

our senior Senator. It has been nothing short of a privilege to serve alongside him. He is an excellent colleague, he has been a class act. I have enjoyed working with him and look forward to a few more years in the future.

PAT.
(Applause.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished majority leader and the distinguished Democratic leader—both very close friends of mine whom I have served with for so long. And my dear, dear friend Senator SHELBY from Alabama.

It is the friendships that mean the most, both to me and to my wife Marcelle. It is the friends we gather on both sides of the aisle and the people I have traveled with around the world.

One of my proud achievements was the War Victims Fund, but it was Senator MITCH MCCONNELL who had it renamed the “PATRICK J. LEAHY War Victims Fund.” I know that Senator SCHUMER helped guide me into committee assignments that made the most sense for Vermont and for my own career and, I hope, for the Senate.

My first vote was for the Church Committee. Frank Church wanted oversight of our intelligence agencies, and the Intelligence Committee came out of that. The two leaders of the Intelligence Committee now—Senator BURR and Senator WARNER—do such a great job with that.

As I was looking at the paper today, I thought of the first Supreme Court Justice I voted for, John Paul Stevens, a wonderful man. I have voted on each member of the Supreme Court since then.

Going back through the 16,000 votes, I am sure I could find some and think, what the heck was I thinking when I voted that way?

But I am proud to serve Vermont. I am proud to be in this body. I am mostly proud to serve with all the Senators who are here on both sides of the aisle. Some of my closest friendships are here.

I have served with three wonderful Senators from Vermont. Senator Robert Stafford, who is no longer with us, was the senior Senator from Vermont when I came here. He was Mr. Republican in our State, and I wondered how he was going to react to this youngster, this Democrat coming in. He and his wife Ellen took Marcelle and me under their wing and helped us on everything. He taught me how best to form coalitions across the aisle. I will never forget that.

I am not going to hold up my colleagues here. I will speak more about this at another time.

But I was the first Vermonter to vote to end the war in Vietnam, which we ended by a one-vote margin at that time in the Armed Services Committee. There were other votes that were very close. There were bipartisan votes.

It is a privilege to be in this body. This body has been at times, and can be and should be, the conscience of the Nation. I urge my friends on both sides of the aisle to continue to work together. We have worked together on trips that many of us have taken. I will close with mentioning just one trip to give you an idea of that.

Senator Hubert Humphrey and Republican Leader Hugh Scott were going to go to Moscow. He said: PATRICK, you and Marcelle are going to come to Moscow.

I was 34 years old. I had just gotten through a campaign that nobody had contributed to. We were flat broke.

I blurted out: What is the airfare to Moscow?

He said: No, we are going to take Jerry's plane.

I said: Jerry who?

He said: Jerry Ford. He is the President. Don't you read the papers?

We had an equal number of Republicans and Democrats on that trip, and we formed lifelong friendships and learned how to work together. I urge Senators to continue doing that. And it was better than flying commercial.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I thank my colleagues.

(Applause.)

PROTOCOL AMENDING TAX CONVENTION WITH LUXEMBOURG

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next treaty.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Treaty document No. 111-8, Protocol Amending Tax Convention with Luxembourg.

Pending:

McConnell amendment No. 916, of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 917 (to amendment No. 916) to change the enactment date.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the amendments to the treaty are withdrawn.

The amendments (No. 916 and No. 917) were withdrawn.

The clerk will report the resolution of ratification.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follow:

Resolution of Advice and Consent to Ratification of the Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed on May 20, 2009, at Luxembourg (the “proposed Protocol”) and a related agreement effected by the exchange of notes also signed on May 20, 2009.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the resolution of ratification.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 93, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 212 Ex.]

YEAS—93

Alexander	Gardner	Portman
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Reed
Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blackburn	Grassley	Roberts
Blumenthal	Hassan	Romney
Blunt	Hawley	Rosen
Booker	Heinrich	Rounds
Boozman	Hirono	Rubio
Braun	Hoeven	Sasse
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Burr	Inhofe	Schumer
Cantwell	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Capito	Jones	Scott (SC)
Cardin	Kaine	Shaheen
Carper	Kennedy	Shelby
Casey	King	Sinema
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Smith
Collins	Lankford	Stabenow
Coons	Leahy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Manchin	Tester
Cortez Masto	Markey	Thune
Cotton	McConnell	Tillis
Cramer	McSally	Toomey
Crapo	Menendez	Udall
Cruz	Merkley	Van Hollen
Daines	Moran	Warner
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warren
Enzi	Murphy	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murray	Wicker
Feinstein	Perdue	Wyden
Fischer	Peters	Young

NAYS—3

Durbin Lee Paul

NOT VOTING—4

Bennet Isakson
Harris Sanders

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 93, the nays are 3.

Two-thirds of the Senators voting having voted in the affirmative, the resolution of ratification is agreed to.

The resolution of ratification was agreed to as follows:

PROTOCOL AMENDING TAX CONVENTION WITH LUXEMBOURG (TREATY DOC. 111-8)

Resolved (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration.

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Protocol Amending the Convention between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital, signed on May 20, 2009, at Luxembourg (the “Protocol”) and the related agreement effected by exchange of notes on May 20, 2009 (Treaty Doc. 111-8), subject to the declaration in section 2.

Sec. 2. Declaration.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration: The Protocol is self-executing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid

upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Clifton L. Corker, of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee.

