

In fiscal year 2009, the Alaska Region Forest Service funding level for subsistence management activities in the two largest forests in the National Forest System—the 17 million acre Tongass National Forest—an area roughly the size of West Virginia—and the 5.6 million acre Chugach National Forest—totaled \$5 million. The current bill before you would only fund half this amount, \$2,582,000.

The need has not suddenly changed, and I hope Congress has not suddenly forgotten its obligation to the Alaska Native people. I can only hope that the fiscal year 2010 amount resulted from the innocent ignorance of an incoming administration about the obligation the Federal Government has to the Alaska Native people.

Subsistence hunting, fishing, and gathering is about more than simple economics. It is about the survival of a way of life and identity of Alaska's Native peoples. However, its economic importance is central to rural Alaska life and cannot be overstated. Rural Alaska residents harvest approximately 44 million pounds of fish and wildlife for food, the replacement value of which is \$220 million.

Subsistence is a major source of employment and sustenance for families in rural Alaska; subsistence participants work to feed and clothe their families. Wild foods supply one-third of the caloric requirements of rural Alaskans, in many remote communities it can total 75 percent or more.

One in every five Alaskans lives in a rural area, about 125,000 people in more than 250 communities. Most rural settlements are off the road network and are comprised of fewer than 500 people, the majority made up of Native villages. In a State where approximately 15 percent of the population is Alaska Native, nearly half of all rural Alaskans are Alaska Native.

Of subsistence foods taken by Alaskans, 60 percent of the catch is made up of fish, land mammals make up 20 percent, marine mammals make up 14 percent, birds, shellfish, plants, and berries make up the remaining 6 percent of the rural harvest of wild food.

Mr. President, I ask for your assistance in helping the Federal Government honor its commitment to the Alaska Native people and fully fund the Alaska Region Forest Service subsistence management budget.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent 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.

TRIBUTE TO VIVIA MOTSINGER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a good friend, Vivia Motsinger, on the recent celebration of

her 90th birthday. A longtime resident of Washington, DC, Vivia's 90 years may best be characterized by her incredible work ethic, as well as her undying devotion to public service.

Vivia Motsinger was born the daughter of a shipbuilder in Portsmouth, VA, on September 20, 1919. Years later, Vivia's father moved the family to our Nation's Capital in order to work in the construction of government buildings. She went to school at Roosevelt High, where she graduated in 1935 at the age of 16. Tragically, 2 years later her father died, making teenaged Vivia the only breadwinner in her family. Grateful to have the aid of Social Security to supplement her meager earning power, Vivia started out her career working hard to assist her mother and younger sister.

Vivia's professional career saw her begin as a clerk at a naval gun factory during WWII. Later, she found employment as a stenographer and an administrative assistant at the U.S. Department of State. Mrs. Motsinger's final position, before she retired, was that of a Foreign Service worker. She is very proud of the accomplishments that she has made and grateful for her years of service to the Federal Government.

Vivia has been blessed with a loving family. She married a remarkable husband, who worked as an officer for the Central Intelligence Agency, and raised a son who is now employed by NASA. She loves her church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and is proud to have become a member some 34 years ago. She has spent her years of retirement studying her heritage, a hobby which has driven her to become avidly involved with genealogy and research.

With her optimism and strong work ethic, Vivia represents the spirit of America. Despite challenging circumstances, she has achieved great things. I congratulate Vivia Motsinger on this her 90th birthday.

GOLD STAR MOTHER'S DAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this Sunday marks Gold Star Mother's Day, a day for us to honor the mothers of servicemembers lost while serving in our Armed Forces.

This Sunday, the last Sunday in September, is a day that is part of a larger Gold Star tradition, one that brings together all family members who have lost a son or daughter in uniform.

The gold star has its roots in World War I, when families would display in the windows of their homes a blue star for every family member who was serving and a gold star for every family member who had died in the war. In 1936, Congress established the last Sunday in September as Gold Star Mother's Day.

America has been home to hundreds of thousands of Gold Star Mothers, each of whom has lost a child. They often choose to become part of an organization of other Gold Star Mothers,

one that—in the words of one mother—“none of us ever wanted to become eligible to join but we are grateful to have.” It is a testament to their strength that so many continue to volunteer and to remember, long after they learn of their own loss.

On Sunday, the American people are encouraged to display our flag and also to hold meetings to publicly express the love, sorrow, and reverence we have for Gold Star Mothers.

Gold Star Mothers from across the country will visit our Nation's capital, to remember. They will visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, a short distance from this place, where many will lay wreaths for their sons or daughters. They will travel to Arlington National Cemetery and view the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

In Illinois, Gold Star Mothers will be recognized in ways big and small, from the Governor's annual ceremony in Chicago, to a barbeque held in their honor at the Middle East Conflicts Wall Memorial in Marseilles, Il, to commemorations in townhalls and on radio shows.

Gold Star Mothers affect every community in this country. Their presence is another reminder that in the Senate, the vote for war is among the most significant votes a Senator will ever take.

I hope all Americans will take a moment out of their day this Sunday to honor Gold Star Mothers, their families, and their children who died while serving our country.

PUBLIC OPTION LITE

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, a September 17, 2009, editorial in the Wall Street Journal, “Public Option Lite,” clearly and concisely describes how the Finance Committee chairman's health care plan would result in a near total government takeover of the health care industry.

Because it does not include the public option, the chairman's plan has been touted as a more moderate proposal than other bills before Congress. But, as the Journal writes, the absence of the public option “is a political offering without much policy difference. His plan remains a public option by other means.”

Near total government control would be achieved through the bill's two main mechanisms: an individual mandate for all Americans to purchase government-approved insurance and the regulatory insurance “exchange.” The inevitable outcomes of these mechanisms would be “vast new insurance regulation” and “a vast increase in the government's share of U.S. health spending, forcing doctors, hospitals, insurance companies, and other health providers to serve politics, as well as, or even over and above patients.” Thus, power would be centralized with politicians and bureaucrats, rather than patients and doctors.

Along the way, as the editorial points out, the bill would increase the