

I hope my Republican colleagues, particularly my friends from Tennessee, take a close look at it. Both Senators from Tennessee recognize human-caused climate change. The senior Senator, our friend who has just done such a masterful job of bringing this elementary and secondary education bill to the floor and steering it so far through this process, is a renowned champion of clean energy research and of electric vehicles.

Tennessee's junior Senator said in 2009, when cap-and-trade ideas were swirling:

I wish we would just talk about a carbon tax, 100 percent of which would be returned to the American people. So there's no net dollars that would come out of the American people's pockets.

Gentlemen, that is our bill. I am open to this discussion any time, but let's please not wait too long. As they know at Oak Ridge, as they know in the mayor's offices in Knoxville and Ducktown, as they know at the University of Tennessee, and as the rangers know up in the Great Smoky Mountains, time's a wasting, and we need to wake up.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MILLENNIUM COMPACTS FOR REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to speak about the successes of the Millennium Challenge Corporation, or MCC, which is one of the U.S. Government's newest and most potent resources in the war against global poverty.

MCC was founded by a bipartisan act of Congress in 2004 as a new way to deliver foreign assistance. While the U.S. Agency for International Development, USAID, remains a critical tool for working with countries in need, MCC was given a very specific and focused goal: to reduce poverty through economic growth. The countries receiving MCC grants would be partners with a strong say in how their money would be spent. And, countries would need to compete for MCC dollars—only the best governed countries that performed better than their peers on matters of economic freedom, ruling justly, and investing in their people, would be worthy of MCC funding.

The MCC model is working. Countries are taking a hard look at their problems and poring over their performance scorecards so that they can become MCC-eligible. Academics have confirmed that the so-called "MCC Effect"—MCC's ability to incentivize sig-

nificant policy reforms from countries seeking a compact—is real and meaningful.

MCC countries are reforming in vital ways to be part of MCC. Ghana, for example, is reforming its entire power sector in order to receive MCC assistance. In Lesotho, women were fundamentally unequal citizens, unable to open a bank account without a man's permission. MCC made the Lesotho partnership contingent upon removing those barriers, and women now enjoy economic freedoms unavailable to them before.

With 11 years under its belt and a proven record of success, the MCC is looking towards the future and assessing how it can amplify its already significant effects on fighting poverty. One way we can do that is to give MCC the flexibility to coordinate its work on a regional basis. That is why I introduced S. 1605, the Millennium Compacts for Regional Economic Integration Act, or the M-CORE Act, along with Senators FLAKE, COONS, and ISAKSON on June 18, 2015. The M-CORE Act would enable MCC to establish concurrent compacts in eligible developing countries, enhancing their ability to promote economic growth and cross-border engagement between and among nations. Through the greater regional economic collaboration that MCC regional compacts will achieve, countries can address deficiencies in communications, transportation, and energy networks. MCC's bilateral compacts have increased access to reliable power, built highway corridors, and improved business climates, thereby promoting economic growth and cross-border engagement within MCC partner countries.

Regional investments can have an even greater rate of return. In Central America, for example, MCC's work on road infrastructure could have had an even greater impact if the roads connected across borders. And in Africa, neighboring countries could collaborate on a regional power pool, connect land-locked countries to transportation infrastructure, or address other policy, institutional, and logistical challenges that hamper economic growth and development.

MCC has, by mandate, always focused on economic analysis and rigorous data; and its approach to regional investments has been no exception. MCC's extensive analysis has concluded that a regional approach to poverty reduction, under the right circumstances, can present opportunities to take advantage of higher rates of return on investment and larger scale reductions in poverty.

In short, MCC regional investments have the potential to greatly enhance economic growth in well-governed regions of the developing world. I urge my Senate colleagues to join me in supporting this commonsense legislation.

REMEMBERING LINDA NORRIS

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Linda Norris, a beloved former member of both my State and Washington, DC, staff who passed away recently. Linda was the very first member of Team Crapo and has left a lasting legacy in my office as well as in her adopted State of Idaho.

Linda retired from the Senate nearly 7 years ago after providing 18 years of service to Idahoans. Linda was the first staff member to join my congressional campaign as a member of my first House campaign staff. She was prominent and pivotal in my campaign and quickly became one of the most reliable and intuitive staff members. Linda then became my first regional director in Twin Falls, ID, serving throughout my service in the U.S. House of Representatives and into my service in the U.S. Senate. As State Director of Constituent Services, she established high constituent service standards, ones that are still used in my office, and she advocated strongly for military families and veterans. Her friendly nature, southern charm, and quick intellect helped defuse potential conflicts, and she represented the House and Senate offices with the utmost professionalism.

Whether she was working in Idaho or Washington, DC, her priority was to serve the people of Idaho, which she carried out with the utmost care and diligence. Her lasting legacy will be her influence over domestic violence awareness and prevention. More than 20 years ago, she arranged for me to visit a local shelter for abused children. The visit inspired an immovable commitment to increase awareness of domestic violence and to advocate for solutions and assistance for victims in every possible circumstance. Her interest and advocacy in this matter also spurred her into action when she recognized the need for training public servants who worked on public lands in how to handle domestic violence situations that arise when people are on public lands, not in their homes. With my strong support, she worked with the appropriate individuals within the U.S. Forest Service to initiate programs to train employees on domestic violence prevention. This remarkable achievement might be enough to most people, but Linda was a force that continued to search for ways to improve the lives of others.

She touched the lives of many Idaho military families and youth. As an Army wife herself, Linda had a personal understanding of military families. This experience gave her empathy to advocate effectively and attentively on behalf of Idaho military members, veterans, and their families. Linda also instituted and guided my military academy nomination process, helping countless Idaho youth on their path to success.

She was observant, inspired, tactful, and hard-working. Linda helped highlight the unrecognized good deeds of