

All in his strength . . . all in William's Cold Steele!  
 As a Chicago boy, who had it rough . . . trying to lift up himself . . .  
 At seventeen, his Mother signed the papers . . . to insure his future dreams . . .  
 For William was born to be, in The United States Army . . . Hoooh indeed . . .  
 As this was to be, his final casting and molding . . . into a heart of Steele, you see . . .  
 Letting this Chicago Lad, Be All That He Could Be . . .  
 When, all in a moment of truth . . . as an explosion almost took his life, but lies the proof . . .  
 As this young man's medal was to be tested, as where lies the truth . . .  
 While, on the edge of death as he awoke with one leg left . . .  
 As his tears would crest, as he remembered his Mother who him had blessed . . .  
 In his head, the words she said, "There is no sense of looking down, hold your head up!"  
 As somehow the strength he found . . .  
 As from that moment on, his most gallant heart of Steele so moved on!  
 To fight the good fight, burning bold . . . burning bright!  
 For you see, The Army is William's life!  
 As he would not give up, nor give in . . . until he's back in action again . . .  
 For inside this heart of Steele, such warmth is revealed . . .  
 And if ever I had a son, oh how I wish he could be like this one!  
 Throughout our Country Tis of Thee, all in our nation we have seen . . .  
 Hearts of Steele, Freedom Fighters like Dr. King, and Rosa Parks . . .  
 Because, of all of their courage and sacrifice, and most magnificent hearts . . .  
 Blessing this our country tis of thee!  
 And now a new name to the list, of a young man who for us so much would give . . .  
 With his heart of Freedom Fighter, teaching us all how to live!  
 With but Hearts of Steele!

#### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on July 4, the Nation will celebrate the 45th anniversary of the enactment of the Freedom of Information Act, FOIA. Now in its fifth decade, FOIA remains an indispensable tool for shedding light on government policies and government abuses. This premier open government law has helped to guarantee the public's "right to know" for generations of Americans.

Today, the U.S. Government is more committed than in any time in our history to making and keeping government open and accountable to the people. As one of his first official acts, President Obama signed an historic Presidential Memorandum on the Freedom of Information Act, which restored the presumption of disclosure for all government information. I applaud President Obama for his commitment to FOIA, and I will continue to work closely with his administration to ensure that our government fulfills both the letter and spirit of this remarkable memorandum.

While the Obama administration has made significant progress in improving the FOIA process, large backlogs re-

main a major roadblock to public access to information. A report released by the National Security Archive found that only about half of the Federal agencies surveyed have taken concrete steps to update their FOIA policies in light of the President's reforms. According to the Department of Justice's annual FOIA Report for fiscal year 2010, more than 69,000 FOIA requests remain backlogged across our government. These delays are simply unacceptable.

To address these concerns, in May, the Senate unanimously passed the Faster FOIA Act of 2011—a bill to establish a bipartisan commission to examine the root causes of agency delays in processing FOIA requests. Senator CORNYN and I first introduced this bill in 2005, because we were concerned about the growing problem of excessive FOIA delays within our Federal agencies. During the intervening years, this problem has not gone away. That is why in 2010, we reintroduced this bill and the Senate unanimously passed it. Unfortunately, the House of Representatives did not take action. After the Judiciary Committee's hearing on FOIA, which was held during the annual Sunshine Week in March, we reintroduced the Faster FOIA Act yet again—with the hope that the Congress would finally enact this good government legislation. I am pleased that the Senate has done its part to achieve this goal. On the occasion of this 45th anniversary of FOIA, I urge the House to act on this important bill so that the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays can begin its important work.

I thank Senator CORNYN for his work on this bill and for his leadership on this issue. I also commend and thank the many open government and FOIA advocacy groups that have supported our efforts to bolster FOIA, including OpenTheGovernment.org, the Project on Government Oversight and the Sunshine in Government Initiative.

The right to know is a cornerstone of our democracy. Without it, citizens are kept in the dark about key policy decisions that directly affect their lives. Without open government, citizens cannot make informed choices at the ballot box. And once eroded, the right to know is hard to win back.

The House Committee Report that accompanied the Freedom of Information Act in 1966 stated:

it is vital to our way of life to reach a workable balance between the right of the public to know and the need of the Government to keep information in confidence to the extent necessary without permitting indiscriminate secrecy. The right of the individual to be able to find out how his Government is operating can be just as important to him as his right to privacy and his right to confide in his Government. This bill strikes a balance considering all these interests.

As we reflect upon the celebration of another FOIA anniversary, we in Congress must reaffirm the commitment to open and transparent government captured by these time-proven words.

Open government is neither a Democratic issue, nor a Republican issue—it is truly an American value and virtue that we all must uphold. It is in this bipartisan spirit that I join Americans from across the political spectrum in celebrating the 45th anniversary of FOIA and all that this law has come to symbolize about our vibrant democracy.

#### FBI EXTENSION OF SERVICE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, back on May 12, the President requested that Congress pass legislation to enable Robert Mueller to continue serving as Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, FBI, for up to 2 additional years, in light of the continuing threat to our Nation, the leadership transition at other key national security agencies, and the unique circumstances in which we find ourselves as the tenth anniversary of 9/11 approaches. In response to the President's request, a bipartisan group of Senators drafted and introduced S. 1103, a bill that would create a one-time exception to the statute limiting the term of the FBI Director by allowing the term of the incumbent FBI Director to continue for 2 additional years. Given the continuing threats to our Nation and the need to provide continuity and stability on the President's national security team, it is important that this critical legislation be enacted without delay.

Director Mueller's term expires on August 3, 2011. With the House out of session this week and the Senate out of session the next, there is relatively little time left to act. Of the 10 weeks between the President's request and the expiration of Director Mueller's term, six are gone already. More than half the time that we had in which to act has elapsed. If we do not complete action on this matter this week, the Senate will then be in recess until July 11. That leaves Congress only 3 weeks for all necessary action to be completed by the Senate and the House of Representatives.

We should be acting responsibly and expeditiously. I have worked diligently with Senator GRASSLEY in order to prevent a lapse in the term of the Director of the FBI. We must act on this bill without further, unnecessary delays. The Senate should take it up, consider it and pass it, and then the House will need to consider and pass the bill before the President has the opportunity to sign it. Each of these steps must be completed prior to the expiration of the Director's current 10-year term on August 3, 2011. There is no time to waste.

I understand from the Senate cloakroom that all Senate Democrats are prepared to take up and pass S. 1103 and send it to the House of Representatives for it to take final action before August 3. We should do that now, before the Fourth of July recess. There is no good reason for delay.