

from the Governor to the Administrators, to our press that is on the case, but we have got a job here.

I am going to be asking my colleagues for us to do that which only the Federal Government can do, and that is to provide those financial resources to help folks when there has been a weather emergency where they live.

If there is any base-level function of government to try to bring us together as a community, as a United States of America, it is to stand up and help folks, whether it is in Vermont or it is in Louisiana or it is in deep Texas. Wherever it is, when there is an event through no fault of their own where the weather is doing so much damage, I think each of us reveres the opportunity we can have to help our colleague and the folks whom our colleague represents. Vermont needs help now, and Senator SANDERS and I will be seeking to obtain that help on behalf of Vermonters.

I want to wind down here a little bit by describing a photograph of a sight I saw, and I took a photograph that we don't have here.

Along the river in Barre, where the mud had come down and the silt had settled way outside of the banks of the river, there were three beautiful bicycles that were in a tangled mess and half-buried. What it represented clearly were the bikes of three young kids, of boys and girls who looked forward at the end of the day, on a beautiful Vermont summer day, to riding those bikes and having some fun. They don't know where those bikes are. They are buried, they are twisted, they are out of their reach, and it is having an effect on their lives.

I know Vermonters are going to respond, and I hope our Federal Government responds. We have got to get bikes for those kids.

One of the things we have to do is to make some contributions to funds that Vermonters made before when we suffered Tropical Storm Irene—when we were trying to get families the help they needed—to be able to have those kids back out on those bicycles in the beautiful Vermont summer that can, after this storm, resume.

What I hope we do here—and I am going to be, as I mentioned, joined fully by Senator SANDERS, who led today's delegation—is seek the assistance of our colleagues so that this government can be a friend at the time of need for the Vermonters who in times of others' needs have always been there.

I want to thank many of my colleagues who have approached me, Senator KENNEDY foremost among them, who has had a lot of experience with natural disasters in Louisiana. There has been one colleague after another saying: PETER, if there is anything we can do, we want to help. So I take everyone at their word.

I want to end where I began, and that is with my expression of gratitude to

the response from Vermonters, from President Biden, from Administrator Criswell, and from my colleagues as well.

Vermont is strong, and we will get through this. But make no mistake—it is asking so much of a family who has lost a home. It is asking so much of kids whose summer expectations are that they are going to be able to ride on those Vermont country roads and enjoy being out with their friends and no longer have the bikes. It is asking a lot of families who are wondering what is going to happen now after mom's business has closed. It is going to ask a lot of Vermonters who are trying to figure out how in the world, even with help here, they are going to navigate the paperwork that is necessary in order to get that assistance.

What we are going to do here, in addition to seeking the assistance that is required, is that Senator SANDERS, Congresswoman BALINT, and I are coordinating our casework response because there are a lot of concrete challenges that folks face. We want them to absolutely call us, and we are going to work it out between the three of us to make sure that we can help the most Vermonters as quickly as possible get access to things that will be helpful to them to rebuild their futures. We will be strong. We will recover.

I just want to end by acknowledging the sadness I feel for so many families who and businesses that have been so hammered by this storm. This storm, by the way, was dropping so much rain as a result of the change in our climate that this point is undeniable. The warmer temperatures over the ocean create much more moisture in the air, and what was going to be a "normal" rainstorm becomes a deluge as 3 inches turn into 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 inches.

We do owe it to the future to act with alacrity, effectiveness, and determination and address the climate factors that are going into creating these mega storms.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

Will the Senator withhold his suggestion of a quorum?

Mr. WELCH. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

TRIBUTE TO ELVERDA LINCOLN

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, it is my favorite time of the week here in the U.S. Senate. I like to come down on a regular basis and talk about the Alaskan of the Week. The Alaskan of the Week can be someone who is doing something great for their local community, their State, their country. Maybe it is someone who is helping to actually save the world. That is who we have today—someone who literally helped to save the world.

Before we begin, I know we have some Alaskans in the Galleries here. Today, the Boys & Girls Club is in town, and we have some of our great,

young leaders from my State who are here, and I am really glad to see them. It is appropriate, I think, as some of the Boys & Girls Clubs' awardees can probably be Alaskans of the Week soon, right?

