

Marco Rubio, Johnny Isakson, Kelly Ayotte, Ben Sasse, Deb Fischer, John Boozman, David Vitter, Tim Scott, Roger F. Wicker, Richard C. Shelby, Michael B. Enzi, Roy Blunt.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that at 9:30 a.m. Friday, the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the following amendments in the order listed: Sullivan No. 67, Cardin No. 75, Murkowski No. 98, Flake No. 103, Cruz No. 15, Moran No. 73, and Daines No. 132; further, that all amendments on the list be subject to a 60-vote affirmative threshold for adoption and no second degrees be in order to the amendments. I ask consent that there be 2 minutes of debate equally divided between each vote and that all votes after the first in the series be 10-minute votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, now that we have purged the calendar of five of the six Democratic amendments, the majority leader tells us it is time to vote.

It doesn't strike me that this is in the best interest of what we are trying to achieve. We are going back and forth in a bipartisan, constructive fashion. I would like to ask the majority leader is he prepared to be in session tomorrow and to consider Democratic and Republican amendments and work through the list, including the ones he just tabled?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Does the Senator from Illinois intend to object to my consent?

Mr. DURBIN. What I am asking is to try to amend this so it does have some balance. The majority leader mentioned one Democratic amendment and at least five or six Republican amendments to be considered tomorrow.

Mr. MCCONNELL. We just had votes on Democratic amendments that the Senator's Members offered and he didn't want to agree to have a vote.

Mr. DURBIN. The RECORD will reflect the spirited debate on those amendments when the majority leader wouldn't even give the authors 60 seconds to describe what was in the amendment.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Am I correct the Senator from Illinois is going to object?

Mr. DURBIN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, the next vote will be Monday, at 5:30 p.m. The assistant Democratic leader and I have agreed to announce no more votes tonight.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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. MCCONNELL. 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.

TRIBUTE TO BEN RICHMOND

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a great Kentuckian and a man who has dedicated his entire career to promoting civil rights and helping people. My good friend Ben Richmond, the longtime president and CEO of the Louisville Urban League, recently announced his impending retirement from that position. Mr. Richmond has served as president and CEO of the Louisville Urban League for nearly 30 years—since 1987.

Mr. Richmond is a civil rights champion who has led a venerable civil rights institution such as the Louisville Urban League to new heights. Under his tenure, the Louisville Urban League has promoted job training and education for many in Louisville's African-American community. His body of work is so outstanding that in 2007 he received from the city the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Award, a recognition for a local activist who is dedicated to King's principles and who has promoted peace, equality, and justice.

Since Mr. Richmond took over the Louisville Urban League, the staff has grown from around 20 to 30 and the annual budget grown from under \$1 million to around \$3.3 million. Mr. Richmond is the driving force for fundraising for the budget.

The Louisville Urban League placed more than 200 people in jobs last year with a combined annual income of nearly \$5 million. It helped about 1,000 prepare for finding employment through career expos, job training, referrals, and career counseling. It also has many programs to help youth and seniors.

The Louisville Urban League is nearly halfway towards realizing their goal of seeing 15,000 local African Americans earn college degrees between 2012 and

2020. Mr. Richmond oversaw the Louisville Urban League's move to a new headquarters in 1990. And under Mr. Richmond's tenure, the Louisville Urban League was just one of 13 Urban League affiliates nationwide to receive a top score in a self-audit required by the National Urban League.

We are lucky, that after his retirement, Mr. Richmond plans on staying in Louisville. Our city can continue to benefit from his wisdom and experience. I want to wish my good friend Mr. Ben Richmond all the best in retirement, and I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in congratulating Ben for his successful tenure at the helm of the Louisville Urban League. The city of Louisville and the State of Kentucky have certainly benefitted immeasurably by his many efforts over the decades.

The Louisville Courier-Journal newspaper recently published an article extolling Mr. Ben Richmond's many accomplishments. I ask unanimous consent that said article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Courier-Journal, Jan. 21, 2015]

URBAN LEAGUE CEO RICHMOND RETIRING

(By Sheldon S. Shafer)

Ben Richmond, a cornerstone of local social activism for more than a quarter century and a major advocate of economic equality, is retiring as president and CEO of the Louisville Urban League.

