

We heard a lot today in the Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing that was referenced earlier, basically about lazy people sitting around. I tried to alter the image a little bit. I said: You can have lazy people who get a paycheck in public housing and they spend all day watching TV, tweeting, and filing for bankruptcy. You have lazy people in the middle class. You have rich lazy people and you have poor lazy people.

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, there are probably some lazy folks in here, too.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, we are not going to be able to eliminate laziness, but maybe we can take care of hunger in America so that kids don't go to sleep without food.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Ms. ADAMS for her leadership and her strong voice on these issues. It is very impressive to see how hard she has been fighting.

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. RASKIN for those comments.

One of the reasons that I wanted to serve on the Agriculture Committee was because of the issues that are impacted not only in my district but throughout this Nation. Having so many people who are food insecure gave us an opportunity, I think, to do good in this farm bill. It is my understanding that we have never had a bill that was not bipartisan, and I think we need to think about that. The citizens of this country are looking to us to do what is right because it is the right thing to do.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, in my district, I have urban, suburban, and rural. I have urban places like Rockville, Maryland; I have suburban places like Bethesda and Silver Spring; I have rural places in Frederick County like Middletown and Carroll County. I have sort of the full gamut of America in my district, and there is poverty in all of them. There are people struggling in all of them, just like there are people who have become very prosperous in all of them.

But our job, I think, as Representatives in Congress, is to keep the country unified and see what that beautiful, magical phrase in the beginning of the Constitution "We the people" means. For us to stand together in all of our magnificent diversity of ways of life and different kinds of communities that we have across the country, what is it that binds us together?

I think the goodness of the American people is that we are invested in the success of everybody, not just this or that group, not just our business buddies, not just our partners, not just people in our political party, but we are invested in the success of everyone, and that is our job.

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, Mr. RASKIN is exactly right. Hunger is not a partisan issue.

□ 1745

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. ADAMS for participating.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), my distinguished colleague.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted, if I might say, to be with Professor Raskin today, and I would like to use that terminology, or Congressman RASKIN, but it means that he gets into both the theory, the practice, and the passion of an idea. That is what teachers do. They try to instruct their students to look at the holistic concept of a theory.

Mr. Speaker, the loss of food stamps is not a theory, but it has passion in the loss of such. It has a broad landscape of impact. It certainly has a theory of which I don't adhere to, and that is that Americans who have asked for a hand up are the ones deserving of the brunt of an enormous tax cut that has created an enormous deficit that was not asked for by the top 1 percent, who are getting the major aspect, or major benefit, of this tax cut.

As a member of the Budget Committee, we took pains, the Democrats, to parse through the ultimate negative impact of the \$1.4 trillion-plus tax cut.

During the Obama administration, we discussed a corporate rate reduction. Many of us would have considered that on the idea of job creation, coming from the early thirties, if you will, down to about the mid-twenties. We did more than—when I say "we," this bill did 21, unasked for by any corporate entity, which added, again, insult to injury as it relates to those families, disabled, and seniors, children who are dependent upon these programs.

We have many Americans who are dependent upon means-tested programs, 70 percent. The supplemental nutrition program, unlike the 21 percent corporate rate reduction for taxes, is \$1.40 per person.

One of our colleagues in the other body, Senator BOOKER, as we all know who are familiar with him, and I think maybe we should join in that effort, spend that much per meal, all of the Members of the House of Representatives, because what we are dealing with today is the farm bill.

The farm bill takes to shutting down the SNAP program and to cutting it drastically, and to ignore and underfund important programs because we find ourselves in a predicament of the deficit, the tax cut, and what choices do we make.

The decision to limit SNAP is not limited to red States or blue States. Eighty-five of the top 100 counties of individuals receiving SNAP benefits are rural communities, and many of them are, in fact, Republican represented.

The disastrous changes to SNAP would jeopardize the food security of 42 million people, including 30 million children, 4.8 million low-income seniors, and 1.5 million low-income military veterans.

So in conclusion, I came to the floor today to ask the question: Why in the farm bill?

There is something about having a little seniority in this House. I can remember that of all the bills in this Nation that came out of this House and Senate—and I might say, joyfully, because I have been supported by the Farm Bureau. I come from a State of ranchers and farmers. We used to take pride in having that nexus between farmers and the SNAP program and the continuity of such.

So here we are. We have breached it. We have blown it up for no reason other than to pocket the money for the tax cut.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for bringing us together. I ask my colleagues to vote against the farm bill, because that would be standing up for maybe a better pathway of that bipartisan farm bill that we have had over the decades to make a difference in the lives of all Americans.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. JACKSON LEE for her really profound and important remarks tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I would close out our session here by just making an observation about the importance of this SNAP question.

It is important legislatively because our friends across the aisle have broken from a bipartisan tradition going back a very long time now in the passage of the farm bill just to make it a partisan power grab and a push over everybody else in the body, but it also goes to the question: What kind of government are we going to have? Will this be government for the few or will it be a government for everyone?

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

HONORING THE LIFE OF THE HONORABLE ZELL MILLER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CURTIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of a former mayor, of a former Georgia State senator, of a former Governor of Georgia, and of a former United States Senator representing the State of Georgia, Mr. Zell Miller.

Zell Miller passed away on March 23 at the age of 86. He was born on February 24, 1932, in Young Harris, Georgia, in Towns County. He was born to Birdie Bryan and Stephen Grady Miller.

When Zell was 17 days old, his father died. His widowed mother raised her

son and daughter, Jane, alone in Young Harris. Located in the north Georgia mountains, Miller's mother built a home for herself and her children with rocks she had hauled from a nearby stream.

Mr. Speaker, I had the honor and privilege of attending Young Harris College, and I am very familiar with this area and I was blessed to hear about these stories.

I have always heard about the story of how Ms. Miller hauled these rocks up from the stream to build her home. It was that experience, that house, that became symbolic of Zell Miller's rugged independence.

After he graduated from Young Harris College, Zell Miller continued his education at Emory University in Atlanta; but shortly after he arrived there, he found that he wasn't really focusing on his studies. In fact, in one of the many books that he wrote, "Corps Values," he writes about waking up in jail in Young Harris drunk as a skunk. He tells that story in that book. I have read the book, and I remember that story.

Well, shortly after that experience, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps, in 1953. Later, he attributed much of his success to both the discipline he learned as a marine and the independence that he learned from his mother.

