

rights movement of the 1960s and has been a critical force in the advancement of the Hispanic community's fight to obtain a voice in the public sphere. Thanks to the fine leadership at NCLR by individuals such as current president and CEO Janet Murguía and past president and CEO Raul Yzaguirre, NCLR has much to celebrate. In its 40 years of service in 41 States, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia, the National Council of La Raza has worked ardently to provide a much needed Latino perspective in the policy areas of civil rights, immigration, education, employment, health and asset building. In addition, I recognize NCLR's dedication to encouraging civic participation among Hispanics through its voter registration initiatives.

In the Silver State, NCLR has been a valuable partner in meeting national challenges at the local level through its four Nevada affiliates: the East Las Vegas Community Development Corporation, Housing for Nevada, The Nevada Association of Latin Americans, Inc., NALA, and Nevada Hispanic Services, Inc.

In recent months, Nevadans have endured the highest foreclosure rate in the country and struggled to overcome the challenges of an ailing economy. Unfortunately, the Hispanic community has been especially vulnerable to foreclosure and more susceptible to falling victim to economic decline. I have been comforted to know that local partners in the NCLR affiliate network have been tackling this problem head on by providing homebuyer education programs, assistance for loss of a home due to foreclosure, and counseling for individuals facing mortgage default, among many other services and valuable affordable housing projects.

In addition to these valuable housing services, NCLR's Nevada affiliates also offer programs that focus on job placement, education services, nutrition services, immigration assistance, and important health issues, such as HIV/AIDS prevention and substance abuse prevention. These efforts have been especially important during an economic recession, and I share the gratitude of the many Nevadans who have benefited from the services and programs in Las Vegas, Reno, and throughout the Silver State.

I commend the National Council of La Raza for their 40 years of support to the Hispanic community and to these affiliates in Nevada and around the United States. It is through the hard work of these organizations that we will be able to overcome the challenges of our current economy and of the longer term battles against racial and ethnic disparities in the United States.

REMEMBERING SENATOR JESSE HELMS

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to my late colleague, Sen-

ator Jesse Helms of North Carolina. Other Senators have spoken at length in remembrance of our friend, recalling the man and his many accomplishments in this body. It was wonderful to hear the tributes by friends and family at his services in Raleigh, NC.

It was my good fortune to come to the Senate when Senator Helms was leading a lot of fights for a strong America. Senator Helms took charge of the Foreign Relations Committee at the same time I arrived in the Senate. From that perch as chairman, he steadfastly defended the Nation's interests. Senator Helms relished defending his principles, and I am sure he enjoyed his victories.

One such victory in this body is of particular note to me, for I was privileged to play a part in it. In 1999, in Senator Helms's fifth and final term in office, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was before the Senate, and it was poised for ratification. But, with his support and blessing, I helped secure the votes to defeat the treaty, and it fell far short of the two-thirds vote that had at one time seemed assured.

That is but one of the many victories for U.S. national security in which Jesse Helms was involved in his three decades in the Senate.

Senator Helms fought some of the most contentious and courageous fights in the Senate on issues of profound significance. Yet even when the stakes were so high that they involved preserving and safeguarding this Nation, Senator Helms remained unflinchingly courteous. He held to his principles even when they were not popular, but he did so in a way that did not damage friendships.

My wife Caryll and I offer our sympathies to Jesse's wife Dot and their family. Senator Helms took the positions he judged to be right and he didn't flinch. He was a kind and gentle man who deeply believed in his country, his family, and his God.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, on Friday, July 11, 2008, I regrettably missed a vote on H.R. 3221 due to a prior commitment in Michigan. If I had been present, I would have voted for RECORD vote No. 173, the motion to disagree to the amendments of the House adding a new title and inserting a new section to the amendment of the Senate to H.R. 3221. This represented the final hurdle in passing the much-needed Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008. I strongly support this bipartisan, comprehensive bill to address the root of our economic problems—the housing crisis. This bill would strengthen the regulatory oversight of government sponsored enterprises, GSEs, and provide FHA modernization reforms to help stabilize the housing finance system and begin to restore confidence to the market. The bill's Hope for Homeowners FHA refinancing program would help as many as 400,000

homeowners at risk of losing their homes to foreclosure. It also includes foreclosure counseling for families in desperate need of help, assistance for communities hit by foreclosures, an affordable housing trust fund, provisions to help returning soldiers avoid foreclosure and important tax benefits targeted to help the recovery of the housing market. I am especially pleased that the package includes my provision to allow struggling American businesses to invest in the economy and create jobs here at home. This bill is an important first step in helping struggling families in Michigan and throughout the country. I look forward to the swift enactment of this legislation to provide relief to homeowners and to uphold the American dream for all.

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I have advised the Senate leadership that I will be necessarily absent from the Senate for the balance of this week. This evening, were I able to be present for the vote on the President's veto of the Medicare bill, I would have voted to override.

Following consultation and discussion with my physicians, including the Capitol Physician's Office, I made the decision earlier this summer to treat my atrial fibrillation with a pacemaker, and made arrangement for scheduled admission to Inova Fairfax Hospital. Colleagues will recall that last fall I was treated for this common condition.

This past Saturday doctors implanted a pacemaker, and consistent with the success of the routine procedure, I was released the following day.

This morning I came to the Capitol, handled planned morning appointments, and voted on the floor of the Senate. During a follow-up visit this afternoon, the Capitol Physician's Office and my private doctors made the decision to schedule a readmission to Inova Fairfax Hospital where they will perform a second procedure to adjust the pacemaker, and will keep me for observation.

FURTHER CHANGES TO S. CON. RES. 70

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, pursuant to sections 221(f) and 227 of S. Con. Res. 70, I previously filed adjustments to the 2009 budget resolution for H.R. 6331, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008. Those adjustments reflected the Congressional Budget Office's estimate at that time of the budgetary effects of H.R. 6331.

CBO has since revised that estimate. While H.R. 6331 still meets the conditions required for the release of the reserve funds under sections 221(f) and 227, including being fully paid for over both the 6- and 11-year time periods, the net effect of CBO's revisions is to