

since, were lost. We can never go back to rectify past mistakes that could have prevented that day, but we can work to better secure our Nation moving forward.

We have a roadmap of how to get there. The 9/11 Commission laid out a plan, provided guidance, and delivered 41 specific and wide-ranging recommendations. Yet more than 2 years after the Commission issued those recommendations, many of them remain just that—recommendations that have not been acted on or fully implemented.

This legislation already comes before this body far later than it should. But the fact that it is on the floor of this Chamber just 2 short months into a new Congress speaks boldly of our new leadership and how important finishing the 9/11 Commission's work is to our leadership. I commend both Majority Leader REID and Chairman LIEBERMAN for making this a top priority for this Congress, as well as Chairman INOUE and Chairman DODD for their roles in crafting this legislation.

Many of us have been pushing for a long time to see all 41 recommendations fully implemented and to make significant improvements to our Nation's security that have been under the radar screen for far too long.

As a former Member of the House of Representatives, I fought to see that all 41 recommendations were fully implemented in the 2004 intelligence reform legislation. I was proud to serve as the lead Democratic negotiator in the House on the conference committee that created the final intelligence bill. While that legislation made essential and urgently needed reforms to our Nation's intelligence, unfortunately, it fell far short on implementing all of the recommendations.

I have also since introduced legislation that ensures that all of these recommendations will be fully implemented and to hold the executive branch accountable for implementing each recommendation. It is my hope that with the bill we are working on now before the Senate, and with the vigorous oversight under the leadership of Chairman LIEBERMAN and Ranking Member COLLINS, we will be able to see all these recommendations enacted and implemented.

It was just over a year ago the 9/11 Public Discourse Project, led by former members of the 9/11 Commission, published its disturbing report card, giving far more Fs than As on the implementation of those 41 recommendations.

There is no excuse left for Congress, the White House, or our Federal agencies for not finishing what is so direly needed: improving the security of our Nation. Yes, we have made some great steps forward. Yes, we have made some significant improvements that have likely saved lives and stopped terrorists in their tracks. But no one—no one—should use the lack of another catastrophic attack on our soil as proof that we have succeeded in fully meeting our goals.

The fact is, so long as we do not heed the advice of the 9/11 Commissioners who spent months examining how we could improve our Nation's security, so long as we do not make dramatic improvements to our security—at our Nation's ports, on our trains and buses, around our chemical plants, and in how we allocate homeland security funding—we continue to leave our Nation at risk.

I cannot imagine talking about the security of our Nation without the 41 recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. The Commission's findings and recommendations are integral to understanding our deepest flaws, the complexity of our intelligence and security networks, the obstacles that lie ahead and, most of all, what needs to be done.

Yet if some in our Government had had their way, there would have been no Commission, there would have been no digging into the secrecy and ineffectiveness of our Nation's security, no poring over thousands upon thousands of documents, no reviewing of every action Federal agencies took or did not take to prevent and respond to the attacks of September 11, no asking of some of the toughest questions our Nation has had to bear.

So once we pass this final legislation, have it signed into law and implemented, we will come to the day—I hope sooner rather than later—when our Nation's security funding is based more on risk, when our ports are fully secure because of 100 percent scanning, when we are making the necessary investments in mass transit security, and when our first responders have a strong emergency communications system that works in interoperable ways, so that those who are sworn to protect us can speak to each other effectively.

These are only a few of the dimensions in this fight. Unfortunately, this is a fight that would not have taken place without the commitment and strength of the families of the victims of September 11.

When the loved ones of those who were lost on September 11 have to become full-time advocates, spending every possible hour lobbying Congress, when they have to be the constant reminder for our Government to do its job, we know we have failed them. Many of them are here and have been here today watching this body, waiting to finally see this legislation become law, hoping that all their suffering, their work, and their tireless advocacy will not be in vain.

Let us not only fulfill their wishes but the wishes of all Americans to have a nation as secure as possible for their families and neighbors. Let's work to pass this legislation and make sure it is fully enacted. Let's finally accomplish what should have been finished several years ago.

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

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

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak therein for 10 minutes each.

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

#### TRIBUTE TO MARION "GENE" SNYDER

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, on February 16, the Commonwealth of Kentucky lost a favorite son. Marian "Gene" Snyder was born on January 26, 1928 in Louisville, KY, to a working-class family. He would often say he was "a poor boy from the other side of the tracks in a cold-water flat." His upbringing during the Great Depression and the work ethic taught to him by his mother and father would serve Gene well in future years.

Gene worked his way through college and law school and earned a law degree from the University of Louisville at the ripe young age of 26. He was appointed to his first political post as Jeffersonton city attorney.

In 1962, Louisville Republican leaders saw they had a great young candidate and backed him for his first race for Congress. Gene won that race and represented the people of Kentucky's third congressional district for the next 2 years. Gene unfortunately lost reelection in 1964, but as he did all of his life, he bounced back and in 1966 he won the fourth congressional seat. He would serve and hold that seat with distinction for the next 20 years.

Gene was instrumental in bringing a number of important infrastructure projects back to Kentucky while serving on the Public Works Committee. One of his greatest achievements is a freeway that bears his name in Louisville, KY.

Gene Snyder worked hard to make sure Kentucky got its fair share from the Federal Government. But I think the most important thing he did was to validate conservatism in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Back in the early 1960s, you couldn't count on one hand the number of Republicans in Kentucky. Gene Snyder was the first brick in the foundation of what the Republican Party is today in Kentucky.

Gene had something lacking in today's world of weekly polls and political consultants. Gene had conservative principles and never wavered from those principles. Gene Snyder actually stood for something. That is why I consider Gene Snyder one of my political mentors. I would not be standing here in the well of this great Senate if it were not for Gene Snyder.