The Senator from New York.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 1327

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that as in legislative session, the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 153, H.R. 1327; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, it has long been my feeling that we need to address our massive debt in this country. We have a \$22 trillion debt. We are adding debt at about \$1 trillion a year. Therefore, any new spending that we are approaching, any new program that is going to have the longevity of 70 or 80 years should be offset by cutting spending that is less valuable. At the very least, we need to have this debate.

I will be offering up an amendment if this bill should come to the floor, but until then, I will object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I am deeply disappointed that my colleague has just objected to the desperately needed and urgent bill for our 9/11 first responders—a bipartisan bill that just earned over 400 votes in the U.S. House of Representatives and that has 73 cosponsors in this Chamber.

Enough of the political games. Our 9/11 first responders and the entire Nation are watching to see if this body actually cares. Do we care about the men and women who answer the call of duty?

When our country was attacked on 9/11/2001, the entire world looked on in shock as many people rightfully sought to get away as quickly as they could. As those towers began to crumble, there was one group of men and women—our heroes, the bravest among us—who ran the opposite way. They ran toward danger. They raced up the towers. They went into harm's way to answer the call of duty.

Then, in the days and weeks that followed and the months and months that followed, life slowly began to return to normal for the rest of the country, but at Ground Zero, nothing was normal.

The pile kept burning. It was smoldering. You could smell it blocks and blocks away—10 blocks, 20 blocks, 30 blocks away. Men and women kept going to that pile to do the very hard work of, first, trying to find survivors and then, of course, just trying to find remains and doing all the hard work of cleaning up. They dove in. They got to work. They wanted to help our country heal.

Now more than 18 years have actually passed, and thousands of those men and women have actually died. Thousands more are getting sick. They are getting grueling, painful diseases, like cancer, and they are now dying. Why? Because they did the work at Ground Zero that we asked them to do, and it made them very sick—the air they breathed, the smoke, the burning metal, the crushed glass, the crushed electronics, the toxins they breathed in that the EPA told them was safe.

These heroes have since had to quit their jobs and doing the jobs they love and providing for the families they love because they are too sick. They have had to give up their income. They have had to give up their dreams. They have had to give up their future. They have had to face the terrifying reality that they are actually going to die because of what they did on 9/11 and the months thereafter.

If that wasn't a great enough burden, they had to use their most precious commodity, time—time away from their families, time away from their friends, and time away from their children, from their loved ones, and from their community. To do what? To come here. To come here to walk the Halls of Congress, to go to office after office, to ask that this body and this government stand by them in their greatest time of need, to ask for the basic compensation that they have earned and deserve, to ask for the healthcare that could actually keep them alive maybe another year longer and not have to go through bankruptcy, and to have to come here week after week, spending thousands of dollars of their own money, sacrificing the time and energy that they have left.

I have seen first responders in wheelchairs, attached to oxygen tanks, spending their last moments here in Congress just asking that we do the right thing.

Almost a decade ago, 9 years after the attacks, Congress finally listened. We passed a healthcare and compensation fund for the people who got sick because of 9/11, but that compensation fund was only designed to last for 5 years. You know how this place works. They wanted to make sure it worked right. They wanted to make sure every i was dotted and every t was crossed. They wanted to make sure there could be no fraud and no corruption. Well, of course, there wasn't. So it was limited. These first responders—many of them sick and some dying—had to come back again and again and again to spend more of their time walking these halls.

Eventually, we passed another compensation bill, but, again, it was for another 5 years. Even though thousands of 9/11 first responders are sick and even more will become sick, they still had to come back, even though some of these diseases are lifetime diseases and more will die. And, now, sadly, the fund is running out.

The 5 years aren't over yet, and the Federal Government is already having to tell these families who have gotten cancer and died since 9/11 that we have actually run out of money for them, that the compensation they have earned and the need their families have will be cut by up to 70 percent.

Once again, sick and dying first responders are being forced to come here to knock on our office doors to remind Members of Congress of what they did on that day and the weeks and months since, to tell them their personal stories of how painful it is to lose everything you love. First, it is your ability to work, then your ability to play with your kids, then your ability to eat, and then your ability to breathe.

I believe we have a responsibility—a sacred responsibility—so that anyone in this Chamber who has any sense of decency, compassion, or patriotism would listen to our first responders and give them what they need: a permanent compensation program so that these men and women will never have to spend another moment in these hallways again.

We could pass this bill right now, but, instead, my colleague has objected, asking people to come back over and over. Everyone loves to point fingers in this place, but there is nowhere else to point that finger today than this Chamber.

The House has already passed the bill overwhelmingly 402 to 12. It is about as bipartisan as it gets. Shame on those 12 Members who voted no.

The same bipartisan bill, the one I just called on my colleagues to pass already, has 73 cosponsors—73. When was the last time that happened?

I want to say how grateful I am to my Republican colleague from Colorado, Senator GARDNER, for leading this bipartisan bill with me. In these divided times, what other bill can you imagine would have so much support by both parties?

Enough is enough. We should pass this bill today. We should have passed this bill today, and I hope we can pass this bill with no further delay.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, let me thank my colleague and friend, the Senator from New York, for the amazing work she has done to get this bill to this point. She has worked long and hard on this for years and years and years with compassion, dedication, intelligence, and persistence. The bill wouldn't be here today without her hard work. I thank her for that.

I also want to thank—I know there are police and firefighters in the Gallery over here. I want to thank them