

The museum, which was founded in 1990, is located in Kansas City, MO. It is dedicated to highlighting and preserving that important part of our sports history—the history of African-American baseball. Bob Kendrick runs that museum, and it is a museum I would encourage all of my colleagues to visit as the All-Star Game was in Kansas City a few years ago, and it was one of the venues for Major League Baseball.

When people are in Kansas City, playing the Royals, managers and coaches often take their players there—players who haven't been there before and players who want to go back—just for them to have a sense of what it was like when there was the segregation of baseball and also some of the great players who played there. The chairman of the board, Stewart Myers, was here yesterday, and the vice chairman, Adam Sachs, was here yesterday.

The museum is actually expanding and building the Buck O'Neil Research and Education Center on the Paseo in Kansas City. Buck O'Neil was a great Kansas Citian, but he had also been a great part of Negro Leagues Baseball. In June of this year, vandals broke into the YMCA, on which a lot of money had already been spent. It was where that part of the museum, the research center, was going to be housed. The vandals did more damage than they should have been able to do, and, unfortunately, there was some water damage in the building. Yet that effort continues.

The Negro National League was created there in 1920 at that Paseo YMCA. There was an owners meeting, and the owners decided, It is time we really put more of a structure into this league. So they established a league. Before 1920, these African-American teams barnstormed around the country and played whomever they could play. After 1920, they could still barnstorm, but there was a league, there was a league championship, and there was a structure they had not had before.

In 1947, as every baseball fan knows, the Brooklyn Dodgers decided to integrate baseball, and Jackie Robinson, who had played for the Kansas City Monarchs, was the first player to step into that challenge of integrated baseball. The league lasted another 13 years or so. I think the last team finally folded in the early 1960s.

Some of the greatest baseball and the most exciting baseball ever played was played in this particular league—names like Satchel Paige, who said about himself that he was so fast he could turn off the light in the bedroom and be in bed before it got dark. He was a great pitcher, and he was a great runner. Buck O'Neil, Satchel Paige, Cool Papa Bell, Jackie Robinson, and 100 other names in that last 3 years of the 1940s who joined the Major Leagues are all part of that story.

Missouri teams were an important part of that story. The Monarchs

played for 37 seasons, and I already mentioned that Jackie Robinson played briefly for the Monarchs before he went to the Dodgers. They won a dozen league championships. They sent more players than any other team to the Major Leagues. The St. Louis Stars, who were on the other side of our State—originally the St. Louis Giants—played 12 seasons. They won the league championship in 1928, in 1930, and in 1931.

The real focus of the exhibit here this week was on the Homestead Grays. Now, where did the Homestead Grays come from? I think I already mentioned they were celebrating the 75th anniversary of winning the Negro League World Series in 1943. The Homestead Grays were originally based in Homestead, PA, just outside of Pittsburgh.

In 1940, in 1941, and in 1942, they played at least half of their games here in Washington. When the Washington Senators were traveling, the ballpark would be available, and the Homestead Grays would play games there. By 1943, they were playing about two-thirds of their games in Washington and generally had more people at their games than the Washington Senators had at their games. They won nine consecutive league pennants from 1937 through 1945.

There was even an effort, when the Nationals team was brought here, to call the Nationals the Washington Grays because of that tremendous team that had played here. The team owners chose the Nationals because it was one of the Washington Senators' official nicknames. That is an important part of our history right there, and we are going to be celebrating the 100th anniversary of that league in 2020.

I and Congressman CLEAVER, who is on the other side of this building, are looking at ways to draw more attention to this great part of our story. It is sad because of the segregated elements of it, but it is a great story because of the entrepreneurship and the sportsmanship and the competitive nature of that league.

Mr. NELSON. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. BLUNT. I can tell the Senator is interested. I am pleased to yield.

Mr. NELSON. Indeed, this Senator is interested. Would you believe that a lot of those retired players who are still living happen to live in Florida?

Mr. BLUNT. Right.

Mr. NELSON. Further, as the Senator correctly pointed out, once Jackie Robinson was able to break into the majors in 1947, it would be another 11 years—1958—before the last team in the Major Leagues integrated. Would you believe, for all of that period of time, these great baseball players who have contributed so much had no pensions?

