

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3979, the defense authorization bill.

At 10:30 a.m., there will be a cloture vote on the motion to concur on the defense authorization bill.

Mr. President, the work we are going to do on this defense authorization bill is extremely important for our country. I will have more to say about that in just a minute.

 TRIBUTE TO JAMES FRANSEN

Mr. REID. Today's generation goes to Google for answers to questions they have about geography, about politics, famous people, or any subject. Any subject, you name it, and we all go to Google as quickly as we can. But long before Google, we had to use books, encyclopedias, volumes of books containing all sorts of facts on topics, and they were all in alphabetic order. For almost the last 40 years—39 to be exact—the Senate has had its own encyclopedia—legislative counsel Jim Fransen.

Jim began his Senate career in 1975, just after graduating from law school—from the University of Wisconsin—where he also studied as an undergraduate. That year he joined the Office of Legislative Counsel as assistant counsel. Over the years, Jim Fransen gradually moved up the ranks until he was named legislative counsel, a position he has held for 15 years.

He is a noted expert on a lot of things, but especially the United States Tax Code. We have heard speeches on this floor about the complexity of the Tax Code. That is a monumental assignment, to understand the Tax Code. Jim certainly does, perhaps better than anyone in Washington. Jim actually wrote the Tax Reform Act of 1986. That was the famous Bradley-Gephardt legislation.

For four decades, he has played a role in every important piece of tax legislation that has become law in our country. The Office of Legislative Counsel does the work for the Senate—not Democrats, not Republicans, but all of us, including our staffs. They write bills to create programs while also drafting amendments that will have some effect on these programs, sometimes wiping out these programs. This impartiality is the key to the success of the Senate and something we don't often consider—how we get to the point where we are.

This massive bill we are going to deal with today has legislative counsel's imprint on it. The same can be said of the bill they are going to work on today in the House, the omnibus; the tax extenders, the same thing. These are the must-do's we have to do before we leave here.

Another key to the success of Jim Fransen is the excellent team he has put together in the Office of Legislative Counsel. The staff, under his watchful eye, receives about 15,000 legislative inquiries every year—15,000—well more than 1,000 a month, and they are responsible for drafting 98 percent of all the legislation we do.

(Mr. WALSH assumed the Chair.)

It is rare to find someone like former Senator Jim Webb, who was a freshman Senator who came in and drafted his own bill that would give educational benefits to the military. Senator Webb came to me and said: I am going to write my own bill. Now that doesn't happen very often, but it was extremely important to him that he did that, and it had to be done because it was a significant piece to the new GI bill of rights, which the Presiding Officer—the General—would certainly understand. But 98 percent of the work we do here is not stamped by Jim Webb. We depend upon Jim Fransen's office to do this. So his job is not an easy job, but he has excelled because of his knowledge of the law, his experience of the legislative process, his patience, and his impeccable character.

Jim Fransen is a man of integrity and one who considers everyone's views, whether he personally agrees with them or not. It is no wonder Jim is the second longest serving legislative counsel in the history of the Senate. One of his admirers once told me: Jim always plays it way up here, while the rest of us are down here. His phone rings at all hours of the day and night with random requests, and Jim handles it all with class and dignity.

Jim is retiring from the Senate at the end of this month. He will be missed, and that is an understatement, but he leaves with us an Office of Legislative Counsel that has never performed better. I thank him for his service, and I do this on behalf of the entire Senate family. I thank his family for the untold hours he has spent away from home. I appreciate the work his wife Margaret Ann has done in supporting him, and, of course, he will spend more time with his three daughters and two grandsons. So thanks very much for sharing this good man with us.

I wish Jim the very best in his retirement, and I repeat, I thank him on behalf of the Senate family for all the work he has done.

 DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as I indicated, we are going to move to the defense bill, but we are going to also, as part of that bill, do something that is at least 10 years overdue. For the last 10 years, we have been struggling to get bills out of the energy committee. We are fortunate enough to get them out once in a while, but they are stymied here on the floor. That has been going on for 10 years. There has been a permanent wrecking crew, led by one person, to do this.

Before Nevada was settled by pioneers, its mountains were home to thousands of bighorn sheep—we still have lots of them—and pronghorn antelope—we have the largest antelope herd in the entire world in northern Nevada—and Nevada's streams and lakes at one time were full of Lahontan and cutthroat trout. That is not the case anymore.

Because of the growth in the State of Nevada there has been a tremendous impact on the environment. We had in Nevada salmon in our rivers, but not anymore. We are trying to replenish fish so that we will have more of what we did have before, including salmon. Like every State across the Nation, Nevada's natural and cultural heritage has come under immense pressure as our cities and populations have swelled.

About 80 percent of the people now live in one of our 17 counties. Clark County is where Las Vegas is. The other 16 counties make up about 20 percent of the population. So the pressure, especially because of what has happened in southern Nevada, has been very difficult on the environment.

The other thing people have to understand is that 87 percent of the State of Nevada is owned by the Federal Government. That creates a lot of issues—some positive, some negative. But with the population having swelled, some of the issues we are now experiencing are certainly to be expected. As our society continues to expand, the stresses on our land, our wildlife, and water resources will continue.

That is why the package of land bills in this National Defense Authorization Act is vitally important to our country. The package is a compromise that protects our Nation's wild and scenic places, our Nation's unique history, and opens up other lands for development.

Are there provisions in this bill that I don't care a great deal about in a positive fashion? Yes. There are things in this bill I don't like. But there are things in here I do like. Are there things in this bill the majority of Republicans probably don't like? The answer is yes. So this is what legislation is all about. It is about compromise. It is about working together to have an end product, and that is what we have here.

