

I thank my colleague from Pennsylvania and the Presiding Officer as well for his patience.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. I wish to say a word of commendation for the remarks the Senator from Colorado just made about a very important issue, and that photograph he took is, indeed, an inspiration to all Americans. Each of us can be inspired by that photograph, what it represents, by the sacrifice that undergirds that photograph, and also for his reminding us about those sacrifices and those commitments, so we want to thank him.

PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, this legislation on equal pay is about justice, in a word. We could almost say that equal pay equals justice. There is probably no simpler way to say it. It is really, when you consider what this means, a very simple concept: If a woman does the same job, the same work, does all of that in the same way a man does and is hired by a company, she should be paid the same wage.

It seems so simple, so elementary, but unfortunately we have had more than one generation now where that has not been the case. Depending on what study or what year we are talking about, women make, on average, 76 cents for every dollar a man makes, or 77 cents. It has always been in that band of similar numbers.

I think for a lot of families it is disturbing. How do I tell, in my case, my four daughters to just do well in school and work hard, as they have, and get good grades, and once you are on a career path, you will be fairly compensated for your work because of all that hard work you did and the good work you do for an employer. What can I say if they come to me—I hope this never happens—10 or 20 years from now and say: You know, what you told me isn't true. I did well in school, I worked hard, I got hired and worked hard in the job I have had, and I am getting paid 76 cents for the \$1 a man makes doing the same work in the same place at the same time. It makes no sense.

So really, in essence, it is about whether we are going to be true to our words and true to the values of this country, and it is about giving people a fair shot on something as fundamental as the wages they are paid for their labor—to use an expression from the Bible, laboring in the vineyards; laboring at a job and being paid in a fair manner.

There was a report not too long ago—not this year but a few years ago—that looked at a State-by-State weekly pay comparison. In that report, Pennsylvania women made, on average, \$694 a week, while men in Pennsylvania were paid \$849 a week—an 18.3-percent differential. But that is not the end of the story. It gets worse. For people 50 years

and older, just looking at that age category, for women workers 50 years and older in Pennsylvania at that time, just a few years ago, the differential was \$732 and \$984 for men—almost \$250 a week above in that age category—and for all women at that time, about \$150 of difference each and every week. Imagine what that does to someone's sense of achievement or sense of dignity when they know they are doing the same work every day and they are being underpaid over and over every week, every month, every year, and in some cases decade after decade. So when we say this is a matter of justice, in some ways that might be an understatement.

We have a chance to remedy that, and it is very simple. Are we going to take steps to remedy that or are we going to reject the steps it will take to bring a measure of justice, a fair shot for women? They are not asking for anything that a man wouldn't ask for or demand. They are just asking for basic fairness—to be treated the same for the same work.

I won't go into all the elements of the legislation, but some of them involve what happens in the event of a conflict—if a woman is discriminated against based upon her pay and she brings an action in a court, what will be the rules that govern that case. I think we should do everything possible to make sure that if an employer has a defense, they have to earn that defense, especially in this kind of litigation.

One part of the legislation prohibits retaliation for employee complaints. In other words, if a woman is inquiring about or discussing or disclosing the wages of herself or some other employee, she is not retaliated against. It is hard to believe we have to legislate and make that the subject of debate. One would think that if a woman is working in a company for years and she is aggrieved and has a claim to make and is asked what the foundation of her claim is, her questions, her inquiries, her comparisons between and among different sets of data, what she makes, what a man who does the same work has been paid—that those basic questions should never, ever be the subject of retaliation by an employer, but too often they are. So we have to legislate. We have to specifically prohibit that kind of conduct by an employer, as maddening and as frustrating as that is.

One would think that employers would want to make things right; that they would want to make sure that if a man is paid a buck for his work, a woman doing the same work is paid the same amount. She shouldn't have to ask. She shouldn't have to be worried about any kind of reprisal or retaliation or punishment. But the state of the law today is such that retaliation goes without sanction in the United States of America. It is very insulting to women and insulting to families.

So there is lots we can do, but the most important thing we can do is to

get a favorable vote on the Paycheck Fairness Act before us. I hope we get a bipartisan vote. This shouldn't be the subject of support of just one party. This should be bipartisan. The people who are asking for this help, who have been asking for it for decades, aren't members of just one party. They happen to represent one-half or more of the American people, when women have asked for that.

If any of my colleagues think for whatever reason that this is not the right thing to do for today, they should do it for future generations. Do it for your own daughters, your own granddaughters, maybe your great-granddaughters. But to forgo the opportunity to do something about this at long last—President Kennedy signed the original legislation. A lot of people in the United States weren't even born then. Yet here we are still debating, still striving to get a basic measure of justice in place. So I do believe equal pay equals justice.

