

I hope my Republican colleagues, particularly my friends from Tennessee, take a close look at it. Both Senators from Tennessee recognize human-caused climate change. The senior Senator, our friend who has just done such a masterful job of bringing this elementary and secondary education bill to the floor and steering it so far through this process, is a renowned champion of clean energy research and of electric vehicles.

Tennessee's junior Senator said in 2009, when cap-and-trade ideas were swirling:

I wish we would just talk about a carbon tax, 100 percent of which would be returned to the American people. So there's no net dollars that would come out of the American people's pockets.

Gentlemen, that is our bill. I am open to this discussion any time, but let's please not wait too long. As they know at Oak Ridge, as they know in the mayor's offices in Knoxville and Ducktown, as they know at the University of Tennessee, and as the rangers know up in the Great Smoky Mountains, time's a wasting, and we need to wake up.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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.

MILLENNIUM COMPACTS FOR REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to speak about the successes of the Millennium Challenge Corporation, or MCC, which is one of the U.S. Government's newest and most potent resources in the war against global poverty.

MCC was founded by a bipartisan act of Congress in 2004 as a new way to deliver foreign assistance. While the U.S. Agency for International Development, USAID, remains a critical tool for working with countries in need, MCC was given a very specific and focused goal: to reduce poverty through economic growth. The countries receiving MCC grants would be partners with a strong say in how their money would be spent. And, countries would need to compete for MCC dollars—only the best governed countries that performed better than their peers on matters of economic freedom, ruling justly, and investing in their people, would be worthy of MCC funding.

The MCC model is working. Countries are taking a hard look at their problems and poring over their performance scorecards so that they can become MCC-eligible. Academics have confirmed that the so-called “MCC Effect”—MCC's ability to incentivize sig-

nificant policy reforms from countries seeking a compact—is real and meaningful.

MCC countries are reforming in vital ways to be part of MCC. Ghana, for example, is reforming its entire power sector in order to receive MCC assistance. In Lesotho, women were fundamentally unequal citizens, unable to open a bank account without a man's permission. MCC made the Lesotho partnership contingent upon removing those barriers, and women now enjoy economic freedoms unavailable to them before.

With 11 years under its belt and a proven record of success, the MCC is looking towards the future and assessing how it can amplify its already significant effects on fighting poverty. One way we can do that is to give MCC the flexibility to coordinate its work on a regional basis. That is why I introduced S. 1605, the Millennium Compacts for Regional Economic Integration Act, or the M-CORE Act, along with Senators FLAKE, COONS, and ISAKSON on June 18, 2015. The M-CORE Act would enable MCC to establish concurrent compacts in eligible developing countries, enhancing their ability to promote economic growth and cross-border engagement between and among nations. Through the greater regional economic collaboration that MCC regional compacts will achieve, countries can address deficiencies in communications, transportation, and energy networks. MCC's bilateral compacts have increased access to reliable power, built highway corridors, and improved business climates, thereby promoting economic growth and cross-border engagement within MCC partner countries.

Regional investments can have an even greater rate of return. In Central America, for example, MCC's work on road infrastructure could have had an even greater impact if the roads connected across borders. And in Africa, neighboring countries could collaborate on a regional power pool, connect land-locked countries to transportation infrastructure, or address other policy, institutional, and logistical challenges that hamper economic growth and development.

MCC has, by mandate, always focused on economic analysis and rigorous data; and its approach to regional investments has been no exception. MCC's extensive analysis has concluded that a regional approach to poverty reduction, under the right circumstances, can present opportunities to take advantage of higher rates of return on investment and larger scale reductions in poverty.

In short, MCC regional investments have the potential to greatly enhance economic growth in well-governed regions of the developing world. I urge my Senate colleagues to join me in supporting this commonsense legislation.

REMEMBERING LINDA NORRIS

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Linda Norris, a beloved former member of both my State and Washington, DC, staff who passed away recently. Linda was the very first member of Team Crapo and has left a lasting legacy in my office as well as in her adopted State of Idaho.

