was always looking to take the younger kids under his wing. His coach said, "He was just a great kid."

Well, 3 years after his mother killed his father, George Holland died as well. A gunman targeted his house on February 4 of this year—a house he was visiting. He was with his girlfriend and her family when someone shot into the house around 9 p.m. A bullet went through the kitchen window and struck George, who collapsed and later died at Rhode Island Hospital. He was 17 years old.

Steve Finkbeiner and his wife Constance were beloved in their town of LaPlace, LA. They owned a feedstore that was at the end of a quiet road. They had owned it for 28 years. The community all looked upon the Finkbeiners as family. Everybody had some reason to go into that feedstore every now and again. Constance and Steve treated their customers as if they were members of their own immediate family.

One friend said exactly that: They were like family. They were just like family.

Others remembered Steve as a hard-working man and a community member.

It was just after 2:30 p.m. on February 25—just a few weeks ago—when deputies received a call from the feed and supply store. A woman said she and her husband had just been shot during an armed robbery. Constance survived the attack but was critically injured. Her husband Steve died. What happened was two robbers initially went into the store inquiring about shots for a pet. They left briefly only to return to rob the place and shoot the couple who owned the store.

Ruthanne Lodato lived just over the border in Alexandria, VA. She was a music teacher, 59 years old. She was as involved as one can be in the community. She was a loving wife to her husband and the mother of three daughters. She was planning her class's 40th reunion. She was remembered fondly as a music teacher who would hold up her hand to cue the group to sing her school's alma mater. She was the glue that held her family and friends together. That is how she was described.

There were 300 mourners at her funeral. On February 6 of this year—again, just over a month ago—she was shot after she opened the door to her suburban home for what was described as a balding, bearded man in a tan jacket, who shot her dead.

Ricky Roberts was a very exceptional guy. He lived out in Sonora, CA. He was a demolition derby driver, and he used his garage to construct demolition derby cars. That is what he loved to do. He loved it so much that when he got married to his wife Teddi, they were married on top of a derby car, probably one that he had made, in July of 1990. They were married on top one

of his derby cars at the town's Mother Lode Fairgrounds.

What he also loved was volunteering for his community. Ricky was a long-time Sonora police volunteer and a member of the Christian Heights Church. He volunteered hours and hours every week as one of the citizen police officers, and he was very involved with the Police Explorers, helping to train and organize some of the kids who were involved in the Police Explorers Program.

He was a very positive person. His mom said that he made people feel good about themselves and that he had a great rapport with people. He had a great sense of humor and he had the ability to laugh at himself.

On February 16 of this year, Ricky was found at 11 a.m. bleeding in his garage—the garage where he built demolition derby cars—from an apparent gunshot. He was pronounced dead at the scene. He was the first homicide victim in Sonora, CA, in nearly 13 years.

The numbers are pretty stunning: 31,000 people every year die from gun violence; 2,600 people die every month, and 86 people die every day.

There is no other country in the industrialized world that has numbers that come anywhere close to approximating these catastrophic totals.

What I have tried to do is come down to the floor every week to tell the story of the voices of these victims to let my friends know that these are real people with real families who are getting killed at a rate of 86 per day all across the country. We can talk about these statistics, but apparently the statistics haven't moved Congress and the Senate to action. Maybe the voices of those 86 people a day will—even after they leave this place.

The carnage and the wreckage that is left behind is nearly incalculable. Surveys have been done of what it is like to live in cities with a high incidence of gun violence. They show that the rates of PTSD among the kids who have to live every day with the fear of being shot or with the knowledge that they are pretty sure that in that year a friend, a neighbor or a relative will be killed. They rival the rates of PTSD of our returning soldiers. These cities are like war zones.

The tragedy of all of this is that we are not powerless to do something about it. We have the ability to change laws, to modify laws, in order to reduce the rates of gun violence all across this country.

I close by drawing attention to the evidence. Johns Hopkins recently did a new study of a Missouri law that for years had required background checks before people bought guns and licenses for all handgun owners.

In 2007, Missouri repealed that law.

Johns Hopkins, one of the best research universities in the country, did an exhaustive study of rates of gun violence before that law was passed and the rates of gun violence afterwards.

They controlled for every factor other than this law that was repealed. They looked at whether rates of gun violence were increasing in only certain counties. They compared it to rates of gun violence in nearby States, and they looked at all of the other factors that could go into an explanation other than the repeal of the law when trying to figure out why rates of gun violence were increasing.