He married Shirley Carver in 1954, and the couple had two sons.

In 1956, he enrolled at the University of Georgia, where he earned a bachelor's and a master's degree in history.

In 1959, he took a teaching position at Young Harris College and returned to his hometown as a professor of history and political science.

Mr. Speaker, members of the Georgia delegation are here tonight, and I am going to yield to them. I am going to pause. I am going to continue on and tell you about the rest of this outstanding gentleman's life, but at this point I am going to pause and I am going to yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. FERGUSON), one of my fellow delegation members from Georgia.

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Representative CARTER from Georgia's First District, for organizing this hour to honor one of Georgia's great leaders, former United States Senator and Georgia Governor Zell Miller.

Governor Miller's leadership in our State led to the creation of something that we hold near and dear to our hearts, and that is the HOPE Scholarship. This scholarship program has helped generations of young Georgians build a bright future for themselves, and that, in turn, has led to a stronger State for our people.

In addition to the HOPE Scholarship and many other policy accomplishments, Governor Miller truly embodied the term "public servant." He devoted his life to serving our fellow Georgians and sought to leave our State better than he found it.

At his funeral, Governor Miller's grandson read a list of 14 life lessons that the Governor had written to mark his 70th birthday. This list included a number of important lessons that he wanted to pass along to his family and to others, and it included such things as reminding folks not to smoke, that it killed his friends way too early. It reminded people to be polite, to be on time.

One of the lessons that struck me in particular and I think really describes how Zell Miller sought to live his life reads this:

Search for your niche. It may take years, although often it occurs early in life. There is something out there that you can do better and easier than everybody else. You will have a knack or talent for it. Find it. It is there. And when you do, others will beat a path to your door to get you to do it for them.

Governor Miller certainly found his niche in his lifetime, and that niche was serving his fellow Georgians. Using his talents, he created a program that helped thousands of students achieve their dream of a college education, a legacy that will live on through each successive class of HOPE scholarships.

We are eternally grateful for his service and his commitment to our great State and to ensuring that future generations will have greater opportunities.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman mentioned something about the HOPE Scholarship. Zell Miller was known as Georgia's education Governor. He was the founder of the HOPE Scholarship, and as the gentleman noted, it resulted in a number of students who have been able to complete their college degrees and their college careers as a result of the Zell Miller Scholarship and the HOPE Scholarship.

Before I recognize the next speaker, I want to continue on what I was sharing with you about Zell's early life and the fact that, after he got out of the Marine Corps, he went to Young Harris College and he was a professor of history and political science. But he was something else. He was also a baseball coach. He coached baseball at Young Harris College.

I had the privilege of talking to some of his former players. In fact, we just had homecoming up at Young Harris a few weeks ago, and I had the opportunity to talk to Don Harp, a retired Methodist minister who has served for many years on the board of trustees at Young Harris College. He was one of the best baseball players to ever come through Young Harris.

He was telling me a story about how he was a catcher on the baseball team. They had a lead in the game, and he was calling the signals. They were ahead by one run, with two outs, in the top of the ninth inning. They were about to wrap it up. He said he called for two sinkers in a row. Sure enough,

he got two strikes on the batter and had an 0-2 count. He said then he decided he would call for a fastball. So he called for a fastball, and sure enough, the batter hit it right up the middle, two runs scored, and they got behind by one run.

He said he went back to the bench after that inning. He said they were behind by one run, and he went back to the bench, and he said Zell Miller was coaching and he was sitting on the bench. He said he motioned to him. He said: Come over here.

He said he came over there and he sat beside him, and he said Coach Miller looked at him and he said: If you ever make another call like that, you will be sitting here by me the rest of this game.

He said he understood right then exactly what he was to do.

I also remember talking to one of my colleagues that I served with in the Georgia State Legislature in the Georgia House, Mickey Channell, who played baseball for Zell at Young Harris College. Mickey was from Greensboro, Georgia.

Mickey told me: I didn't get to play very much, but I remember this one time that my dad traveled up to see me and traveled up to see me play, and Zell knew he had come.

He said: Zell let me start that game because he knew my dad was there.

I could tell how much that meant to Mickey, and he had always remembered that.

That is just a glimpse of what we are talking about when we are talking about this great man, this great Georgian, this great American.

In his early political career, as I mentioned, he was a mayor. He was mayor of Young Harris. He held that position for 2 years, and then he was elected as a State senator. He represented the areas up in north Georgia—Towns County, Union County, Rabun County—as a State senator.

A few years after that, he took a leave from his teaching responsibilities at Young Harris College, and he actually went and was executive secretary for then-Governor Lester Maddox during the time that Lester Maddox was Governor from 1968 to 1971.

□ 1800

During the 1970s, Zell Miller was twice named as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention, once in 1972, and again in 1976.

In 1971, he was appointed as Executive Director of the Democratic Party in Georgia, and he served in that capacity until 1973, when he became a member of the State Board of Pardons and Paroles. He served on that board until 1975.

Then in 1975, Zell Miller became Lieutenant Governor of the State of Georgia, and he actually held that post longer than anyone has ever held that post. He held it for 16 years.

In 1980, he ran for statewide office. He ran for the United States Senate,

but he lost in the primary to then the incumbent, Senator Herman Talmadge. Over the next 10 years, as Lieutenant Governor, he really worked on his leadership skills. As Lieutenant Governor, he was the Presiding Officer in the State Senate.

As I mentioned earlier, I had the honor and privilege of serving in the Georgia State Legislature for 10 years; and the stories that we heard, as Members, about Zell Miller as the Lieutenant Governor, and the famous Tom Murphy, who served for so many years as Speaker of the House of the State of Georgia, and the battles that those two would have, Zell as the leader of the Senate and Tom Murphy as the leader of the House. The stories are still told in the Georgia State Legislature and the Georgia State Capital about the battles between these two giants of Georgia politics.

In 1990, Zell ran for Governor of the State of Georgia. He was in a tough race in the Democratic primary. He faced Andrew Young. He won that primary, and then he was elected. He was elected as Governor of the State of Georgia; actually defeated JOHNNY ISAKSON, who now serves as our Senator here, our senior Senator in the United States Senate.