AFGHANISTAN ELECTIONS

Mr. President, I will turn to another subject this evening. I know we have to wrap up, and I am the last speaker of the evening, but this is a topic that doesn't get enough attention even though it was the subject of a lot of coverage and attention in the last couple of weeks and especially the last couple of days; that is, the elections in Afghanistan.

Many people know that some of the reporting indicated that the results were good in terms of turnout. There are a lot of questions to review, but we don't know the results of the elections. It is, however, remarkable how the Afghan people turned out to choose their second democratically elected President. About 60 percent of the 12 million eligible voters defied Taliban threats to cast their votes. I am hopeful these elections are a step toward a smoother transfer of power later this year.

By the way, that voter turnout number in terms of eligible voters is a little higher than we had in the United States of America in 2012. Secretary Kerry said last week that this election has been “Afghan owned from the start.”

The Afghan government security forces and civil society worked together to make these elections happen despite concerted efforts by the Taliban to sow fear and destroy democratic progress.

The service of our men and women in uniform set the stage for this progress. U.S. training and mentoring helped the Afghan National Security Forces get to the point where it could secure polling centers and allow these elections to happen.

We know in 2009 the international security forces bore the brunt of the election's security efforts, including, of course, American fighting men and women—our soldiers, at that time.

The State Department, USAID, and NGOs also put a tremendous amount of work in supporting Afghan institutions

in this process of carrying out an election.

The role Afghan women played in these elections is particularly remarkable. In the National Defense Authorization Act's amendment last year, I urged the administration to focus especially on ensuring there were enough female poll workers and security personnel to ensure all Afghan women who wanted to vote could do so safely and without fear of intimidation.

Female voters turned out in numbers never seen before in Afghanistan, which speaks to their tremendous bravery and unwavering commitment to fighting for their rights as Afghan citizens. This is an incredible number. About one third of the 7 million voters, according to the reports, were women. Many women were voting for the first time. I don't have an enlargement, but this is a photograph which appeared a day after the election which depicts a line of 50 or more women standing in the rain under a plastic tarp waiting to vote.

The American service men and women and, of course, taxpayers have made a tremendous investment in Afghanistan to make it the nascent democracy it is today. From harsh Taliban rule, Afghanistan is emerging as a fledgling democracy, with tremendous gains in education and health care.

Just imagine. Girls who were literally at zero in their representation in schools a little more than a decade ago now constitute 42 percent of Afghan children enrolled in school. That didn't happen because of just some policy in effect. There was a lot of bravery and valor demonstrated by families and by young girls going to school under terrible threats—threats of death and intimidation. We all know about the terrible stories of young girls walking or riding to school and having acid thrown in their faces. Despite specific attacks on girls or young women, they keep going to school.

It also happened because of the great sacrifice of our fighting men and women—those killed in action or wounded in action, tens of thousands of Americans. In Pennsylvania to date we have lost 91 soldiers killed in action and almost 740 wounded in action.

So all of these results—whether it is about democracy or whether it is about girls in school, women being able to vote, or a range of other metrics, health care and otherwise—came with tremendous sacrifice, the kind of sacrifice most of us don't really have a sense of. At least I don't.

The results will be returned later this month on the election in Afghanistan. If a runoff is necessary, I hope all parties will work together to ensure the process is credible, transparent, and free from violence.

Once President Karzai's successor is in place, the Afghan government and the Afghan people should move quickly to sign the bilateral security agreement and affirm the commitments the

Afghan government has made to the international community and, by doing so, recognize the tremendous sacrifice of our fighting men and women and those of the coalition forces as well.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article about the election from the New York Times dated April 5, 2014.

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

[From the New York Times, Apr. 5, 2014]
AFGHAN TURNOUT IS HIGH AS VOTERS DEFY
THE TALIBAN

(By Rod Nordland, Azam Ahmed and
Matthew Rosenberg)

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN.—Defying a campaign of Taliban violence that unleashed 39 suicide bombers in the two months before Election Day, Afghan voters on Saturday turned out in such high numbers to choose a new president and provincial councils that polling hours were extended nationwide, in a triumph of determination over intimidation.

Militants failed to mount a single major attack anywhere in Afghanistan by the time polls closed, and voters lined up despite heavy rain and cold in the capital and elsewhere.

"Whenever there has been a new king or president, it has been accompanied by death and violence," said Abdul Wakil Amiri, a government official who turned out early to vote at a Kabul mosque. "For the first time, we are experiencing democracy."

