

some problems demand a national solution. We must take action to make our communities safe—all of our communities safe. We must engage in these difficult conversations about persistent inequality and about gun violence. And we must dedicate ourselves to securing real change.

I implore my colleagues: Let us make our laws our sanctuaries. Let us honor the memory of those lost on Sunday and the lives of those who survived by recognizing our obligation to take action. No Member of Congress can be for this.

Madam President, 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. 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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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 rise today to remember the victims of the terrorist attack in Orlando, FL. Forty-nine people were killed and even more were wounded when a self-proclaimed ISIS sympathizer attacked Pulse nightclub in the early hours of Sunday morning. I can't imagine the trauma experienced by those who were present in the club or the suffering of the families now mourning a beloved son or daughter.

My thoughts and prayers are with the victims, with the families of the deceased, and with all those currently sitting at the hospital beds of the injured. My thoughts and prayers are also with the people of Orlando, whose sense of security has been shattered by this deadly attack.

Every deadly ideology of the last century has been characterized by a fundamental disregard for the sacredness of human life. The form of radical Islam espoused by ISIS and its adherents is no different. Like every radical ideology before it, it regards individual human beings as expendable commodities in its pursuit of a Utopia. More than that, it sees certain individuals as not only expendable but dangerous, and it seeks to exterminate them accordingly. The blood-soaked villages of ISIS-controlled Iraq and Syria bear terrible witness to the slaughter of Christians, Yazidis, moderate Muslims, and anyone else ISIS felt was standing in its way.

As a nation, we have to stand against the threat of terrorism. We have to ensure that our military is equipped to destroy terrorist organizations abroad and that our law enforcement personnel are equipped to confront terrorist threats here at home. We need to control our borders and modernize our immigration system so that we know who is coming and who is going from our Nation. We need to invest in our intelligence agencies and hold them accountable as they work to keep our homeland safe. We have to support our

allies who are taking the fight to the terrorists. And most of all, we have to show the utter bankruptcy of an ideology that regards human beings as expendable.

America has a proud history of standing up for the dignity and freedom of the human person against tyrants of all stripes. We stood against the deadly ideologies of the 20th century, and we will stand against the deadly ideologies of the 21st century.

On Sunday morning we saw the darkest side of humanity, but, as so often happens, when we see the worst in human beings, we also see the best—the DJ who helped a patron escape from the club; the man who stuffed his bandana into a bullet hole on a stranger's back to stop the bleeding; the man who pulled a wounded stranger to safety behind a car and then kept him conscious on the way to the hospital; the long lines of Orlando residents who came forward to donate blood; and, of course, the police officers who walked into that club and who wake up every day ready to lay down their lives for the rest of us. Against that spirit, terrorism will never prevail.

Our whole Nation grieves with the citizens of Orlando. May God bless and comfort the families of all those who died, and may He heal all those whose hearts are broken.

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. BROWN. 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. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

#### RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF GEORGE V. VOINOVICH

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I am joined by my colleague and friend, Senator ROB PORTMAN of Ohio—the other Senator from Ohio—to discuss the passing of a dear friend of his and of mine. I will make a few short remarks.

I believe Senator PORTMAN, who will be speaking at his memorial service later in the week in Cleveland will be offering a resolution and some comments to the resolution.

This past weekend we were awakened on Sunday to learn that the State of Ohio and the city of Cleveland had lost one of its champions, George Voinovich.

As mayor of my beloved city—the city I call home—Cleveland, as a two-term Governor of Ohio, and as my colleague for my first 4 years in the Senate before Senator PORTMAN succeeded him, George dedicated his life to public service.

A man of strong conviction, he was always willing to listen to the other side of an argument and to put what he believed was best for our State and for our country ahead of partisan politics. Of course, we didn't always agree, but we worked together in the Senate to make progress for Ohio on everything from judicial nominees to supporting our manufacturing industry to cleaning up our great lake, Lake Erie.