Richmond announced his impending retirement at an Urban League board meeting Tuesday, after serving as head of the civil-rights organization since 1987.

Under the leadership of Richmond, a mainstay in the push to improve economic development in western Louisville, the Urban League has long been dedicated to promoting job training and education, primarily for Louisville's poorer citizens.

Richmond "has been one of the anchors for diversity and for stability in not only the African-American community but the overall Louisville community," said Raoul Cunningham, Louisville NAACP president. "I am going to miss Ben, his counsel and his cooperative spirit."

Richmond "has become known around the country for innovative and groundbreaking approaches to helping residents improve their quality of life," said Dan Hall, a University of Louisville vice president and the Urban League board chairman. "He is intensely passionate about helping individuals find a pathway to success."

Richmond received Louisville Metro's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Award in 2007, an annual recognition given by the city to a local activist dedicated to King's principles and who has promoted peace, equality and justice.

Then-Mayor Jerry Abramson said at the time that "over his decades of leadership, countless lives have been improved through Ben's tireless efforts in workforce development, housing and youth programs."

The national Urban League was founded in 1910, and the Louisville agency in 1921. The local league was set up chiefly to help rural black Southerners who had moved to Louisville after World War I.

The Louisville Urban League under Richmond has greatly expanded its reach. It placed about 250 people in jobs last year and

helped around 1,000 more prepare for finding employment. The league's career-development efforts range from helping job seekers draft resumes to mock job interviews.

In recent times the league has sponsored Saturday morning enrichment classes for children. And it has found buyers for dozens of new single-family homes built on vacant or abandoned property under its Project Rebound program in Russell, helping to transform the surrounding neighborhood.

League efforts annually include career expos; job training, referrals and career counseling; a variety of services for employers; homeownership training and counseling; a health and wellness program called Get Fit Louisville; a walk to defeat childhood obesity; and a long list of programs to help both youths and seniors in many ways.

Benjamin K. Richmond, 71 and single, was born in Durham, N.C., and raised in Jackson, Miss.

Richmond came to the Louisville Urban League as president and CEO in 1987, after top jobs with league affiliates in Wisconsin and Michigan. Richmond here replaced the league's longtime leader, the late Art Walters. Walters, who died in 2010 at age 91, directed the Louisville Urban League from 1970 to 1987.

Since Richmond took over, the league's staff has grown from around 20 to 30—also aided by dozens of volunteers—and its annual budget has grown from under \$1 million to around \$3.3 million this year. The funds have been cobbled together largely by Richmond—from Metro United Way and numerous public and private sources.

The current budget, for instance, includes about \$340,000 from United Way, less than \$100,000 from Metro Government and a \$1.2 million federal grant earmarked primarily for programs for seniors.

The league has several departments, including the Center for Workforce Development, the Center for Housing and Financial Empowerment and the Center for Youth Development and Education.

Richmond said in an interview Monday that he expects to remain on the job until around June 30, or until a replacement is named by the agency's board, after a planned national search. He said he may then stay on under a contract for a while longer.

Richmond intends to stay in Louisville, while traveling some to visit relatives in Mississippi and Arizona.

But he pledges to remain active, noting that "there are many opportunities in both the public and private sectors here. I will see what emerges. But I want to have fun."

Among many achievements during his tenure, Richmond cited:

Opening the league headquarters in 1990 at 1535 W. Broadway, a 19,000-square-foot office, community meeting site, classroom and job-training facility. The league invested \$1.6 million in the headquarters, which was paid off long ago. Richmond said the league headquarters has spurred significant nearby development along Broadway.

The economic impact of the league in terms of finding jobs for more than 200 people last year. Their combined annual income should be nearly \$5 million.

Richmond noted that in recent years the league helped find jobs for dozens of minorities in construction of the KFC Yum! Center, and he said the league was instrumental in getting the PGA of America to establish an urban youth golf program and also hire top staff minorities.

That a halfway point has nearly been reached toward a goal—shared with partner organizations such as Simmons College and Jefferson Community and Technical College—to have 15,000 local African-Americans earn college degrees between 2012 and 2020.

The minority effort is part of the community's 55,000 Degrees effort.

That the league last year received a top score in a self-audit—a review of its staff, policies, finances and procedures—required every three years by the National Urban League. The Louisville agency was just one of 13 affiliates of the national organization to achieve that status, Richmond said.

