

So while I cannot stand here this evening and promise miraculous results, it is our best judgment—this is our best effort—of what we can do in this body to offer some relief at this moment.

The second proposal that is part of this bill is the GSE reform, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. These are important sources of liquidity in the residential mortgage market. They have provided a great source of relief during this time. Our bill reforms these institutions in such a way that we have a strong regulator requiring certain capital requirements and the like. It has been tried for the last 6 years to achieve what we have in this bill. It has failed in every other attempt. This final proposal, which we crafted over the last number of weeks, enjoys broad-based bipartisan support.

The third feature of this bill, which has received less attention than the two points I have made, may be the provision which has more lasting implications than anything else we have done.

The homeowners bill is a temporary one. It dies in 2 or 3 years; it will go out of existence. But the affordable housing provisions of the bill are permanent. We will generate revenues that will make it possible for people to have rental housing in the future that they could not even begin to imagine under present circumstances. That is a very important part of the bill as well.

We include, as a result of the work of the Finance Committee, under the leadership of Senators MAX BAUCUS and CHUCK GRASSLEY, of Iowa, mortgage revenue bonds, relief for first-time home buyers, tax credits that would allow them to purchase foreclosed properties or others.

We have provisions dealing with counseling services, which are very important as people try to work out arrangements with lenders to stay in their homes. It has been called the most broad-sweeping housing legislation in more than a generation. All because of one or two Senators, I was unable to complete that bill this evening. As a result of the leadership of HARRY REID, our majority leader, we will be back on this bill when we return Monday, July 7. We will have a cloture vote that day and then move, 48 hours later or so, to a second cloture motion, which should allow us to come to a final conclusion on the bill.

I am deeply saddened that, as we go into this Independence Day recess, we were not able to complete action on this proposal. I say to the American people, as we leave for 10 days, we have done something that will offer you some hope, some sense of optimism, some sense of confidence that your Senate, your Congress was not unmindful of your concerns and worries. Nothing provides greater stability to a family, to a neighborhood, to a community than home ownership. It is one of the great dreams of most American families to be able to have their own home,

to watch equity increase in those homes, to be able to provide a stable environment for your family and children. Yet we see with the ever-increasing foreclosure crisis in the country, as I mentioned, some 8,400 foreclosures every day in the country—that dream, that hope is evaporating for too many American families. So this bill would have provided real relief. Unfortunately, we could not get to it.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention at the same time, of course, we are simultaneously or are about to provide economic relief to 17 telecom companies who were engaged in activities that were highly questionable in the vacuuming up of private information of millions of Americans and their families, private telephone conversations, e-mails, faxes, and the like. That is part of the so-called Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. While I have deep concern about those who would do us great harm, I am deeply disturbed that that issue seems to be taking greater priority than this home ownership issue, Medicare relief, and the families across the country.

I wish to conclude my remarks this evening, as we prepare to leave this city and return to our respective States, by saying that at a time when we could have done something meaningful for an awful lot of people, to offer them some hope, some renewed sense of confidence and optimism, we missed that opportunity. I didn't want the evening to end without expressing my disappointment.

Simultaneously, I offer a note of optimism. When we come back 10 days from now, this will be a priority item. The majority leader, to his credit, talked about this eloquently and often over the last several days. He is committed that this issue will be a priority item when we return. As such, we will eventually conclude passage of this bill, and we will work with the House of Representatives to adopt a compromise measure and be able to offer some hope that people can remain in their homes—at least many will—with the hope that they can stay there, raise their families, and that we can once again see capital begin to flow in critical areas of investment in this country.

I am grateful to the Presiding Officer and to others who are here to hear these concluding remarks. Again, I felt it was important to identify exactly what the situation was as we concluded our business this evening.

With that, I yield the floor.

CAPITOL GUIDE SERVICE RETIREMENTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I call to your attention today the contributions of three outstanding individuals who will be retiring from the U.S. Capitol Guide Service at the end of the week. Tom Stevens, Sharon Nevitt, and Jeannie Divine have served the Congress—House and Senate alike—with a dedica-

tion to duty that allowed the guide service to fulfill the mission of providing our constituents with an educational and enjoyable experience while visiting our Nation's Capitol.