When I came to the Senate in 2007, we assembled a commission of distinguished Ohio lawyers of both parties to find the candidates—again, of both parties—to recommend as nominees for the Federal judiciary. I thank Senator PORTMAN. Actually, this began with Senator DeWine and Senator Voinovich, and it has now continued from their service with Senator PORTMAN and me doing the same thing.

George had a lifelong love affair with what he called the “jewel of the Great Lakes,” Lake Erie. His fight to clean up and protect our lake began when he joined the Ohio Legislature almost exactly 50 years ago. At that time, people wrote off Lake Erie as a polluted, dying lake. Over the past century, people have had a habit of trying to write off Ohio. Like all of our State's champions, George wouldn't accept that.

As my colleagues know, there is an enormous painting on the stairway outside the Senate Chamber depicting the American victory in the Battle of Lake Erie. George fought what he referred to as the “second battle of Lake Erie,” pushing for the first Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, cochairing the Senate's Great Lakes Task Force, working with me to introduce the Clean Water Affordability Act, which I continued to work on since his retirement in December of 2010.

That tenacity paid off. Our lake has made an incredible comeback. We still have work to do every summer. We have to deal with the return of toxic algal blooms. Senator PORTMAN and I have worked on that issue in the western basin of Lake Erie near Toledo.

But because of the work and investment by people such as George, he was able to catch yellow perch not far from his own backyard in Collinwood, a section on the lake on the east side of Cleveland.

It will be up to all of us who love Lake Erie and understand how vital it is to our State to continue that work for our Great Lake.

George was the son of Serbian and Slovenian immigrants, and he understood the importance of investing in our Nation and investing in public works that create jobs and power our communities and our economy. In retirement, George Voinovich continued to push for ways to finance our Nation's infrastructure. Just this year he reached out to his friend, Senator CARPER of Delaware, and to me about the need for dedicated public works funding.

He was willing to reach across the aisle to work with us on projects such

as the Brent Spence Bridge, which we still need to rebuild, and loan guarantees and tax incentives for Ohio's manufacturers and small businesses.

He was a deeply religious man. He was guided by his faith through nearly half a century in public service. That faith sustained him through the worst tragedy that any parent can imagine, when his 9-year-old daughter Molly was killed during George Voinovich's first campaign for mayor of Cleveland. He said of that experience later:

When one loses a child, things come into focus, what is important, what is unimportant. You see more. You feel more. You experience more. We all take so much for granted.

I hope we will take George's passing as an opportunity to reflect on what we take for granted and what is important to us as a country. On behalf of everyone in this body, I send my deepest condolences to Janet Voinovich, to their children, and to everyone touched by George's life and, frankly, her life of public service.

His legacy will live on through the lasting contributions he made to his beloved Cleveland, to Ohio, and to our great country.

I yield to my friend from Ohio.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I thought those remarks beautifully described a great public servant, George Voinovich. I wish to add a little to it, and then at the end of my remarks, I am actually going to offer a resolution for the entire Senate to vote on as a tribute to the life of George Voinovich. We have put together a resolution which talks about a lot of his accomplishments. As my colleague has said very well, it gives us an inspiration for the future. From his life, hopefully, we can learn about how to better do our jobs on the floor of the Senate.

He was an amazing public servant. As some know, he was not just mayor of Cleveland during a critical time but also Governor of Ohio and, of course, a Senator here for two terms. I believe he represented the very best of public service. By that I mean whether it was his efforts to tackle the debt, to give children more choice and parents more choice in their schools, or to modernize infrastructure, he never made it about him. It was always about others, and specifically, it was about his constituents.

He was a very proud grandson of immigrants, Serbian and Slovenian. He was also the son of a great neighborhood in Cleveland called Collinwood, where I was over the weekend visiting with Janet Voinovich. He was raised with the values of that neighborhood—honesty, integrity, and hard work. He said that his father used to tell him that in America we have more of the world's bounty than any other country on Earth because of our freedom, because "we get more out of our people through the free enterprise system and our education system." He never forgot

those early lessons. Wherever he went, whatever title he had, he was always that same earnest, plainspoken kid from Collinwood.