Mr. Speaker, before I go on and tell you about his Governorship, I will pause again and yield to another one of my colleagues from Georgia, Representative DAVID SCOTT, and I will have a story to share about his brother-in-law in just a minute and Zell Miller. I look forward to hearing about him because I know he has got some great stories about "Give 'em hell Zell."

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DAVID SCOTT).

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I say to the gentleman, well, my friend, you got that right.

Zell Miller was my friend, my partner, and my mentor. I got into politics quite a little bit early, just as I graduated from the Wharton School of Finance, University of Pennsylvania, and landed in Atlanta. Two years later, getting down there—you mentioned Andy, getting in his campaign. And then 2 years later, there I am winding up in the Georgia House of Representatives.

So my story intersects on so many different angles and ways with that of Zell Miller, and I can truly stand here and tell each of you that I truly loved this man, and I still do; and I would not be standing here as a Member of Congress if it weren't for that friendship, that partnership, and that mentorship with Zell Miller.

Let me, perhaps, I think, as I tell you about this, I am thinking of a scripture that best sets the story for this great man; that evolves everything, the history and the steps, the many positions, all that he had done.

Before I get to that scripture, Zell Miller helped me. I mean, I got there as a young person. I got over in the Sen-

ate. My two Senate officemates, one was Paul Coverdell, the other Julian Bond. And with us three, Zell Miller called us three his three horsemen.

It was then that he was laying the foundation for that vision, for the HOPE Scholarship. Zell Miller appointed me to be chairman of the Senate Higher Education Committee; first African American at that position.

But more than that, he appointed me at that position at a time when he was giving birth to one of the greatest public affairs programs in Georgia history, the HOPE Scholarship. And for me to be there as the chairman of the Senate Higher Education Committee, in that pivotal position, and then to be able to go across Georgia in churches and schools and help sell the HOPE Scholarship and what it meant, and then that paved the way for me to later become Rules Chairman with Zell's endorsement.

So there I was, as Rules Chairman; as you know, Buddy, nothing gets on that calendar if it don't get through the Rules Committee. And I was there to make sure none of those bills—because you know it was tough. They had other bills coming to try to remove the HOPE Scholarship.

So let me just conclude by sharing with you what his life meant to me and, I think, to the Nation and the world is best captured in God's first psalm.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, or sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in the law of the Lord he does meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, bringing forth his fruit in his due season. And none of his leaves will ever wither, and everything, everything, whatsoever he does, shall prosper.

Such a man was Zell Miller. God bless you, Zell Miller, and I thank God for sending Zell Miller our way.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for sharing that. And I want to share one other thing before I call on the next speaker.

I mentioned that Zell Miller was the baseball coach at Young Harris College when he was a professor up there and on the faculty there. Well, they discontinued the baseball program for a long time. And then, when Zell was Governor, they actually restarted the baseball program, and Zell had a big role in that. In fact, he—two stories I want to tell you real quickly.

He invited us all to the Governor's mansion, those of us who were supporting the baseball program and trying to get it started up. And to kick it off, he had none other than Hank Aaron and Mickey Mantle at the Governor's mansion as a benefit to getting the Young Harris College baseball program started again.

Not only has that program started again, but it has been very, very successful, producing players such as Nick Markakis, who plays for the Atlanta Braves now, who played at Young Har-

ris College; Charlie Blackmon, playing for the Colorado Rockies; just a few of the many players that went to Young Harris who are playing in the major leagues right now.

I also want to share with you very quickly his love of baseball because, again, when he was Governor, Phil Niekro, the great knuckleball pitcher of the Atlanta Braves, was inducted into baseball's Hall of Fame. Zell actually hosted a trip to the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown during the time that he was being inducted, and my wife and I and my two oldest sons were honored and able to go on that trip.

I can remember being at the Hall of Fame with Zell Miller, and I can remember the emotions, and how proud he was of a Georgian, of Phil Niekro, of an Atlanta Brave being inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Just another one of the great memories that I have of Zell Miller.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN), another member of our delegation, to share with us his remarks.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman CARTER for putting together this Special Order to honor someone who probably everybody in Georgia has been touched by in some way or another.

Of course, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of what we all consider a true legend in the State of Georgia, former Governor Zell Miller. He was known for his quick wit, and he had a deep love for the State of Georgia and, of course, obviously from the mountain area in north Georgia. He was always willing to do what was right for our State, the State that we all love to call home.

Zell Miller's service to our country began at a young age and, as was mentioned, he served in the United States Marine Corps, where he later attained the rank of Sergeant.

Upon returning home from his military service, Zell received degrees, as has been said, in history from the University of Georgia, and would eventually use that education to teach college at his hometown in Young Harris, Georgia. I did not know that he was the baseball coach, but I was glad to learn that.

After only a few years of teaching, Zell was called to run for public office, as was said, as Mayor, State Senator, Lieutenant Governor, and later Governor, then U.S. Senator. It is hard to imagine who has had a greater impact on the lives of Georgians.

Zell was one of those true conservatives. As Governor, Zell Miller will be remembered for his great accomplishments, as we mentioned, of the HOPE Scholarship program, and funding it with the Georgia Lottery, which has surpassed \$10 billion in total financial aid assistance to Georgia students. Let me repeat that: \$10 billion in total financial aid assistance to Georgia students.

Because of the HOPE Scholarship, Georgia higher education is now a national leader in entry requirements and graduation rates.

A quick story about the University of Georgia. On visiting that campus, we learned—and this was when we were doing our higher education bill, and we were told that graduation rates were 55 to 60 percent across the country. Well, in visiting the University of Georgia now, that has been under the HOPE Scholarship since Governor Miller served his term, we learned that the entry requirement, Buddy, was 1,300 on the SAT, and you had to be at the top of your class to get into the University of Georgia. And the student body is 80 percent of Georgians. They only accept 20 percent from out of State, so you can imagine how much more difficult it is to get into the University of Georgia out of State.

But the amazing statistic is that the graduation rate is 95 percent; and those students either get a job upon graduation, or go on to higher education; an amazing accomplishment for the University of Georgia, and largely because of the opportunities presented to Georgians through the HOPE Scholarship.

Because of the HOPE Scholarship, like I said, Georgia is now a national leader in education. Zell Miller will always be known as the “Education Governor,” and he helped build a foundation that, of course, our State enjoys today.

During his tenure, he also played a pivotal role in bringing the Children’s Medical Center to the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University. We have a special attachment, our family does, as many families across the State of Georgia do, to the Medical College of Georgia.

