

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Washington.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

FAA AIR TRANSPORTATION MODERNIZATION AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENT ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 223, which the clerk will report by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 223) to modernize the air traffic control system, improve the safety, reliability, and availability of transportation by air in the United States, provide for modernization of the air traffic control system, reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Whitehouse amendment No. 8, to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide penalties for aiming laser pointers at airplanes.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, we are continuing this morning on this important FAA bill, which is a very important jobs bill for America. I know my colleagues have been down on the Senate floor—the chairman of the full committee, Senator ROCKEFELLER, and the ranking member, Senator HUTCHISON—and they have been doing a good job of explaining why it is so important to move ahead on something that can create hundreds of thousands of jobs both in construction at our airports across America and on the implementation of the NextGen system, which is really about making a digital conversion to air transportation so our flights can be safer, so they can be more fuel efficient, and so there can be coordination on the ground with the flights and all of our transportation systems.

So this morning we want to keep moving through this process to get this legislation done so we can get it implemented and start creating jobs and improving our air transportation safety.

I think there are amendments to be offered under the agreement. I will yield to my colleague from Mississippi.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Mississippi.

AMENDMENT NO. 14

Mr. WICKER. I thank the Senator from Washington, and I thank the Presiding Officer.

I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment so that I may call up my Wicker amendment No. 14, which is at the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Mississippi [Mr. WICKER] proposes an amendment numbered 14.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To exclude employees of the Transportation Security Administration from the collective bargaining rights of Federal employees)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ EXCLUSION OF EMPLOYEES OF THE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION FROM THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Termination of Collective Bargaining for Transportation Security Administration Employees Act of 2011”.

(b) IN GENERAL.—Section 7103(a) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in clause (iv), by striking “; or” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in clause (v), by striking the semicolon and inserting “; or”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(vi) an officer or employee of the Transportation Security Administration of the Department of Homeland Security;”;

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (G), by striking “; or” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (H), by striking the period and inserting “; or”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(I) the Transportation Security Administration of the Department of Homeland Security;”.

(c) AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 49.—

(1) TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION.—Section 114(n) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding “This subsection shall be subject to the amendments made by the Termination of Collective Bargaining for Transportation Security Administration Employees Act of 2011.” at the end.

(2) PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.—Section 40122 of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by redesignating subsection (j) as subsection (k); and

(B) by inserting after subsection (i) the following:

“(j) TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section (including subsection (g)(2)(C)), this section shall be subject to the amendments made by the Termination of Collective Bargaining for Transportation Security Administration Employees Act of 2011.”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act and apply to any collective bargaining agreement (as defined under section 7103(a)(8) of title 5, United States Code) entered into on or after that date, including the renewal of any collective bargaining agreement in effect on that date.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, this amendment deals with the notion of collective bargaining by TSA employees. The Transportation Security Administration was formed approximately 10 years ago by the Aviation and Transportation Security Act of 2001, Public Law 107-71. Since that time, Transportation Security Administration employees have fared very well. They are a familiar sight in our airports. They are familiar to any of us who fly and who frequent the airports of the United States. It is a good job, and they are well taken care of.

During that 10-year period, TSA employees have not been allowed to collectively bargain. There is a reason for that. First of all, under that act which I referenced, as a compromise back in that day, the Under Secretary of Transportation for Security, who is now the TSA Administrator, was given the ability to fix the compensation and terms thereof, and included in that was the determination about whether collective bargaining rights would be afforded to these TSA employees.

In a 2003 memo, the Under Secretary of Transportation for Security at that time prohibited TSA security screeners from unionizing with collective bargaining rights. The Under Secretary wrote:

I hereby determine that individuals carrying out the security screening function under section 44901 of Title 49, United States Code, in light of their critical national security responsibilities, shall not, as a term or condition of their employment, be entitled to engage in collective bargaining or be represented for the purpose of engaging in such bargaining by any representative or organization.

The determination was made by the predecessor of the TSA Administrator that in light of their critical national security responsibilities, it was not appropriate for collective bargaining rights to be included.

Now we have every reason to believe that under this new administration, that decision is about to be reversed. A decade of experience and practice will be ended unless this Congress acts, and the appropriate vehicle on which to act is this reauthorization bill before us. Wicker amendment No. 14 would simply exclude TSA personnel from forming a union with collective bargaining rights. I point out to my colleagues that the FBI and the CIA and the Secret Service, which all have similar critical national security responsibilities, do not have collective bargaining rights either. So the spirit of amendment No. 14 would be to continue TSA employees in that same vein.

TSA workers have fared well indeed during the past decade. It is a good job. I enjoy seeing them, I enjoy working with them, and we are glad to have them. But for good reason, they have been excluded from collective bargaining rights.

The TSA and TSA leadership need the flexibility to innovate and to move quickly during times of national emergency on issues involving the security

of the traveling public, and for that reason I submit that adding the burdensome responsibility of union demands and dealing with collective bargaining demands could limit the ability of those responsible for the very important function of security at some of the most high-risk targets and make it harder for our security personnel to do their job.

So I will be urging my colleagues during this day—we will be urging the American people to contact their Senators and to let their voices be heard. TSA has worked well in this regard, and we do not need to burden it with extra responsibilities when they need to be concentrating on security.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oregon is recognized.

PROTESTS IN EGYPT

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, over the last week, I have watched the affairs in Tahrir Square in Cairo, as millions of Americans have, and I was deeply impressed by the peaceful demonstration of Egyptian citizens calling for change in their nation—change that would respond to the economic plight of ordinary citizens, change that would give ordinary citizens the opportunity to be a part of the voice directing the course of their nation.

Until yesterday, those protests were absolutely peaceful. But that did change yesterday when pro-Mubarak forces entered the fray. Last night, I was watching as Molotov cocktails were being thrown by pro-Mubarak forces down from adjacent buildings onto the protesters below. I watched as organized thugs proceeded to stone those protesters. I watched as there was sporadic gunfire in the square. I watched as a group of horsemen galloped through the crowd whipping people with their whips.

This thuggery against citizens who were peacefully protesting is absolutely unacceptable. The United States has had a long and close relationship with Egypt. We channel a tremendous amount of economic development aid to Egypt. But let me be very clear. What happened yesterday cannot happen again. What happened yesterday, with thugs attacking peaceful demonstrators on behalf of the government must not happen again.