As a boy, he was diagnosed with a bone marrow disorder, which kept him from enjoying many of childhood's joys, such as sports. He didn't let it get him down. In fact, he brought all his energies into his studies—one reason he was such a good student, I think—and he got around Cleveland on his red bike, which he called Bessie, which was his pride. Later in life, by the way, I had the opportunity to be in parades with George Voinovich. I would be marching along, and there he was on his bicycle. I don't know if it was named Bessie, but I know Janet Voinovich was at his side, riding that bicycle in parades, and then as Governor Voinovich and then Senator Voinovich. He loved those bicycles and was always riding with a smile on his face.

That difficult health care struggle he had early in his life shaped his character and gave him a heart for all those who were suffering or who were just different. As with so many of his decisions, he would go to the Lord for inspiration. He would start with a humble prayer, and he did this at Collinwood High School. He said he prayed for guidance, asking God what he should do with his life. And he got an answer. He felt he had a calling, and that was to get involved in student government, and so he ran. He was elected as class president as a senior. He went on to serve as student body president at Ohio University, when he was in undergraduate school, and he was president of his class and president of the Young Republicans club while in law school at Ohio State University. So if people wonder how he got into politics, it all started in high school and through college and law school. That was the track he chose for himself.

For over half a century, he served his neighbors in so many different roles—local, State, and Federal. He was a county commissioner in Cuyahoga County. He was county auditor. He was mayor, as we have talked about. He was a State representative. He was an assistant attorney general. He was Lieutenant Governor. He was Governor for two terms, and he was a U.S. Senator for two terms. This is a guy who devoted his life to public service.

In 1959, as a young man, he volunteered for the mayoral campaign of Tom Ireland. We don't remember much about Tom Ireland, because Tom Ireland lost. But in that election, George Voinovich met a young woman—a beautiful and intelligent fellow volunteer named Janet Allan. Janet and George were married for more than 50 years. Having just been with her over the weekend, I can tell you she is an extraordinary woman. Their relationship—their partnership—is a real model and example for all of us, and certainly it has been over the years for Jane and for me. George used to say about Janet that she was "God's great-

est blessing on me," and that was clear to anyone who knew them. Together they had four wonderful children: George, Betsy, Peter, and Molly.

He was Lieutenant Governor in 1978 when his true calling came. I say "true calling" because this was a time of urgency in his hometown of Cleveland. It was in trouble. That same year, Cleveland had become the first American city since the Great Depression to default on its debt, which, by some measures, totaled more than \$100 million. That was a lot of money back then. People were worried. Some people were leaving the city altogether.

From his neighbors and from his conscience, George Voinovich heard the call to come back home. Shortly after he won that Republican nomination for mayor, tragedy struck the Voinovich family. George's youngest daughter, Molly, was hit by a car. She was walking home from school when she was 9 years old. It is a tragedy no parent should ever have to endure, but George and Janet endured it, and, turning to their faith, they persevered. They went on to win that election.

George says that through that trial, his faith deepened even further and his compassion for others grew even stronger. SHERROD BROWN just talked about the fact that he said that "things come into focus when you lose a child." I think that is what my colleague said, and that is how George felt. It deepened his faith and brought things into focus.

He did win that mayoral election, and he turned Cleveland into "The Comeback City." It is not an exaggeration, I don't think, to say that he personally saved the city from default in the sense that he had incredible energy, infectious optimism that it could happen, sheer force of will, and a great work ethic, and he brought people together.

Having talked to some of the city fathers at that time, some of whom are still with us, it was George Voinovich's bringing a team together that saved the city of Cleveland. He lifted people's hopes.

A decade later it was the entire State of Ohio that needed to be turned around. After winning reelection in Cleveland as mayor with two landslide votes, he was elected Governor in another landslide. Ohio was facing a massive debt, just like Cleveland had been, and George came to the rescue again, saying he would get the State government "working harder and smarter, doing more with less." Anybody who knew George Voinovich knew that was his favorite motto—doing more with less; working harder and smarter; and with God, all things are possible.

