

Budget Committee, leading the Democrats in our efforts to fashion a federal budget which meets our nation's priorities while working to pay down the national debt. In addition, FRANK is a leader on transportation policy, gun safety, and environmental issues among others.

FRANK LAUTENBERG was the author of legislation which banned smoking America's airlines, a wise action which all of us who fly appreciate more and more each year as we learn about the effects of recirculated cigarette smoke. He wrote the bill which established the age of 21 as the national legal drinking age, an action clearly responsible for the saving of many American lives. And, he passed legislation to prohibit anyone convicted of domestic violence from owning a gun.

Senator LAUTENBERG, also led efforts in the Senate culminating in passage of the transportation bill and as the Ranking Member of the Appropriations Committee's Transportation Subcommittee, he has fought many battles for sound investment in the nations' highways and as a particular friend of mass transportation.

As the Ranking Democrat on the Senate's Budget Committee, Senator LAUTENBERG has been a consistent voice in support of a balance budget, paying down the national debt, and investing in America's future. He coauthored the historic Balance Budget Agreement of 1997.

FRANK LAUTENBERG has served in the Senate since 1982. He is a friend and ally in many legislative battles whom I will miss deeply in the years ahead. However, FRANK is a man of tremendous energy and vision. That energy and vision will continue to serve our nation because FRANK LAUTENBERG's love of this nation is so deep and abiding that as long as he has breath he will be advancing its ideals.

THE SUPREME COURT DECISION IN THE CASE OF BUSH VERSUS GORE AND ITS AFTERMATH

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am heartbroken that the Supreme Court has issued an opinion that, to me, undermines a core democratic principle—that every vote counts and every vote must be counted.

I am also perplexed that the Court sent the case back to the Florida Supreme Court for further proceedings on the recount, since it did so while also suggesting that time had run out for the recount. That suggestion is disingenuous, considering that the U.S. Supreme Court itself helped cause the clock to run out when it voted 5-4 to stop the recount last Saturday by issuing a stay.

I want to compliment the four justices who voted against the stay order—Justices Stevens, Souter, Breyer and Ginsberg—two appointed by Republican Presidents and two by a Democrat. While several of them recognized constitutional problems in the

way the recount was being carried out, they clearly understood the overriding importance of counting every legal vote.

In his dissenting opinion, Justice John Paul Stevens pointed out that the Florida Supreme Court, in ordering the recount, merely “. . . did what courts do—it decided the case before it in light of the legislature's intent to leave no legally cast vote uncounted.”

He stated that in its action “the majority effectively orders the disenfranchisement of an unknown number of voters whose ballots reveal their intent—and are therefore legal votes under state law—but were for some reason rejected by ballot-counting machines.”

The closing words of Justice Stevens, I believe, will go down in history as the thoughts of a great Supreme Court justice:

Although we may never know with complete certainty the identity of the winner of this presidential election, the identity of the loser is perfectly clear. It is the Nation's confidence in the judge as an impartial guardian of the rule of law.

When the next President is sworn into office in January, I pledge to do all that I can to help the country put this extraordinary and unsettling election behind us. I will do my best in the United States Senate to advance the interests of the people of California, who have so many needs and rights that remain to be addressed.

There are many lessons to be learned from these events. We need to change our election procedures to make them uniformly as reliable and accurate as possible, so that we will never again be in this situation. And more Americans must now realize that their participation in the political process is vitally important. I will work on these challenges in the coming months, for the sake of Californians and for all Americans.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR CHUCK ROBB

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to my colleague on the Armed Services and Intelligence Committees, Senator CHUCK ROBB. As his career in the Senate comes to a close, Senator ROBB leaves behind a career in public service that he and the Virginians he served so well should be proud of.

CHUCK ROBB has served his nation as a United States Marine, as Lieutenant Governor and Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and for the last twelve years as a member of the United States Senate. CHUCK ROBB has been a public servant in the truest sense. He has always put the nation's interest first, and self-interest last.

During the twelve years I have served with Senator ROBB on the Armed Services Committee, he has proven himself to be a champion of a strong national defense, of the men and women who wear our nation's uniform, and of his fellow veterans.

On the Armed Services Committee, he has been first and foremost a devoted advocate of a strong Navy-Marine Corps team. While Senator ROBB has never been one to tout his own accomplishments, his pride in and love for the United States Marine Corps is one thing he has never been able to hide.

Senator ROBB has worked hard on military readiness, quality of life, and modernization. He sponsored the targeted recruiting and retention bonuses Congress enacted last year for critical skills where they would have the most payoff for the military. He was a leader in providing promised health care benefits to military retirees. He has worked hard to get the Navy to develop a long term plan to fund enough ships to maintain the Navy we need for the future, and on securing additional funds to keep the ships we have today ready. And he has been a leading proponent of making our defense budget as efficient as possible and has pushed the Defense Department to rigorously examine both their strategy and their organization.

CHUCK ROBB has devoted enormous time and energy to America's national security. He is the only Senator ever to serve on the Armed Services, Intelligence, and Foreign Relations Committees simultaneously. On countless occasions we have benefitted from having his voice of reason and experience at the table.

CHUCK ROBB has never forgotten America's POWs and MIAs and their families. Both as a member of the Armed Services Committee and the Select Committee on POW/MIA affairs, he has devoted himself to a full accounting for our soldiers who are still missing in action.

While Senator ROBB is best known as a champion of a strong national defense, he has been much more than that. During his Senate career he has worked hard to make America stronger in every way. Senator ROBB has devoted himself to making the United States a more productive nation and, more importantly, a more just nation.

Both as Governor and as a Senator, CHUCK ROBB has been a strong voice for protecting the environment, for civil rights, for improving education for both students and teachers, and for putting new technology to work for our students, our military, and our nation.

CHUCK ROBB has been a leader in fighting discrimination against African American farmers, in expanding opportunities for women and minorities at both the federal and state government levels, and in honoring courageous civil rights leaders including Martin Luther King, Jr.

He is also renowned for his steadfast devotion to fiscal discipline. CHUCK ROBB has never been afraid to cast an unpopular vote to restrain spending or reject unwise or unaffordable tax cuts. Senator ROBB was steadfast in his belief that we have an obligation to pay for the programs we enact rather than