What they found was very simple. They found that even when we control for all of the other factors, the repeal of the background checks law in Missouri led to a 23-percent spike in firearm homicide rates. That is an additional 55 to 63 murders every year from 2008 to 2012.

There were 60 additional people killed in one State alone because that State had chosen to allow criminals to own guns. When we repeal a background check law, we essentially are allowing criminals to go into places where guns are sold, purchase them, and then either use them themselves or sell them in the black market to people who will do the kind of destruction that leads to 31,000 people dying every year.

My colleagues, we have the ability to change this situation. I try to make this point every time I come to the floor to talk about the voices of victims. I understand that we are not going to bring these numbers to zero by passing a commonsense background checks bill or by investing more money into our mental health system or by trying to do something, even if it is in a nonlegislative way, to address the culture of violence in our society. There is always going to be gun violence.

We can do something. We can lower these numbers. We can lessen the damage, the trauma, and the carnage all across our country, all across the States that we represent.

Think about a kid like George Holland, who had overcome so much, the death of one of his parents and the imprisonment of the other, to become an immensely compassionate 17-year-old. Who knew. Who knows what he was going to accomplish.

We will never get to understand the good that George Holland could have done in this world because, at age 17 on February 4 of this year, he was gunned down in his girlfriend's home.

Hopefully, whether it is the data or the voices of victims, the Senate will figure out that we can do something to change that reality.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order with

respect to the motion to proceed to H.R. 3979 be modified so that when the postclosure time is expired the Senate proceed to a vote on the motion to proceed to the bill.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 4302

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks on Monday, March 31, the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.R. 4302, which was received from the House and is at the desk; that there be no amendments or motions in order to the bill with the exception of budget points of order and the applicable motions to waive; that the time until 5 p.m. be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees for debate on the bill; that notwithstanding the previous order, following the vote on confirmation of the Owens nomination on Monday, March 31, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 4302, the bill be read a third time and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill; that the bill be subject to a 60-affirmative vote threshold; finally, that upon disposition of H.R. 4302, the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to proceed to H.R. 3979, as provided under the previous order.

Madam President, I want everyone to understand there will be at least 3 hours of debate on H.R. 4302, and I want to make sure everyone understands I will be giving Senator WYDEN the 1½ hours on our side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the request is agreed to.

SGR

Mr. REID. Madam President, before Chairman BAUCUS became Ambassador to China, the Finance Committee, under his auspices, negotiated a bipartisan, bicameral bill with the House to repeal the flawed Medicare physician payment system. He worked on that for more than a year. But the committees didn't come to an agreement on the really hard part—how to pay for it.

Senator WYDEN, the new chairman of the Finance Committee, has come up with a way to pay for it. I support repealing the payment system—the SGR—permanently. I have been in favor of that for a long time, and I appreciate the work done on that in the past period of time Senator WYDEN has been chairman of that committee. I repeat, the work done on it for a year didn't have a way to pay for it. So I support repealing this permanently. I believe we should repeal it without pay-fors or by using reductions in the overseas contingency fund, called OCO.

The deadline is here. I spoke on the floor this morning, and I say it again. Everyone is saying, Well, why are you helping the doctors? Madam President, I am helping my Medicare recipients in Nevada. They need physicians. And for us to play around with this bill, as we do continually, isn't fair to the patients. Because doctors are unhappy that they do not have some degree of certainty, and that is what they need. So that is why I am for getting rid of this totally. We don't have that now.

The House passed a short time ago a patch of 12 or 13 months, which is good. So efforts will continue on the permanent repeal of the SGR, and I support Senator WYDEN seeing what he can do to come up with some votes for a permanent repeal. He served a long time in the House and a long time in the Senate and he knows what he is doing. So let us hope he gets enough votes. Until then, we are left with a patch.

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. KING. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

REMEMBERING ED MUSKIE

Mr. KING. Madam President, I rise this afternoon to memorialize one of the great residents, citizens, denizens of this body—Senator Edmund Sixtus Muskie of Maine—who tomorrow, March 28, 2014, would have been 100 years old.

I knew Ed Muskie—not well, but I knew him. I knew him working here as a staff member. We were very scared of him. He was a presence. He was a force. He was indeed a great man. He is the classic American story—a classic American story we need to remind ourselves of.

He was the son of a Polish immigrant tailor in a small town called Rumford on the Androscoggin River in western Maine. He rose to become a great U.S. Senator, Secretary of State, candidate for President, candidate on the ballot for Vice President of the United States, and one of the great citizens of Maine and the country of the 20th century. Ed Muskie rose by his own merits.