He did do more with less. He cut taxes by \$24 billion to get the economy moving, but he also trimmed government spending by \$720 million in just 2 years. With his experience as mayor, he wasn't afraid to delve into the details of the budget. He rolled up his sleeves, and he got involved.

The only thing he knew better than his budget, by the way, was his constituents. He helped hundreds of thousands of people who were stuck on welfare to find jobs, as unemployment in Ohio fell to 25-year lows. He also modernized our roads and bridges. He was a big infrastructure guy. After a landslide reelection, he left the Buckeye State with nearly \$1 billion in a rainy-day fund.

By the way, when he was mayor, he served as president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and when he was Governor he served as president of the National Governors Association—the only person in America to have done that. That is pretty amazing. He rose to the top.

He loved to fish. Wildlife fishing in Lake Erie was his favorite thing. He got me started on that, which I do now every year. He loved his lake. If you go to his home and stay, as I did over the weekend, you know it is a couple of houses from the lake. You can see how proud he was of that lake by the way in which he supported efforts to make it clean and make it safe. He was also a strong supporter of our coal miners in eastern Ohio. He became the first government executive in the world to recognize the independence of his ancestral homeland of Slovenia, something that meant a lot to George. His last speech was on Friday night of last week, and it was on the 25th anniversary of Slovenia's independence day.

George was reelected as Governor in 1994 with 72 percent of the vote. At the time, it was the biggest landslide of any Governor in Ohio history. After he had reached his term limit as Governor, he was elected by another large margin to this Chamber, the Senate. He was reelected in 2004 with more votes than any Senate candidate had ever received in the State of Ohio.

In the Senate, he focused on expanding NATO to include Slovenia. He authored a Federal law that helps to monitor and fight anti-Semitism all around the world. He passed bipartisan legislation to help protect American intellectual property. But if you want to see his biggest impact, go to Ohio. You will see it everywhere—whether it is the Innerbelt Bridge, named after him; whether it is the Voinovich Bicentennial Park in Cleveland; whether it is the Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs at his beloved Ohio University in Athens, OH; whether it is the Voinovich Atrium at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, which, by the way, some say would not be in Cleveland but for George Voinovich's leadership. I just talked last week to the director of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, who happened to be here for a visit, and, coincidentally, we talked about George Voinovich's role in being sure that the financing was put together to have that Rock and Roll Hall of Fame be in Cleveland, OH.

These are all testaments to the love and respect the people of Ohio had and continue to have for him. Above all,

talk to those who knew him. He made an impact on all of us. For me, he was a friend, and he was a great mentor over the years. He helped me in my career. He was someone who gave me a lot of inspiration to get into public service in the first place.

In our conversations, by the way, for all of his political successes and accomplishments and all we had to talk about that had to do with policy or political issues, he mostly wanted to talk about family. That was where he always started. That was where he was in his heart. He would say: "How is the family?" That is how he would start the conversation. Janet was his soulmate, his partner in everything, and he loved those kids and grandkids so much. They were the anchor for everything—family and faith. That is one reason he was so successful, in my view. He had grit, he had that work ethic, and he certainly had natural talent, but he also had that foundation. That moral foundation of his family and his faith gave him the confidence and the ability to do so many other great things for so many other people.

When he announced his retirement, he said: "I have a philosophy: It's God, family, country, and community." Those are pretty good priorities. George put himself last. It was never about him. It was about others. He was the public servant. He put the servant part first.

He had the heart of a servant because he was a humble man. As some know back home, he was proud of the fact that he drove a Taurus and shined his own shoes. He was a penny-pincher. He loved to buy his clothes on sale. He was a good fiscal conservative. He and Janet lived in the same house they bought in Cleveland in 1972. No matter where he was or what his title was, he was, in many respects, still that same kid from Collinwood—George from Collinwood.