In no way can America turn a blind eye to this ruthless assault on ordinary citizens. This morning, there were voices from within the Egyptian Government calling what happened yesterday a fatal error. Prime Minister Shafik called it a fatal error. This morning, there were signs that the army, instead of allowing and organizing thugs and allowing them on the square to assault the demonstrators, was standing in to protect them. This is a right turn of events.

Let it be noted by all who would care to listen that the citizens of the United States of America are not going to stand by and support a government

that is attacking peaceful demonstrators in a square in Cairo. If we see a repeat of this violence, America must send a very strong message that there will be no further aid to the Mubarak government.

We do not know what the ultimate outcome of these protests will be, but peaceful action against government is a hallmark of democracy, a hallmark of freedom. We should ensure that those protests could continue—those peaceful protests—calling for a voice for ordinary citizens, and that Egypt can move toward free and fair elections.

I yield the floor.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 5

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to temporarily set aside the pending amendment so I can call up my amendment, No. 5, which is at the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Missouri [Mr. BLUNT] proposes an amendment numbered 5.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Under Secretary of Transportation for Security to approve applications from airports to authorize passenger and property screening to be carried out by a qualified private screening company)

On page 311, between lines 11 and 12, insert the following:

SEC. 733. APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS FOR THE SECURITY SCREENING OPT-OUT PROGRAM.

Section 44920(b) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “The Under Secretary may approve any application submitted under subsection (a).” and inserting “Not later than 30 days after receiving an application submitted under subsection (a), the Under Secretary shall approve the application.”

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, this is an amendment that deals with an issue going back to the beginning of the TSA screening program, almost 10 years ago now, at the end of 2001. We had significant discussion between the House and the Senate about how that program would run. In fact, the House, which I was a Member of at the time and the occupant of the chair was a Member of at the time, passed a bill which said

the screening would continue to be competitive and private and determined by local airports. The Senate's view at the time was this was a new responsibility that would be taken over everywhere by the Federal Government and the TSA.

The final determination was that, while the Federal Government would take this responsibility, there would be allowed to be pilot airports that would be determined and be monitored to determine whether a pilot project would verify that another alternative would be a competitive, private screening as one of the options available to airports. In fact, in 2004, the screening partnership program was created.

The pilots had worked. The verification was that the private screeners were performing at a level that was equal to that of the government-paid screeners, that the cost was comparable, and that airports in the future would be able to apply to go from the government-run program to a competitive program, and about 16 airports have done that. I think the biggest one is probably the San Francisco airport. The Kansas City airport, which I use and that I represent, may be the second biggest of those. Rochester, NY, is also in this program, as are a number of smaller airports.

In fact, as recently as a few months ago, the TSA was still telling airports and recommended to four airports in Montana—a State where seven of their airports are currently in this program—the TSA recommended to four more airports in Montana that they look at this program as a potential better alternative for them. Only in recent weeks did TSA determine in responses to the Springfield, MO airport, the four Montana airports, and perhaps as many as a handful of other airports that, no, we think that program is big enough. This is an option that is no longer available to local airport boards.

This amendment would reach the conclusion that the local airport board is still an important determiner of which system works best in an airport. Essentially, this amendment would tell the TSA that if local airports apply, the TSA would allow them to become part of the screening partnership program and treat them as they are treating the 16 airports that have been in that program—some for as long as a decade now, since the beginning of screening as we see it in airports today.

I hope we get to where we actually give authority back, or maintain authority at the local airport level to determine which system works better for them. A competitive system allows flexibility, and flexibility allows more adaptability, more innovation and, frankly, I think, encourages the government-run systems to be more competitive and responsive.

That is why I am offering this amendment. I hope it becomes part of this bill, and I look forward to working with the committee on this amendment and over the next few days as we

continue to debate FAA. This has a real impact on a number of the authorities that are under the Federal Aviation Administration. I think this is an important time to solve this problem. It is one that was created, in my view, totally by TSA deciding on their own something that the law never envisioned. I was part of that debate a decade ago. I know what the intention was, and it was not the intention of the pilot program, or of the determination we made at the end of 2001, that TSA would determine for local airport authorities what was best for their airport.

This amendment would require the TSA to work with local airports and implement their desire to change from the system they have at the time—totally run by TSA—to a system under the screening partnership program. That is the essence of this amendment, and I urge its adoption and inclusion in this bill.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN of Ohio). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 8

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, today I am pleased to join Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator BOXER and a growing list of my colleagues in support of the Whitehouse-Kirk-Boxer amendment that will improve airline safety throughout the Nation.

Most individuals are familiar with laser pointers that are often used in presentations. What you may not know is the growing danger these devices pose to pilots.

Last month, the FAA released nationwide data on lasers pointed at aircraft. From 2009 to 2010, incidents nearly doubled from 1,527, to 2,836. To show how quickly this has become a problem, when the FAA first began to track this problem in 2005, incidents were under 300.

Transportation Secretary LaHood has acknowledged this is a serious safety issue. Lasers can temporarily blind pilots, which is incredibly dangerous, but even more so during the critical time of takeoff and landing. Advancements in laser technology also are making the problem worse. Certain color variations, such as green lasers, are 35 times brighter than comparable red lasers.

This is a particular worry for me and for my State's busiest airport—O'Hare. According to the FAA, last year O'Hare had the second-highest number of laser events in the Nation at 98.

The Whitehouse-Kirk-Boxer amendment creates new penalties for knowingly pointing a laser pointer at an air-

craft, or at the flight path of an airplane. Commonsense exemptions are provided to allow further research and testing activities.

Current law has not kept up to date with this new threat. It is time we give law enforcement and prosecutors additional tools to reduce the likelihood of a tragedy.

The amendment is supported by the Air Line Pilots Association and the National Association of Police Organizations which includes the Federal Flight Deck Officers Association.

I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE and his staff for their leadership on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan proposal to help make our Nation's pilots, and especially their passengers, safer.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, we are sitting here, and what is good is we are not doing health care amendments. What is bad is we are not doing any amendments.

The Republicans have proffered a number of amendments. We need to do them by pairs so we can work them out. Some of them will be able to be accepted by voice vote. I expect that Senator WHITEHOUSE's on laser use into pilots' eyes will probably be accepted by voice vote. But he may want a vote. If I were he, I would want a vote because it is so important to emphasize the issue.