I am convinced that the secret sauce of America is the welcoming of people from all over the world who come here to bring their talents and allowing them to express themselves fully and freely in the wonderful rich soil of this great country.

Ed Muskie went to school on a scholarship at a small college in Maine, Bates College, where the Muskie Archives currently reside. Then he went on to Cornell Law School through the generosity of individuals and scholarships because he had no resources of his own. He was in World War II and then came back to practice law in the small town of Waterville in Central Maine.

In 1954 Ed Muskie literally invented the Democratic Party in Maine. I don't believe there had been a major Democratic officeholder in Maine for some 50 years. I think perhaps there were a few in the 1920s and 1930s, but the State was completely dominated by the Republican Party all through the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s.

When Ed Muskie ran for Governor in 1954, it was the longest of long shots. In fact, the story in Maine was that, of course, in the 1936 election, when

Franklin D. Roosevelt ran against Alf Landon, Roosevelt carried every State in the Union except two—Maine and Vermont. Hence the famous saying: As goes Maine, so goes Vermont.

The story goes that on the coast of Maine, in a small Republican town of several hundred people, the clerk announced the vote.

At the end of the tally, she said: Landon 47, Roosevelt 2.

Someone mumbled: The SOB voted twice.

That was the way the Republican Party dominated the State—until Ed Muskie in 1954. He drove from one end of the State to the other with friends, stayed on friends' living room couches—nothing fancy. The idea of a political ad on television in those days was to show up at the TV station at the appointed hour, and as the clock ticked to 8 you would look into the camera, give your statement for 30 seconds, and then you were off to the next campaign stop.

As the campaign went on in 1954, something happened in Maine: An excitement built—a buzz, I guess we would say today. Ed Muskie—indeed, to everyone's shock and surprise—was elected Governor in that year. In those days, the Maine Governor's term was 2 years. He was reelected in 1956—a very successful Governor—and then was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1958.

There is a wonderful story about when Muskie first came to the Senate. Lyndon Johnson, of course, was the dynamic, I would say all-powerful majority leader of the Senate at the time. The story is that Johnson took Muskie aside and said: Now, Ed, when somebody comes and asks you for your vote, you just tell them you haven't made up your mind yet. Your vote is the most valuable thing you have in the U.S. Senate, and keep it to yourself. And if they press you, just say, "Senator, they haven't gotten to the M's yet. When they do, you will know how I am going to vote."

This was Johnson's advice to the freshman Senator from Maine.

A few weeks later, apparently there was some kind of procedural vote on the floor, and Johnson wanted to line up his votes in his Democratic caucus.

He went to Ed Muskie and said: Ed, can I count on your support?

Allegedly, Muskie replied: Senator, they haven't gotten to the M's yet.

The result was that Muskie was exiled to the Public Works Committee—at the time one of the least desirable of committee assignments. Of course, now it is the Environment & Public Works Committee and one of the most important and prestigious of our committees. But at the time it was the same as being sent to the outer limits by the majority leader, who didn't like this smart aleck from Maine.

But I think this story has an important and instructive ending because Ed Muskie, with his Maine work ethic, his common sense, and his intuition and insight, used the Public Works Com-

mittee to invent environmental law in America.

In 1970, 12 years later, the passage of the Clean Air Act was the first major passage of an environmental piece of legislation in American history. There had been a few small things here and there, but most States had very little in the way of environmental regulation and certainly there was no national regulation. But the amazing thing, the astonishing thing about the passage of the Clean Air Act—and it was a very important piece of legislation. It was very significant. It affected every business in the country. It affected the automobile industry. It affected the paper and manufacturing industry. It was a tremendously important piece of legislation and very controversial. But the Clean Air Act passed the Senate unanimously. Imagine. We can't pass the time of day unanimously, and he marshaled the resources, the votes, and the sentiment of the entire Senate. He did it through amazingly hard work. They had hundreds of hearings and hundreds of hours of markup. He listened to his colleagues, he found compromises, and he found ways to make it work across the entire spectrum of the Senate.