Linda retired from the Senate nearly 7 years ago after providing 18 years of service to Idahoans. Linda was the first staff member to join my congressional campaign as a member of my first House campaign staff. She was prominent and pivotal in my campaign and quickly became one of the most reliable and intuitive staff members. Linda then became my first regional director in Twin Falls, ID, serving throughout my service in the U.S. House of Representatives and into my service in the U.S. Senate. As State Director of Constituent Services, she established high constituent service standards, ones that are still used in my office, and she advocated strongly for military families and veterans. Her friendly nature, southern charm, and quick intellect helped defuse potential conflicts, and she represented the House and Senate offices with the utmost professionalism.

Whether she was working in Idaho or Washington, DC, her priority was to serve the people of Idaho, which she carried out with the utmost care and diligence. Her lasting legacy will be her influence over domestic violence awareness and prevention. More than 20 years ago, she arranged for me to visit a local shelter for abused children. The visit inspired an immovable commitment to increase awareness of domestic violence and to advocate for solutions and assistance for victims in every possible circumstance. Her interest and advocacy in this matter also spurred her into action when she recognized the need for training public servants who worked on public lands in how to handle domestic violence situations that arise when people are on public lands, not in their homes. With my strong support, she worked with the appropriate individuals within the U.S. Forest Service to initiate programs to train employees on domestic violence prevention. This remarkable achievement might be enough to most people, but Linda was a force that continued to search for ways to improve the lives of others.

She touched the lives of many Idaho military families and youth. As an Army wife herself, Linda had a personal understanding of military families. This experience gave her empathy to advocate effectively and attentively on behalf of Idaho military members, veterans, and their families. Linda also instituted and guided my military academy nomination process, helping countless Idaho youth on their path to success.

She was observant, inspired, tactful, and hard-working. Linda helped highlight the unrecognized good deeds of

fellow Idahoans by suggesting I create two awards: the Spirit of Idaho for volunteers, and the Spirit of Freedom for veterans and those who work with veterans. These awards recognize the extraordinary efforts of Idahoans and the service of veterans and volunteers serving veterans. She also helped achieve hard-sought land access and conservation policies. Linda was a nurse by training and profession, which is consistent with her gift for helping and caring for people, a behavior she demonstrated repeatedly. The legacy that she left upon her retirement remains today in the Crapo office.

Since news of her unexpected passing has reached my staff and former staff members, remembrances of Linda have poured in. I would like to share a few with you:

“Linda was a singular individual who set the pace for constituent services in Idaho. She cared for individuals and families, not ‘cases’. Her approach influenced me and how I set up succeeding constituent services operations. Her zealous care for people has been emulated and has resulted in thousands of Idahoans getting the help they deserve from their government.”

“Linda was truly an amazing, generous, and gracious lady. She truly was beautiful both inside and out. Linda made me feel so welcome on my first trip to Idaho. She joked with people that she introduced me to that I was from way, way Southern Idaho. We decided that Lava Hot Springs would be my adopted hometown. Really being from Louisiana, I loved that Linda and I shared strong Southern roots, and great wacky stories.”

“She has that southern mixture of sweetness and sass with an underlying spirit and determination that was always apparent.”

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Linda was a great friend. Not only did she pay attention to my professional needs, but she also recognized when some personal time was needed. Many times when I was working in her region, she built in time in the schedule for a much needed clothes shopping trip, a visit to the eye doctor, or just some down time with my family. My wife, family, and I have all been blessed with her friendship. Linda will be missed beyond measure, and I extend deep condolences to family and friends. Thank you for your service, Linda. Rest in peace, dear friend.

RECOGNIZING CANDLE-LITE COMPANY ON ITS 175TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Candle-lite Company—the oldest continually operating candle company in the United States—as it celebrates its 175th anniversary.

Candle-lite Company was founded in 1840 by Thomas Emery, who traveled door-to-door selling candles in Cincinnati, OH. His venture continued to grow and eventually his son, Thomas

Jr., joined the business. Candle-lite's products were manufactured in various locations in the Cincinnati area before manufacturing was moved to its current location in Leesburg, OH, in 1952.

Today, Candle-lite's 1 million-square-foot manufacturing and distribution facility in Leesburg employs over 600 Ohioans annually and the corporate headquarters in Blue Ash employs 70.