Richmond said he is proud that under his oversight the local league has attained financial stability, adding that he believes his organization is widely respected.

Under Richmond, the league has become more diversified. About half of its 36-member board and about half the staff are white. Richmond said he has strived to "practice what we preach—racial diversity."

Richmond "has been a tremendous leader," said Metro Councilman David Tandy, D-4th District. "There is still work to do, but he has been at the forefront of the second, or third, wave of the civil-rights movement, focusing on economic opportunity. . . . He has played a pivotal role in the community."

Richmond "has tried to create opportunities and meet challenges our community has faced," said longtime ally Sam Watkins, president of the Louisville Central Community Center, another West End-based, pro-development group.

"He's been a champion for west Louisville and has been proactive in trying to garner desperately needed attention for the area's issues and problems."

REMEMBERING WENDELL FORD

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today the United States Senate family lost one of its Members. Early this morning, our friend and colleague, Senator Wendell Ford, passed away at his home in Owensboro, KY.

Senator Wendell Ford's service to his State and country spanned seven decades. A veteran of World War II and longtime member of the Kentucky Army National Guard, Wendell Ford's first elected position was that of State senator. In 1967 he ran successfully for Lieutenant Governor. Four years later he was elected Governor.

Following his term as Governor, the people of Kentucky sent him to the U.S. Senate, where he enjoyed a distinguished 24-year career. He was my predecessor as Democratic whip, a position that he held from 1995 to 1999. When Senator Ford retired, he was the longest serving U.S. Senator in Kentucky history, a record that my friend, the majority leader, eclipsed in 2009.

Senator Wendell Ford loved Kentucky. His loyalty to his home State was never in question. During his time here in the Senate, he unabashedly and unapologetically fought for anything that would give Kentucky families a helping hand. Similarly, anyone or anything that threatened Kentucky and its people was met with Senator Ford's fierce opposition.

My thoughts today are with his family. I express my condolences to his wife of 71 years, Jean Neel, their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Senator Wendell Ford will be greatly missed by his loved ones, the people of Kentucky and the United States of America.

FIVE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF CITIZENS UNITED DECISION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, yesterday marked the 5-year anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*. In this sweeping opinion, on a divided 5 to 4 vote, the Court held that the First Amendment permitted corporations to spend freely from their treasuries to influence elections. As a result of *Citizens United* and the series of decisions that followed in its wake, we have witnessed wealthy, well-connected campaign donors and special interests unleash a deluge of cash in an effort to sway Federal, State, and local elections across our Nation.

Let me be clear: I firmly believe that every voice should be heard in our country, and every perspective should have a seat at the Nation's policy-making table. However, *Citizens United* has led to a system that allows a privileged group of deep-pocketed donors and corporations to drown out the voices of ordinary citizens in an effort to buy and control every seat at the table.

The numbers speak for themselves. During the last Presidential election, outside groups poured more than one billion dollars into Federal races, over three times the \$338 million that outside groups spent in 2008. More than 93 percent of all super PAC donations in 2012 came in contributions of at least \$10,000 from 3,318 donors, who make up 0.0011 percent of the U.S. population. Of that group, an elite class of 159 people each contributed at least \$1 million—funding nearly 60 percent of all super PAC donations that year.

We saw this trend continue during the recent midterm elections. Outside groups spent more than \$560 million to influence 2014 Federal races—8 times the approximately \$70 million spent in 2006, the last midterm election cycle before *Citizens United*. In 2014, we also saw a significant increase in political activity by tax-exempt "dark money" groups that do not publicly disclose their donors. *Citizens United* and its progeny have created a campaign finance system flush with secret cash and sorely lacking in transparency.

The impact stretches from Congress to state capitols to city halls throughout the country. As in Federal campaigns, *Citizens United* has led to an explosion of outside spending at the State and local levels, with corporations and wealthy single spenders looking to play kingmaker, pouring cash into races for positions ranging from district attorney to city commissioner. One of the most startling examples last fall occurred in Richmond, CA, a city with a population of 107,000. Chevron—an energy company with more than \$200 billion in annual revenue—spent approximately \$3 million through campaign committees aimed at influencing the mayoral and city council races. That means Chevron spent at least \$33 per voting-age resident in Richmond.

While the influx of spending is well documented, I believe that the long-