But we need to have Democrats—I know we have some amendments that Democrats want to offer. But they are not coming to the floor to offer those amendments. So this is my plea, through the distinguished Presiding Officer, for Democrats please to come to the floor and do their amendments.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. INHOFE. First of all, let me say that the manager has been very kind to me in offering to allow me to come up at some point. I do not care so much when it is, but I do have two amendments I have already discussed on the floor. I would like to get them in the queue so at some time we will be able to do that. So I would wait until such time as the majority feels it would be appropriate, and then I would be asking them if I can do that.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I understand the Senator from Okla-

homa has a particularly difficult scheduling problem right now and for most of the afternoon. So putting his amendments in and talking about them, whatever he wishes to do, is important to him and also is hard to do in terms of the schedule. So that renews my offer, my request, my prayer, that Democrats who have amendments will come down and offer them.

It is called the Federal aviation bill. It reauthorizes it. It is monumental, and we are kind of sitting here. So the Republicans are sort of doing their part, but the Democrats are not doing our part. So please come down, if you have amendments, because I wish to accommodate not just Senator INHOFE but all others who have amendments, many of which we can probably work out.

Some will be accepted by voice, others may have to be voted on. But we have to have amendments before we can get to any of that. So that is my request.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, reclaiming my time. First of all, I thank you very much. The one set of amendments I have, I would hope to get into the managers' amendment or somehow have them come up and even be voice voted. But they are issues I have talked about in the past quite often. I think we all understand—or most of us do—that when our good friend Senator Glenn retired, that left me as the last active commercial pilot, on a regular basis, in the Senate. So I have these two amendments I am very interested in. I will yield the floor. When such time comes—what the Senator from West Virginia said is true. Right now, because of the Prayer Breakfast that is taking place, I happen to be hosting the African dinner tonight, so I have groups coming by every 30 minutes throughout the day.

At some time today, I wish to be able to get two amendments, Nos. 6 and 7, in the queue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

REMEMBERING DON TYSON

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I come to the floor to honor a great man, a great Arkansan and a great American, Donald John Tyson.

Don Tyson was one of the three iconic Arkansans who helped move our State forward. Don Tyson, Sam Walton, and J.B. Hunt transformed the northwest part of our State and made Arkansas a mecca for business.

When I think of Don, one of his favorite phrases comes to mind. He would say: "I don't have time to have a bad time." Don lived life to the fullest and enjoyed every minute of it. Don came to Arkansas in very humble circumstances. He was born in Kansas but moved to Springdale as an infant when, as Don liked to tell it, his father's truck ran out of gas.

There in Springdale, Don took over the family business when his father passed away. Don's hard work helped

turn his father's small poultry business into the most successful meat processor in the world. As chairman of the board and CEO of Tyson Foods, Don revolutionized the poultry industry and made protein more accessible to Americans, helping create Chicken McNuggets, chicken tenders, chicken sandwiches, and much more.

He was responsible for developing the Rock Cornish game hen, smaller birds that weigh only a few pounds that were more profitable but also immensely popular. Under Don's leadership, the company's revenue increased from \$51 million to more than \$10 billion.

As the Washington Post said: "For many Americans, Tyson products became the answer to a daily question: What's for dinner?"

Even as he rose to great heights, Don remained true to his roots—his trademark khaki Tyson uniform with "Don" embroidered on the front pocket. He referred to all staff members as coworkers, never employees. Don understood that the truck drivers and plant workers were as essential to Tyson's success as the executives in the corner offices.

Don was also committed to giving back to his community. A noted philanthropist, Don created the Tyson Family Foundation, which provides scholarships for students from communities where Tyson Foods operates, including many communities in Arkansas.

Don was a huge supporter of the University of Arkansas, helping fund many of the school's educational and athletic programs. He also was a great friend to veterans. One of his most recent projects was helping preserve the Fayetteville National Cemetery. An avid fisherman and devoted conservationist, Don created the Billfish Foundation, which promotes catch-and-release practices for billfish to conserve their populations. Don's charitable work had a real impact on Arkansas and communities across the country.

Finally, Don understood the importance of family. Tyson Foods has always been and remains a family-run business, starting with Don's father John Tyson and continuing with his son John. Don's emphasis on family, from his father-son collaborations to the way he treated all his coworkers as extended family, is what made Tyson Foods great.

In looking back on Don Tyson's life, I see a man who loved his business, who loved his community, who loved his family, and who lived life. Today, I join all Arkansans in celebrating a life well lived.

Don, you will be missed.

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator yield?

One of the things that is interesting about northwest Arkansas is that you were just talking about Don Tyson. You could just as well have been talking about Sam Walton, Hunt, and many others.

I do not know what it is about northwest Arkansas, that these great entrepreneurs who changed the world seem

to all come from that area, as the Senator from Arkansas knows. I am very familiar with that area, since my daughter Molly is a professor at the University of Arkansas.

I have been over there many times. I was just listening to you describe the life of Don Tyson and how consistent that is with many of the other entrepreneurs. I salute all those guys up there and you for bringing that to the floor.

Mr. PRYOR. I thank the Senator from Oklahoma.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

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

REMEMBERING PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

Mr. DURBIN. Sunday is the 100th anniversary of the birth of President Ronald Reagan.

When Ronald Reagan was born, his father Jack looked at his new son and exclaimed, "He looks like a fat little Dutchman but who knows, he might grow up to be President some day."

In fact, Ronald Reagan grew up to become not just a President but one of America's most memorable Presidents.

As we mark the 100th anniversary of his birth, much is being said and written about Ronald Reagan's White House years, and understandably so. But in my State of Illinois, people are also remembering an earlier time in the life of this iconic American.

Ronald Wilson Reagan is the only American President born in Illinois.

He entered this world on Feb. 6, 1911, in the little town of Tampico, IL, in an apartment above a bakery on Main Street.

His father Jack sold shoes to support his wife and two sons.

Over the first 9 years of his life, the Reagan family moved four times, from Tampico to Galesburg, to Monmouth, and the south side of Chicago before finally settling in Dixon, IL, population 10,000.

Today, the white frame house at 810 South Hennepin Street in Dixon, the Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home, draws visitors from around the world.