There were plenty of conservative Senators here in 1970. In fact, at one point in the debate on the Clean Air Act, Howard Baker, who was the Republican leader, gave his proxy to Muskie because he had to be out of the Chamber for a few hours. Again, imagine today the Republican leader giving his proxy to one of the Democratic Senators on a major piece of legislation. I think it says something about, unfortunately, the difference between then and now in the Senate, but it also says something about Muskie's leadership. It was made up in part of incredibly high intelligence. People who knew him well, such as Senator George Mitchell, have said he was one of the most brilliant people they have ever met. So he had high intelligence, but he also had high emotional intelligence. He could intuit what people needed, what they needed and wanted, and what they had to hear and how to persuade them. But he also had incredible perseverance and patience, and he was willing to listen and understand other people's point of view.

The Clean Air Act and later the Clean Water Act in 1972 are really the pillars of environmental law in this entire country. It is hard for us to realize today because we take for granted our commitment to environmental protection, but it didn't really exist until Ed Muskie's leadership in the late 1960s.

It is all the more remarkable for me as a political representative of the State of Maine that Muskie took this step because it had a significant impact on our major industry. Maine is a pulp and paper State, with huge mills and outpourings into the water and into the air. At the time, they were virtually untreated.

So this was not an insignificant act from Muskie's own political situation.

It wasn't as though he had a free ride on this, but I believe part of the impetus for this great action, for this great insight was Muskie's being raised as a young boy in the town of Rumford on the Androscoggin River. The Androscoggin River at one point was one of the most polluted rivers in America. I live on the Androscoggin today. When Muskie was a boy, the saying was that the river was too thick to drink and too thin to plow. It was a terrible situation. Ed Muskie realized that, and he realized he had to do something about it. So he used the vehicle of the Public Works Committee, where he had been sent in exile, to achieve one of the great legislative monuments of the 20th century.

He also is the father of our current budget process. He was one of the Senators who put together the budget process in the mid to late 1970s. He had an incredibly distinguished career. He was an incredible force and a very powerful man.

I have a vivid personal recollection of him which to this day I don't quite know what to make of, but it is an absolutely true one. In 1968 he was running for Vice President of the United States. Ed Muskie was Hubert Humphrey's running mate. In the latter stages of the campaign—September, October of that year, 1968—it was the last several weeks of the campaign, and it was a time when Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates flew around the country. They didn't even take the time to have a motorcade and go into town to make a speech. The plane would land, the crowd would be right out on the airport runway, there would be a little fence line, and the candidate would come down the stairs, make a speech, and get back on the plane and go.

I was a law student that year at the University of Virginia, and I had no connection to Maine at the time, but I somehow heard that Ed Muskie, the Vice Presidential candidate, was coming to Richmond, VA, and was going to be at the airport at 8 or whatever on Tuesday night. So a bunch of us went over to Richmond to hear him. I can remember standing in this crowd along a fence line with probably 300 or 400 people and listening to Muskie right before the election in 1968. He spoke passionately about his vision for America. He spoke about what this country can and should mean. And this was a very important election. This was Richard Nixon versus Hubert Humphrey, and it was an election decided by one vote per precinct across the country—it was that close. It was a very close election.

Here is my strange memory, which again I say I don't really fully understand. I remember standing in the crowd listening to Muskie speak—whom I didn't know at all. I had never set foot in Maine at that point. I didn't know him. I hadn't met him. But I was listening to him speak. And at the end of his speech, out of my mouth completely spontaneously came the words

"We trust you." It was something about the man that made you feel you could trust him. He was so honest, so authentic, and so entirely himself. It was an amazing moment.

Here it is almost 50 years later, and I remember that evening in Richmond, VA, my first encounter with Ed Muskie.

I got to know him somewhat more when I worked here as a staff member for his colleague Bill Hathaway, the other Senator from Maine at that time. Then I had the privilege of interviewing him in my capacity as a public television host for a documentary in 1981, when he retired as Secretary of State.

He had a distinguished career here in the Senate. Then he went on and heeded Jimmy Carter's call in 1980 to serve as Secretary of State during the height of the Iran hostage crisis. He served our country honorably and well during that period and then retired. But when he retired, he didn't stop his involvement in public affairs. He became a champion of access to the legal system for the poor. He, of course, remained committed to the environment and had a very active life—mostly in Maine, in his beloved house in Kennebunkport—and was a contributor right up to his death in 1996.

