

So it is, during this time of tragedy, and hearing an individual Senator, Senator PRYOR, talk about the loss of loved ones and family friends and young people with bright futures, and the reflection in a day or so of the anniversary of the Challenger tragedy and the loss of seven lives, including the teacher, Christa McAuliffe, who was going to teach that lesson plan to the classrooms from space, we are once again reminded that because we dare to venture, because we are by nature explorers, there are risks, and sometimes the price to be paid is with human life. But that is not a reason not to take the risk and to boldly venture forth.

This is a good reminder for us as Americans as we face so many uncertainties—whether it be financial and our future of trying to get out of the recession, or whether it be the uncertain future in Afghanistan or Pakistan, or how the leadership of al-Qaida is being morphed into other countries, such as Yemen or Somalia, or the constant uncertainty of whether we will have a job tomorrow, or whether we can retrain for the new kinds of jobs that are coming on line.

There are a lot of uncertainties—the uncertainties of our energy future. Can we remain dependent on 70 percent of our daily consumption of oil coming from places such as the Persian Gulf and Nigeria and Venezuela? No. It is time for us to venture forth, to explore new realms, to develop new technologies and to be creative. And, of course, as the President spoke last night, we can't do that unless we have an educated workforce, which is so necessary for us to be creative. It is that creativity, that Yankee ingenuity of Americans, that keeps us competitive in the global marketplace today because we can outinvent, we can outcreate. That is the change America has.

As we reflect upon the tragedies, the individual tragedies that we have, the collective tragedy that we had as a nation—25 years ago with Challenger, several years ago with the loss of Columbia, the losses we had most recently that are seared into our hearts in Tucson—the hope that springs forth for those who are wounded, that they would come back to lead normal lives, these are our challenges. Keep at it. Keep at it.

I say this also. Because it is a time of uncertainty, a lot of pundits are having fun because it appears that NASA is in disarray. NASA should not be in disarray. We have a blueprint. We have a roadmap for the future in the NASA bill that passed this Congress—one of the few that passed in the Congress before the lameduck session. It simply says let's continue to encourage the commercial companies to develop a service of taking astronauts and cargo to and from the space station and let's see if we can do that safely, as determined by NASA, but more efficiently and, therefore, more cheaply, given the constraints of budgets.

But, at the same time, we then allow NASA to do what it does best, which is to venture out and explore the heavens. In so doing, we are going to build a new rocket that will take large components up and that will fulfill the President's goal, which is to go to Mars.

The President specifically set a timetable of 2025 to land and return safely on an asteroid. That is no easy feat, given how fast an asteroid flies through space. But it will give us new technologies, as we develop, to go to Mars.

Think of the unbelievable time it would take us under conventional technology—10 months to get to Mars. Then, once you got to Mars, you pretty well have to stay on the surface of Mars for 1 year, until the planets are realigned, revolving about the Sun, so Mars comes in closer to the Earth for the 10-month trip back. That is why we need new technologies. An astronaut who flew seven times, Dr. Franklin Chang-Diaz, a plasma physicist from MIT, is developing a plasma rocket that will take us to Mars in 39 days. Then, with that short time flying, at 400,000 miles per hour by plasma thrust, we could stay on the surface 1 month, to return to Earth without having to stay 1 year.

These are exciting new technologies. A pilot project of that plasma rocket, with the acronym VASIMR, is being developed to fly on the space station and provide a continuous pulse that will keep the space station boosted, instead of it having, in the degrading of its orbit for conventional technology, to keep boosting it.

Not only is the sky the limit, not only is the stratosphere the limit, the heavens are the limit if we as Americans will assume this can-do posture that is so typical of the personalities of explorers and adventurers; in other words, the personalities of we, the Americans.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HAGAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF PROGRAMS UNDER THE SMALL BUSINESS ACT AND THE SMALL BUSINESS INVESTMENT ACT OF 1958

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 366, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 366) to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs

under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read three times and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 366) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

RECOGNIZING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAGIC EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI ON JANUARY 12, 2010

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 26, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 26) recognizing the anniversary of the tragic earthquake in Haiti on January 12, 2010, honoring those who lost their lives in that earthquake, and expressing continued solidarity with the Haitian people.