This compromise is a chance for the Senate to get something done. Compromise has been wanting in this body, especially regarding matters of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Hundreds of bills for the last 10 years have been stopped.

I am only offering my opinion, but one of the finest public servants I have ever served with is Jeff Bingaman from New Mexico. Jeff is an absolutely brilliant man, a hard worker. I would bet—and I don't bet very often, and I am sure no one will take me up on this—but I think one reason Jeff Bingaman left the Senate was because of the work he was unable to get done in his committee. What a good chairman he was,

but he was stymied time and time again from getting anything out of that committee. So for the last 10 years that committee has worked really hard, very hard, but they haven't had much to show for that work.

This package protects more than 1 million acres of landscapes. I was waiting in my office and Senator BENNET from Colorado came to my office. He had a great big poster with him. I asked: What is that? It was upside down. You could see immediately what it was when it was right side up. He was looking for time on the floor to show America what was in this bill for the State of Colorado. This beautiful vista he was showing me—and he showed the whole world last night—is something that is in this bill. It will be protected—a stunningly beautiful forest area in Colorado.

One million acres of landscape will be protected. Watersheds will be protected. Historic treasures will be protected. This protects over 140 miles of wild and scenic rivers throughout our country. These bills will create nearly 250,000 acres of wilderness in five States: Colorado, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, and Washington.

Additionally, the packages convey more than 100,000 acres to local communities for economic development. My friend the PRESIDING OFFICER understands how important that is, being able to convey to the private sector the ability to develop Federal lands. It has to be done carefully. It can't be done on a massive scale. If we did that, the rich people would wind up owning all the nice places. These are places I think should be shared by the American people. But 100,000 acres go to local communities for economic development.

The legislation continues our country's rich history, establishing national parks. It designates a number of new areas—for example, the Harriet Tubman Historic Park.

I read in a period of a month two books on Harriet Tubman. They both came out at about the same time. I can't imagine why a movie hasn't been made about this dynamic little 5-foot woman who did such remarkable things. What a story of this woman—this slave. She was a slave—bringing people out of the South into freedom in the North. She took them as far as Canada. She did it alone. So I hope some day someone will make a movie of this stunningly powerful woman. We are recognizing an area that will be named on her behalf.

The bundle of lands bills is good for America. It stretches literally from the shores of Alaska to the coast of Maine. It is especially important to Nevada, my State. It protects over 75,000 acres of wilderness in Humboldt and Lyon Counties in northern Nevada, the first new wilderness protections in the State since 2006.

One of those areas is named after a famous Indian, Wovoka. There was a man who was a famous Indian. He es-

tablished a dance that really brought Native Americans together. Even though it started in Nevada, it swept the country. This is going to be in Lyon County, it contains sage-grouse, bighorn sheep habitats, and some of the best fly fishing opportunities in Nevada and the Nation.

Now there is a pine forest wilderness in Humboldt County which has been championed by the local community. They have been working on this for years. We couldn't get it out of the House of Representatives. Over here, of course, it was a lost cause, and don't even think about getting it out of the energy committee.

Environmentalists, ranchers, hunters, anglers, and off-road vehicle enthusiasts came together to protect 20,000 acres of scenic lakes, amazing rock formations, and prime sage habitat.

But it also allows a mine there to have some more land from the Federal Government which they need from enlarging that land. It is a copper mine. It is extremely important that we develop copper and don't have to import it from South America and Russia.

Southern Nevada established the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument on the edge of North Las Vegas. This area is the largest deposit of ice age mammals in the United States. Imagine that basically in the middle of thousands of homes. People couldn't understand what they were digging up out there, ice age mammals that are so unbelievably large and preserved over these thousands of years. When the resources are developed, catalogued, and better understood, it will likely be the largest deposit in the entire country.

The package sells 10,000 acres of land to the city of Yerington. Lyon County was a county that probably suffered more from the economic shutdown. They had huge problems of unemployment, and now we have that mine there that will help. This will allow them to make even more jobs there.

The agreement also provides lands to the cities of Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Fernley, Carlin, allocates tracts for three universities and college campuses, and expands Nellis Air Force Base and the Fallon Naval Air Station.

This is good for Nevada. It is good for the country. This legislation promotes jobs, protects the environment, helps our Armed Forces, and gives Americans the opportunity to enjoy the beautiful landscapes this country has to offer.

It is not perfect legislation. No legislation is. But this is really good legislation. So I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting these critical lands bills which are part of the defense authorization bill.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

Mr. REID. Mr. President, what is the business now?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the message to accompany H.R. 3979, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3979, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Pending:

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill.

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Reid amendment No. 3984 (to the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3985 (to amendment No. 3984), of a perfecting nature.

Reid motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on Armed Services, with instructions, Reid Amendment No. 3986, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3987 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 3986), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 3988 (to Amendment No. 3987), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, in 1986 the people of South Dakota elected me to serve them in the 100th Session of the Congress in the House of Representatives. In 1996 they gave me the honor and privilege of being their junior Senator.

When I ran for the House in 1986, I told the people of South Dakota that neither party has all the answers, and that both parties have good ideas, as well as men and women of good will. My job, as I understood it, would be to work in a bipartisan manner, listening to all parties and reaching a good fit—also known as a compromise. That is what I still believe.

However, in each year of my 28 years of service this has become more difficult to achieve. Each party, rather than working cooperatively for the American people, is more and more focused on winning the next election. Today, days after the 2014 election, you can walk into the call center for either party and find Members dialing for dollars for 2016. Tonight there will be fundraisers across DC where Members will discuss policy not with their constituents but with organizations that contribute to their campaigns. We have lost our way.

My thoughts are not original. My colleague and dear friend from South Dakota, Senator Tom Daschle, in his farewell called for finding common ground that “will not be found on the