It was in Dixon that the shy boy would begin to discover self-confidence and the talents that would serve him so well in life. He acted in his first play in Dixon, and he was elected student body president during his senior year at Dixon High School.

From Dixon, Ronald Reagan went to Eureka College, a small college near Peoria. The tuition was \$180 a year, twice that much with room and board, more than the Reagan family could afford. But Ronald Reagan did not let that discourage him. He received a "needy student scholarship" and waited tables and washed dishes at his fraternity house to help pay his way.

Once again, he was elected president of his senior class.

1935, Ronald Reagan was working as a radio sports announcer. He followed

the Chicago Cubs to spring training in California and slipped away one day to visit Hollywood and explore whether there might be a future for him in movies.

Two years later, Ronald Reagan packed his possessions into a Nash convertible and moved to California, where he would become a successful actor and later Governor. But he never forgot his Illinois roots.

In his first inaugural parade in 1981, Ronald Reagan included the Dixon High School band.

On a visit to Eureka College in 1992, President Reagan told students, "Everything good that happened to me, everything, started here on this campus."

In 1990, 2 years after he left the White House, President Reagan travelled to Abilene, KS, for a ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of President Eisenhower's birth.

He said that day:

I learned long ago that in order to find the heart of America you need only visit the heartland of America.

It was a lesson he had learned years earlier in those small towns in Illinois.

Both the State of Illinois and the town of Dixon have created Ronald Reagan Centennial Commissions to celebrate the 100th anniversary of his birth. If you want to see the places that helped shape America's 40th President, come to Illinois this year, where it all began.

Ronald Reagan was President when I was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1982. While our views of government differed remarkably, I admired his optimism and his unshakable faith that America's best days were ahead of us. He restored a sense of confidence in many Americans at a time when we really needed it.

He told us:

America is too great to dream small dreams.

And he was right.

In 1992, 2 years before he announced he had Alzheimer's disease, Ronald Reagan addressed his party's nominating convention for the last time.

He said then:

Whatever else history may say about me when I'm gone, I hope it will recall that I appealed to your best hopes, not your worst fears, to your confidence rather than your doubts.

In 1983, in one of the most important accomplishments of his Presidency, Ronald Reagan brought together Democrats and Republicans to head off a funding crisis in Social Security. That bipartisan agreement helped add years of solvency to one of the most successful programs this government has ever created. It brought 50 years of solvency to Social Security and is one of the crowning jewels of his leadership.

In 1986, he signed America's last major tax reform act to simplify the Income Tax Code, broaden the tax base and eliminate loopholes that allowed some to avoid their obligations while unfairly increasing the tax burden on others.

Today we face a far greater challenge. Not only do we have to protect Social Security for the long run, we also have to simplify our Tax Code again, and put in place a responsible plan to reduce our deficits even as we invest in a stronger economic future.

In this centennial year of his birth, it would be a fitting tribute to President Reagan if Democrats and Republicans could work together to solve our challenges in the same spirit of patriotic pragmatism that President Reagan and others brought to protecting Social Security a generation ago. I hope we can work together to help get Americans back to work today and to lay the foundation for a strong economic future so that our children can continue to say, as President Reagan said so often, that America's best days are still ahead.

After Ronald Reagan clinched the delegates needed to win his party's 1980 Presidential nomination, a newspaper reporter asked him what he thought he needed to do next. He replied that he wanted to dispel the notion that he was a hard-nosed radical who would oppose compromise on principle.

These are his words. He said:

You know, there are some people so imbued with their ideology that if they can't get everything they want, they'll jump off the cliff with the flag flying. As Governor, I found out that if I could get half a loaf, instead of stalking off angrily, I'd take it.

Ronald Reagan was a man who believed deeply in his core principles. He would not want any of us to compromise our own core principles in his memory.

But there is such a thing as principled compromise. President Reagan understood that. He knew that accommodation was needed to make the system work. We would honor his memory by remembering that lesson and working to restore to our politics the same civility that we associate with him. Let's remember that there is no dishonor in accepting half a loaf. That is how democracy works.

Finally, I wish to express my admiration for Mrs. Reagan. Her love and steadfast devotion to her husband during his illness moved us all, and her courageous work in support of new treatments for Alzheimer's disease will surely help other families. Our thoughts are with her and the rest of President Reagan's family as we mark this historic centennial.

(Mrs. HAGAN assumed the chair.)

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, the FAA authorization expired in October of 2007. For more than 3 years we have been operating on short-term extensions—17 total short-term extensions. The Federal Aviation Administration, airlines, and the flying public, all deserve a long-term authorization to provide certainty to our national aviation system. The bill before us will improve the safety of air travel, modernize our air traffic control system, boost the economy, and create thousands of jobs. This is a jobs bill.

The FAA estimates commercial aviation is responsible for over 5 percent of our gross domestic product and generates \$1.2 trillion a year in economic activity. The aviation industry provides \$346 billion in earnings and 11 million jobs. This bill will help grow those numbers. The funding provided in this bill will support over 280,000 jobs.

Economist Mark Zandi said:

Aviation is the glue that keeps the global economy together.

We know that in Illinois. We know it because of that great airport called O'Hare, which we are currently in the process of modernizing. This bill will boost our economy now and keep the United States competitive in the global marketplace. The Senate Commerce Committee, chaired by Senator ROCKEFELLER, with ranking member Senator INHOFE, has held dozens of hearings over the past few years on aviation. Each was different. All of them focused on safety. Last year we passed into law many safety provisions the committee recommended, but we need to do more.

This bill will improve safety by preventing runway incursions. Improving runway safety, according to the NTSB, is the highest priority. There were 988 runway incursions last year. This year there have already been 66. This bill will require the FAA to review all commercial service airports in the United States and initiate action to improve lighting, signage, and runway and taxiway markings.

Another key component of this bill is NextGen. NextGen is the term we use to describe our transition to a more modern satellite-based air traffic control system. I mentioned on the Senate floor before that I recently read a book by Steve Johnson about innovation. He told a fascinating story that on October 4, 1957, when the Soviets launched sputnik, America was caught by surprise. Here our adversaries in the Cold War had the capacity, with a missile, to launch a satellite that circled the Earth. It was the first manmade satellite. We knew they had the bomb. Now they had these missiles and the capacity to launch a satellite.