Our 12th grandchild was born 8 weeks premature. Her first year of life she spent in that Medical Center, off and on, to deal with being born premature. Our family, among many families in the State of Georgia, thank Zell Miller for his foresight in bringing the Children’s Medical Center of Georgia to the 12th District. It means so much to the health and welfare of families in that area.

□ 1815

Zell Miller established Georgia as a State to watch, and his hard work paid off. Georgia has been named, for 5 years running, as the number one State to do business. You don’t attain that rating unless you have one of the top education systems in the country.

Zell Miller was the Governor who gave Georgia hope. He will be dearly missed, and his legacy will live on forever. I am one person that is glad that I knew him, and I thank him for what he has done for my family and for fellow Georgians.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his kind words.

Before I yield to our next speaker, I want to mention one of the things that

Zell was famous for, and that was that he wrote a number of books. He was an author.

In fact, the first book he ever wrote in 1976 chronicled, really, him growing up in the mountains. The name of the book was “The Mountains Within Me.”

That book had a very special meaning to me, personally. You see, he talked about Young Harris College, and he equated Young Harris College to being like a shoe factory because things are coming out of there in pairs. That meant a lot to me, because that is where I met my wife. She was my chemistry lab partner. We came out as a pair and we have been a pair, and in September it will be 40 years.

He also wrote a number of other books. I mentioned earlier that he wrote the book about his experience in the Marine Corps, “Corps Values: Everything You Need to Know I Learned in the Marines.” He wrote that in 1996. There are 12 chapters in that book, and each chapter is devoted to a particular trait that he developed during his years in the Marine Corps, for instance, courage, neatness, discipline, and pride.

He also wrote another book, “Great Georgians,” that was published in 1983.

Another one that he wrote was “They Heard Georgia Singing,” about all the famous singers who came from the State of Georgia—a great book. By the way, in that book he chronicles two musicians who came from Young Harris College, Ronnie Milsap and Trisha Yearwood, both Young Harris College alums.

As you can tell, I am very proud of Young Harris College. It is my alma mater. It changed my life. Zell Miller changed my life.

I will go on later, but before I do, I want to take this time to yield to another Georgian who is here with us to pay his respects, Representative Hank Johnson.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend BUDDY CARTER for yielding to me.

For the record, I want it to be known that it was he who called me yesterday to find out what color suit and tie I was going to wear.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a great Georgian and a great American, former Georgia Governor and U.S. Senator Zell Miller, who died at the age of 86 in March.

He was a north Georgia mountain boy of humble beginnings, who was raised by a single parent after his daddy died when he was just 2 weeks old. He was raised in a house that his momma built with her own hands.

Former Presidents, Governors, and dignitaries from all over the country and the world have honored Mr. Miller, who launched the State’s HOPE Scholarship and led Georgia into the 21st century.

He was a true statesman, who served Georgia and his country as, first, a

United States Marine, then as mayor of Young Harris, later serving as a State senator, thereafter as Lieutenant Governor, and then as Governor, and finally as United States Senator.

Zell Miller dedicated his life to public service. He was a man physically compact and a bit short, but he walked tall and he walked strong, and he left a towering legacy.

A small town mountain boy from the little town of Young Harris, Zell Miller made a big impact on the affairs of Georgia and, indeed, the affairs of the Nation.

Zell Miller left a huge impact on Georgia’s judicial system. He literally changed the face of the State bench.

I include in the RECORD an article I found of particular interest from the Fulton County Daily Report, dated March 23, 2018, by managing editor Jonathan Ringel. The article is entitled, “The Late Zell Miller Diversified the Bench.”

THE LATE ZELL MILLER DIVERSIFIED THE BENCH

(By Jonathan Ringel, March 23, 2018)

The news today that former Georgia governor and U.S. senator Zell Miller has died at age 86 prompts us to look back on the mark he left on Georgia’s legal system—that of being the first governor to appoint a large number of minorities and women to judge-ships.

As a staff reporter here, I wrote the following article, which was published Dec. 28, 1998, a few days before the end of his eight-year tenure as governor.

The Zell Miller Legacy: Diversity on the Bench

When he leaves office next month, Gov. Zell Miller will have appointed 37 percent of Georgia’s 287 trial and appellate court judges. Those numbers include four of the 10 judges now on the state Court of Appeals and five of the seven state Supreme Court justices.

Moreover, Miller changed the face of the state’s bench, carrying out his pledge to concentrate on diversity.

Twenty-five of Miller’s appointments have been black. Forty-two have been women. Eleven have been both, meaning he has added 56 black and female judges to the bench in eight years.

According to Miller’s office, Gov. Joe Frank Harris made 76 judicial appointments in his eight years before Miller. They included 10 black and 11 women, totaling 18 black and female judges.

Even before hearing those numbers, attorneys and court watchers say diversifying the bench will be Miller’s legacy to the law of Georgia.

“That’s a major impact,” says former Attorney General Michael J. Bowers of the judicial statistics.

Criminal-defense lawyer John R. Martin, a harsh critic of Miller when it comes to mandatory minimum sentencing laws, calls Miller’s diversifying the bench “remarkable.”

“That is amazing,” says Paula J. Frederick, immediate past president of the Georgia Association of Black Women Attorneys.

Miller looks at his role in diversifying the bench as ironic.

Appointing judges, he says, was “the one aspect of being governor I had never thought about” throughout 16 years of being lieutenant governor.

He says he had lots of plans on taking office—such as starting the lottery-funded

HOPE scholarship, but being a nonlawyer, "I had not thought about the judiciary."

That changed when he took office in 1991, because, along with the keys to the Governor's Mansion, Miller inherited a tricky piece of litigation.

In 1988, state Rep. Tyrone Brooks, D-Atlanta, the American Civil Liberties Union and other plaintiffs had filed a voting rights suit against the state. They attacked the picking of judges in circuitwide at-large elections, claiming the system was discriminatory because blacks typically were outvoted by the white majority and that most judges were therefore white. *Brooks v. State Board of Elections*, No. CV288-146 (S.D. Ga., filed July 13, 1988).

They also alleged that, since 1964, the state should have been submitting laws creating new judgeships for review by the U.S. Justice Department, under the federal Voting Rights Act.