But I always like to begin my Alaskan of the Week remarks by just giving a little update of what is going on back home in Alaska. We are having a great summer. It is actually a really cold summer for us. The Sun is high in the sky. People are fishing. Tourists are flocking to our State.

By the way, if you are watching on TV, come up to Alaska, and you will have the best vacation of a lifetime, I guarantee it. The midnight Sun is out, and the scenery is spectacular. Of course, we are a place of big skies, big places, a big ocean, big rivers, some of the most resilient, interesting, special people in the world, and some of the most patriotic. We have more veterans per capita than any State in the country.

I have the pleasure of frequently speaking about our veterans in Alaska, about our military in Alaska. Many of them have been honored by being Alaskans of the Week. That is going to happen again today with a very special veteran, Elverda Lincoln.

So let's talk a little bit about our Alaskan of the Week. She served in the U.S. Navy during the Second World War. And I am going to talk a little bit about a program, the WAVES Program. It is a very famous program, the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service. That is the acronym, WAVES.

Elverda is a World War II vet, an Alaskan pioneer literally. She is an author, a mother, a grandmother, a great-great-grandmother. She has such an amazing story, and here is the deal: She is turning 100 in a couple of days—100—and is still going strong.

So let me spend a few minutes talking about this extraordinary woman who is such an inspiration to so many in Alaska and hopefully, after millions of Americans listen to this speech, to so many Americans across the country.

Elverda was born in 1923 in Minnesota as the oldest of 14 kids. She was about 6 years old when the Great Depression began. Of course, it was a very tough time for most Americans. In her words, there was no work. Her family literally did not know where the next meal was coming from. They ate a lot of soup, she said, and when there was not enough to go around for the 14 kids her parents had to take care of, they just added water to the soup. They were tough times, but she and her family survived.

She said, "We," like so many other Americans, "were all in the same boat."

After graduating from high school, Elverda worked for some time in Washington State, from working in a fruit cannery to waitressing, but none of these jobs gave her a sense of fulfillment or adventure or satisfaction.

Then December 7, 1941, happened, and our great Nation was at war. So what did this young woman do? She said she noticed a huge sign in her local post office. You know what the sign was—one of the most famous recruiting posters ever. It was Uncle Sam literally pointing at her. Every day, she said she walked past that sign that said: "I WANT YOU." She was a patriot, so eventually Elverda heeded Uncle Sam's call, and she joined the Navy—like I said, the WAVES Program. She was soon on a train to New York and on a journey then that took her across the country—a 5-day train ride.

The WAVES Program was set up in 1942 by President Roosevelt to free up positions primarily stateside but very important positions. You are going to hear about what Elverda actually did for her country and the Navy so that male sailors could deploy overseas.

So she got on a plane with eight other women who had also joined WAVES. They had to take turns sleeping on the floor of the lavatory for 5 days because there were no assigned seats on this train going across our great Nation.

There were 4 weeks of boot camp—tough duty—from 4:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. every day for 4 weeks straight.

When she completed boot camp, Elverda was filled with a sense of accomplishment and patriotism. She had done something hard, something fulfilling, something worthwhile. Beyond that, she felt connected with her fellow WAVES. These were sailors in the U.S. Navy, women sailors. Then, of course, she was connected with probably one of the most important causes our country has ever undertaken—to win World War II and free the world from tyranny and oppression.

Her confidence soared, she said, when she received her Navy uniform and her \$50-per-month paycheck—a lot of money back then. She was first stationed in Seattle. Get this: Her job was to keep track of the exact locations of U.S. ships and enemy ships and planes throughout the Pacific. She then was transferred to Tongue Point Naval Air Station in Astoria, OR. At this point, of course, the Pacific theatre—the war in the Pacific—was in full force.

She aided in modifying, updating, and correcting naval communications manuals. She helped to code a great deal of radio signals and manuals that were used in battles like the Battle of Iwo Jima and were also used in the invasion of the Aleutian Islands by Japan. A lot of people don't know that Alaska was actually invaded by the forces of Imperial Japan and occupied in the Aleutian Islands. Our military had to go fight brutal battles in the Aleutian Islands to kick out the Japanese on American territory, our great State.

It was only after the war that Elverda realized the great importance of what she had done. Like I said, she is an Alaskan of the Week who helped save the world—literally helped save the world.