Further, it was years later in this Senate—in the last decade—that, finally, the Commissioner of Baseball was brought in front of the Commerce Committee in order to face the music

about the fact that the retired players who had not played in Major League Baseball but in the old Negro leagues in America—because they couldn't get into Major League Baseball, even while the rest of the teams were being integrated, which took 11 years—had no pensions. Would you believe that Major League Baseball, through Bud Selig, finally agreed to give them onetime pension payments?

This Senator is so grateful because that has helped so many of the residents in my State who are these great players. Senator BLUNT has so accurately described their considerable talents on the baseball field.

Mr. BLUNT. I think that is an important part of the history.

There were a couple of players there last night who had played in the league, and of course there are fewer of those players all the time. I have had a chance, as you have had, to meet and talk to them over the years—to talk about the excitement of that kind of baseball and their ability to entertain both with their sportsmanship as well as just with their talent as sportsmen.

I think it was a great league, and it is a great story. I don't know if the Senator has had a chance to go to the museum in Kansas City, but as a guy who knew those players and appreciates what that league was all about, I would certainly love to go there with the Senator sometime.

Mr. NELSON. If the Senator will yield, as a matter of fact, I am looking forward to seeing that museum.

It was one of the Senator's players on the Kansas City Monarchs—"Peach-Head" Bob Mitchell, retired, who was living in my State—who brought to the attention of his Senator the inequity that had occurred in their never getting pensions, even though they were certainly capable of getting into Major League Baseball but, because of segregation, could not.

Mr. BLUNT. I am looking forward, along with others, to celebrating that century of history. It is an important part of the story to be told, and I am glad the Senator has helped add to it here today.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. President, I also want to talk for a few minutes about the importance of getting the appropriations bills to the Senate floor, and I want to do that by talking about the opioid epidemic.

Our annual opportunity to look at that is legislative—legislative in terms of deciding how to spend money as we try to deal with this epidemic that claims more lives than any other single accidental cause of death. For a long time, car accidents predominated that list, but in virtually every State in the country, more people die now from drug overdoses than die from car accidents.

There are people of every age, such as the high school cheerleader in my hometown of Springfield, MO, who hurt her leg and got medicine for that leg injury. I think it was after 3 years of

struggling with addiction that her mother found her dead in the bedroom from an overdose.

Every age, every race—there are stories of incredibly successful people who received from the doctor or the dentist more pain medicine than they needed. It is not because that is what the doctor or the dentist intended to do. Doctors and dentists in the 1970s and 1980s were told: This is nonaddictive. There is no reason for people to have pain.

People could take these opioid-based painkillers and not have pain. That part was true. The part that wasn't true was the nonaddictive part. And the part that wasn't true was what you would do when the doctor was no longer giving you that medicine or you could no longer act like you were getting the medicine because of pain when, by then, you were getting it for some other reason.

The appropriations bill that our committee has voted out and that we are eager to get to the floor includes \$3.7 billion targeting the opioid epidemic. It is a 1,300-percent increase over where we were 4 years ago. Congress has become more aware of not only how widespread the epidemic is but also the incredible human cost of the epidemic.

The bill includes almost half of that money, \$1.5 billion, for State opioid response grants. One reason we are doing this with grants is we really don't know all of the options yet, and we haven't been able to evaluate the best ways to deal with this. We do feel in our committee and in Congress that it is unlikely that the best way to deal with this in one place is necessarily the best way to deal with it in other places.

My State of Missouri received \$10 million last year. We will receive \$28 million this year if this grant funding is approved, and other States will go up proportionately, exactly as we did.

What did we do with that money in our State of Missouri to see how we could deal with this epidemic? More than 1,700 people have received evidence-based medical treatment for opioid-use disorder; 1,700 people in the last 12 months or so have received that. More than 4,300 kits of naloxone, which is what you take when you overdose, have been distributed. That is less effective sometimes than it used to be because of fentanyl, and people don't have any idea, when they are trying to help you with what you put into your system—and you don't either—so, occasionally, you will get that shot to relieve you from the overdose and think that has helped, and then suddenly what you have put into your system overwhelms even that normal cure if you get it on time. “Cure” might be the wrong word because all it does is save you that one time.

