

Dixon to chair the base closure commission known as the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission. It made sense. As a Senator, Alan Dixon had written the section of the Defense authorization bill that created the BRAC.

Here was a man who had spent his entire career making political friends, but now he took on a job that was bound to test some of those friendships. He accepted that assignment because the President asked, and Dixon knew it was right for America. It was the same decision he made when he enlisted to serve in World War II.

Last October, Alan Dixon published his memoirs with the appropriate title "The Gentleman From Illinois." He returned to Washington briefly with Jody and members of the family to head on over to his favorite Capitol Hill restaurant, The Monocle. It is about a stone's throw from the Dirksen Senate Office Building where he used to have his old meetings in his office. The Monocle was the place where, afterwards, you joined for bipartisan dinners and a lot of good times.

Alan Dixon told his old friends gathered at The Monocle that evening:

What this country needs now is more friends on the Hill working together and talking together, and working for solutions that will serve the interest of the public.

Well, Alan Dixon was right about that. I hope that some day, in his memory, we will see the return of that spirit in this Senate Chamber. This country truly needs to work together.

Before Dixon left the Senate, then-Senator Paul Simon praised him with these words:

In generations to come, his children, his grandchildren, and his great-grandchildren will look back and say with pride, "Alan Dixon was my father, my grandfather, my great-grandfather," whatever that relationship will be.

Those words by Paul Simon about his lifelong political friend and colleague Alan Dixon ring true today as we reflect not only on his service as a Senator and public official but also as a person.

I lost a pal when Alan Dixon passed away. My wife and I extend our condolences to Alan's wife of 60 years, Jody. What a sweetheart of a woman. People don't realize what spouses put up with because of our public lives. She put up with it for many years. There were good times, but I am sure there were tough times too. Mothers have to work a little extra harder when the father happens to be in public life. She was his rock.

To Alan and Jody's three children Stephanie, Jeff, and Elizabeth, and to their families, to the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren—you can be proud of Alan Dixon. He was truly "the gentleman from Illinois."

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, this last weekend in Chicago was memo-

rable—memorable for the wrong reasons. This last weekend in Chicago, gun violence took the lives of 14 people and wounded 82.

I am honored to represent Illinois. I am especially honored to represent a great city such as Chicago. But I am heartbroken to think about what happened this past weekend.

Mayor Emanuel and Superintendent Gary McCarthy anticipated the Fourth of July weekend would be a challenge, and they dispatched hundreds of police to the streets of Chicago in an effort to avert this violence. I wouldn't say they failed, but I would say the tragedy that followed tells us we have a lot of work to do.

I am sure Mayor Emanuel and all of the elected officials in Chicago, including Superintendent McCarthy, are looking over what happened this past weekend trying to think of what they can do to bring peace to the city and end the violence which has taken so many lives. They will be working overtime, and a lot of people will point the finger of blame and say they could have done more. I think the mayor would acknowledge he could have done more. But let me add, we all could have done more. It isn't just the city's responsibility that this kind of violence has occurred. It isn't just the misfortune of the city of Chicago that these lives were lost and that gun violence continues to plague us. It is a responsibility that goes far beyond the city of Chicago. It is a responsibility we have visited on this Chamber, of the Senate.

How can we ignore gun violence in America wherever it occurs—in Chicago, in Washington, DC, across this country? What are we doing as Members of the Senate? What efforts are we making to make America a safer place to live? We have run away from it. We ran away from our responsibility when it comes to an honest, conscientious discussion about gun control.

Some people are frightened of this issue. They think when you get near the Second Amendment, it is the third rail of politics, and that there are gun lobby groups out there just waiting to pounce on any Member who comes to the floor of this Senate and talks about changing our gun laws. That has been the case for a long time, and yet the American people, when you ask them about the basics, get it. They understand you can protect our Second Amendment rights to own and use firearms legally and responsibly and still put reasonable limits in place to keep guns out of the hands of people who will misuse them.

Is there anyone who believes it is an infringement of constitutional rights to say that no one who has been convicted of a felony should be allowed to purchase a firearm in America? That makes sense.

This weekend in Chicago convicted felons were out on the street with firearms firing away. We should do everything in our power to stop that from occurring. After all of the senseless

tragedies which we have seen over the last several years—in Connecticut, in so many different places, even in the State of Illinois—is there anyone who argues with the premise that people who are so mentally unstable they cannot accept the responsibility of a firearm should not be allowed to buy a firearm? Two categories: Convicted felons, mentally unstable people, should not be allowed to purchase firearms in America, period.

We had the vote—a bipartisan vote. Senator JOE MANCHIN of West Virginia is no liberal. Senator MANCHIN is a real conservative and pro-gun. He joined up with Senator PAT TOOMEY of Pennsylvania, who is about as conservative a Republican as you can find. Both Senators MANCHIN and TOOMEY came to the floor and said let us do background checks to make sure convicted felons and people who are mentally unstable cannot purchase a firearm. It failed. It failed because it faced a filibuster we couldn't break. The majority of Senators voted for it, but that wasn't enough because we needed 60 and we didn't have it. We lost a handful of Democrats and we attracted only a few Republicans to support us.

To me, that is not the end of the debate. It is time for us to revisit that issue. It is time for us to have another vote on the floor of the Senate. I am not sure the outcome will be much different, but we owe it to the people of this country to continue this debate, and we owe it as fellow Senators, Democrats and Republicans, to search for solutions.