Ed Muskie is a true American hero. There is no way my poor words or anybody else's can really capture his career and the impact he made. I think perhaps the closest I could come is to recall Sir Christopher Wren's epitaph on his tomb in St. Paul's Cathedral. On the tomb it says, "If you seek his monument, look around you." If you would see Ed Muskie's memorial, look around you. Take a deep breath. Experience our great rivers. Experience the environment we now have in this country which we treasure and which is so much a part of who we are across the country and in, of course, the State of Maine. Ed Muskie was a great man. He was a great member of this body and it is an honor for me—to say it is an honor is a gross understatement—to be standing today in his seat, the seat that he held for those important years from 1958 to 1980 and when he served our country so, so well. Ed Muskie is a man who belongs to the ages, who we all miss, and who made such a difference in all of our lives.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I suggest the absence of quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRANKEN). The clerk will call the roll. The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with

Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

JUSTICE FOR ALL REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I urge Members from both sides of the aisle to come together and support passage of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2013, an important and bipartisan bill that will improve the effectiveness of our criminal justice system. This legislation was voted unanimously out of the Senate Judiciary Committee on October 31, 2013. It is fitting that the full Senate is considering this legislation now, ahead of Crime Victims' Rights Week.

This important legislation, which is cosponsored by Senator JOHN CORNYN of Texas, reauthorizes the original Justice for All Act of 2004. That landmark law took significant steps to improve the quality of justice in this country by increasing the resources devoted to DNA analysis and other forensic science technology, establishing safeguards to prevent wrongful convictions, and enhancing protections for crime victims. The programs created by the Justice for All Act have had an enormous impact, and it is crucial that we reauthorize them.

We must do more than just reauthorize these vital programs, however.

The legislation before us strengthens key rights for crime victims, reauthorizes the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program, includes provisions to improve the quality of indigent defense, and increases access to post-conviction DNA testing to protect the innocent. It also includes new measures to help ensure the effective administration of criminal justice in the States.

The reauthorization strengthens the Kirk Bloodsworth Post Conviction DNA Testing Grant Program. Kirk Bloodsworth was a young man just out of the marines when he was arrested, convicted, and sentenced to death for a heinous crime that he did not commit. He was the first person in the United States to be exonerated from a death row crime through the use of DNA evidence.

The Kirk Bloodsworth Post Conviction DNA Testing Grant Program provides grants to States for testing in cases like Mr. Bloodsworth's—when someone has been convicted but significant DNA evidence was not tested. The reauthorization clarifies the conditions set for this program, so that participating States are required to preserve key evidence, and are given further guidance that will make the program more effective and allow more States to participate.

The Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2013 also takes important steps to ensure that all criminal defendants, including those who cannot afford a lawyer, receive effective representation. It requires the Department of

Justice to assist States in developing an effective and efficient system of indigent defense, and it calls on the States to produce comprehensive plans for their criminal justice systems. I know from my time as a prosecutor that the justice system only works as it should when each side is well represented by competent and well-trained counsel. The principle that all sides deserve zealous and effective counsel is at the bedrock of our constitutional system, and I am glad the legislation before us today embodies this belief.

The bill reauthorizes and improves key grant programs in a variety of areas throughout the criminal justice system. Importantly, it increases authorized funding for the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grant program, which is a vital program to assist forensic laboratories in performing the many forensic tests that are essential to solving crimes and prosecuting those who commit those crimes.

It is also important to note that this bill would make all of these improvements while responsibly reducing the total authorized funding under the Justice for All Act. These changes will help States, communities, and the Federal government save money in the long term.

I thank the many law enforcement and criminal justice organizations that have helped to pinpoint the needed improvements that this bill will provide and I appreciate their ongoing support. I also thank Senators COONS, UDALL of New Mexico, MCCONNELL, KLOBUCHAR, FRANKEN, PORTMAN, FEINSTEIN, HATCH, SCHUMER, LANDRIEU, BURR, COLLINS, and MERKLEY for cosponsoring this critical legislation, and I thank the lead Republican cosponsor Senator CORNYN for working with me on this and on broader legislation to improve the use of forensic evidence in criminal cases.

Together we will continue to work toward a criminal justice system in which the innocent remain free, the guilty are punished, and all sides have the tools, resources, and knowledge they need to advance the cause of justice. Our criminal justice system is not perfect and we are all less safe when the system gets it wrong. Americans need and deserve a criminal justice system that keeps us safe, ensures fairness and accuracy, and fulfills the promise of our Constitution. The Justice for All Reauthorization Act will take important steps to bring us closer to that goal.

DISAPPEARANCE OF SOMBATH SOMPHONE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I rise today to express my concern with the lack of progress in the case of Sombath Somphone, who has been missing in Laos since December 2012. Mr. Somphone disappeared while working on civil society development, and despite repeated calls by the U.S. government for a transparent investigation