He was a man of deep faith. He was a devout Catholic, and as busy as he was, he went to mass several times a week. He also took comfort in praying the Rosary. The legendary quarterback Bernie Kosar tells the story that George Voinovich prayed the Rosary at Municipal Stadium with Bernie's mom during the Browns' 1986 double-overtime comeback playoff victory over the New York Jets. Everybody gives Bernie Kosar all the credit for that, but it really was George Voinovich and a Higher Power that intervened.

After retirement, he did not slow down. As I said, just this past Friday he was at Cleveland City Hall for the 25th anniversary of Slovenia's independence. He was also at the Republican headquarters in downtown Cleveland last Thursday to open what we call the "Voinovich Lobby" of that new headquarters. He was also planning to serve as a delegate in next month's Republican National Convention. We were so looking forward to paying tribute to him in many ways at that convention. We still will, but, oh,

I wish he were going to be there to be part of it.

It has been a great honor to succeed him as U.S. Senator. When he decided to retire, he called me here to Washington. I will never forget the dinner we had together where he said: I am not telling anybody this yet, but I am planning to not run again for reelection.

I had just helped him with an event in Ohio, and I was strongly supporting him for reelection. But he said he had had it; that it was time for him to go back home. He encouraged me to run. He endorsed me the day I got in. I don't believe I would be here but for the fact that he called me to Washington that day and encouraged me and told me that knowing public service was in my heart too, that this was the time to step forward and to help our country. I owe him for so much but most importantly for his model and for the example that he set.

He was certainly an independent voice, including on this floor. Senators on both sides of the aisle will tell you he was an attentive and thoughtful listener. He treated people with respect and dignity. I have talked to some of the staff here this week about George Voinovich—some who have been here a while and remember him—and all have the same to say. They cherished his friendship. They felt like he cared about them. He had good friends—Senator SHAHEEN and Senator CARDIN on the other side of the aisle. He had good friends on this side of the aisle. He used to refer to Danny Akaka as being "like a brother to me." Senator Akaka was a Member from Hawaii on the other side of the aisle.

His selfless example of public service, his ability to enact change on a bipartisan basis does provide a lesson for us right now, and really for all time. I think we can best honor him by carrying on that tradition, by figuring out how to solve problems, and that involves reaching across the aisle and getting things done. He was a man who believed we could make a difference here in this place.

I see Majority Leader MCCONNELL has now joined us on the floor, and he will tell you that George Voinovich always had the belief that things could be better. He was ultimately an optimist, and his ability to figure out how to get to a solution was something all of us can learn from. In Ohio, he was a public servant without equal.

Tonight, I would like to offer a resolution honoring his memory. I urge all my colleagues to support it.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 493, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 493) relative to the death of George V. Voinovich, former United States Senator for the State of Ohio.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 493) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

Mr. PORTMAN. I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, before the Senator from Ohio leaves the floor, I had an opportunity to listen to his tribute to our former colleague, Senator Voinovich, and he was indeed a stunningly successful public servant. I mean, just thinking about any Republican getting elected mayor of Cleveland, it is hard to imagine such a thing, and then to be so extraordinarily successful at every step in his career.

I was privileged to get to know him when he came to the Senate. My colleague from Ohio knew him a lot longer than I did, but I wanted, on behalf of all of us who served with George, to thank the Senator for that extraordinary tribute to his outstanding life.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in 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.

#### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 2 and a half years ago, I chaired a hearing of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee in which the chief executives of the two top rocket makers, the United Launch Alliance and SpaceX, testified on the need for competition in launching government satellites.

Not long after that hearing, Russia began its aggression against Ukraine. These two issues—the threat against Ukraine and the launch of U.S. satellites—intersected because one company is reliant on rocket engines made in Russia.

Defense appropriations bills since then have included nearly half a billion dollars to build a new, American-made engine to end this reliance on Russian engines as quickly as a replacement can be built and tested.

Defense authorization bills have taken a different approach, by putting strict limits on the number of Russian

engines that can be purchased before the new, American-made rocket will be ready.

