

who came through that theater had what they needed to make it to their next destination and ultimately back home. Some of these people were being redeployed, do not get me wrong, but many were headed home. I heard from these members of this unit.

Among the servicemembers they helped move through this hub was a young woman who had been sexually assaulted somewhere in the region. That was not the first stop. The first stop for this sexual assault victim was a barracks situation where she literally had to walk through the men's restroom facilities to go the women's restroom facilities. This is a victim of sexual assault. She told us—the person I spoke to in the unit—that this victim said to her that these were the first sympathetic faces she had seen or worked with since this terrible incident and she was grateful to this Illinois Guard unit for standing by her in this emotionally trying time.

I was happy to hear that this Guard unit had stepped up to give this young woman the help she needed, but it is inexcusable—in fact, it is shameful—that the rest of the system failed her. It is a story repeated too many times across the services.

This current system has to change, and it will. I thank for their extraordinary advocacy Senator CLAIRE McCASKILL of Missouri, Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND of New York, Senator PATTY MURRAY of Washington, and many others. They put into the pending bill on the Defense Authorization Act many effective and necessary reforms.

I supported them. I appreciate Chairman LEVIN and Ranking Member INHOFE for including 26 reforms in the underlying Defense authorization bill. I would like to highlight one reform in particular in which I played a small part—the special victims' counsel. I wish to highlight this reform because victims need and deserve someone in their corner helping them through what is probably one of the toughest moments of their lives.

In testimony earlier this year in the Appropriations Defense Subcommittee which I chair, the head of the Air Force General Welsh talked about how effective this pilot program of special victims' counsel has been. The bill that is pending before us would expand their services. My subcommittee's appropriation spending mark ensures that it will be fully funded.

The bills other reforms are equally powerful: improving prevention; holding leaders accountable for the climate in the military on this issue; reforming the military justice code. On these reforms, there is strong bipartisan agreement.

Many of those reforms, including one we may vote on before we leave this week, were thanks to the leadership of Senator CLAIRE McCASKILL. She has been relentless in her efforts to lead on this important issue. Today is no different. She has an amendment which

she offered which empowers the victims of sexual assault to have a greater voice in how their cases are prosecuted. It would require commanders' promotion reviews to take sexual assault climate into account. It would eliminate the so-called good soldier defense by which commanders are permitted to consider the defendant's overall value to the unit. I really appreciate Senator McCASKILL's leadership. Her amendment is a positive one.

The crux of today's floor debate is whether the Senate pushes this reform even further. Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND of New York offered an amendment that aims to give victims greater confidence that the military justice system is free from any bias by giving the decision on these cases to a senior judge advocate general outside the victim's chain of command.

However we come down on this proposal, we all know this would be a significant change for a military justice code that has only undergone two significant changes since 1950, but I believe we must go forward with the Gillibrand proposal. I will vote in favor of her proposal. I did not come to this decision lightly. I have discussed this issue with my colleagues in the Senate, as well as every single military leader they have recommended I meet with. I have met with them publicly and privately. I have listened carefully. I have called the victims to hear their side as well. I considered the views of outside experts as well as my colleagues. Many of my colleagues have served in the military, and they have personal insights. After much deliberation, I have concluded that every single one of those reforms, including Senator GILLIBRAND's proposal, is going to be necessary if we are going to give victims the confidence they need and the support they need to come forward.

I would also note that Senator GILLIBRAND's effort is endorsed by a diverse and thoughtful range of outside groups. They include the National Women's Law Center, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, and the Service Women's Action Network.

I know our senior military leaders are committed to cracking down on sexual assault. Many commanders around the world are just as outraged as Congress and just as committed to prosecuting offenders and setting a new tone in the military. But it is the role of Congress to ensure that the system those leaders implement is fair and reasonable. It must put the victims of assault back in control and the perpetrators of these claims on notice. It must restore victims' confidence. These reforms accomplish this goal. I look forward to supporting them.

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. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I am back again for now the 51st consecutive week that the Senate has been in session to urge Congress to wake up to the effects of carbon pollution on the Earth.

