

them an appropriate reward in their efforts. I am trying to help these men resolve their dispute with Major League baseball so that they can receive a small but important token for their contributions to sports history.

Also throughout the era of segregation, when public facilities were segregated by law, the African-American community of Miami was forbidden to use all of the area's beaches but one, Virginia Key Beach, in Biscayne Bay known as "the Negro beach."

Known in those days as the "Colored Only Beach," Virginia Key Beach was an important place in the lives of African-American families—a place for them to gather and enjoy the pleasures of relaxation beside the ocean. The memories of this place are sweet, even mixed and intertwined with the bitterness and memories of segregation.

Together with my friend and colleague, Congresswoman CARRIE MEEK of Miami, we have sponsored legislation that will help preserve this historic place. Our bill would require the Secretary of the Interior to study and report to Congress on the feasibility of incorporating Virginia Key Beach into the National Park System.

By enacting this legislation, we can preserve its 77 acres of beach and wildlife, while honoring its past and present importance to the people of Florida.

These are examples of some of the small ways in which we can honor the lives and memories of our Nation's African-Americans.

My own State, Florida, has an especially proud history in this regard, as well as a willingness to correct past mistakes.

In 1994, for example, the Florida Legislature passed, and the late Gov. Lawton Chiles signed, the Rosewood claims bill, which provided \$2.1 million to survivors and the families of victims of the 1923 Rosewood Massacre.

Last year, the legislature enacted sweeping reforms to give every person an equal opportunity to have his or her vote counted.

You don't want any State to ever have to go through what we went through in Florida in the last Presidential election because there were votes that were not counted. So the Florida Legislature, in 2001, in trying to correct the voting rights abuses, passed legislation to help modernize the system in a Presidential election.

Unfortunately, a \$50-billion State budget proposed by the Florida House last week left out the second of two installments of \$12 million to help counties replace antiquated, punch-card voting machines.

African-Americans were disproportionately affected by flaws in the election system. And Florida lawmakers have made a commitment not only to that community but also to all the people of Florida to fix the system.

Without this funding, they will have broken their promise.

It would be appropriate at this time of recognizing the achievements of Af-

rican-Americans for the State House to do its duty and to keep its word so that every vote gets counted.

Today—and every day—let us celebrate African-American achievement both by remembering our past and by recommitting ourselves to the current fight for social, political, and economic equality for everyone.

I thank the Chair for the time to address the Senate.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until 3 o'clock today.

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for the edification of Members, Senator DODD has been working. I talked to him not long ago. He indicated progress was being made. Even though it appears we are not doing anything, there is a lot of committee work going on around the Hill. With this most important election reform legislation, there is a last-ditch attempt by Senator DODD to see if it can be rescued.

As a number of Members indicated this morning, it would be a real shame if this were held up by virtue of a filibuster, especially when we know that matters go to conference, and with the present makeup we have in Washington, with a Republican President and a Republican House, certainly they should be willing to take their chances with a Democratic Senate.

I hope progress is made and we can resolve the Schumer-Wyden matter. But if we can't, I hope Members look forward to invoking cloture on this most important legislation tomorrow when the vote is scheduled.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I seek recognition and ask unanimous consent that upon the completion of my comments, the Senator from North Dakota, who is sitting in the chair at the moment, be recognized.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The Chair hears none, and it is so ordered.

PLEA TO THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I want to follow my remarks of a

few minutes ago about Black History Month with an underlining of my concern of what is happening in the Florida Legislature as we speak, which is meeting in the capital city of Tallahassee.

It is almost ironic that at the very time the Senate is considering an election reform bill, of which for that legislation we are having discussions, negotiations, and awaiting agreements to finally come forth so we do not have to come to the Chamber to break a filibuster to pass it—and it is legislation that is going to get wide support once we get to final passage—but it is almost ironic what has happened in the Florida Legislature since we started this legislation 2½ weeks ago when I spoke in this Chamber in favor of the legislation. At that time, I took to the floor complimenting the Florida Legislature.

In the State of Florida, we went through a grueling experience in the Presidential election of 2000. We saw so many ballots that were not counted. We saw clear voter intent that was not followed. There was confusion over the ballots. There was confusion in the construction of the ballot, how it fit together. There was the famous butterfly ballot. We saw how even when voter intent was so clear for example, a first-time voter, who was not familiar with the ballot, would go down the Presidential names and select one name and mark that on a punchcard ballot, and then at the bottom of the Presidential names there was a line, and it said: "Write-in," and they would write in the same Presidential candidate—the voter intent was clear, but that ballot was not counted.

So after that awful experience, before which I had never known anything about error rates in ballot counting—and thank the Good Lord I never had a close election, and little did I ever know there could be the confusion and so many people, in effect, disenfranchised in an election—when we started our election reform bill in this Chamber a couple weeks ago, I took to the floor and complimented the Florida Legislature because it changed all of the punchcard ballots and it appropriated, out of a \$50 billion annual budget, \$24 million so that the counties could buy new voting equipment and they would never have to go through the confusion of that punchcard voting system again. They would have an optical scan system with a much lower error rate.

That was my compliment to the Florida Legislature. They did right. That was a year ago. But just last week, the Florida House of Representatives did not appropriate, in its appropriations bill, the second \$12 million installment to modernize the election system. What in the world are we thinking in the year 2002, when it is almost taken for granted that it is a bedrock principle that registered voters should have the right to vote and to have their vote counted?