

upon himself, the U.S. Navy, and the Department of Defense.

For nearly 40 years, Admiral Winnefeld has performed his duty professionally, honestly, and with great dedication. Our Nation will miss his leadership and expertise. We wish him and his family all the best as he moves to the next phase of his life. Personally, I want to thank Admiral Winnefeld and say job well done, God bless, and Godspeed.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NEW HORIZONS PLUTO MISSION

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, 46 years ago yesterday, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first people to walk on the Moon.

September will bring the 53rd anniversary of President Kennedy's speech that launched America on the quest to land them on the Moon. He set that goal for the country not because it was easy but because it was hard. I am here to congratulate the men and women of the New Horizons mission for making the hard work of sending a spacecraft to Pluto look easy.

One week ago today, what had once been a fuzzy picture of Pluto came into sharp focus. Dramatic transformations inspire everyone. As you can see, NASA delivered an amazing before-and-after story. Until the New Horizons flyby, the best picture we had of Pluto offered little detail of our neighbor at the edge of the solar system, but now we can see distinct features on its surface, including something that looks like a heart. Who couldn't love that. Thank you for this great picture.

It took the New Horizons spacecraft 9½ years to cross the 3 billion miles between Pluto and Earth, but it was a mission much longer in the making.

In the late 1980s, a group of scientists came together to advocate for sending a spacecraft to the edge of the solar system. Such a mission would tell us more about Pluto and once again push back the edge of the known frontier. Many of those scientists are still involved with the New Horizons mission, including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's own Richard Binzel.

While these scientists pushed to get the green light for the mission, it was only achieved by the partnership between NASA, some of our best U.S. universities and the aerospace industry, and the hard work and innovation of their scientists, engineers, and staff.

From just the initial information returned this week, scientists have to rethink what they thought they knew about Pluto, its Moons, and its space environment. Images came back of

mountains of frozen water as high as the Rocky Mountains on Pluto. On its Moon Charon, we can now see deep canyons and a row of cliffs and troughs stretching 600 miles, as far as from Washington, DC, to Atlanta.

Instruments on the New Horizons probe confirm that the Pluto system contains a large amount of frozen water. That is an essential building block of life. One thing scientists didn't see—many of the meteorite impact craters—suggests that Pluto was geologically active relatively recently.

The voyage of discovery from the flyby will continue for years to come. Not only will scientists learn more, but they will also train the next generation of planetary scientists. I am proud the youngest member of the New Horizons team is Alissa Earle, a graduate student at MIT.

The New Horizons team is following in the great American exploration tradition. They are pushing back the boundaries of geography, knowledge, and technology. In doing so, they are inspiring the world. No matter what you think of the classification of Pluto as a dwarf planet, we can all agree that the New Horizons mission is already a massive achievement.

I look forward to the further revelations it will bring as its data streams back to Earth and it travels to the far edges of our solar system.

Finally, I would like to note that in the same week of taking us to Pluto, NASA also commenced the continuous monitoring of the Sun and the Earth—the only home humans have known thus far. I hope the events of this past week confirm the importance of using all of NASA's tools to further the exploration of our solar system and universe and better understand our own planet as well.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

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

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

HONORING THE LIVES OF FIVE AMERICAN HEROES

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I am here with our senior Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER to speak on something very tragic that occurred in our State and in my hometown.

I rise to honor the lives of five American heroes—the five American heroes we honor today with the lowering of the flags here at the U.S. Capitol. Our community is heartbroken, as has been said many times, our State is heartbroken, and I believe our Nation is heartbroken that these outstanding young men died in the way they did, but we honor their lives. We mourn

their loss. We think of the greatness they embodied: Thomas Sullivan, David Wyatt, Carson Holmquist, Skip Wells, and Randall Smith.

I think as the Nation has learned about these individuals carrying out what many would consider to be mundane activities in support of our U.S. military, those who protect us, they understand the greatness they symbolized, most of them having served in Afghanistan and Iraq and some of them younger, beginning their careers, but all having excellent backgrounds and exemplifying the very best America has to offer.