After 12 years with President Hamid Karzai in power, and decades of upheaval, coup and war, Afghans on Saturday were for the first time voting on a relatively open field of candidates.

Election officials said that by midday more than three and a half million voters had turned out—already approaching the total for the 2009 vote. The election commission chairman, Mohammad Yusuf Nuristani, said the total could reach seven million. "The enemies of Afghanistan have been defeated," he declared.

But even as they celebrated the outpouring of votes, many acknowledged the long process looming ahead, with the potential for problems all along the way.

International observers, many of whom had fled Afghanistan after a wave of attacks on foreigners during the campaign, cautioned that how those votes were tallied and reported would bear close watching.

It is likely to take at least a week before even incomplete official results are announced, and weeks more to adjudicate Election Day complaints. Some of the candidates were already filing fraud complaints on Saturday.

With eight candidates in the race, the five minor candidates' shares of the vote made it even more difficult for any one candidate to reach the 50 percent threshold that would allow an outright victory. A runoff vote is unlikely to take place until the end of May at the earliest.

The leading candidates going into the vote were Ashraf Ghani, 64, a technocrat and former official in Mr. Karzai's government; Abdullah Abdullah, 53, a former foreign minister who was the second biggest vote-getter against Mr. Karzai in the 2009 election; and Zalmay Rassoul, 70, another former foreign minister.

Both Mr. Ghani and Mr. Abdullah praised the vote. "A proud day for a proud nation," Mr. Ghani said.

Still, a shortage of ballots at polling places was widespread across the country by midday Saturday, and some voters were in line when polls closed.

More worrisome, the threat of violence in many rural areas had forced election authorities to close nearly 1,000 out of a planned-for 7,500 polling places, raising fears that a big chunk of the electorate would remain disenfranchised.

But when it came to attacks on Election Day, the Taliban's threats seemed to be greatly overstated. Only one suicide bombing attempt could be confirmed—in Khost—and the bomber managed to kill only himself when the police stopped him outside a polling place.

In three scattered attacks on polling places, four voters were reported killed. Two rockets fired randomly into the city of Jalalabad wounded eight civilians. One border policeman, in southern Kandahar Province, and another policeman in remote western Farah Province were confirmed killed in Taliban attacks, according to preliminary reports.

Bad as all that was, it was a lower casualty toll than on a normal day in Afghanistan, let alone an election on which both the insurgents and the government had staked their credibility. Interior Minister Umar Daudzai said there were 140 attacks nationwide on Saturday, compared with 500 attacks recorded by the American military in 2009.

In preparation for the election, the Afghan government mobilized its entire military and police forces, some 350,000 in all, backed up by 53,000 NATO coalition troops—although the Americans and their allies stayed out of it, leaving Afghans for the first time entirely in charge of securing their own election.

"Voting on this day will be a slap in the faces of the terrorists," said Rahmatullah Nabil, the acting head of the National Directorate of Security, the Afghan domestic intelligence agency.

Sensitive to concerns about potential fraud—more than a million ballots were thrown out in the 2009 presidential vote and then again in the 2010 parliamentary elections—the police were quick to report their efforts to crack down on Saturday.

Among those arrested were four people in Khost who were caught with 1,067 voter registration cards. Several people, including an election official, were caught trying to stuff ballot boxes in Wardak Province.

"This has been the best and most incident-free election in Afghanistan's modern history and it could set the precedent for a historic, peaceful transition of power in Afghanistan," said Mohammad Fahim Sadeq, head of the Afghanistan National Participation Organization, an observer group.

In many places where voting was nearly impossible in 2009, the turnout was reported to be strong. One was Panjwai district, a once-violent haven of the Taliban just outside Kandahar City, where hundreds lined up to vote. "I left everything behind, my fears and my work, and came to use my vote," said Hajji Mahbob, 60, a farmer. "I want change and a good government and I am asking the man I am going to elect as the next president to bring an end to the suffering of this war."

Even where the Taliban did manage to strike, voters still turned out afterward. A bomb set off at a polling place in the Mohammad Agha district of Logar Province killed two voters and wounded two others, according to the district governor, Abdul Hamid. "The explosion dispersed the voters who were holding their voting cards and waiting to vote," said Zalmay Stanakzai, a car repair shop owner who was there. "Some of us left, the others stayed. I was concerned about our safety, but we considered voting our duty."

Insurgents set off a series of five blasts in the Shomali plain, just north of Kabul city,

in the village of Qarabagh. "After the explosions, the polling stations reopened and people rushed to vote," said Mohasmmad Sangar, 32, a used-car salesman there. "It was a great day today."