The Russians, to prove to the world they had launched the satellite, had this basketball-sized sputnik satellite emitting a signal. There were two scientists near Baltimore working for the Federal Government who decided they would try to track this signal. They found it. As they tracked it, they used their scientific expertise and the Doppler effect to determine not only the trajectory of this satellite but its speed. They reported their findings to the Department of Defense. They could tell the Department of Defense where sputnik was and how fast it was moving.

The Department of Defense challenged them and said: If you can tell us where that satellite is and how fast it is moving, could you tell where that signal is being received on Earth? They went to work. It took them several weeks. They came up with the means

to determine from a satellite where the signal was being received on Earth. We know it as GPS.

GPS is in our pockets. We carry it with our cell phones. People can locate us based on the cell phone we carry in our pockets. The problem is, airplanes don't have GPS. They still rely on aging technology, radar and the like, to locate the planes and to move them safely. This bill is going to move us into this new generation of technology. It is about time.

NextGen will give pilots and air traffic controllers the ability to accurately pinpoint aircraft in the sky, to avoid problems, to move things more smoothly, safely, and efficiently. The FAA has called for action on implementing NextGen.

Last year U.S. airlines carried 704 million passengers, including a lot of Senators and Congressmen. Soon those numbers will increase. The FAA reports that U.S. airlines will carry more than 1 billion passengers by 2023 and more than 1.2 billion by 2030. Our outdated air traffic control system cannot handle this increase in traffic. But with NextGen we hope to triple the capacity of our national aviation system and not compromise at all when it comes to safety. This technology will allow planes to fly the straightest, quickest route from point A to point B. With more precise information and better communication, we can fit more planes safely in our airspace. Doing so will save airlines fuel and money. It will reduce airport delays significantly.

Chicago's Midway Airport was ranked dead last over the past few months for ontime departures. Chicago's O'Hare has won that dubious distinction more than once. The main reason is the lack of capacity in our aviation control system. Fully implementing NextGen could reduce these delays dramatically. It will also save a lot of fuel and money for the airlines. This is a great investment.

Illinois is in the middle of the largest airport expansion project in American history at O'Hare. The \$6.6 billion project will completely reconfigure the runways and make sure traffic moves in and out of O'Hare more efficiently. Moving this project along means a lot to the people of Chicago and Illinois. O'Hare already generates 450,000 jobs and \$38 billion in economic activity for Chicago and my State. This modernization project will create 195,000 more jobs and another \$18 billion in annual economic activity. We need to move forward as a nation, with the FAA, to make certain O'Hare is modern and safe and can accommodate the increased capacity in air service.

I hope we can take up this bill and the amendments that have been offered to it in a timely fashion and pass the legislation soon. This bill will help airports the size of O'Hare, but also smaller airports around the United States. It has already helped us in many ways.

The Essential Air Service Program has been critical for a lot of small airports, and certainly that is true in Illinois. We need to make sure that communities large and small across America have access to passenger air service.

There is a provision in this bill that tries to coordinate some of the bookings between Amtrak and airlines. During floor consideration of this bill in the previous Congress, my amendment was adopted that I hope can help travelers better coordinate and use both passenger rail and air travel. Particularly for travel to and from less urbanized areas, this option will help move people more efficiently. We can do offer this in more communities. And we can do so at less expense to the Federal Government.

I thank both Senator INHOFE and Senator ROCKEFELLER for their leadership on this bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, let me say that most everything the Senator from Illinois has talked about I agree with. We have been talking about this bill for a long time.

I join Senator ROCKEFELLER in encouraging anyone, Democrats particularly, to bring any amendment down they want. Procedurally, I don't think I can get my two amendments in the queue until that happens.

For the moment, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized as in morning business.

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

REMEMBERING PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, the Senator from Illinois was talking about our friend, our beloved Ronald Reagan. I thought I would make a couple of comments that might surprise a few people.

I was not from Oklahoma originally. I was actually born in Iowa. When I was a very small child, Ronald Reagan was the sports announcer for WHO radio.

My father was a claims adjuster. They officed in the same room—not the same building but the same room. They played the pinball machine together. I can remember at that time they never said Ronald Reagan; they said Dutch Reagan. That was his name. That was his name as a sports announcer too. He would actually come by and we referred to him as Uncle Dutch. That was in Des Moines. That was back during the Depression and shortly after.

When my family moved to Oklahoma, we didn't have a lot of money. So we never went to movies. At that time they didn't have TV. The only time we would ever see a movie is if Dutch Reagan had a movie. I went down once to Atoka, OK, which was probably roundtrip driving about 4 hours. We went down to see a Dutch Reagan movie.

Later on, I became the mayor of Tulsa. During that time Reagan was in

his first term. He had me do all of his domestic work. I was debating Democratic mayors from all over the country on the policies that Ronald Reagan had initiated and tried to perpetuate, and they were all very successful, I might add. Now, in retrospect, a lot of people on the other side of the fence realize they were.

Saying this was a personal relationship, I look beyond what everyone knows about Ronald Reagan, what his persona was, and I can say he was such a warm and personable person. It never occurred to me—I thought of him as one of the family until the time he started running for political office.

It is kind of interesting because his first election, of course, was running for office out in California. At that time, we still did not have a lot of money, but my father—I think that was the first race he got involved with financially, and Ronald Reagan never forgot it. I can remember when I came to Congress he was in his second term, and he would always comment: There is young Congressman INHOFE. His daddy was one of my first financial contributors.

So anyway, I will just say this: When you lose somebody like him, you do not just lose a leader that in retrospect looks good to everyone, but you lose someone who is very warm and loving. Here is a guy who, in the Oval Office, would never ever walk in without a coat and tie on. This is the way he distinguished the office, and this is the way the office distinguished him.

So we dearly miss him on this, his 100th birthday anniversary.

Madam President, let me make one comment about the two amendments I have on the bill. I think it is important we address both of them, but one of them is, in particular, very significant. We have a subpart S version of the FARs that affects scheduled and non-scheduled airlines. A scheduled airline can live with the flight crew rest and duty time because they can adjust their schedules to do that. The unscheduled cannot. So the subpart S in the FARs today allows a subpart S to work longer hours, but they also have longer rest hours in between. They average out actually with longer rest hours per active hours than under the law that affects the scheduled airlines.