Our Nation mourns, our community mourns, and we have lost five of our greatest. Also, hospitalized in Chattanooga today is a young man named Dennis Pedigo, whose mother and father both served on the Chattanooga Police Department, and he has followed in their footsteps.

I think people have heard all around our country the tremendous heroism that was exemplified by the Chattanooga Police Department, which rushed at the assailant and brought him to his end—by the way, trained to do so, trained to go at them. This was not a SWAT team, but these were patrol squads that were trained to deal with this kind of situation and no doubt saved the lives of other people in doing so. So we honor them. We honor all of them. We celebrate them. As a community we have been harmed, and our community has prayed.

We had a vigil on Friday night that was extraordinary. Senator ALEXANDER was there with our Governor, our mayor, county officials, and others. It was an extraordinary time of our community coming together around what has happened.

I do believe that what people all over the country and the world have heard about "Chattanooga strong" is true, and I think our community will be even stronger because of what has happened, and our Nation must understand where we are in the world and that these types of activities will possibly continue.

I had a very good conversation on Friday with the Pentagon to talk about what they are doing. I know threat activity has been rising for some time, and they are looking at what needs to be done to ensure this doesn't happen again.

I had a very good conversation this morning with Senator MCCAIN, who I know is leading efforts with House Members to figure out if there is a way to add something to the NDAA, a piece of legislation that we can deal with very quickly here so we can make sure we have policies to protect lives.

Our community is praying for these individuals. It is my hope that we will put policies in place to ensure we appropriately protect these individuals.

In addition to that, there are tangible things we can do. I know that when something like this happens,

there are certain types of Federal benefits. Our offices are working together with outside groups to coordinate that.

Thankfully, our community has come together to make sure these families have the financial support they need beyond that. There is an effort under way in Chattanooga now—and I hope people around the world will participate—to make sure that the financial support that is necessary to sustain these families in light of what happened occurs.

My friend and a great Tennessean—or at least we claim him as that because he lives in Chattanooga for part of the year—Peyton Manning, has lent his name to this effort. My sense is that we will see a generous outpouring to ensure that, at a base level, some of the financial needs of these families, if not all, will be dealt with in an appropriate way.

I will close by saying this. Our community has been shocked, as has the world. We have lost five outstanding people, and it has shaken their families.

I had the opportunity to meet briefly with the family of the fallen sailor, the last person who passed. He was riddled with bullets, and the Erlanger trauma squad worked with him for hours and hours and hours trying to save his life. Finally, after a tremendous fight, he lost his life—again, in the line of duty.

The needs of these families are great. While our community is praying, they will try to meet their needs in other ways.

How do we respond to this? LAMAR and I have both mentioned what comes out of this, and the fact is that I feel that our community is like none I have witnessed from the standpoint of its compassion to others. My sense is that the way our community is going to respond to this is much like what I would refer to in Genesis 12, where God said to the Jewish people that they were blessed to be a blessing. I think most people in our community, our State, and our Nation believe we have been incredibly blessed, and my sense is that in addition to responding to the specific needs that need to be dealt with both here in Washington and back home and certainly at the State level, our community is going to rise up and ensure that, because we have been blessed, we continue to be a blessing to others. That is my hope, and that is what I am seeing happen. I have never seen such an outpouring of compassion anywhere else in my life.

I am proud to represent Tennessee. I am proud that my hometown has responded in the way that it has, in spite of a deep mourning and grief that we have for these outstanding men who lost their lives in the line of duty.

Senator ALEXANDER and I will submit a resolution later today, and my sense is that the entire Senate will want to be a part of it.