Nicholas Haysom, the United Nations' top election official here, said: "We know that the Taliban have made a very explicit and express threat to disrupt it. The failure to disrupt the elections will mean that they will have egg on their face after the elections."

While there were reports of disrupted voting in troubled places like Logar Province and neighboring Wardak, in Helmand Province in the south and Nangarhar Province in the east, at the same time voters were showing up in unexpectedly high numbers in other places, like Zabul, Uruzgan and Kandahar Provinces in the south, and Kunar Province in the northeast, despite strong insurgent presences in those areas.

In Uruzgan, election authorities had to open additional polling places to accommodate unexpected numbers, while in Daikundi they ran out of ballots in some remote districts and election authorities had to race new ones out to them. In northern Mazar-i-Sharif, voters were still lined up after dark.

Underwritten by \$100 million from the United Nations and foreign donors, the election was a huge enterprise, stretching across extremely forbidding terrain. Some 3,200 donkeys were pressed into service to deliver ballots to remote mountain villages, along with battalions of trucks and minibuses to 6,500 polling places in all. The American military pitched in with air transport of ballots to four regional distribution centers, and to two difficult-to-reach provinces.

Though many international observers left Afghanistan in the wake of attacks on foreigners, or found themselves confined to quarters in Kabul, years of expensive preparations and training of an army of some 70,000 Afghan election observers were expected to compensate, according to Western diplomats and Afghan election officials. "We have so many controls now, it's going to be much safer this time," said Noor Ahmad Noor, the spokesman for the Independent Election Commission.

The American ambassador, James B. Cunningham, called the elections a "really historic opportunity for the people of Afghanistan to move forward with something we've been trying to create together with them for several years now."

Still up in the air is the question of whether an American troop force will remain in Afghanistan after 2014. Mr. Karzai's refusal to sign a long-term security deal to allow that presence was a major point of tension between the American and Afghan govern-

ments. Each of the leading candidates has agreed to sign the deal once in office, though inauguration day may not take place until well into the year.

The election on Saturday was notable also for how many Afghan women were taking part. More female candidates than ever before are on provincial ballots, and two are running for vice president, the first time a woman was ever put up for national office here, which has generated a great deal of enthusiasm, especially in urban areas.

At the women's polling station in the Nadaria High School, in Kabul's Qala-e-Fatullah neighborhood, among those lining up to vote was a young mother, Parwash Naseri, 21. Although wearing the blue burqa that is traditional here, she was still willing to speak out through the privacy mesh covering her face.

She was voting, for the first time, for her children and for women's rights, she said, speaking in a whisper. "I believe in the right of women to take part just as men do, to get themselves educated and to work."

Mr. CASEY. I wish to highlight two quotes. The first is from a 21-year-old woman who is voting for the first time in this election:

She was voting, for the first time, for her children and for women's rights, she said, speaking in a whisper. "I believe in the right of women to take part just as men do, to get themselves educated and to work."

A remarkable inspiration from a 21-year-old woman voting for the first time in Afghanistan.

The second quotation is from a 60-year-old farmer who was asked by a reporter what it was like to vote under the threats that were either proximate—meaning something happening in almost real time or in the recent past—or just the overall threat posed by the Taliban and other extremists. This farmer said:

I left everything behind, my fears and my work, and came to use my vote. I want a change and a good government . . .

He goes on from there to describe what he hopes will happen. But just imagine that. He said:

I left everything behind, my fears and my work, and came to use my vote.

When I read that, I thought about something Thomas Jefferson said in a letter to John Adams when he was an older man. He was describing the fear of old age—not the kind of fear of reprisal if you were voting but the fear of

growing old. He talked about how he dealt with the fear of growing old in nautical terms. He said: "I steer my bark with hope in the head, leaving fear astern." That is all I thought about when I heard what the 60-year-old farmer said; that even though he had fears—the fear of death, the fear of reprisal against him, his family or people in his neighborhood—he was willing to say his right to vote was so important he was willing to leave those fears and his work behind so he could vote.

What a tremendous inspiration on a subject—the conflict in Afghanistan and all which comes from it that often is not the subject of positive commentary or inspiration. For once and all too infrequently, this is one of those occasions where we can be positive about a result.

We have more work to do to make sure the bilateral security agreement is signed, but we should draw some measure of inspiration from what happened in Afghanistan and the progress which has been made there.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:49 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, April 9, 2014, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate April 8, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

FRANK G. KLOTZ, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY FOR NUCLEAR SECURITY.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NEIL GREGORY KORNZE, OF NEVADA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

GEN. PAUL J. SELVA