Our top national security leaders, including the Secretary of Defense, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Secretary of the Air Force, have warned that laws that halt access to Russian engines will endanger our ability to launch important defense and intelligence satellites.

To cut-off access to Russian engines would force the Defense Department to buy rockets that are not cost-competitive with SpaceX because SpaceX's rockets cannot launch our largest satellites. The cost to the American taxpayer would be more than \$1.5 billion, and it would be a risk to our national security.

As vice chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, I believe these costs and risks are too high. Many of my colleagues agree with this view. The chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Senator MCCAIN, has a different view. He argued forcefully that we should pass strong laws restricting the use of these engines. We crossed swords many times on the floor of the Senate on this issue. Even though we still do not see eye-to-eye on this issue, the product of this debate is better because of it.

The Nelson-Gardner amendment provides the Department of Defense with sufficient time to develop and test a replacement for the Russian rocket engine. The amendment limits the use of Russian engines for competitive launches to a maximum of 18, allows for a responsible transition to an American-made engine, and, consistent with existing law, does not impact the use of Russian engines purchased to support the EELV block buy.

These provisions increase the pressure on DOD and the United Launch Alliance to keep its new rocket R&D program on-track and push them to use only those Russian engines that are needed to support our national security.

This amendment protects the American taxpayer by avoiding billions in additional spending on sole-source contracts for more expensive rockets. It protects our national security by guaranteeing that there will not be a gap in our ability to launch satellites. And it protects our national interests by increasing the pressure to have an American-made replacement engine ready as soon as possible.

I would like to thank the Senators who worked tirelessly to see that this amendment was adopted with a strong vote in the U.S. Senate: Senators NELSON, GARDNER, BENNET, SHELBY, COCHRAN, DONNELLY, SESSIONS, and INHOFE deserve great credit for their efforts.

I am proud to have worked with them on this issue, and I am pleased that we were able to find a responsible solution that protects our national security and the American taxpayer.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today the Senate approved a Defense authoriza-

tion bill of tremendous scope and containing a number of harmful provisions. I was against the decision by the majority leader to end debate on this bill after a period of consideration that resulted in consideration of only a handful of the over 600 amendments filed. Now, I am disappointed by its passage in the Senate. A bill this big deserves substantial, open, public debate.

With less than 2 weeks of debate on legislation that authorizes nearly \$600 billion, I continue to believe that the Senate was unable to properly consider the bill. Not only was more time needed to explore and debate this lengthy bill, during the brief period of consideration it was given, many on both sides of the aisle, myself included, determined that the Defense authorization contains an assortment of harmful language.

This is unfortunate, because the Defense authorization also contains provisions that I support. It authorizes spending to promote our national interests, provides vital resources to our military personnel, and reaffirms our commitment to partners abroad. It also furthers our military readiness through investment in next-generation technology. It is this kind of reasonable content that should be the universal rule for a defense authorization. Regrettably, that is only a portion of this bill.

This year's Defense authorization will once again prevent the President from closing the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. The bill would extend the unnecessary prohibition on constructing facilities within the United States to house Guantanamo detainees, continue the counterproductive ban on transferring detainees to the United States for detention and trial, and maintain the onerous certification requirements to transfer detainees to foreign countries. Regrettably, the bill also adds several new restrictions, including a provision to bar detainee transfers to any country subject to a travel warning by the State Department. This sweeping prohibition is unnecessary and would even include some of America's allies. While this year's bill does contain some modest improvements to current law, the Defense authorization once again fails to provide the Obama administration with the flexibility it needs to finally close the detention facility at Guantanamo. With the costs of more than \$4 million per year per detainee to keep the detention facility at Guantanamo open, I agree with our retired military leaders who tell us that it is in our national security interest to close the detention facility. Doing so is the morally and fiscally responsible thing to do, and I strongly oppose the needless barriers to closing Guantanamo contained in this bill.

Also unfortunately, the Freedom of Information Act, FOIA, our Nation's premier transparency law, is directly