She saw her time in the Navy as a great transition in her life, where she found out what hard work and dedication and patriotism were all about. And, importantly, she also met her husband, Bob Lincoln, a U.S. marine—so we know Elverda has very good taste by marrying a U.S. marine—while he was stationed in Oregon.

Both Elverda and Bob wanted to live a continued life of adventure and travel, so after the war in 1950, with one child already born and another one on the way, they packed up their car, and they drove north to the great State of Alaska. Now, it wasn't a State back then. It was still a territory, but you get the picture. They wanted an Alaskan adventure, and they got it. They settled in the Matanuska Valley in the town of Wasilla on a homestead.

Elverda and her husband Bob added to Wasilla's population, which, back then, was 100 people. It is much bigger today. They felled trees. They built a cabin. They built a life. They raised three wonderful kids. Bob did everything from dairy farming to putting up telephone lines to being a butcher. And, of course, they fell in love with Alaska.

"It's like one big family," Elverda said. "Our friends range from the preachers to the alcoholics and everybody in between."

Eventually, Elverda began to write about her life in Alaska—some funny and some very serious stories about life on the homestead in the Last Frontier. She has written four books so far; and talking to her, you have no doubt that she has at least four more in her.

Unfortunately, her husband, Bob, passed away. But before he did, he and Elverda traveled the world, something that she continued to do until recently.

Elverda now lives in the senior center in Wasilla, and she stays busy. She walks every day. She quilts for charities, including Quilts of Valor and quilts for Children's Place. During COVID, she made masks.

She has 5 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren, and 2 great-great-grandchildren. In her hundred years of life—hundred years of wisdom—Elverda attributes her longevity to the following—and this is a great lesson for everybody: living healthy, staying active, being positive, and staying out of other people's business.

"I've loved every minute of my life," Elverda recently said. And what a life it has been.

So, Elverda, thank you for your service to our country. Thank you for your service in the U.S. Navy in WAVES, to the great State of Alaska, and to Wasilla. Thank you for being such a positive inspiration for so many. Happy hundredth birthday from the U.S. Senate. And, of course, congratulations on the great honor of being our Alaskan of the Week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I always consider it good fortune when I

come to deliver remarks on the Senate floor and get to follow Senator SULLIVAN's Alaskan of the Week speeches.

His discussion of his constituent Elverda reminds me of a very, very dear person in my life, Florence Kerins Murray, born just a little bit ahead of Elverda—1916—but like Elverda, served in the U.S. military. She was a WAC—Women's Army Corps—lieutenant colonel and then broke, essentially, every glass ceiling you could break in Rhode Island politics and in the Rhode Island judiciary, becoming a very respected Rhode Island Supreme Court Justice.

So I will take the liberty of joining my colleague Senator SULLIVAN in wishing his constituent a happy birthday, but I also wanted to share the memory of a very dear Rhode Islander who I think would have gotten along very well—I would like to be a witness, a fly on the wall, to the conversation between Florence and Elverda.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. To my friend and colleague from Rhode Island, I will gladly pass along your birthday greetings to Elverda. Thank you very much.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I rise this evening, now for the 22nd time, to keep unmasking the far-right scheme to capture and control our Supreme Court. This scheme is funded by creepy rightwing billionaires who stay out of the limelight and let others—namely, Leonard Leo and his crew—operate their scheme.

How are they benefiting from the scheme? It is hard to track which rightwing billionaires are involved—and that is by design—but thanks to intrepid reporting from ProPublica and others, we are learning more all the time. And every day it becomes harder for the billionaire-friendly Justices and their political allies to pretend, with a straight face, that all is kosher at the Court.

I have previously described the noxious cocktail of this court capture scheme: creepy rightwing billionaires, phony front groups, amenable Justices, large sums of money, and secrecy. I don't know whether they take that shaken or stirred, but those seem to be the common ingredients.

To chill that Court-capture cocktail, we can add one more ingredient: Alaskan glacier ice. But I will get back to that later.

First, let's review the origin story of Justice Samuel Alito. It begins with the bipartisan Senate rejection of Judge Robert Bork, which infuriated Bork's far-right backers. On the Court were Justices Souter and Stevens—both Republican appointees—but they wouldn't help the billionaires, so the angry chant went out from the far right: No more Souters. No more Stevenses.

Then President George W. Bush got an appointment and nominated his