

that they are flying the fair and friendly skies. Otherwise, these billions of dollars, year after year, will come out of the pockets of consumers who have no choice.

Senator WICKER and I worked together to build it into the Senate bill. We should not have receded to the position of the House. That was a mistake. This history is going to continue because the anger of the flying public is only going to build as each and every month and year goes by. The day is going to come, I vow to you, where we are going to have this in a bill that passes this Chamber and the House of Representatives.

This is an issue whose time has come. If it has been blocked, it is only temporarily. We are going to return to this issue. Everyone in the Congress will be made accountable to the flying public so that they are not given this offer they can't refuse every time they are at the counter: Pay or don't fly. It is absolutely wrong.

At this point, I yield back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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 (Mr. JOHNSON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time on Executive Calendar No. 941 be considered expired at 1:45 p.m. on Wednesday, September 26; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO JIM PAXTON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, at the end of this month, my friend Jim Paxton will end his 32-year tenure with the Paducah Sun newspaper in western Kentucky. Through his service as the paper's editor and publisher, Jim has shown a dedication to his community and his organization, and he deserves our sincere gratitude. Looking back at

his experience with the paper, Jim called it, "the best job a person could ask for." It is my privilege to congratulate him on his remarkable career in journalism.

Founded more than 120 years ago as the Paducah Evening Sun, Jim's newspaper has always been a family business. Before joining the paper, Jim worked with other news organizations in Nashville and Lexington and went to law school. However, after a tragic aviation accident that claimed the life of the Sun's previous editor, Jack Paxton, Jim left his legal career behind and agreed to lead the local institution.

Jim began at the Sun in 1986 and soon after earned the title of editor. With his brothers David and Richard, who later joined the company, the family expanded their media offering to better serve their community. The story of Paducah is intertwined with the region's river system, and the Sun has the news that its readers need for their day. There is a great deal of local news to cover. Paducah is the heart of our Nation's inland waterways network, and it is home to both the National Quilt Museum and the U.S. Department of Energy's Gaseous Diffusion Plant. Further, in 2013, the U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, designated Paducah as the world's seventh City of Crafts and Folk Art. The Paducah Sun, under Jim's leadership, has kept a close eye on each of these aspects of the city's life and heritage.

In recent years, Jim has taken a leading role in crafting the Sun's editorial page, a page of his paper I rarely miss. I have especially enjoyed each of my opportunities to meet with the paper's editorial board to discuss the issues most vital to Paducah's future. By presenting a fair and even-handed opinion to his audience, Jim and the Sun's staff have made themselves a central feature of the day for many western Kentuckians.

When Jim leaves his post at the end of this month, he does so after a career filled with distinction and one he can be proud of. Whatever the future may hold for Jim and his family, I send them my sincere best wishes. Families throughout Paducah and across the Commonwealth have benefited from Jim's diligence and thoughtfulness, and I would like to express my profound gratitude to him. I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in congratulating Jim Paxton, the gold standard for a professional newsman, on a successful career and wishing him a happy retirement.

CAIRO HOUSING CRISIS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I would like to bring attention to the southernmost city in my State, Cairo, IL.

Sitting at the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, Cairo was once a booming port town and was home to

Fort Defiance during the Civil War. In the 1960s, Civil Rights icon Representative JOHN LEWIS even spent a summer there to help integrate a number of businesses and public spaces.

However, in recent years, this southern city has faced a new challenge, as uninhabitable living conditions have forced hundreds of public housing residents to relocate from their homes—and in many cases from their beloved community. Public housing in the city suffered years of neglect at the hands of local officials who are now accused of misusing Federal funds to bankroll lavish personal expenses, including multiple trips to Las Vegas and steak dinners.

And how was life for residents? By the time residents were forced to relocate, 185 families—including roughly 200 children—were living in housing overrun with rodents, bedbugs, roaches, crime, mold, asbestos, and lead. I am talking about rats in the couch, maggots in the freeze, and plumbing and heating that simply refused to work.

It was local officials who failed to provide its residents with safe and healthy housing; yet these families were the ones whose lives were uprooted as a result. Today, all 185 families have relocated, and the vacant housing complexes are set to be demolished. While the strength and resilience of these residents and their community in the face of this situation is inspiring, there is no question they deserved far more from their government.

It has been more than 2 years since the HUD Inspector General's Office began investigating alleged misuse of Federal funds by local officials, and it is beyond time for that investigation to be finalized and for the results to be made public.

Today I am calling—once again—for the HUD inspector general to do just that, but more remains to be done to restore the faith and confidence of public housing residents in our government. Transparent accountability must be had at all levels of government where mismanagement played a role in creating this crisis.

This is why, in May of last year, Senator DUCKWORTH and I called for the HUD inspector general to also look into HUD's oversight of Alexander County Housing Authority. This July, the IG released its report that found that despite having early knowledge of bad conditions at Alexander County, HUD hesitated to intervene, while residents suffered.

This is unacceptable, and it cannot be repeated. HUD is responsible for ensuring public housing authorities meet their responsibility to provide safe and affordable housing, and it must be capable of performing this vital oversight. Senator DUCKWORTH and I have urged HUD to quickly implement the recommendations included in the report to more effectively oversee public housing authorities, to which HUD has agreed.