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

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 26) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 26

Whereas on January 12, 2010, an earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale struck the country of Haiti;

Whereas, according to the United States Geological Survey, the epicenter of the earthquake was located approximately 15 miles southwest of Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti;

Whereas, according to the United States Geological Survey, the earthquake was followed by 59 aftershocks of magnitude 4.5 on the Richter scale or greater, with the most severe measuring a magnitude of 6.0 on the Richter scale;

Whereas, according to the Government of Haiti, more than 230,000 people died as a result of the earthquake, including 103 citizens of the United States;

Whereas an untold number of international aid personnel also died as a result of the earthquake, including more than 100 United Nations personnel;

Whereas, according to the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration—

(1) an estimated 3,000,000 people, or nearly 1/3 of the population of Haiti, have been directly affected by the disaster; and

(2) an estimated 1,300,000 people were displaced from their homes to settlements;

Whereas casualty numbers and infrastructure damage, including damage to roads, ports, hospitals, and residential dwellings, place the earthquake as the worst cataclysm to hit Haiti in more than 200 years and, proportionally, as one of the worst natural disasters in the world in modern times;

Whereas the Post Disaster Needs Assessment, which was conducted by the Government of Haiti, the United Nations, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and other experts, estimates that damage and economic losses totaled \$7,800,000,000, which is equal to approximately 120 percent of the gross domestic product of Haiti in 2009;

Whereas the Post Disaster Needs Assessment estimates that \$11,500,000,000 is needed during the next 3 years for the reconstruction of Haiti and to lay the groundwork for long-term development;

Whereas Haiti was the poorest, least developed country in the Western Hemisphere before the January 2010 earthquake, when—

(1) more than 70 percent of Haitians lived on less than \$2 per day; and

(2) Haiti was ranked of 149th out of 182 countries on the United Nations Human Development Index;

Whereas, before the earthquake, Haiti was in the process of recovering from a catastrophic series of hurricanes and tropical storms, food shortages, rising commodity prices, and political instability, but was showing encouraging signs of improvement;

Whereas President Barack Obama vowed the “unwavering support” of the United States and pledged a “swift, coordinated and aggressive effort to save lives and support the recovery in Haiti”;

Whereas Senate Resolution 392, which was agreed to on January 21, 2010, by unanimous consent—

(1) expressed the profound sympathy and unwavering support of the Senate for the people of Haiti; and

(2) urged all nations to commit to assisting the people of Haiti with their long-term needs;

Whereas the response to the tragedy from the global community, and especially from the countries of the Western Hemisphere, has been overwhelmingly positive;

Whereas the initial emergency response of the men and women of the United States Government, led by the United States Agency for International Development and United States Southern Command, was swift and resolute;

Whereas individuals, businesses, and philanthropic organizations throughout the United States and the international community responded to the crisis by supporting Haiti and its people through innovative ways, such as fundraising through text messaging;

Whereas more than \$2,700,000,000 is estimated to have been raised from private donations in response to the tragedy in Haiti;

Whereas the Haitian diaspora community in the United States, which was integral to emergency relief efforts—

(1) has annually contributed significant monetary support to Haiti through remittances; and

(2) continues to seek opportunities to partner with the United States Agency for International Development and other Federal agencies to rebuild Haiti;

Whereas Haiti continues to suffer from extreme poverty, gross inequality, a deficit of political leadership at all levels, and weak or corrupt state institutions;

Whereas significant long-term challenges remain as Haiti works to recover and rebuild;

Whereas the International Organization for Migration estimates that approximately 800,000 people remain in spontaneous and organized camps in Haiti;

Whereas, according to numerous nongovernmental organizations and United States contractors, the pace of reconstruction in Haiti has lagged significantly behind the original emergency relief phase;

Whereas there is an acute need—

(1) to increase local capacity in health care and education; and

(2) to focus international attention on employment opportunities, rubble removal, permanent and sustainable shelter, reconstruction of roads, safety and security, and fundamental human rights in Haiti, especially in temporary camps and shelters;

Whereas the alleged irregularities and fraud that occurred in the election held in Haiti on November 28, 2010, have imperiled the credibility of the electoral process, undermined the recovery effort, and further destabilized security throughout Haiti;

Whereas political leadership is required to ensure that a democratically elected government, which is respected by the people of Haiti and recognized by the international community, is prepared to assume office on February 7, 2011, or shortly thereafter;

Whereas, on October 19, 2010, an outbreak of cholera was detected in the lower Artibonite region of Haiti;

Whereas initial efforts to contain the epidemic were disrupted by Hurricane Tomas and resulting widespread flooding, which led to the spreading and entrenchment of the disease throughout Haiti;

Whereas, according to the Haitian Ministry of Public Health and Population, between the outbreak in October 2010 and January 21, 2011—

