

says is more important than what the science would say we can do best.

There is the Emmett Till unsolved civil rights bill. I agree we ought to pass that bill, but I don't think we ought to add that money to our grandkids. I think we ought to get rid of the waste, fraud, abuse, and excesses at the Department of Justice and pay for it. It is a legitimate Federal role. It fits with the enumerated powers. Those were Federal laws violated in the fifties and sixties. But to pass that bill and not get rid of wasteful programs and not get rid of waste says we are only doing half the job. It is easier doing it that way. You don't make anybody mad or upset with you. But you don't do the best thing for our children and our grandchildren, and you certainly don't do the best thing for our country.

It is interesting. I have sent two letters to the prime author of that bill. He has not had the courtesy to answer me once. He held a press conference that impugned I was a racist because I would not let that bill go through.

The fact is, the statements are: You can't work and negotiate bills. We have offered amendments to pay for the bill, with which Mr. Sykes, the main supporter of this bill, agrees. What has happened is it is take it or leave it, no debate, no amendment, no working in the Senate to the best tradition of the body.

So we have this statement made by Senator HARRY REID that you can't work with COBURN. I tell you, PEPFAR was a great bill. This Senate passed it. We were critical in terms of negotiating that bill. The Second Chance Act, which makes sure that we work against recidivism on prisoners throughout this country, we worked hard and changed that bill. On the Genetic Nondiscrimination Act, we negotiated well and got a great bill for every American so the insurance company can no longer discriminate against you if you have a genetic tendency and they cannot raise your premium. We have done a ton of things, but it is on the small bills which require people to work that we have not been able to accomplish that.

I look forward to the next 2 weeks. I look forward to the weekend. Congress is about to go on vacation. Most Americans today with gas prices cannot go on vacation. And we are going to get a debate this weekend on these 40 bills. We probably won't have done anything significant yet about energy. So we are going to be debating spending \$25 billion, \$50 billion, maybe even \$70 billion more, creating 50, 60, 70 new programs, and you are still going to be paying \$4.10 for your gasoline with no hope 10 years from now that things are going to be any different because we have our priorities wrong. We would rather look good to special interests and pass bills in the dark of night than debate them on the floor and put the priorities that should be in front of this country out there—energy, health care, Social Se-

curity reform, \$300 billion worth of waste in the Federal Government every year. Nobody is doing a thing about it. Half the agencies will not even comply with the improper payments law. We have \$3 billion a year spent at the Pentagon maintaining properties they don't want, but the Congress won't pass a true real property reform because it is held up by a homeless act, most of which none of the buildings are capable of being utilized by homeless individuals.

What I say to my colleagues is let's have a debate. Let's see the rumble in America that thinks whether we are doing the right things, the right priorities. Do they want us to go down this road where we strangle the lifeblood economically from our children, we take away their ability to own a home, we take away their ability to get a college education, or should we be about real priorities? And if we are going to spend new money, shouldn't we be about getting rid of some of the \$300 billion that is wasted every year right now?

I don't have to take a poll about that one. That is a 90-plus-percent factor with the American people. It is only in the Senate that we don't get it, that we would rather spend time growing the Government and spending more money than fixing the real problems of this Nation.

I look forward to the debate. I am excited about this weekend. My hope is we will have an open amendment process, one that does justice to the greatest traditions of the Senate but, more importantly, one that does justice to the American family and their children to come.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. KLOBUCHAR). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, I have in my hand the bill Senator REID just filed. There is no CBO score with this, and I object to the introduction of this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SPECIALIST ESTELL "LEE" TURNER

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to SPC Estell

"Lee" Turner and his heroic service to our country. As a member of the Army's Echo Company, 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division based in Fort Campbell, KY, SPC Turner was serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. On July 2, 2008, he died in the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD, after being mortally wounded by an IED in Afghanistan.

Lee had already served his country for 6 years in the Army two decades earlier, having finished his military service in 1989. Yet this wasn't enough. Even though he had gone above and beyond, Lee still had the drive to be a hero. After moving to Sioux Falls in 2004, he reenlisted in the Army at the age of 39, after the Army had raised its age limit. He looked forward to being deployed to Afghanistan, his first tour in the war on terror. His wife recalls, "He never seemed worried about it, this is something he believed in. He thought it was right."

Raised in a military family, patriotism was instilled in his heart from a young age. Lee's father served in the Navy for 18 years, and his grandfather was an Army soldier who served in World War II. His younger brother John is in the Army and his wife is an Army reservist. Lee's awards and decorations include the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Army Combat Action Badge, and the Purple Heart. Lee enjoyed racing and fixing cars and playing guitar. He had a fierce devotion to his family, and he will be deeply missed by those who survive him: his wife Leah, his daughter Lyda, his siblings, John and "Gucci," and his mother Gloria.

Specialist Turner gave his all for his soldiers and his country. Our Nation owes him a debt of gratitude, and the best way to honor his life is to emulate his commitment to our country. Madam President, I join with all South Dakotans in expressing my deepest sympathy to the family and friends of SPC Estell Turner. He will be missed, but his service to our Nation will never be forgotten.

STAFF SERGEANT JEREMY VROOMAN

Madam President, I also rise today to pay tribute to SSG Jeremy Vrooman and his heroic service to our country. As a member of the Army's 2nd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, in Vilseck, Germany, Staff Sergeant Vrooman was serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. On July 15, 2008, he died in a Baghdad hospital after sustaining injuries from an improvised explosive device.

A native South Dakotan, Jeremy carried on the tradition of military service in his family when he joined the Army 9 years ago. Both of his grandfathers served and his older brother, Justin, is currently in the Army. Jeremy was proud to serve in the military and planned on making it his career.