I congratulate Candle-lite and its employees in making its first 175 years a success and extend my best wishes for the next 175 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO RUTH GRIFFIN

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, today I wish to honor one of New Hampshire's most revered and accomplished leaders, Ruth Lewin Griffin, as she celebrates her 90th birthday.

Born in Fall River, MA, Ruth moved to Portsmouth, NH, at a young age and continues to reside there today. Most notably, she served as executive councilor for the third district of New Hampshire for 20 years. As a testament to her continued commitment to the Granite State, Ruth currently serves as chairman of the Portsmouth Housing Authority.

But Ruth's career of service began long before her time on the executive council. After graduating from Portsmouth High School, Ruth went on to pursue a degree from Wentworth Hospital School of Nursing. Using the skills she learned as a registered nurse, she dove headfirst into a career as a public servant, holding office as a State senator and State representative and serving on the Portsmouth Police Commission and board of education. She also served as a delegate to two Constitutional Conventions and as a Republican national committeewoman. Ruth has earned well-deserved praise for her service to our State, including being named one of New Hampshire's Ten Most Powerful Women for 6 years in a row, and most recently, she received the 2015 Granite State Legacy Award, which honors dedication to the State, its people, and way of life.

In addition to her tremendous service to New Hampshire, Ruth has been blessed with a wonderful family, including the late John Griffin, five children, five grandchildren, and two great-grandsons. Four generations of the Griffin family have lived on their family farm, raising sheep, chickens, and other livestock. As the matriarch of the family, Ruth strives to teach her family members the values she learned on the farm—hard work, humility, and perseverance. She will often tell you, invoking her family motto, that she lives her life “by courage, not by cunning.”

Ruth embodies the spirit of a true New Hampshire leader. Her life is marked by her dedicated service and her devotion to making New Hamp-

shire a better place to live and work. I had the privilege of serving alongside Ruth in the Governor's office and the attorney general's office and will be forever grateful for her wisdom, guidance, and mentorship. I am very proud to recognize and celebrate Ruth's birthday and her extraordinary contributions to the State. I wish Ruth and her family the best on this very special day and for many more years of health and happiness.●

REMEMBERING LAURA MYERS

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today, we honor the life and legacy of Laura Myers, whose passing signifies a great loss to Nevada. I send my condolences and prayers to her family and friends during this time of hardship. Laura was an incredible person, committed to bringing joy to those around her through humanitarian service and fair-and-balanced news to residents across Nevada. She truly represented the best of journalistic excellence. She will be sorely missed by the entire Nevada family.

Laura was born on August 26, 1961, in Las Vegas. She spent the majority of her childhood in northern Nevada, where she received her education and graduated from the University of Nevada, Reno. She began her journalism career with the Reno Gazette-Journal in 1984 and took her first step in political coverage, reporting the Nevada Legislature, in 1987. She was then hired in 1988 by the Associated Press to cover news in Carson City and later in the San Francisco and San Jose, CA, areas.

Over the next 20 years, Laura pursued both her humanitarian and journalistic passion, leaving and returning to the AP several times and working with Habitat for Humanity in Uganda, Mongolia, and New York, alongside her day job throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Laura's first departure from the AP was in 1992 after she joined the Peace Corps, where she spent time working to help a remote village in Togo, West Africa. In 1995, Laura worked with the American Refugee Committee, managing logistics at a refugee camp in the Congo. Immediately after, she accepted another job offer from the AP with a position covering politics, foreign affairs, the military, and national security in Washington, DC.

In 2003, Laura left the AP and fulfilled her passion for movies, studying at the New York Film Academy. Afterwards, in 2006, Laura spent 10 months in North Africa and the Middle East as a management consultant for Arabic- and French-language newspapers. After filling another position with the AP in 2007, Laura worked for Food for All of Washington. From 1988 to 2008, her extraordinary hard work and good character maintained a good relationship with the AP, continuously preserving an opportunity to return. In 2009, after committing time to teaching English to adults in Egypt, Laura returned to Nevada and was hired as the Las Vegas