Let me give you a couple examples why it is important. Ninety-five percent of our troop movement over in theater, where the Presiding Officer and I just came back from, after having spent New Year's Eve with our troops over in Kabul and Afghanistan—during that time, there were several times when they had to bring blood in.

If a nonscheduled airline has to bring the blood in, they cannot do it because that is too far. They would have to leave the plane there and have crew rest in Kabul and come back. Well, they cannot do that because we have rules against it.

Ninety-five percent of the troop activity, movement, comes from non-

scheduled airlines. Forty percent of the material comes in and out. That is what we are talking about. We are talking about getting blood over to our troops in the AOR.

So it has worked well. There has not been, in 15 years, one case where an accident on a nonscheduled airline has taken place due to the fatigue of anyone. So it is a problem that does not exist, and I have always had this hang-up about fixing things that are not broken. So, consequently, I am hoping we will be able to keep that.

What is happening today is there is a comment period and a rule that would do away with that subpart S, and I would like to have this amendment in here. It would keep that from happening. So I think it is very important, and I think it means a lot to our troops over there. The only alternative—if you take the blood example—is, you would have to find, from maybe Qatar or some other place, a military plane, a C-130 or a C-17, to take them in. As you know, right now the OPTEMPO of our lift capacity is to the point we cannot take on anything more. So I think this is a life-and-death type of thing.

The other amendment I feel strongly about—I mentioned a minute ago when Senator Glenn retired, that left me as the last active commercial pilot in the Senate and I still am and have been flying for 50 years. Many times in the past I have, at my own expense and in my own aircraft, done things where we are helping out people because there is no one else to do it, either taking people for medical treatment or taking, in one case, a limb that had been amputated back to be reattached, this type of thing.

So for people to do it—the pilots and the equipment, such as my equipment—it costs us money to do it. But we feel, in order to encourage them to do it, they should be exempt from liability should something happen so they do not have frivolous lawsuits. If you do, then it discourages people from being generous. So this is kind of a Good Samaritan type of amendment.

These are amendments Nos. 7 and 6. I am hoping to get them in the queue. I cannot do that at this time. I want to cooperate with Senator ROCKEFELLER, but as soon as we can, I want to get these in.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I am waiting just momentarily to receive the documentation on offering an amendment. But in the meantime, I would like to speak as in morning business.

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

EGYPT

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, it is very apparent that President Mubarak must step down. The longer he waits to realize he has to step down, the more difficult it is going to be in order to have an orderly transition and to keep the peace in Egypt. The longer he waits to announce he is stepping down immediately, the more difficult it is to transfer power to his Vice President, General Omar Suleiman.

If he had done this several days ago, then that transition would have been so much easier because General Suleiman is well respected in Egypt, certainly by the military. He is well respected by the Arab neighbors in the region, and he is well respected in Israel, as well as the United States.

But every day there is violence and bloodshed in these clashes, it makes the Arab street much more difficult to accept any semblance of authority that would come from Mubarak, even though, under the Egyptian Constitution, there is a Vice President, albeit that Vice Presidency has been vacant for years and years and years. But, nevertheless, there is a Vice President who is in the constitutional line of succession to become President.

Again, I say what I said several days ago: President Mubarak needs to recognize, despite his long years of great service in keeping Egypt stable, especially in the aftermath of the assassination of President Anwar Sadat, that it is time for him to step down, that there is a new nation of Egypt out there and they want reform and they want free and fair elections and most of them want a peaceful and orderly transition of power.

I would again call on the President of Egypt to step down and step down immediately and let the Presidency be assumed by his Vice President, with the guarantee of free and fair elections in September and the guarantee that President Mubarak is not going to run for reelection.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 34

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be set aside in order to call up amendment No. 34.

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

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Florida [Mr. NELSON] proposes an amendment numbered 34.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To strike section 605)

Beginning with line 1 on page 236, strike through line 14 on page 237.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, the NASA bill we passed last fall strongly reaffirmed that aeronautics research is an integral part of the agency and made the point in that bill of increasing a focus on NASA's aeronautics research programs. As a matter of fact, what does NASA stand for? It has become a noun, but it actually stands for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The first A in NASA stands for "aeronautics." It is vital to our research programs in both air and space, the research that is going on.

We have existing aeronautics research facilities that are national assets, and they are in places such as the Ames Research Center in California; the Glenn Research Center named after our former colleague, Senator John Glenn, which is in Cleveland; Langley Research Center in Virginia; the Dryden Flight Research Center, and that is at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

These NASA centers are unique in their ability to leverage the complementary and ever-increasing synergies between space and aviation systems through these incredibly experienced technical researchers, and they make remarkable advances in aerospace-related disciplines such as materials and structures, flight controls, aerospace systems health management, and high speed aerothermal analysis tools. We take for granted when we get on commercial airliners some of the improvements that have been made. Well, where do we think a lot of that came from? It came from NASA and the research there. These advances not only accelerate space and aviation systems but also other very complex systems such as the smart grid, remote medicine and medical robotics, smart cars, a whole bunch of things.

NASA's fundamental aeronautics research capability happens to be also integrated with enabling the future space missions of NASA. The Nation's aeronautics research and development investment currently is planned and well coordinated through the National Aeronautics Research and Development Policy as well as in Executive Order 13419 in which the roles and responsibilities of executive departments and agencies in Federal aeronautics R&D are clearly defined and delineated all the way through the rest of this decade, until 2020.

What happened when this FAA bill was put together years ago is that it had a transfer to some committee of NASA's successful aeronautics R&D investment leadership and this competitiveness, this investment has supported

springing forth key technologies that directly contradict a national policy of doing this in a committee instead of doing it in NASA. The unnecessary reassignment, when this bill was crafted some time ago, of those responsibilities to other agencies of government would clearly jeopardize the success of this extraordinary R&D program.

The amendment, to which we have no objection, is to take this part out of the bill with the new NASA bill that was passed, with the robust aeronautics research and development that is within NASA, be the operative policy.

If it is appropriate, if this is the proper parliamentary procedure, I ask for the yeas and nays—or I would ask for a voice vote. I am told we are not in the proper venue for that. So I have offered the amendment, it is laid down, and we will deal with it appropriately.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

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

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

REMEMBERING PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, as a native Californian, I come to the floor now to honor the 100th birthday of President Ronald Reagan.