Tom Stevens first came to the guide service in March of 1985. Tom's contributions toward managing the expanded role of the guide service following the events of September 11, 2001, were instrumental in his selection as Director of the Capitol Guide Service in 2003. Tom's commitment to the employees of the Capitol Guide Service and the Congressional Special Services Office is well known. Under his leadership, this team has skillfully provided assistance to hundreds of thousands of visitors who come to the Capitol each year. Tom has been a mainstay in the effort to prepare for the operations of the Capitol Visitor Center. We recognize and appreciate his extraordinary contributions to the Capitol Visitor Center and indeed the entire Congress.

Sharon Nevitt, the Assistant Director of the Capitol Guide Service, came to the Service in 1977, working her way up through a number of management and supervisory roles. Her efficiency, quiet competence, and fierce loyalty to the employees of the guide service have been invaluable to the day to day operations of the Capitol Guide Service. Sharon has also contributed a wealth of time and effort to various working groups aimed at establishing operational procedures for the new Capitol Visitor Center. Sharon's efforts and her many contributions are recognized and appreciated.

Jeannie Divine has been a fixture here in the Congress since 1975. I would venture to say that each and every one of our offices has been assisted by Jeannie at one time or the other over her career. Jeannie is the one who takes all our calls and works with our staffs to accommodate the growing number of tour requests from our constituents who visit our Capitol each year. She handles each request with efficiency and courtesy. Her kindness and lighthearted nature have allowed her to form lasting friendships with people from both sides of the aisle and both sides of the Hill. Her efforts to help all of us are recognized and appreciated.

We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to this dedicated team whose combined tenure equals 87 years of exemplary service to the Congress of the United States. Please join me in wishing Tom, Sharon, and Jeannie never-ending success in their future endeavors.

HONORING NEA PRESIDENT REG WEAVER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I wish to honor a man who has spent the greater part of his life as an advocate for quality public education.

Reg Weaver has said, "There is no feeling like seeing children's eyes brighten up as they discover the world of opportunity."

He should know. For more than 30 years, as a teacher and a national education leader, Reg Weaver has helped countless children discover the world of opportunity. He has enriched children's lives and helped to improve America's public schools. And in doing so, he has helped to make America better and stronger.

This week, after two terms, Reg Weaver is retiring as president of the 3.2 million-member National Education Association, America's largest teachers union. I know that many of my colleagues join me in thanking Mr. Weaver for his dedicated service. We wish him well as he begins his next chapter in life. I won't say "retirement" because, if you know Reg Weaver, you know he is going to continue to champion children and teachers—it is who he is.

Reg Weaver grew up in the central Illinois town of Danville, about 120 miles south of Chicago. When he started grade school, the U.S. Supreme Court had not yet passed its landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling. Reg attended a predominately White public school through the third grade. Then his family moved across town, and Reg found himself in a mostly Black public school. The differences between the two schools were stark.

Two years later, his mother re-enrolled Reg in the mostly White school, telling school officials the family lived with Reg's grandmother.

That first-person experience with "separate but equal" public schools in his hometown made a deep impression on Reg Weaver. He has spent his life working to guarantee all children the opportunity to attend a good public school, no matter where they live.

The idea of dedicating his life to that goal evolved gradually.

In high school, Reg Weaver shied away from science, despite the urgings of his homeroom teacher, Mr. Sanders, to take a chemistry class. He says he feared the class would be too difficult and other students might ridicule him. Instead, he concentrated on Spanish and wrestling, both of which he excelled in. He thought of becoming an interpreter or maybe even a physical therapist.

His wrestling won him a scholarship to Illinois State University. Only after accepting the scholarship did Reg Weaver realize he was attending a teachers college. He couldn't major in Spanish or physical therapy at Illinois State so he majored in special education for students with disabilities.

Some might say that Reg Weaver fell into teaching by accident. I think it was fate. He discovered quickly that he loved teaching and went on to earn a master's degree from Roosevelt University in Chicago.