On the review issue, a special three-judge panel of the U.S. District Court in Savannah agreed with the Brooks plaintiffs. So when Miller took office, the Justice Department was holding in limbo 48 established judgeships and other judgeships created since the litigation began.

"There was a cloud hanging over the judiciary," recalls Troutman Sanders partner Norman L. Underwood, a former Court of Appeals judge.

Miller asked Underwood to head the Judicial Nominating Commission, which since the days of Gov. Jimmy Carter had screened judicial applicants and recommended shortlists to the governor.

Miller reconstituted the commission, saying he wanted to open up the process for minorities and women. He eliminated four of the five guaranteed slots for representatives of the bar, leaving only the one for the current bar president as an ex-officio member.

Miller allowed the speaker of the House and the lieutenant governor to pick one nonlawyer each for the commission, and he added the attorney general.

The rest of the picks—three lawyers and two nonlawyers—remained Miller's.

According to Miller's 1991 executive order, the commission must always include one woman and one member who is Black, Hispanic, Asian-Pacific American, Native American or Asian-Indian American (Daily Report, Feb 13, 1991).

"The loss of the bar seats was a bit of a disappointment," says Albany litigator William E. Cannon Jr., the current bar president, who disagrees with Brooks' argument at the time that the bar's majority control of the commission perpetuated a "good of boy network."

Underwood says there might have been a perception the prior commissions were not focused on diversity.

That said, the first commission, including three black members and one woman, went about its work.

Later that year, two seats opened up on DeKalb Superior Court, which had no black members.

Faced with mixed race and gender shortlists sent by the commission, Miller chose Michael E. Hancock, then chief judge in DeKalb Recorder's Court, and DeKalb State Court Judge Linda Warren Hunter, who were both African-American.

Considering that more than 40 percent of DeKalb County is black but the Superior Court had no black judges, Underwood says, "I think the governor just sensed that's unacceptable."

Miller won't discuss any specific decisions. But he says his first appointments of minorities and women encouraged more of each group to apply.

Other factors were at work, as well.

Frederick, a deputy counsel to the state bar who made a shortlist for a state court position, notes that women and minorities have graduated from law school in much greater numbers over the years, adding to the available pool for Miller.

In addition, the Brooks case loomed over Miller's picks throughout most of his administration.

In June 1992, after six weeks of negotiations prompted by U.S. District Court Judge Anthony A. Alaimo, Miller and Brooks hammered out a historic settlement. (Daily Report, June 19, 1992)

To end the case, Miller agreed to appoint 30 black judges and adopt the so-called "Missouri plan of judicial selection, in which judges are appointed and then undergo periodic retention elections.

But in March 1994, U.S. District Court Judge B. Avant Edenfield of Savannah refused to approve the settlement, ruling that Attorney General Mike Bowers lacked the authority to make such sweeping changes to the state's judicial election system and that the requirement to appoint black judges would violate the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution. (Daily Report, March 9, 1994)

Brooks appealed unsuccessfully for three years, finally dismissing the case last year. (Daily Report, June 23, 1997)

Robert J. Proctor, who has brought numerous legal challenges to affirmative action policies around the state and opposed the Brooks settlement, says, "I think Gov. Miller implemented the settlement anyway."

Miller came close, appointing 25 black judges. While about 28 percent of Georgia is black, 20 percent of Miller's appointees were black and 33 percent of his appointees have been female.

Brooks says, "I think there's greater trust in the judicial system now."

Clayton County District Attorney Robert E. Keller says, "The bench must represent a cross-section of society," and credits Miller for his appointments.

But Proctor, a past chairman of the conservative Southeastern Legal Foundation, says judges should not be picked on the basis of race or gender.

"That whole concept is just abhorrent to me," Proctor says.

He adds that Miller's picks do not represent the proportions of the number of black or female lawyers in the state.

The state bar keeps records only on gender, says spokeswoman Jennifer Davis. She says 28 percent of the 29,523 members of the Georgia bar are women.

Miller responds, "I don't think I've done anything in my eight years as governor that pleased Bob Proctor." (Not true, says Proctor, who calls Miller's second term "taxpayer-friendly.")

Miller adds, "You don't choose anybody because they're a female or a minority," noting that there were many times lawyers who were considered front-runners for posts because they were women or minorities did not get the job.

Besides, he adds, "I only got very qualified individuals on the shortlists."

Underwood recalls an opening in a circuit that stretched 90 miles from one end to the other. Miller picked a lawyer who lived in the part of the circuit where there wasn't a judge, and Underwood speculates, "In that case, the factor on the governor's mind was geography."

Fulton Superior Court Judge Cynthia D. Wright was Miller's executive counsel for his first term.

She says, "When you appoint a judge, you have to factor in a whole lot of subjective qualities."

"It is not an objective process."

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Zell Miller was the first Governor to appoint a significant number of minorities and women to the Georgia bench. Zell Miller should be remembered for actually desegregating Georgia's courts. As the Daily Report article outlines, by the time Zell Miller left the Governorship in December of 1998, he had appointed 37 percent of Georgia's 287 trial and appellate court judges. Those numbers include 4 of the 10 judges on the State court of appeals, and 5 of the 7 State supreme court justices.

Zell Miller appointed an African American female as the first African American to ever serve on the Georgia Supreme Court. Twenty-five of Governor Miller's appointments were African Americans; 42 of his judicial appointments were women; 11 were African American women, meaning he added 56 Black and female judges to the bench in his 8 years. It is a fact that Zell Miller appointed more African Americans to judgeships in Georgia than all previous Georgia Governors combined.

In addition, Governor Zell Miller appointed an African American to serve as Georgia's Attorney General, making that African American the first African American State attorney general in the Nation. It is a remarkable record for any Governor, let alone one from the Deep South.

One of the first counties where he began to diversify the bench is my home circuit, the Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit. As Governor, Zell Miller appointed as State labor commissioner the first African American to ever hold a nonjudicial constitutional office in Georgia, and Zell Miller appointed more African Americans to more State boards than any other Georgia Governor.

As executive secretary for Governor Lester Maddox from 1968 to 1971, Zell Miller was credited with exerting a moderating influence on Governor Maddox, a segregationist, and spurring him to appoint Blacks to his administration, which he did.