With that, I will turn to my distinguished friend, a great colleague, and one of the greatest Senators our State has ever had, LAMAR ALEXANDER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank Senator CORKER for his eloquent and obviously heartfelt comments. He mentioned the word that we have heard most often since last Thursday, when he and I first got word of this tragedy, and the word is ‘heartbroken.’ We are heartbroken for the lives that were lost, heartbroken for the families that remain, and heartbroken for the community of Chattanooga.

We can see the deep emotion that Senator CORKER has expressed. As a resident and former mayor of Chattanooga, that community is very special to him.

On Friday at 5:30 p.m., in Mount Olivet Baptist Church, there was a memorial service that nearly 1,000 people attended. Senator CORKER, our Governor, the police chief, and others spoke.

I know most people in the country know about what happened that day. Most of them would have liked to have been there to do what they could in a time such as this. You never know quite what to say. Sometimes all you can do is just be there.

This is especially hard because these were young men—young men in the service of our country, young men whose lives were filled with happiness, young men who had the expectation of a long life for themselves, young men who were filled with duty and service.

They were living in a strong community. Faith and the sense of helping one another is strong Chattanooga faith. Chattanooga is a place of good neighbors. Chattanooga was recently named the best midsize city in America. Everything in Chattanooga seemed to be going in the right direction, and then this happened. So it is especially heartbreaking in the community of Chattanooga.

On Friday, I thought—while trying to think about what words I could add to the words that were being said—about the time in 1985 when 289 members of the 101st Airborne Division lost their lives in a plane crash in Newfoundland, and President Reagan came to Fort Campbell to meet with the families to talk about it.

I was Governor then, and I drove up to hear what he had to say. He spoke of those men and women—as these five were—as peacekeepers. They were there to protect lives, protect the peace, and to act as a force for stability and trust for our country.

President Reagan said of those 289 men and women, which can be equally said of these five men, that their work was the perfect expression of the best of the Judeo-Christian tradition. They were the ones of whom Christ spoke when he said: ‘Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God.’

President Reagan said of the 289 who lost their lives 30 years ago what could be said of these five this week and what a poet said of soldiers in another war:

They will never grow old; they will always be young. And we know one thing with every

bit of our thinking: They are now in the arms of God.

Chattanoogaans said last Friday the words ‘Chattanooga strong,’ and they were repeated by Senator CORKER, the Governor, and most of the members of the community. People were standing up and supporting each other and the families who had been heartbroken by the loss of their loved ones.

I am enormously impressed with the people of Chattanooga and their current leaders: the mayor, the Governor, and their Senator, who is also their former mayor. I believe Chattanooga will be strong.

I think it is important, as we reflect and grieve here in the Senate with Chattanooga—not just with the families and the people who knew the five who passed—that we not only honor the five, but that we also honor the city and its response to this terrible tragedy.

I pledge to continue to work with Senator CORKER to do all that I can to help those five families and help create an environment that can keep Chattanooga strong.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

THE HIGHWAY BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, after literally months of discussion and a lot of cooperation from chairmen and ranking members and staffs and Members from both sides of the aisle, I am happy to announce that Senator BOXER and I have an agreement for a multiyear, bipartisan highway bill. We hope to be able to discuss this agreement at our conferences shortly. This is a 6-year highway authorization that will allow planning for important long-term projects around the country. The bill also provides 3 years—3 years—of guaranteed funding for the highway trust fund.

Senators from both parties know that a long-term highway bill is in the best interest of our country, so we will continue working together to get a good one passed. Thanks to the dedication of both Republican and Democratic Senators and their staffs, I am hopeful that we will.

I wish to thank some other people who have been involved in getting us to where we are. In particular, I thank Chairman JIM INHOFE, Chairman ORRIN HATCH, Chairman JOHN THUNE, and Chairman RICHARD SHELBY for their efforts to reach a bipartisan accomplishment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if we have an agreement—and I am sure we do because I have great respect for Senator MCCONNELL, Senator BOXER, and, of course, Senator INHOFE. We have this issue, though: We haven’t seen the bill. There can be an agreement, but until we put an agreement in writing, things are a lot different.