Today I wish to talk about how climate change is taking its toll on an important part of our way of our life, some of our long-cherished American pastimes that we do in the great outdoors.

New Englanders—and the distinguished Presiding Officer from Connecticut is very familiar with this—have fond memories of ski trips in Vermont, of ice hockey on frozen ponds in New Hampshire, and of fishing trips off the coast of Rhode Island. All of these activities are fun, they are fulfilling, and they leave us with indelible memories of the wonders of our natural world. But climate change is putting much of that at risk.

The New York Times records that declining snowfall and an unseasonably warm weather were a drag on winter sports and recreational tourism during the 2011–2012 winter. Before the end of the century, they report the number of economically viable ski locations in New Hampshire and Maine will be cut in half. Skiing in New York will be cut by three-quarters. I am sorry to inform the Presiding Officer from the great State of Connecticut that there will be no ski area left in Connecticut or Massachusetts. I assume from the report that means Rhode Island as well, because Rhode Islanders have been skiing our beloved Yawgoo Valley since the 1960s.

As drought and increasing temperatures reduce the snowpack in the Cascade Range and the Rocky Mountains, the future of ski and snowboarding there is also at risk.

The Park City Foundation in Utah predicts an annual local temperature increase of 6.8 degrees Fahrenheit by 2075, which could cause a total loss of snowpack in the lower Park City resort area. Beyond the loss to the skiing tradition in Park City, the report estimates that this will result in thousands of lost jobs, tens of millions in lost earnings, and hundreds of millions in lost economic output.

No part of the country will be immune from these changes our carbon pollution is driving. Studies have found that extremely warm days in the Southeast are on the rise. Ice on the Great Lakes is forming later and disappearing earlier. Rain will continue to decrease on the Great Plains. Wildfire

seasons are getting worse in the West where the snowpack is melting earlier. Sea-level rise threatens Hawaii's famed beaches, and warming in Alaska is degrading the permafrost that entire communities are built on.

Climate change has already changed rainfall patterns and can load the dice for bad weather conditions such as heat waves. This past summer a heat wave prompted the Kenosha public schools in Wisconsin to cancel all outdoor student practices and sporting events. The district stated on its Web site: "Keeping the best interests of our athletes in mind, we are canceling/rescheduling all contests today."

According to the Denver Post, this past spring a prolonged drought forced Denver Parks and Recreation to postpone opening of the grass sports fields for soccer and lacrosse, which kept thousands of children and adults from starting their athletic seasons.

For some, warmer temperatures mean more time inside because the air is not fit to breathe. Ground-level ozone, commonly known as smog, forms more quickly during hot sunny days, causing asthma attacks, emergency room visits, and even hospitalizations.

In August, I met with two Rhode Island kids: Nick Friend, a 15-year-old from East Providence, and Kenyatta Richards, who is an 8-year-old from Warwick. They have asthma. They have to stay indoors and avoid being too active on bad air days. We have had six bad air days from ozone this year in Rhode Island. That is 6 days when Rhode Islanders such as Nick and Kenyatta can't enjoy the outdoor activities that are so much a part of our American childhoods.

The effects of climate change aren't limited to hotter days and smog. Oceans are warming, ice is melting, and sea levels are rising. This puts coastal infrastructure such as dams, bridges, and coastal powerplants at risk. It also threatens many of our most beloved and expensive palaces of sport. As far back as 2007, "Sports Illustrated" ran a special issue on sports and global warming, saying: "Scientists project up to a one-meter increase in sea level by 2100," warned one article, "which will alter the shape of the land in low-lying regions of U.S.—including San Francisco Bay and South Florida—and swamp well-known sports venues." Places such as the American Airlines Arena and Sun Life Stadium in Miami and AT&T Park in San Francisco are at risk.

As Congress sleepwalks through history, blind to the harmful effects of carbon pollution, responsible groups are acting, including our major professional sports leagues. The NBA, MLB, NFL, and NHL are letters that almost every American knows. These leagues and their teams are cultural institutions. They are also big business with annual revenues in billions of dollars. They take the threat of postponed games and washed-out stadiums seriously.