In another twist of fate, Reg Weaver found his niche teaching science—the very subject he had once avoided—to middle school students in suburban Chicago. It was there that he first got involved in the Illinois Education Association,

the State chapter of the National Education Association.

In 1981, Reg Weaver became the first African American ever elected president of the Illinois Education Association. During his 6 years as IEA president, the organization increased its membership by 50 percent. IEA was also the driving force behind passage in 1983 of a comprehensive collective bargaining law for Illinois teachers and other school personnel. To this day, Reg Weaver keeps a photo of the bill signing in his office.

In 1996, Mr. Weaver was elected vice president of the National Education Association. He was elected president of the national organization in 2002. As we all well remember, that was a time of major change for public education in America. Less than a year before, President Bush had signed the No Child Left Behind Act, the most comprehensive overhaul of Federal education law in 40 years.

As NEA President, Reg Weaver has not only worked to highlight flaws in the new law, he has tried to suggest ways the law can be strengthened.

Reg Weaver fought to improve the achievement for all students and close the achievement gaps that leave too many low-income and minority students behind. He has worked to increase teacher pay so schools can attract and retain qualified staff. He has worked to encourage parents' involvement in their children's education, always mindful of the difference his own mother's involvement in his education made in his life.

From his days as a middle school science teacher in suburban Chicago to his tenure as president of the Nation's largest professional employee association, Reg Weaver has been a tremendous asset to Illinois and to our Nation.

Over the years, he has received many accolades and awards. *Ebony* magazine named him one of the 100 most influential Black Americans. He is also the recipient of People for the American Way's 2005 Spirit of Liberty Award and the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute's 2006 George Meany Latino Leadership Award.

One award that has special meaning for him is his inclusion in the Danville, IL, High School Wall of Fame. In the same high school where he once feared to take a science class, Reg Weaver now serves as an inspiration for students to study hard and go as far in life as their talents and passions will take them.

In closing, I want to thank Reg Weaver's family—especially his wife Betty—for sharing so much of Reg with America for so long. Above all, I want to thank Reg Weaver for his passionate advocacy on behalf of America's students, teachers and public schools.

GLOBAL AIDS BILL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, many of us on the Democratic side have dis-

agreed with the President's policies—on the war in Iraq, on the economy, on education, and health care.

But an overwhelming majority of us, on both sides of the aisle, find common ground in our support for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR.

The President believes this program is one of the hallmarks of his administration. I agree. I think it is his most positive achievement as President of the United States.

In fact, I believe it is an important illustration of American smart power, a resource we have both squandered and underutilized in recent years.

Smart power is the idea that America's strength resonates not only from its military power but from the power of its ideas, the power of its values, its generosity and diplomacy.

I worry that a measure of this leadership has been lost recently. We are in a struggle of ideas across the world. Many of our harshest critics paint a picture of the United States that is not even close to reality.

When you consider the purpose of this bill—to prevent 12 million new infections; support treatment for at least 3 million people; and provide care for another 12 million, including 5 million vulnerable children—it is easy to see it as an expression of American values—of generosity and caring for those in need.

The success of the PEPFAR program has brought us a long way since 2003, when only 50,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa were receiving treatment. Today, PEPFAR and the Global Fund jointly support nearly 2 million people on treatment, primarily in Africa.

That is remarkable progress in just 5 years. The situation on the ground has been literally transformed through the support and generosity of the American people.

We should be proud of this achievement. But, as U.S. Global AIDS coordinator Dr. Mark Dybul has reminded us many times, "We cannot treat our way out of this epidemic." To build on this progress, we are going to have to integrate our treatment efforts with other prevention activities.

Epidemics do not occur in isolation. If a person goes hungry or doesn't have safe water to drink, her antiretroviral drugs will not be effective. If there are not enough doctors or nurses in her village, she will not receive the care she needs to overcome this terrible disease.

It is essential to integrate treatment with prevention, health workforce capacity development, and other important public health efforts on the ground. We need to move away from an emergency posture to one that encourages sustainability for the long term.

This bill—the Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008—helps us do that.

The President has urged Congress to send him this important bill before the end of the year.