(1) more than 3,850 people have died from cholera in Haiti; and

(2) more than 194,000 people in Haiti have been affected by the disease;

Whereas, according to the Pan American Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, cholera could spread to as many as 400,000 people within the first year of the epidemic, potentially causing 8,000 deaths at the current case fatality rate;

Whereas the United States has provided \$40,000,000 worth of assistance to combat the cholera epidemic, primarily through the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, to assist with stockpiling health commodities, equipping cholera treatments centers, providing public information, and developing a safe and sustainable water and sanitation system;

Whereas the efforts to combat the cholera epidemic have helped to drive the mortality rate from cholera down from 7 percent to 1 percent of all contracted cases during the 3-month period ending on January 21, 2011;

Whereas, during the first year following the January 12, 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the people of Haiti have demonstrated unwavering resilience, dignity, and courage;

Whereas at the conference of international donors entitled “Towards a New Future for Haiti”, which was held on March 31, 2010, 59 donors pledged approximately \$5,570,000,000 (including nearly \$1,200,000,000 pledged by donors from the United States) to support the Action Plan for National Recovery and Development of the Government of Haiti;

Whereas the United Nations Office of the Special Envoy for Haiti estimates that approximately 63 percent of the recovery and development funds pledged for 2010 have been disbursed; and

Whereas Haiti requires sustained assistance from the United States and the international community in order to confront the ongoing cholera epidemic and promote reconstruction and development: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors those who lost their lives as a result of the tragic earthquake in Haiti on January 12, 2010;

(2) honors the sacrifices of the men and women of the Government of Haiti, the Government of the United States, the United Nations, and the international community in their responses to those affected by the earthquake;

(3) expresses continued solidarity with the people of Haiti as they work to rebuild their neighborhoods, livelihoods, and country;

(4) reaffirms the commitment of the Senate to support the long-term reconstruction of Haiti, in partnership with the Government of Haiti and in coordination with other donors;

(5) supports the efforts of the Executive Branch to prevent the spread of cholera, treat persons who contract the disease, provide technical assistance to the Haitian Ministry of Public Health, and improve long-term water, sanitation, and health systems;

(6) expresses support for the United States Embassy team in Port-au-Prince, members of the United States Coast Guard, United States Armed Forces, other United States Government personnel, and all members of international organizations who have persevered through adverse local conditions and continue to serve Haiti and the Haitian people;

(7) supports the continued effort of the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission, under the leadership of former President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Bellerive, in its efforts to improve coordination, build state capacity, and bring donors and the Government of Haiti together to effectively lead the reconstruction process;

(8) urges the international community—

(A) to call on the leaders of Haiti to immediately reach a democratic resolution to the current electoral crisis to enable the newly elected leaders of the Government of Haiti to take office by February 7, 2011, or shortly thereafter;

(B) to continue to focus assistance on the priorities of the Government of Haiti;

(C) to develop, improve, and scale-up communications and participatory mechanisms to more substantially involve Haitian civil society at all stages of the cholera and post-earthquake responses; and

(D) to give priority to programs that protect and involve vulnerable populations, including internally displaced persons, children, and persons with disabilities;

(9) urges aid agencies—

(A) to train and use Haitian local and national authorities in the delivery of assistance; and

(B) to enhance their coordination and consultation with the Haitian people and key Haitian Government ministries to ensure the effectiveness of aid; and

(10) expresses support for—

(A) the continuation of the work of United States agencies, nongovernmental organizations, private volunteer organizations, regional institutions, and United Nations agencies to confront the consequences of the crises affecting Haiti;

(B) comprehensive assessments of the long-term needs for confronting the cholera epidemic in Haiti, including the construction of adequate water and sanitation infrastructure; and

(C) the continuation of humanitarian and development efforts between the Government of the United States and the Government of Haiti, the Haitian Diaspora, and international actors who support the goal of a better future for Haiti.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST
TIME—S. 192

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I understand that S. 192, introduced earlier today by Senator DEMINT, is at the desk and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 192) to repeal the job-killing health care law and health care-related provisions in the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010.

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I now ask for its second reading and object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read the second time on the next legislative day.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, pursuant to the provisions of section 201(a)(2) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, have appointed Dr. Douglas W. Elmendorf as Director of the Congressional Budget Office for the term expiring January 3, 2015.

The Chair, on behalf of the Republican leader, pursuant to Public Law 111-25, announces the appointment of the following individual to serve as a member of the Ronald Reagan Centennial Commission for the life of the commission: The Honorable ORRIN HATCH of Utah vice Robert Bennett.

