

based on the success Whitney, Cassandra, Kelli, and Michella have already achieved. I know my fellow Senators join me in wishing them the best of luck in their future endeavors.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS 2008 ANNUAL REPORT

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the 2008 Annual Report of the Select Committee on Ethics.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2008—SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

The Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007 (the "Act") calls for the Select Committee on Ethics of the United States Senate to issue an annual report no later than January 31 of each year providing information in certain categories describing its activities for the preceding year. Reported below is the information describing the Committee's activities in 2008 in the categories set forth in the Act:

(1) The number of alleged violations of Senate rules received, from any source [in 2008], including the number raised by a Senator or staff of the Committee: 85. (This figure does not include 13 alleged violations from the previous year carried into 2008.)

(2) The number of alleged violations that were dismissed—

(A) For lack of subject matter jurisdiction or in which, even if the allegations in the complaint are true, no violation of Senate rules would exist: 52. (This figure includes 5 matters originating in the previous year.)

(B) Because they failed to provide sufficient facts as to any material violation of the Senate rules beyond mere allegation or assertion: 21. (This figure includes 4 matters originating in the previous year.)

(3) The number of alleged violations in which the Committee staff conducted a preliminary inquiry: 10. (This figure includes 4 matters from the previous year carried into 2008.)

(4) The number of alleged violations that resulted in an adjudicatory review: 0.

(5) The number of alleged violations that the Committee dismissed for lack of substantial merit: 4. (This figure includes 1 matter from the previous year carried into 2008.)

(6) The number of private letters of admonition or public letters of admonition issued: 2.

(7) The number of matters resulting in a disciplinary sanction: 0.

(8) Any other information deemed by the Committee to be appropriate to describe its activities in the previous year.

Between January 4 and February 25, 2008 the Committee staff conducted mandatory ethics training for all Senate employees: 8 training sessions for Members, 19 training sessions for staff, and 1 training session for Member spouses. In addition, the Committee conducted 11 new employee training sessions during the year; 17 ethics seminars for Member DC offices, state offices, Senate committees, and outside delegations; 2 mandatory campaign related ethics briefings; and 1 Senator-elect orientation session and 1 training session for transition staff.

In 2008, Committee staff handled 15,555 telephone inquiries for ethics advice and guidance.

In 2008, the Committee wrote 1,264 ethics advisory letters and responses, including 869 advisories concerning gifts or travel.

The Committee issued 3,395 letters concerning financial disclosure filings by Sen-

ators, Senate staff and Senate candidates and reviewed 1,510 reports.

HOLDER NOMINATION

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I believe I am speaking on behalf of Americans who value their second amendment personal right to own their own firearms. I also believe I am speaking on behalf of Americans who favor justice over political patronage. Finally, I believe I am speaking on behalf of Americans who realize we are in a war on terror and want to continue the strong efforts to bring terrorists to justice. I am opposed to the appointment of Eric Holder to be the next Attorney General of the United States.

I take particular interest in this nomination because I, as well as the voters of the State of Oklahoma, feel strongly that the rights conferred upon us by the second amendment of the Constitution guarantee an individual freedom that no government regulation can take away. Eric Holder's record and his true beliefs about the second amendment are clear. In a brief filed in the Heller case, Holder joined other past Department of Justice officials by saying: "[t]he Second Amendment Does Not Protect Firearms Possession or Use That Is Unrelated To Participation In a Well-Regulated Militia." The brief also stated that the "recognition of an expansive individual right to keep and bear arms for private purposes will make it more difficult for the government to defend present and future firearms laws." During his confirmation hearing, Eric Holder noted the importance of the Heller decision and recognized it as precedent. But I certainly do not believe that the decision in Heller has changed the underlying beliefs held by Eric Holder, and his leadership as the chief lawyer of the United States will be a detriment to the gun ownership rights of American citizens.

I am also very uncomfortable with Mr. Holder's judgment and record on pardons and clemency during the Clinton administration. He apparently chose to circumvent the standard process by which all pardons are considered and granted, and clouded this process with the appearance of impropriety. If the pardon of Mark Rich was not impropriety, and I believe it was, then it was at the very least extreme negligence, and such negligence has no place in any level of government. Mark Rich, whom many label a tax evader, is in fact even more than that. Rich was indicted in 1983 on 65 counts of not only tax evasion, but also fraud, racketeering, and trading with the enemy. Rich fled to Switzerland before he could stand trial, which is perhaps the most egregious element of this case—he was a fugitive and a regular fixture on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted List. How can one justify recommending a pardon, bypass the Department of Justice and the hundreds of individuals who worked to bring Mark Rich to justice, when the man who is being par-

doned is not even willing to face the same justice system to which every other American must answer? In fact, Holder admitted during his confirmation hearing that he did not adequately acquaint himself with the facts of the case. The United States Senate should not allow such injustice to go unanswered.

Equally egregious, Holder was Deputy Attorney General in an administration which granted clemency to 16 members of the Armed Forces of National Liberation, or FALN. This is a group which not only carried out violent protests, FALN set off bombs several times in New York City and Chicago and were convicted for conspiracies to commit robbery, bomb-making, and sedition. The Clinton administration granted clemency despite opposition from the U.S. Attorney's Office, FBI, and most importantly, the victims of FALN terrorist activities.

Finally, we continue to be in a war on terror, however, Holder is an individual who is opposed to the military commissions which have tried terrorists and is opposed to the Guantanamo Bay detention facility for detaining terrorists. This Senate and the American people should know that since October 2001, the U.S. has detained almost 800 al-Qaida and Taliban combatants at GTMO. Currently, 60 more are ready for transfer or release to another country, 70 have either been tried or in process, and 130 are a high threat to the U.S. Since 2002, more than 525 detainees have departed GTMO for other countries. Today, there are approximately 240 detainees at GTMO. If GTMO is no longer a prison, some U.S. domestic or overseas prison will have to house these men while they await a habeas hearing and trial. All the while, the military detention facilities at GTMO meet the highest international standards. The Pentagon spends \$2.5 million each year on Korans, prayer rugs, and special meals for prisoners. There are on average two lawyers for every detainee at GTMO. He believes our military commissions currently in place would have to be substantially revamped and even holds the position that U.S. interrogation techniques should be published for the world to see.

For at least these reasons, I cannot vote to support the nomination of an individual who holds opinions on a wide range of issues which I find so objectionable and objectionable to my constituents. I will be voting a definitive no on the Holder nomination.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I wish to express my optimism that with a new administration and a new Congress, we will finally be able to achieve what was left unfinished last year: the expansion of the Children's Health Insurance Program. Though we are in difficult economic times, we can