

we have a great President, and it is going to be a great campaign, but we should not bring it to this floor and hold up the nomination of the Surgeon General because everyone is going after some block of voters to prove that they can be more antichoice than the next candidate. That is wrong. A woman has a right to choose in this country.

The fact is we have a Surgeon General nominee who has the greatest record in stopping teen pregnancy.

Mr. President, there are those who say: What does the Surgeon General do anyway? I am going to go through a little of this, and if my time runs out, I will be back tomorrow. I am going to be back every day, every day, asking where is this nomination. It is not the American way to keep a kind and decent man waiting like this since February. We have had Surgeon Generals who have done some incredibly important things in terms of the fight against smoking, syphilis, AIDS—it goes on. I will save that for another time.

So in my remaining moments here, Mr. President, I will summarize in this way. There is no reason not to schedule this vote. This man passed out of the committee on a 9-to-7 vote. He is fully qualified. He has met every test. And, yes, he is an OB-GYN. And I say to my friends, it is about time we had someone with that kind of experience of bringing babies into the world and taking care of women's health in the position of Surgeon General.

I yield the floor.

Mrs. MURRAY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington, Mrs. MURRAY, is recognized for 7 minutes.

Mrs. MURRAY. I thank the Chair.

THE CLOCK IS TICKING

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I, too, today rise to urge the majority leader to bring the nomination of Dr. Henry Foster, Jr., for U.S. Surgeon General to the Senate floor for a vote.

I am very excited about the nomination of Dr. Foster to be U.S. Surgeon General. Dr. Foster is an OB-GYN, and I appreciate the importance of his practice area to families and children. For far too long in this Nation, women's health concerns have been neglected by our Government. One example tells a whole story.

A National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute study of 22,000 physicians begun in 1981 found that men who took aspirin every other day reduced their incidence of heart attacks. The Institute claimed that women were not included in the study because to do so would have increased the cost. As a result, today we do not know whether this prevention strategy would help women, harm them, or have no effect.

Gender equity in medical research has received increased attention over the past few years. We no longer will tolerate a Government-funded heart disease study which includes 22,000 men

and excludes women altogether. Given that heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women, we expect women to be included in clinical trials.

We still have a long way to go. Women are the fastest growing demographic group among those diagnosed with HIV. We suffer from clinical depression at rates twice that of men. And we frequently are the victims of domestic violence.

It is imperative that the leading public health official in our Nation be a forceful spokesperson on these issues.

Everyone agrees we need to reduce teen pregnancy because it is a national priority. We need a Surgeon General who understands the link between sexual abuse, adolescent pregnancy, and building self-esteem among at-risk youth.

Dr. Foster has experience in reducing teen pregnancy. His "I Have a Future" program was named a "Point of Light" by President Bush because of its pioneering work. Dr. Foster has successfully demonstrated his ideas about public health strategies that can greatly benefit our Nation. He has focused not only on preventing teen pregnancy but on preventing drug abuse, reducing infant mortality and ending smoking by children. He is a physician with vision, and he is a caring and honorable man.

When I first met with him a few months ago, he mentioned the opening lecture he gives to medical students. He spoke passionately about the importance of obstetrics and gynecology. He told me he reminds new OB-GYN's that without their work there would be no art or architecture; without healthy women and children there would be nothing.

Some politicians would have the Senate exclude Dr. Foster from consideration because he has performed abortions. I disagree. Abortion should not be the determining factor in the selection of a Surgeon General. Let us not tolerate the disqualification of this candidate because of his basic practice area. Dr. Foster has dedicated his life to women's health, the welfare of children, and the well-being of families.

Meanwhile, the clock is ticking. Dr. Joycelyn Elders resigned her post, as was stated, on December 9, 1994. This nomination was sent to the Senate on February 2, the nomination papers were filed February 28, and the committee voted this out on May 26, 1995. Our Nation has now gone 6 months without a Surgeon General, and the clock is ticking.

Every 15 seconds a woman is battered. And that is not all. Let me share with my colleagues that the clock is ticking and every 59 seconds a baby is born to a teen mother. Every year, alcohol causes the death of nearly 20,000 Americans. Every 17 minutes, AIDS takes another American life. Every year, over 144,000 Americans will suffer a stroke. We need a national public health spokesperson, and we need a Surgeon General.

This year alone, 95,400 men will die of lung cancer; 62,000 women will die of

lung cancer; 51,000 Americans will die of AIDS; 46,000 women will die of breast cancer; 40,000 men will die of prostate cancer; and 14,500 women will die of ovarian cancer.

Mr. President, we need a national public health spokesperson. We need a Surgeon General, and we need a vote in the Chamber of the Senate on the nomination of Surgeon General.

I, too, will be back on this floor reminding my colleagues it has been 6 months and the clock keeps ticking. We want a vote.

I yield the floor.

TRIBUTE TO W.W. "SON" WEATHERFORD

Mr. HEFLIN. Mr. President, we were greatly saddened on May 24 by the death of W.W. Weatherford. At 81 years of age, "Son," as he was widely known, had lived a life in which he devoted much of his time and energy to his local community.

Son Weatherford served others just by carrying out the activities of his day-to-day life. He ran the family business—the Weatherford Store, in Vina, AL, and was a member of the First Baptist Church of Russellville, serving as both a deacon and a Sunday School teacher.

Son improved his community through the offices he held and the organizations to which he belonged. He was probate judge for Franklin County, eventually becoming president of the Alabama Probate Judges Association. He was the chairman of the Franklin County, Commission, president of the Alabama Association of County Commissioners, and served as State director of the State Mental Health Board. He fought for his country in World War II and became a member of the American Veterans Association and the Red Bay American Legion. Son was also a Mason and a charter member of the Bear Creek Watershed Association. He was president of the Russellville Chamber of Commerce and was once recognized by that community as its Outstanding Citizen of the Year.

W.W. "Son" Weatherford will be sorely missed by the people of the town to which he devoted so much of his energy, the family that he leaves behind, and all those fortunate enough to have known him over the years. I offer my condolences to his wife, Iva Jo, and their entire family in the wake of this tremendous loss.

TRIBUTE TO COMDR. ROBERT MEISSNER, USN

MR. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise to recognize the dedication, public service, and patriotism of Comdr. Robert M. Meissner, U.S. Navy, on the occasion of his retirement after 20 years of faithful service to our Nation.

Today Commander Meissner, a 1975 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, is