

than \$3 million from the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

So we have this new law in effect that can literally save children's lives and make children more healthy and help their brain development, in effect, in Eugene, OR, and Columbus, OH, but if we cut back on the enforcement of these laws by cutting these agencies and taking away employees who inspect these, who force these companies—who make sure these companies are doing the right thing and not selling lead-based toys to American children, what have we? And that is really unfortunate. The cuts would take us back to the very reason Congress passed and President Bush—a Republican President—in those days signed into law the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act in the first place.

We know there are plenty of government regulations that we should reexamine and in some cases pull back or reform or repeal, but it just seems my conservative colleagues don't know the difference between regulations that might actually affect jobs and regulations that clearly protect the public health and clearly protect the public safety.

We know the Senate will prepare to debate the fiscal year 2012 financial services and general government appropriations bill later this week. I call on my colleagues to support funding for the Consumer Product Safety Commission. We know what that does. We know it saves lives. We know it makes a difference in the lives of our children.

VICTOR F. STEWART, JR.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I rise on a more somber note. A longtime friend of mine, Victor F. Stewart, Jr., from O'Leary, OH, died this week at the age of 85. He was a counselor to me, he was a teacher, and he was a friend. He was someone who mentored me and so many other people in our community and our State. He dedicated his life to his community and to his country. He leaves behind 10 children and family and friends. He leaves public servants behind him whom he counseled about life, politics, and public service.

Vic was a child of the Great Depression. He was born in the 1920s. He was a child of the New Deal. He believed in loyalty and frugality. He believed in a citizen's responsibility to vote and to be a citizen.

As I said, he was the father of 10—6 daughters and 4 sons. His wife Helen survives him, and he was married to her for 62 years. I remember going to Vic and Helen's 50th wedding anniversary and the number of children and grandchildren and friends in the community, and the love people felt and extended to both him and Helen was a sight to see.

Vic was a city councilman. He was mayor of O'Leary. He served in the U.S. Army in World War II. He was always a team player. He was a Catholic Youth League basketball coach, a Lit-

tle League coach, a high school third baseman, and, again, a mentor to young people in politics, baseball, sporting activities, and especially to his children.

He was a Democratic Party chair in Lorain County for many years. He walked and met with President Kennedy, President Johnson, and President Carter when they were in Lorain County. He credits President Johnson with so much of what we all should credit our government for doing: the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act, the passage of Medicare, the antipoverty initiatives of the Johnson Great Society program.

When I think about what our government can do in partnership with the private sector, that is what brought us Medicare, that is what brought us safe drinking water, that is what brought us civil rights, and that is what brought us Head Start, many of them passing in the mid-1960s, passage of legislation from which our country still benefits.

Many of the young people sitting in front of us today will benefit from the Pell grants that came out of the Higher Education Act. Senator WHITEHOUSE spoke to a group of us today about a forum he did at the University of Rhode Island and what those Pell grants mean to some of the professors there who were able to go to college because of the Pell grants, some of the young students there who can afford college because of the Pell grants, and some older people who went back to school because of these Pell grants and got an opportunity to further their education as middle-aged parents. Vic Stewart was part of all that.

Vic Stewart believed that the role of government in our communities could make a difference in people's lives, especially working families. So while he met with President Carter and President Kennedy and President Johnson, his heart was always in the community. He cared most about working families, poor kids who didn't have the opportunities of some more privileged people in O'Leary or Lorain or anywhere else in our county. That is what I admired about Vic.

I was so appreciative of the wisdom he would impart to me when we would get together several times a year at breakfast or lunch and just talk about what I was doing and what he was doing, and he was always so helpful that way. He offered his no-nonsense advice with a touch of humor and compassion and a healthy dose of common sense.

He understood the value of a hard day's work. He lived his life guided by that devotion to God. He was a devout Roman Catholic. To family—he was a terrific father and husband to Helen. Friends—he counted so many of us as people who were close to him and his love of country. We will never forget his warmth and his wit and his wisdom.

He always looked to the whole community, not just the privileged. He was

sickened by this power of Wall Street and this huge executive compensation, these huge salaries and bonuses that too many in our society on Wall Street and other places have taken.

His heart was always with the middle class, working families. He taught integrity, especially to young people. That is why I owe Vic Stewart so much. We have lost a true friend, we have lost a teacher, and we have lost a mentor who made a difference in the lives of so many of us. We mourn for Vic Stewart, Jr. We think of Helen. We think of the sons and daughters whom Vic and Helen have taught so well and raised so well over the last five-plus decades.

Mr. President, I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNET). Without objection, it is so ordered.

REBUILD AMERICA JOBS ACT

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, if we pass the Rebuild America Jobs Act, we will immediately invest \$50 billion into our transportation infrastructure and generate hundreds of thousands of good jobs and establish a national infrastructure bank which will generate even more good jobs. We need these jobs during the current period of high unemployment, and upgrading our crumbling infrastructure will spur long-term job growth in addition to the immediate employment benefits. So I strongly support this bill and I hope our colleagues can be brought around as well.

The Rebuild America Jobs Act is one piece of the larger American Jobs Act which, when Leader REID brought it to the floor, all 47 Senate Republicans chose to filibuster instead of allowing us to begin debating and, if they wished, improving the jobs legislation. That filibuster blocked President Obama's plan to cut payroll taxes for every single American worker, and it blocked his plan to offer business owners generous tax breaks to hire new workers and grow their businesses. Economists estimated that the American Jobs Act would create nearly 2 million jobs—1.9 million jobs. Perhaps for that reason, many pieces of the bill have received wide bipartisan support in the past. Indeed, just last December, similar job-creating provisions were included in the Job Creation and Tax Cuts Act, which received 81 votes in the Senate.

The jobs bill that Republicans blockaded was fully paid for through a 5.6-percent surtax on income in excess of \$1 million. In other words, the only tax increase in the bill is a provision that pays for job creation in this country by