Let me tell you another measure that could have helped in Chicago and other cities across America. There is a term called straw purchaser. A straw purchaser is someone who will walk into a gun store, present their identification, and purchase a firearm because they are legally entitled to purchase it, and then turn around and give it or sell it to someone who could not legally buy that same gun. Many times it turns out to be the girlfriend who is sent in to make the purchase. It is time to change that law. It is time to send out an all-points bulletin to the girlfriends of thugs that they are going to be sent away to prison for a long time for that kind of irresponsible act. Straw purchasers pass these guns into the community, and when they do, we know what happens: Innocent people die. That is another provision we should vote on on the floor of the Senate.

If there are colleagues who want to stand and defend the right of straw purchasers to buy guns and turn them over to convicted felons, be my guest. I want to hear that debate. Tell me how that is an exercise of your constitutional right. It is not.

I have thousands and thousands of people across Illinois who own firearms, who store them safely, use them legally, and enjoy their rights under the Constitution. Well, what I am suggesting today is not going to change

that at all, but they live in communities where people will misuse these firearms.

We have a moral responsibility in the Senate to do everything we can to keep firearms out of the hands of people who misuse them. We have a legal and moral responsibility to accept this opportunity in the Senate to debate these issues. We cannot run away from them any more than we can run away from the violence in our streets. I am not alone in my feelings on this issue. There are other Senators who share them. It is time for us to stand up and speak up. We have a responsibility to the people we represent, to innocent people who are being threatened and killed across America.

What happened in Chicago over the Fourth of July weekend is a wakeup call—another wakeup call—to the Senate to get about the business of our purpose here, the reason we were elected—to try to make America a better and safer place.

Madam President, I yield the floor and 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.

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

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

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Mrs. MURRAY pertaining to the introduction of S. 2565 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mrs. MURRAY. I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

BIPARTISAN SPORTSMEN'S ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 384, S. 2363.

The clerk will report the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 384, S. 2363, a bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, I rise in support of the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act.

First, I thank Senators HAGAN and MURKOWSKI for their leadership in gathering support and getting this bill to the floor.

Nearly half of the Senate is cosponsoring this legislation from every cor-

ner of our country. It is truly a national bill, and that is why over 30 groups—from the National Shooting Sports Foundation and Ducks Unlimited to the Dallas Safari Club and many others—support this bill. It is an ambitious proposal that includes dozens of smart ideas from both sides of the aisle. It encourages private investment into fish habitat as well as land and wildlife management.

This bill supports public shooting ranges so more folks have a place to take their kids to teach them how to responsibly handle a firearm, and it protects some of our best places to hunt, fish, and recreate.

Make no mistake, the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act is also a jobs bill, which is something we constantly talk about needing more of around here.

In my State of Montana, outdoor recreation supports tens of thousands of jobs. It is a \$6 billion-a-year industry. Nationwide our outdoor economy creates and sustains more than 6 million jobs every single year.

Despite the economic power of public lands to sustain the rural economy, some folks are talking about closing off the land and privatizing it. We cannot let that happen. Instead, we need to pass the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act, which will strengthen our economy as we create more opportunities for folks to continue recreating in our great outdoors. Responsibly enjoying our outdoors is part of our way of life in Montana. In the Big Sky State we are proud hunters, anglers, sports men and women, and that is why it is critical that this bill will open more of our public lands to every law-abiding American who has a right to access them.

In Montana alone, nearly 2 million acres of public land is not easily accessible to folks, and I am proud my colleagues included the making lands public provision that I have pushed for, for years. These lands were set aside for our parents to enjoy, for all of us to enjoy, and ultimately for our children and grandchildren to enjoy. Accessing these lands is our birthright, and this bill delivers on a century-old promise to preserve our outdoor heritage.

By passing this bipartisan legislation, we will help ensure future generations get to experience the natural wonders that were passed down to us.

In the last Congress, the Senate took up a similar package only to see political gamesmanship get in the way. We cannot let that happen again. Millions of sports men and women across this country expect better. The American people deserve better. There is too much in this bill that we agree on to let it fail once again.

Senators HAGAN and MURKOWSKI have worked diligently for months to craft a bill that has an incredible amount of support in the Senate, but, most importantly, back home in the States we all represent. Let's pass this bill once and for all.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and 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. THUNE. 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. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

HEALTH CARE

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, Americans might have noticed a trend in ObamaCare headlines over the past two days. There was Sunday's Politico story and it basically had this title: "Why liberals are abandoning the Obamacare employer mandate."

There was an Associated Press story entitled "Senate Democrats Try to Pull Focus From Obamacare."

Then on Monday, Politico published a story called "Obamacare's next threat: A September surprise" about the White House efforts to prepare Democrats to meet September rate hike announcements.

All of these stories amount to one thing. Democrats are running scared from ObamaCare.

These three articles are just a few of the many pieces to be published about Democrats' efforts to distance themselves from ObamaCare in preparation for the November election.

It is not surprising they are worried. ObamaCare is Democrats' and the White House's main legislative achievement, and Americans don't like it. They didn't like it in 2010 when the law was passed, they didn't like it when the law was being implemented, and they don't like it now. A Quinnipiac poll from last week reported that 55 percent of Americans oppose ObamaCare. Similar numbers of Americans opposed it 3 months earlier, and almost 3 months before that. In fact, when we average polling on the health care law from late 2009 until today, we find the health care law has consistently been opposed by the majority of Americans. Opposition to the health care law currently averages nearly 14 percentage points higher than support. That is not a good sign for Democrats.

Many Democrats who firmly supported the health care law in 2009 and 2010 believed the law would grow more popular when the American people found out what was in the bill and how it would benefit them. But the health care law has not gotten more popular. Americans found out what was in the bill and they didn't like it. Democrats are realizing that their support for the bill may cost them their seats in November. So now they are running in the opposite direction.

According to Monday's Politico article, the White House knows very well that Democrats are finding ObamaCare to be a big problem in their campaigns.