As Governor, Zell Miller led an unsuccessful effort back in 1993 to remove the Confederate battle emblem from the State flag, and he pushed legislation providing more money for public schools and scholarships for high school students. In fact, Governor Miller raised teacher pay in Georgia by 6 percent for 4 successive years—4 successive years, 6 percent each year. By the time he stepped down after his second term of Governor, Zell Miller was one of the most popular politicians in Georgia's history, leaving office with an astounding 85 percent approval rating.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia's First Congressional District, my friend, BUDDY CARTER, for inviting me here this evening to provide a few remarks about the passing of this Georgia lion, Zell Miller, who did a lot of good for our State and for our people, and I truly appreciate him for that.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for sharing his thoughts.

Before I yield to our next speaker, I want to speak just for a second on a couple of things about the time that Zell spent as Governor of the State of Georgia.

As you just heard Representative JOHNSON mention, and I think it is important to understand, when he left office, he had an 85 percent approval rating. Who in the world gets an 85 percent approval rating? He was the most popular Governor in the Nation when he left office.

But I do want to share with you that that was not always the case. It was tough because, after all, we are talking about "Give 'Em Hell Zell."

You have heard many of the speakers mention the HOPE Scholarship. And, again, we are talking about Georgia's education Governor here, the father of the HOPE Scholarship. But remember, the HOPE Scholarship came about as a result of the Georgia State Lottery, which there were a lot of people who were opposed to that.

Remember I told you about being at Young Harris College? Young Harris College is a Methodist school. There were a lot of people who supported Zell who were opposed to what some considered to be gambling. Zell pressed on. He knew how important it was. That was his tenacity. That was his ruggedness. He didn't let that get in the way, and thank goodness he didn't.

In 1992, he was very important to Bill Clinton's campaign to secure the Democratic U.S. Presidential nomination. He played an important role in that.

In fact, he also spoke at the Democratic National Convention. That is where they had the posters all throughout the convention that said, "Give 'Em Hell Zell." They were distributed among the delegates, as Miller gave a speech that was critical of U.S. President George H.W. Bush's administration. Later that year, he also actively campaigned for Clinton, and Clinton carried the State of Georgia.

Representative JOHNSON also mentioned something that is very important to remember as well. Zell was not easily elected to his second term. That is because he took it upon himself to do the right thing and to try, although it was unsuccessful at that time, to change the State flag of Georgia and to take the Confederate emblem off of that State flag. Later it was done, many years later, and I can remember Zell saying: Well, we might not get it passed. It might not be attributed to me, but maybe I will get an asterisk.

Well, I don't know if he ever got an asterisk, but I am going to give him an asterisk tonight. He deserves an asterisk for that effort.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield to another great Georgian, another member of our delegation, Representative SANFORD BISHOP.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from the First

District of Georgia for yielding to me and for hosting this Special Order to honor my friend and mentor, Zell Miller.

Mr. Speaker, Zell Miller was a titan in Georgia, the man that I was humbled and honored to call a friend and a mentor. He was an extraordinary statesman, a true public servant.

He served as a sergeant in the Marines, the mayor of Young Harris, a Georgia State senator, Lieutenant Governor, Governor, and U.S. Senator for the State of Georgia.

Now, as a newly elected State representative of the 94th district of Georgia in 1977, I had very little to do at the State capitol after the session ended and my committee meetings were over.

Somehow, I found myself hanging out in the office of the Lieutenant Governor, where his press secretary was from my hometown of Columbus, who was on loan from the Columbus Ledger-Enquirer to serve Lieutenant Governor.

I got to know Zell. I got to learn from his example. And from him, I even developed an appreciation for country music. I witnessed in Zell Miller a public servant with extraordinary integrity, courage, and character.

□ 1830

Fourteen years later, he became Governor, and I became a member of the Georgia State Senate. In that term as a State senator, I was appointed to be the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Education, K-12 Subcommittee, and I got to work very closely with Zell Miller because, after all, he was the education Governor.

That year, Georgia was the beneficiary of a windfall as a result of a lawsuit with some utilities, and there were several million dollars that were unexpectedly put into the State coffers. Zell Miller had to make a determination of how the State would spend that money. And being the farsighted visionary that he was, he decided that we needed to bring our State into the computer age, and so he used it to create a computer network, statewide, to enhance the educational opportunities for our colleges and universities and our State's public libraries.

He established the Galileo computer network, which provided the groundwork for distance learning and for telemedicine. I was very proud as the chair of the Education Subcommittee of the Georgia State Senate to work with him in making that happen. Not only that, but we worked to establish pilot programs that year for teaching foreign languages in elementary schools.

Zell Miller will perhaps be best remembered for the HOPE Scholarship, as you have heard, which helped to establish scholarship money and to direct money raised from the State lottery to the college tuition for Georgia students. To date, the program has provided over \$10 billion in scholarship funds to 1.8 million eligible Georgia

students. These investments in education are continuing to pay dividends for the State of Georgia.

Zell Miller was a true servant, and he was an advocate for Georgia. He was an advocate for humankind.

My wife, Vivian, and I offer his wife, Shirley, and their family, friends, and loved ones our most sincere condolences for their loss, but we are all so grateful that he touched our lives.

In closing, I just want to quote the words of a poem that I think is so fitting as we remember the life of Zell Miller:

The tree that never had to fight
For Sun and sky and air and light,
But stood out in the open plain
And always got its share of rain,
Never became a forest king
But lived and died a scrubby thing.
The man who never had to toil
To gain and farm his patch of soil,
Who never had to win his share
Of Sun and sky and light and air,
Never became a manly man
But lived and died as he began.
Good timber does not grow with ease:
The stronger wind, the stronger trees;
The further sky, the greater length;
The more the storm, the more the strength.
By Sun and cold, by rain and snow,
In trees and men good timbers grow.

Zell Miller was good timber. He left his mark on Young Harris; he left his mark on Georgia; he left his mark on our Nation; and he left his mark on the world.

Lives of great men all remind us: "We can make our life sublime, and, departing, leave behind us footprints on the sands of time." Zell Miller has left some big footprints, and we and the world are better because he passed this way.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for sharing with us his experiences and how special they were.

Before I yield to our final speaker, I want to go over very quickly about the last part of the 46 years of political service that Zell Miller had that he served.

In 1999, after he finished his last year as Governor, his second term—and he was term limited—he went back to Young Harris College, the University of Georgia, and Emory University as a teacher. The following year, then-Governor Roy Barnes appointed Zell to the United States Senate after Senator Paul Coverdell died. Four months later, he ran for that remaining 4 years on that 6-year term, and he was elected a Senator from the State of Georgia, and he served in that role.