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

JUDGE JOHN ROLL

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I heard this morning the tributes that were made by Senator JOHN MCCAIN and Senator JOHN KYL about the role that was played by the very heroic judge who lost his life in the tragedy that took place in Tucson.

Shortly after the tragedy, the offices of Senators MCCAIN and KYL reached out to my committee—the committee on which I am ranking member and Senator BOXER is chairman. They talked about how they would go about honoring Judge John Roll by naming the new courthouse that will be constructed in Yuma, AZ, after him.

Many of us have come to know the work of Judge Roll after his tragic, heroic death in the recent shooting where he died protecting Ron Barber, Congresswoman GIFFORDS' district director, and sacrificing himself. My office knew about him before, about Judge Roll's work on behalf of the judicial system in Arizona.

Judge Roll contacted my committee staff last year, after a GAO report criticizing the way Arizona was utilizing their courthouse space. This is a letter from Judge Roll to us:

On behalf of the district of Arizona, I strongly disagree with many of the conclusions in the report, particularly as they relate to Arizona and its attempts to cope with an ever-burgeoning criminal caseload largely arising from border enforcement.

He hoped his response to the report would be helpful to us. It was. We have learned that the problems they have in Arizona on the border are something they have never experienced before. It has put their judicial system into real problems, and consequently this judge was taking a leadership role in reaching out to us to let us know that GAO report was not accurate.

We have had a chance to talk with both Senator MCCAIN and Senator KYL. I sat down with Senator BOXER, who is the chairman of our committee, and talked about what we might be able to do in a very expeditious way. I believe the decision to name the Yuma, AZ, courthouse after Judge Roll is a fitting tribute to a man who served his State with distinction.

The courthouse is a new courthouse, government construction, to help alleviate some of the overcrowding going on in Arizona right now, primarily because of the problems that exist on the border.

I do not know of any time in the years I have been here that a bill has been introduced and then discharged the same day. We all feel strongly enough that this needs to be handled in this way. It is the very least we can do.

Judge Roll was highly regarded by his colleagues and clearly took his judgeship seriously, doing more than simply deciding cases and going home. He was an active advocate for the judicial system in Arizona. I believe we would have had this courthouse named after him upon his retirement had his life not been tragically taken.

Today Senators MCCAIN and KYL introduced S. 188, and I am happy to announce that Senator BOXER and I have discharged S. 188 to the floor on this same day. Anything else I do not think would have been appropriate.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I come to the floor pretty regularly to read letters from Ohioans, from people in my State, about things in their lives that are important to them. I think in this institution we—all of us, myself included—too often forget the pain of so many people at home who have lost jobs, who have lost hopes, who have lost health care.

I think often about—as I know the Senator from Oregon does—how difficult it would be for a parent to explain to their son or daughter: I lost my job and we lost our health insurance and now we may have to move.

Nobody has worked harder in the Senate than the Presiding Officer from Oregon on fixing HAMP and reforming some of the programs that can help people stay in their homes. I appreciate the work the Presiding Officer does.

My letters today are from people all over Ohio about health insurance. It was a long fight to be able to take on the insurance companies and basically say to the insurance companies: You are not going to run this health care system the way you have, excluding people with preexisting conditions, denying claims after they have turned in their insurance after they have been sick, dealing with all the problems people have.

The business model for health insurance in this country too often has been the insurance companies hire a bunch of bureaucrats to keep people from buying insurance—the preexisting condition exclusion—and then hire a bunch of people on the other end, when someone gets sick and turns in their insurance claims, to try to deny them their claims. I understand insurance companies do that. I do not even blame insurance companies because they are all competing with one another. They may have to do that. But the fact is, it does not work for our health care system.

That is what we fixed last year, and that is what Ohioans understand. I guess I—I do not want to say “resent,” but in some ways I do resent when I see conservative Washington politicians, who, for 20 or 25 years, have had taxpayer-financed health insurance for them and their families, and now they want to vote—in the House of Representatives, and some do here—to take away benefits for senior citizens or take away benefits for small businesses or young people who have a preexisting condition or others.

I will not take too long, but I wish to read three or four stories or maybe a handful more than that.

Laura—I will only mention first names. These are letters from people in Ohio who have written me. Laura, from Dayton, in Montgomery County in southwest Ohio, writes:

My youngest nephew has juvenile diabetes and he just started college in-state. Due to the new health care law, he will be able to stay on my older sister's health care insurance plan when he graduates from college.