Around 4,000 people have received training on what to do in the event of an overdose. About 10,000 people have received training in our State on topics from treatment to prevention to recovery.

For a State like ours, the rate of opioid deaths has increased; opioid overdose deaths have more than quadrupled in the past 15 years. That would not be an unusual number for States to see.

Senator CAPITO from West Virginia and I were here on the floor talking about this earlier this year. This is not necessarily an urban problem. In fact, in most cases, it is more of a rural problem per capita than an urban problem per capita. We have set aside money targeted for those rural communities. There is \$135 million set aside for rural communities based on different things that appear to be needed more in rural communities than in any other communities.

A couple of hundred million dollars goes into community health centers to support people who have behavioral health concerns and mental health concerns. If you don't have a mental health problem before you get addicted to opioids, you have one once you have gotten addicted to opioids. So those funds go there to try to deal with that.

Senator STABENOW and I introduced a bill a few years ago, the Excellence in Mental Health Act, and eight of our States now have a situation where they are treating, in that eight-State pilot, behavioral health problems like all other health problems. That particularly steps up if someone with an opioid addiction problem has a behavioral health problem they wouldn't have had otherwise. And there is no limit. Just as there would be no limit if you had kidney dialysis, there is also no limit in those eight States for your behavioral health problems. There is no limit where, if you haven't whipped this in 28 days, you are going to have to deal with this as a unique problem. Dealing with mental health and behavioral health in the same way matters in all cases, but it particularly seems to apply as people try to beat addiction.

The Department of Labor and Health and Human Services bill includes \$60 million for child abuse prevention and treatment programs to support what happens in families when someone in that family gets into a situation of abuse.

The number of people who become addicted needs to change, but also how we deal with pain needs to change. So there is some unique money available to the National Institutes of Health to try to develop a pain medicine that is nonaddictive; \$500 million went toward that effort.

In all of these cases, we feel as though we have produced a good bill out of our committee. It has about one-third of the money in it after defense is taken off the table. It is a big bill that covers a large jurisdiction.

Everyone in the Senate deserves a chance to be part of this debate. Everyone in the Senate deserves to look at how the appropriators—I think it was 33 to 1 that they voted for this bill—have decided to spend the money. It

may be the way everyone decides to spend the money, but everyone ought to have a chance on this floor to say “No, I think this money would be better spent here and here, better spent this way and that way.” Every single Senator ought to be able to be part of that discussion.

If we continue this process that we have been in for a few years—one big bill that nobody ever gets to vote on—that means the Senators who aren't on the Appropriations Committee will not have a say in establishing our national priorities. It is time to do that.

These bills are all out of committee and have been for almost a month now. We have had three of them on the floor already. I think we plan to have four of them on the floor next week, and maybe Defense, Labor, and HHS not too long after that.

These are big issues that every Senator should have a say in, and the only way that will happen is if these issues are decided right here on the floor. Hopefully we will set some records, at least, of having these bills on the floor and debated.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I want to reflect on some of the data that has been coming in on our economy in response to our tax reform and deregulatory push.

Before I do, I want to commend my colleague from Missouri and thank him for his leadership and work on the incredible crisis of opioids we are dealing with. It is not a uniformly national crisis; it is more concentrated regionally, and my State of Pennsylvania is affected as badly as any place in the country.

I am pleased we have been able to take a number of constructive measures, but we have a lot of work yet to do as we try to deal with this scourge. I want to thank him for that.

TAX REFORM

Mr. President, on tax reform, before I get into some of the macro and statistics that are really, really incredibly encouraging, I just want to touch on a couple of constituent companies and their employees and how our tax reform is affecting them.

One is a company called Glass & Sons Collision Repair. They are located in Reading, PA, which is in the eastern part of our State. They recently announced that they will be paying \$1,000 tax reform bonuses to all of their employees—\$1,000. This is a small business. It is a father-and-son business. The owners, Charles and Trevor Glass, made the decision to pay the bonuses right after they met with their accountants and learned how much they are going to save as a result of tax reform. The first thing they did is say: We are going to share this with our employees. It is a terrific development for everyone involved.

There is another company on the other side of the State, in Somerset,