He pledged at that time to carry on the conservative tradition of the late Senator Coverdell, who was a Republican, of course, and he did that. He co-sponsored then-U.S. President George W. Bush's 2001 tax cuts and was adamantly in support of President Bush on the issues of homeland security and the deployment of troops to Iraq at the start of the Iraqi war.

You will remember, also, that he wrote another book, "A National Party No More: The Conscience of a Conservative Democrat." It became a national

best seller in the months before the Presidential election that year. And, of course, in 2004, Democratic Senator from Georgia Zell Miller did something that I am not sure anyone else has ever done. He spoke as a keynote speaker at the 2004 Republican National Convention.

In January of 2005, he retired from the United States Senate and he returned to Georgia. He resumed his teaching career and continued to write. In fact, in 2005, he wrote, "A Deficit of Decency."

In 2008, Zell B. Miller Learning Center was established at the University of Georgia and dedicated in his honor. In 2017, Miller's family announced that he suffered from Parkinson's disease and he was retiring from public life.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to pause now and yield to another member of the Georgia delegation, one of my good friends. He and I served together for 10 years in the Georgia General Assembly. He is truly one of my best friends here in Washington, and I value our friendship. I know that he has got a lot of experience with and a lot of stories about Zell Miller as well.

I yield to my friend, Representative BARRY LOUDERMILK.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, first let me thank my good friend Representative CARTER from the great city of Savannah and the great State of Georgia for his vision to have this time to honor a true statesman, a legend in the State of Georgia, Zell Miller.

It is sad that we wait until someone has left this life to sing their praises and to recognize the tremendous impact that they have had not only on our lives, but our children and their future lives. That really defines Zell Miller.

I never had the opportunity to work directly with Zell Miller or even serve with Zell Miller, although I served with other Governors, but I knew of Zell Miller. I think that says a lot about someone that, even though you don't personally know them but you know of them, signifies the impact that they are having on lives.

Zell Miller's death was a tremendous blow for a lot of people in our State. I knew of him from my involvement in politics, and I knew as Representative CARTER said, that he was one of the few, if not only, to be a keynote speaker at both the Democrat and Republican National Conventions. That means he was truly bipartisan.

What does that mean? Well, it doesn't seem to mean a lot today, but what it meant back then was: I care more about the people of the State. I care more about the people of this Nation and defending the rights and liberties and those things from which I believe in than I do a single party.

That was Zell Miller.

If you were to go to the place where Zell was laid to rest, you would see a headstone. As you see on most headstones, you will find the date of his birth, February 24, 1923. There will

be a dash, followed by the date of his death, March 23, 2018. What is interesting, it isn't the date of his birth or the date of his death that matters, but it is the dash in between those dates that really matters.

I think it is important that we ask ourselves: What are we going to do with that dash? Because we have all been given a dash. Zell Miller used that dash for the good and the rights of people. You see, his dash continues today as, literally, thousands of Georgians were able to complete or actually receive a college education because of his vision for the HOPE Scholarship, which is still alive and well today. That dash is part of their lives and their future and their children's lives.

Another part of that dash in Zell Miller's life was the titles that he obtained. I believe titles say a lot about us and say a lot about what we do. His titles included mayor, because he was mayor of the town of Young Harris. He was Lieutenant Governor. He was Governor.

Another title that he proudly used, as my good colleague BUDDY CARTER uses, he was a Georgia Bulldog. And for those of you who aren't from Georgia, it is not d-o-g. It is d-a-w-g, dawg.

But also, from knowing of this incredible gentleman, there is another title that I believe if we were to talk to him today, it wasn't mayor, Lieutenant Governor, Governor, or even U.S. Senator that he would be most proud of of his accomplishments. It would be that of a United States Marine.

You see, his dash is a dash that is living on because of the lives that it affected for so many people. And while so much has been said about Zell Miller, let me close my remarks by saying this: There are very few people today who, across our globe or even across our country, can be categorized as a true statesman. One of those is Paul Coverdell. When Paul Coverdell died in office, the Governor of the State of Georgia at that time looked for another statesman to fulfill that seat that was vacated by Paul Coverdell's death, and that statesman was Zell Miller.

If there is one thing that we can gather from all of these tremendous stories that we heard about Zell Miller today, it is that he loved his country. He loved his State. He loved the people of this country. He loved his God, and he fought for those principles and ideas that he believed in. Even though he may have disagreed with others on certain policy issues, Zell Miller was a statesman who believed in liberty. He believed in freedom for all, and his life is a legacy.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that one day when I am laid to rest that that dash between my birth and my death will just have a portion of the meaning of that of Zell Miller.

HONORING THE INMAN FAMILY

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank, again, my dear colleague and friend from Savannah,

Georgia, for yielding me this time and allowing me to honor another Georgian who passed 18 years ago.

It was 18 years ago, in June, as Georgia heat blanketed the Inman family as they packed their car for a family getaway in the mountains of north Georgia. It was the Friday before Father's Day when Billy and Kathy Inman, the parents of their son, Dustin, and their family dog set off to go on a fishing trip for the weekend. As they headed north, making their way along the wooded, hilly highways that make up that part of my home State, they stopped at a traffic light in the little town of Ellijay, Georgia.

□ 1845

As they waited for the light to turn green, the Inman family's lives were suddenly and tragically changed. Traveling well over the speed limit at 62 miles an hour, a car driven by Gonzalo Harrell-Gonzalez slammed in the rear of the Inmans' vehicle. The tremendous impact knocked Billy and Kathy unconscious.

Kathy, Dustin's mom, remained in a comma for 5 weeks. When she finally regained consciousness, she learned that the injuries she sustained in that wreck were so severe she would be wheelchair-bound for the rest of her life. But more tragically, she was told the heartbreaking news that her son, Dustin, was killed by that tremendous impact. Within seconds, their lives were forever changed by the driver who slammed into the rear of their car.

And while Kathy would not recover from her injuries nor would they ever see the smiling face of their dear son again, they could at least ensure justice was served. But soon they would learn that even that would slip through their hands.

