

Sunday. He wants to spend more time with his family, and I applaud him for that. There were some people who mocked Congressman RYAN for that, and they are wrong. All parents should work to protect that time with their families.

Here is the problem. For millions of Americans, the concept of work-family life balance is nothing more than a fantasy. For far too many Americans, more time at work and less time with family is the only way to put food on the table and a roof over their heads. Still, these hard-working families are falling behind. An unpaid day off is out of the question.

Contrast that with the Senate. The Republican-controlled Senate doesn't work 5-day weeks. Yet millions of Americans can't get a day off when a loved one dies or a child is confined to a hospital bed. If you play baseball, the average salary is more than \$2 million a year. If your wife has a baby, you take off. But they make millions of dollars a year. Middle-class Americans don't make that.

While Speaker RYAN insists on a family-friendly work schedule for himself, he is blocking legislation that would give the bare minimum in paid leave for hard-working Americans. Before we worry about ourselves, we should worry about the millions of Americans who can't get a day off work to care for a sick child—can't get a half day off work. That would be real family values.

DRINKING WATER PROTECTIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this week the Senate will vote on two pieces of legislation that will nullify drinking water protections for 117 million Americans.

The Obama administration's clean water rule will restore important safeguards to protect American water sources from pollution and contamination. This landmark rule from the Obama administration will finally resolve years of confusion and provide regulatory certainty for businesses, farmers, local governments, and communities without creating any new permitting requirements and maintaining all previous exemptions and exclusions.

The Republicans in Congress are intent on undermining these important protections. The Republican leader and his colleagues unfortunately are forcing the Senate to vote on legislation to roll back President Obama's clean water rule. This legislation will fail, of course, and Republicans know it will fail.

Last week, the junior Senator from Texas said this:

[N]ext week we will have a show vote on the waters of the United States. Leadership is very happy. We will have a show vote. We will get to vote, and it will fail.

Perhaps the junior Senator is right; this is another Republican charade. I hope not. If these bills were to pass,

President Obama will veto them. Yet Republicans are content to waste the Senate's time just so they can launch another attack on the environment. This is the first of a series of environmental attacks we expect this month from Republicans. They are also preparing to nullify the President's rules to address climate change. They have no solutions and no plan to keep our water clean or address climate change. They are wasting valuable Senate time on these show votes.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR GRASSLEY ON CASTING HIS 12,000TH VOTE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, every year in the Senate we are sent to this distinguished body for one reason: to represent the people of our State and the people of this country. Our constituents expect us to legislate. They expect us to be here on the Senate floor voting and representing their interests. In the Senate, there is no one better at upholding that responsibility than the senior Senator from Iowa.

Last Thursday, CHARLES GRASSLEY cast his 12,000th vote as a U.S. Senator. As remarkable as that is, as my friend the senior Senator from Kentucky said, it is even more impressive that he has cast almost 7,500 consecutive votes on the Senate floor. He hasn't missed a vote since July 14, 1993. He holds the second longest consecutive vote streak in Senate history, behind our colleague Senator William Proxmire of Wisconsin. That is a lot of votes.

Senator GRASSLEY's constancy and unwavering work ethic comes as no surprise to those of us who have known him and are acquainted with his background. CHUCK GRASSLEY is a farmer. He is proud of that. He got started in politics when he was elected to the Iowa House in 1959. He served for 15 years. In 1974, he ran for Congress and served three terms in the House of Representatives.

He was elected to the Senate in 1980. Thirty-six years, 12,000 votes—that is remarkable, as is 7,474 consecutive votes. So I say congratulations to my friend CHUCK GRASSLEY on those incredible milestones.

REMEMBERING FRED THOMPSON

Mr. REID. Mr. President, over the weekend, the people of Tennessee lost a member of their family. Senator Fred Thompson, whom my friend the Republican leader has talked about, died after a recurring battle with lymphoma.

Those of us who served with him remember that wonderful voice. His voice was so good that many people said he should be an actor. Well, he was. He was an actor. He had a beautiful voice that projected so very well, but he was good wherever he was—the floor of the Senate, movie studio, the town square of his home.

He was a statesman in every sense of the word. His dedication to responsible

public service fueled his commitment to bipartisanship and compromise. Fred Thompson was known for his courageous heart and straightforward approach to public service.

I will miss him a great deal. He was always very kind and thoughtful and friendly to me, and the Senate is a better place for having had him here.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

FEDERAL WATER QUALITY PROTECTION ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1140, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 153, S. 1140, a bill to require the Secretary of the Army and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to propose a regulation revising the definition of the term "waters of the United States," and for other purposes.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR CHARLES GRASSLEY'S 12,000TH VOTE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have had the privilege of serving with several hundred Senators in this body over the years I have been here, and Senator GRASSLEY has been a very special friend during that time. He has represented the voices of Iowans for nearly three and a half decades. I think we have been friends for that three and a half decades.

When I think of Senator GRASSLEY—12,000 votes, hundreds of hearings, countless tweets, and probably four dozen sweater vests later—he is the same down to earth Iowa farmer who visits every one of the State's 99 counties every year. He is also the Iowa farmer who, when Vermont was hit with terrible flooding a few years back, was the first person to contact me to say, "Vermont stood with Iowa when we were hit with a natural disaster. Iowa now stands with Vermont."

He and I have worked together, and we have had a productive relationship that spans those decades. On the Judiciary Committee, we take our leadership responsibilities seriously. We have both made sure that, both as chairman and ranking members, that every Senator has a chance to be heard. We have found ways to come together on meaningful legislation. We enjoy each other's company. We are able to kid each