Earlier this year, the Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change, which I started with Representative HENRY WAXMAN, to keep attention focused on climate change and what we could do to address it, asked the National Basketball Association, Major League Baseball, the National Hockey League, and the National Football League, as well as the United States Olympic Committee, to tell us what climate change means for their sports. Each of these organizations is awake to the dangers of carbon pollution and each is acting.

Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig wrote to the task force and said:

I have often said that Baseball is a social institution, and to that end we recognize our responsibility to be part of the national effort to preserve our environment. And that is why MLB and many of our Major League Clubs have adopted practices that have resulted in clean, energy-efficient ballparks and environmentally friendly baseball events.

One of those practices is the partial offset of the energy used at all the All-Star Game events, including FanFest, the Home Run Derby, and the All-Star Game, by Green-e Certified energy renewable credits, including wind and solar energy.

On the hockey front, NHL Deputy Commissioner William Daly wrote:

Hockey's relationship with the environment is unique. Our sport was born on frozen ponds, where to this day—players of all ages and skill levels learn to skate. For this magnificent tradition to continue, it is imperative that we recognize the importance of maintaining the environment.

The NHL has partnered with ENERGY STAR and the Natural Resources Defense Council to make its own facilities more energy efficient, and it has called on the U.S. Government to develop a nationwide retrofit strategy to help upgrade buildings such as ice rinks and to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions.

Kathy Behrens, executive vice president of Social Responsibility & Player Programs at the NBA, told us:

While Professional NBA games are played inside climate controlled arenas, most basketball around the world is played outdoors. If air pollution, extreme heat, and other forms of climate disruption make it difficult to enjoy or attend our game and, of much concern, actually threatens the health and safety of basketball players, fans, and business partners, that matters greatly to the [NBA].

Pro basketball is working to reduce carbon emissions through improved energy efficiency at its arenas. A number of NBA arenas have achieved LEED certifications and some have installed on-site solar panels. The NBA has also come out in support of standards to reduce carbon pollution from electric powerplants, which is a cornerstone of President Obama's recently announced climate action plan.

On the football front, Adolfo Birch III, senior vice president of Labor Policy and Government Affairs for the NFL, wrote:

Twenty years ago, the NFL became the first professional sports organization for-

mally to address the environmental impact of our marquee events—Super Bowl and Pro Bowl.

The program to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions during every Super Bowl has resulted in the planting of more than 50,000 trees in the Super Bowl host communities. The National Football League estimates that the 2013 Super Bowl in New Orleans achieved a reduction of nearly 24,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions or the equivalent of the energy use of 8,000 American homes for an entire year.

The U.S. Olympic Committee has also joined in the fight to reduce harmful carbon pollution. According to USOC CEO Scott Blackmun:

The Green Ring program aims to mitigate the USOC and our athletes' impact on the environment through a number of sustainability efforts, an area that is a passion for many of our athletes. Through Green Ring, we hope to contribute to sustainability while using our platform to educate and inspire our constituents to do the same. Our focus is more action, less carbon.

Other international bodies have also launched aggressive plans to fight climate change. The 2014 soccer World Cup in Brazil is aiming to be carbon neutral by offsetting 2.7 million tons of carbon dioxide estimated to be generated by this year's Confederation Cup tournament and the World Cup next year.

Our major sports leagues thus join a great army amassing on the side of climate action: virtually every major scientific body, the insurance and reinsurance industry, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the National Academies, NASA, and the Government Accountability Office, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, leading Americans and international corporations, and the American Public Health Association. To them and many others, who are all in this fight, we can add our friends in the world of sports: Major League Baseball, the National Basketball Association, the National Hockey League, the National Football League, and the U.S. Olympic Committee. There is a growing chorus of voices from every sector of American society calling for action. Indeed, there is work to be done. The major sports organizations are doing their part because they know that few things define American society like the teams we cheer and the games we play.

We in Congress need to wake up and join the fight. It is time to set aside the partisan nonsense and the polluter-fueled fantasies and at last take real steps to reduce our carbon pollution and preserve our distinctly American way of life.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise tonight to talk about the matter that is before us, which is the National Defense Authorization Act. I don't think