Former First Lady Nancy Reagan asked that I serve on the Ronald Reagan Centennial Commission and I was very honored to accept. Today, I join Senator JIM WEBB, also a member, and ORRIN HATCH, to continue President Reagan's spirit of bipartisanship. We have invited Senators on both sides of the aisle to join us here on the floor.

From Simi Valley, in his beloved California, to our Nation's capital, Americans this month are honoring President Ronald Reagan. These centennial events are intended to reach all Americans, including many born after President Reagan left office. Those who remember Ronald Reagan as Governor or as President know how he impacted history. But there are some who may not realize that the society we live in today is, in part, due to the policies of President Reagan. Young adults today grow up without the fear of nuclear war in the back of their mind, and students of tomorrow will work to achieve President Reagan's dream of a world without nuclear weapons.

It can be said that every great President can be remembered in just one sentence. Some examples: "He freed the slaves;" "He made the Louisiana Purchase." Yet, 22 years after he left office and 7 years after his death, the name Ronald Wilson Reagan can still provoke a complex debate. There is no one phrase that can describe his legacy. Some come to mind: "The great

communicator." Or: "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." That is the one that does it for me.

There is much debate over President Reagan because we all think of him differently, and over time, history sweetens our memories. But no matter what policy disagreements one may have had with him, one has to admire his style of politics. He was a conservative Republican, but he understood that in order to get anything done, he had to work across the aisle, which he did.

In his 1983 State of the Union Address, President Reagan said:

Let us, in these next 2 years—men and women of both parties, every political shade—concentrate on the long-range, bipartisan responsibilities of government, not the short-range or short-term temptations of partisan politics.

Also, Ronald Reagan had common-sense conviction that helped his achievements.

He was a true gentleman in American politics. You would not have seen him giving a speech—like some do today—calling his opponents names or giving out generalized insults. Dignity and wit were his weapons of choice.

Also, President Reagan served during times of divided government, when one party had the White House and the other controlled at least one Chamber of Congress, giving each side some governing responsibility to find solutions.

It was a time when a financial and fiscal crisis brought the two parties together to compromise on tough choices about taxes and spending. In 1983, President Reagan and Speaker Tip O'Neill came together to compromise on Social Security, based on proposals from a commission led by Alan Greenspan. President Reagan is credited with creating the conditions that led to the end of the Cold War, reviving the economy, and returning a sense of optimism to our country.

One of the things I most admired was his work to reduce the number of nuclear weapons in the world and his dream of a world one day free of these awful weapons.

President Reagan expressed this vision during his second inaugural address on January 21, 1985. He declared:

We seek the total elimination one day of nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth.

It was a remarkable statement from a President who had deployed tactical nuclear missiles in Europe to counter the Soviet Union's fearsome SS-20 missile fleet. But President Reagan understood the grave threat that nuclear weapons pose to humanity, and he boldly set himself to achieve their eventual elimination.

My good friend, George Shultz, who was Secretary of State under President Reagan, remembers that many at that time thought the President's initial negotiations to reduce strategic arms were not serious—even quite ridiculous. A classified report released recently showed that President Reagan asked the Joint Chiefs of Staff about the cost of an all-out Soviet attack and

plans for retaliation. He asked Secretary Shultz:

What's so good about keeping the peace after wiping each other out?

Mr. Shultz believes if he were around today, President Reagan would have been in favor of the New START treaty. At the famous Reykjavik Summit with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in October 1980, President Reagan went far beyond Gorbachev's proposal to slash strategic arms by 50 percent. He truly believed we should go to zero. The Reykjavik talks may not have worked out, but the idea that we should create a world free of nuclear weapons endures to this day.

Secretary Shultz thinks President Reagan would want to be remembered for his complete faith in freedom and his conviction that you had to be strong to defend that freedom. And that is certainly true.

Ronald Reagan came into office with character and charisma, traits that take other elected officials years to develop. It was that charisma that impressed California's Republicans and led to his nomination as Governor of my great State.

Ronald Reagan was elected Governor of California in 1966 by nearly a 1 million-vote margin. He was elected to a second term in 1970. He did not seem to mind that people underappreciated him at the time.

Decades later, as volumes of his handwritten essays were released to the public, Americans saw just what a thoughtful and visionary man he was. If we remember Ronald Reagan with one sentence, let's remember him as one who took big ideas, a crafting of words, and a conviction of freedom to change the entire world.

On the 100th anniversary of the birth of "The Great Communicator," I hope we can embody his spirit of bipartisanship to keep our country strong and united today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Madam President, I rise to speak also on the 100th anniversary of the birth of Ronald Reagan, and I am so pleased to follow my colleague from California who has been under the weather for a little while. We are very glad she is back.

I think all of us will have an opportunity to talk about one of the great Presidents of the last century and to mark the 30 years since Ronald Reagan's inauguration.

When Ronald Reagan was elected in 1980, America faced an anemic economy, high unemployment, and a sense of malaise emanated from Washington. But President Reagan never doubted that America's potential was unlimited. During his second inaugural address, he said America "can out-produce, out-compete and out-sell anybody, anywhere in the world." The Reagan Revolution was fueled by the understanding that, given the opportunity, Americans would dream, cre-

ate, and build. He also knew the road to greatness was through an individual's effort, not through expanded government. So President Reagan set about reinvigorating the stagnant economy.

He cut government spending. He reduced government regulation. He ended the practice of wage and price controls. He passed tax cuts for all Americans. He famously noted that "Government's first duty is to protect the people, not run their lives." The American economy responded with sustained growth, and a new era of economic prosperity had been ushered in.

Reagan's vision of the greater good also extended beyond our shores. He was a fierce advocate for freedom. With our Cold War adversary, the Soviet Union, imposing the tight grip of communism on much of the world, President Reagan launched a resurgence of American military might through the Strategic Defense Initiative. As he said:

Of the four wars in my lifetime, none came about because the United States was too strong.

It was his firm resolve to negotiate from a position of strength that led to successful arms talks with the Soviets and ultimately to the downfall of the Soviet Empire. During his first inaugural address, he clearly stated where America stood:

As for the enemies of freedom, those who are potential adversaries, they will be reminded that peace is the highest aspiration of the American people. We will negotiate for it, sacrifice for it; we will not surrender for it—now or ever.