The car that killed their son, Dustin, and permanently disabled his mother was driven by Gonzalo Harrell-Gonzalez, a man who had illegally entered this country. Although illegally in this country, Gonzalez was able to obtain a valid North Carolina driver's license, using his Mexican birth certificate and a Mexican Matricula Consular ID card.

When local law enforcement went to the hospital to take Mr. Gonzalez into custody, they found that he had escaped the hospital. As a fugitive from justice, he continued to evade U.S. and local law enforcement and soon emerged back in the streets in Mexico.

Even though the location of Mr. Gonzalez is now known by U.S. and Mexican law enforcement, the family has not been able to get justice for his crime. Under our treaty with Mexico, Mexico does not recognize vehicular homicide as an extraditable offense.

The Justice Department has informed the Inman family that there is nothing else they can do—nothing. After 18 years of grieving the loss of their son and adjusting to a life of permanent disability for Mrs. Inman, Mr. Gonzalez is still evading justice and has yet to pay for his crime.

The tragedy can have easily been avoided if Congress had taken the border threat and security seriously years ago. This car wreck would have never happened, and Dustin would likely still be with us today. Because of the severity of their injuries, Billy and Kathy were not even able to attend their own son's funeral.

Billy will tell you that, yes, he blames the driver of the car for the death of his son—his hunting buddy—but he also blames the government for ignoring our open and porous borders and for allowing someone who was here illegally to obtain a driver's license.

While there have been many speeches given in this Chamber on immigration, we have yet to be able to have a vote or even have a debate on what the majority of Americans are demanding, what the President has committed to, and what we as a legislative body should do, and that is to secure our borders.

How many more innocent victims such as Dustin Inman, Kate Steinle, and Sarah Root—and the list goes on and on—must die before we start taking the safety and security of American citizens seriously and prioritize securing our borders?

Not only are our borders a thoroughfare for human trafficking, they are also a distribution channel for cartels that smuggle contraband, dangerous drugs, and weapons that make their way into our communities. They are a portal for dangerous gangs such as MS-13 that bring terror, drugs, and murder to our streets.

For too long, we have chosen partisan politics over doing what is reasonable and right, and we put our families' livelihoods at tremendous risk. It is beyond time to take action. It is time for Congress to act. It is time for us to enforce our laws, and it is time to secure our borders, not for our own political victories, but for families such as Billy and Kathy Inman.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for that, and I am thankful that the Georgia delegation was able to pay our respects to a great Georgian, to a great American, Zell B. Miller.

Mr. Miller's knowledge and his broad experience in Georgia enabled him to be one of the most popular and successful leaders ever for this State. With the passing of Zell Miller, Georgia has truly lost one of its most important servants.

Zell Miller was a personal mentor to me. Young Harris College changed my life, as I mentioned earlier. Zell Miller changed my life, as he changed the lives of so many Georgians, of so many Americans. I am so grateful for the wisdom that he shared with all of us. His family remains in my thoughts and prayers, but his policies, his ideals, and his legacy will live on in the State of Georgia for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

THE PLIGHT OF THE ROHINGYA MUSLIMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the unspeakable suffering of the Rohingya people. We must do all we can to shine a spotlight on their plight. Last night, the PBS NewsHour presented an hour-long documentary about the brutal campaign against the Rohingyas led by the Burmese military. At times it became intolerable to continue watching footage of young men being beaten, listening to the accounts of young girls and women being raped and killed, and seeing human remains shoved into mass graves.

The facts are well known. Since August last year, nearly 700,000 Rohingya Muslims have fled the violence in Myanmar to neighboring Bangladesh, where they are being housed in deplorable conditions and face an uncertain future. Some of the conversation lately has focused on returning the Rohingya Muslims to Burma, resettling them to a remote island or some third country. However, I believe the most pressing conversation today must be for the Burmese military and civilian government led by Aung San Suu Kyi to confront the issue head-on.

The Burmese leadership must acknowledge ethnic cleansing and acts of genocide that have been inflicted on the Rohingya people. As recently as March, a senior Burmese official reportedly made a series of comments designed to deny or downplay any violence and atrocities against the Rohingya Muslims, saying the vast majority remain in Burma, and "if it was genocide, they would all be driven out."

He went on to declare that the Burmese Government "would like to have clear evidence" of ethnic cleansing and genocide. That clear evidence already exists. Even as Burma has denied international investigators the ability to enter the country to gather evidence of such crimes, the United Nations' fact-finding mission found "concrete and overwhelming" evidence of "human rights violations of the most serious kind, in all likelihood amounting to crimes under international law."

The investigative team found widespread and systematic "State-led violence" and had "numerous accounts of children and babies who were killed, boys arrested, and girls raped."

Various rationales have been suggested for the failures of the Burmese Government to acknowledge and act upon atrocities against Rohingya Muslims. It is said that Aung San Suu Kyi does not control the military and there is a danger that the military would use the present crisis as a way to dismantle the civilian government. It is said that the civilian government is working within a deep traditional bias against the Rohingyas, and some see them as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh.

Others have suggested that pressure on the civilian government could lead to Burma moving closer to the Chinese. Still others point out that talks about the Rohingyas returning to Burma must be afforded time to work out, and the process has only begun.

None of this—none of this—can undermine for a moment the realities of the persecution of the Rohingyas. The PBS documentary "Myanmar's Killing Fields" left no doubt about the extent and nature of the atrocities perpetrated against the Rohingyas. As a U.N. official has stated, it is "a textbook example of ethnic cleansing." Until the Burmese civilian government and military openly acknowledge their role in these atrocities, protection and justice for the Rohingya Muslims will remain out of reach.

There is an overriding need for the Burmese Government and the world to step up to the plight of the Rohingyas. Senator JOHN MCCAIN and Senator DICK DURBIN introduced, on September 7, 2017, a resolution clearly addressing the plight of the Rohingyas. I introduced the same resolution 7 days later.

Subsequent events have darkened still further the plight of the Rohingyas since then. While the basic message in the resolutions remains the same, it would be wise to update them and then that this entire issue be fully and directly addressed by the Congress.

Bishop Desmond Tutu once said: "If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor."

The documentary on "Frontline" last night made it painfully clear that this Congress must not accept neutrality or any shade of it. We must stand tall on the side of justice.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A Bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1732. An act to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to promote testing of incentive payments for behavioral health providers for adoption and use of certified electronic health record technology; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce; in addition, to the Committee on Ways and Means for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.