President Reagan understood that all people, regardless of where they live, long for liberty and freedom. He believed that America was a beacon of hope to all of the oppressed people of the world, a "shining city on the hill," as he described it. As Jeffrey Bell wrote in the *Weekly Standard*, Ronald Reagan "believed that people all over the world craved self-government just as much as Americans did." Even today, he is still being proven right. He said:

Concentrated power has always been the enemy of liberty.

These words still echo in today's tumultuous times. We witnessed the poignant photographs of women in Iraq voting and joyously holding up their purple-stained thumbs. We are now seeing the marches of people in Egypt who long to be able to vote in a real election for the first time in 30 years. He also understood the importance of information in promoting freedom, calling it the "oxygen of the modern age. It seeps through the walls topped by barbed wire; it wafts across the electrified borders."

His words are as true today as when he uttered them. Freedom and individual liberty are America's greatest assets. They are the core of our national identity. They are the foundation of our economic prosperity, and these precious assets have been protected by the service and sacrifice of

patriots in every generation from the beginning of America's history to today. Ronald Reagan understood and appreciated the duty we all have to preserve these American ideals.

As he said:

Democracy is worth dying for, because it is the most deeply honorable form of government devised by man.

When President Reagan died in 2004, there was a spontaneous, worldwide outpouring of grief and tribute that caught some seasoned political pundits by surprise. Throughout his political career, Ronald Reagan was underestimated by "establishment" political intellectuals of the day. He was dismissed sometimes by the media. But when he spoke, the American people listened, they understood, and they agreed with this down-to-Earth but very profound man. And so did the world.

We all remember him fondly, with great respect, and are honored to have known him.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I want to take a quick minute or two to talk about an amendment that will be called up later in the afternoon on my behalf to expand and improve the unmanned aerial systems—known as UAS programs—that are part of the Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill. My amendment is No. 27.

I thank Chairman ROCKEFELLER and his staff because they have worked closely with me on this and several other amendments.

Growth in the unmanned aerial systems sector of the aviation business has been extraordinary in the last few years. I think it is well known that these systems are proven critical to military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. But they also have tremendous potential in the civilian sector whether it is for firefighting, law enforcement, border control, search and rescue, or environmental monitoring.

Law enforcement uses for this technology would be especially helpful in rural areas like much of my home State of Oregon. Unfortunately, the FAA has not yet been able to come up with a real plan for how to integrate these unmanned aerial systems vehicles into our airspace. That is why I am pleased the Rockefeller bill before us includes requirements for the FAA to get to work on a plan in this area and to establish test sites for unmanned aerial systems research.

The bill, however, includes only four of these sites. I would like to see us be bolder, particularly in an area where I think there is so much opportunity for innovation, development, and job creation.

This amendment would expand the number of sites to 10, which would require the FAA to explore the most useful and safest way for unmanned aerial systems to be integrated into the airspace.

The amendment would require at least one of these test sites to investigate how unmanned aerial systems can be useful in monitoring public land. As the chairman of the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests, I have heard repeatedly from law enforcement officials that remote public lands are too often being used as a place for criminals to grow drugs without detection. The Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service, two agencies that work in this field, simply don't have the resources to use expensive helicopters and do all the necessary work to root out these illegal operations.

I will conclude by saying that I believe unmanned aerial systems could be a cost-saving way to address this problem. By getting the ball rolling with my amendment, I believe it will be possible to more significantly fight these reprehensible drug operations that are taking place on public lands.

I hope this amendment, No. 27, will be accepted as part of the Rockefeller legislation, and I look forward to working with the bill's managers to encourage the development in this sector, which I think is right at the heart of what we need to do to promote innovation in the aviation field. I thank Chairman ROCKEFELLER.

I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a period for the transaction of morning business until 3 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each for the purpose of giving remarks relative to the upcoming centennial of the birth of President Ronald Reagan.

The Senator from Arizona.

REMEMBERING PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, there are many of us who will come to the floor this afternoon to pay tribute to one of the great Presidents in American history. Many of us will recollect times and experiences and contacts we had with President Reagan and the way he inspired us personally as well as a nation.

When I was a prisoner of war in North Vietnam, the Vietnamese went to great lengths to restrict the news from home to the statements and activities of prominent opponents of the war in Vietnam. They wanted us to believe America had forgotten us. They never mentioned Ronald Reagan to us or played his speeches over the camp loud speakers. No matter. We knew about him. New additions to our ranks told us how the Governor and Mrs. Reagan were committed to our liberation and our cause.

When we came home, all of us were eager to meet the Reagans, to thank them for their concern. But more than

gratitude drew us to them. We were drawn to them because they were among the few prominent Americans who did not subscribe to the then-fashionable notion that America had entered her inevitable decline.

We prisoners of war came home to a country that had lost a war and the best sense of itself, a country beset by social and economic problems. Assassinations, riots, scandals, contempt for political, religious, and educational institutions gave the appearance that we had become a dysfunctional society. Patriotism was sneered at, the military scorned. The world anticipated the collapse of our global influence. The great, robust, confident Republic that had given its name to the last century seemed exhausted.

Ronald Reagan believed differently. He possessed an unshakable faith in America's greatness, past and future, that proved more durable than the prevailing political sentiments of the time. His confidence was a tonic to men who had come home eager to put the war behind us and for the country to do likewise.

Our country has a long and honorable history. A lost war or any other calamity should not destroy our confidence or weaken our purpose. We were a good nation before Vietnam, and we are a good nation after Vietnam. In all of history, you cannot find a better one. Of that, Ronald Reagan was supremely confident, and he became President to prove it.

His was a faith that shouted at tyrants to "tear down this wall." Such faith, such patriotism requires a great deal of love to profess, and I will always revere him for it. When walls were all I had for a world, I learned about a man whose love of freedom gave me hope in a desolate place. His faith honored us, as it honored all Americans, as it honored all freedom-loving people.

Let us honor his memory especially today by holding his faith as our own, and let us too tear down walls to freedom. That is what Americans do when they believe in themselves.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I was honored to hear Senator MCCAIN's comments on Ronald Reagan. This Sunday is indeed the 100th anniversary of his birth. It is an opportunity for the whole Nation to honor the memory of a man who honored us with his leadership.

In the 1980s, we were a weakened country. Inflation and unemployment were in double digits. The hostage crisis in Iran dragged on, with no end in sight. Our standing abroad was waning