

## LEAD SMELTER SITES IN OHIO

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam President, I rise to bring attention to a problem plaguing many aging communities in Ohio and throughout the industrial Midwest. We in this country have a rich manufacturing heritage, none richer than Ohio. We are the third leading manufacturing State in the country, trailing only in production, and trailing only States two and three times our size—Texas and California. We have built an infrastructure in this country that defined the landscape of the modern world.

At Ohio plants in places such as Middletown and Youngstown, Ohioans made steel beams that built America's skyscrapers, railroads, and bridges. And at lead smelter sites from Cleveland to Cincinnati, OH, workers processed metal to shore up the economic foundation of 20th century America. But as revealed in a disturbing series of recent reports in USA TODAY, former lead smelter plants have left behind a terrible legacy: elevated lead levels in the soil and in the air and surrounding playgrounds and schools, especially in poorer areas of our cities. Many of these potentially contaminated places are in underresourced, aging areas where homes are not necessarily in good shape and where neighborhoods are plagued with many other problems as well.

Yesterday I met with Angelina and Ken Shefton in Cleveland at a property that is within breathing distance of an old lead smelter site. What is even more troubling is that they didn't even know this existed. They are parents of five. One of their sons was recently diagnosed with elevated blood lead levels. They fear for the other four children also. Parents such as them and thousands of Ohioans living in communities with aging and abandoned industrial sites are worried about the health and safety of their families.

A national newspaper report found that lead levels in soil near this smelter plant in Cleveland exceed 3,400 parts per million. The average lead level in U.S. soils is only 19 parts per million.

As a father and grandfather, I am particularly disturbed by these reports. We know that lead is not broken down when it lingers in the ground. It can enter our groundwater and children can absorb it on the baseball diamond or while making mud pies in the yard.

For too long regulators have overlooked or neglected to fully investigate toxic sites in our communities. That is why I am urging the Federal Government to take action. I have called on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee to hold a hearing on what we can do to address this issue. We need to prioritize testing our schools and playgrounds in those neighborhoods close to abandoned sites.

I am asking the EPA to take immediate action to review sites that have not yet been tested. But that is not enough. After the results come in, we

need to take action to clean up residential contamination.

Last week the CDC lowered by half the recommended allowable limit for lead exposure to young children, so we must ramp up our efforts to address the problem lingering in our soil. We need to address it now. Too many young lives are depending on our actions. Too many children in too many urban school districts suffer from behavior problems, suffer from intelligence problems, if you will, because they have had far too high lead levels in their blood which retard growth, restrict learning, and cause behavioral problems. It is a serious public health problem. It is the paint on the walls in these old homes, and it is the lead in the paint on the walls. It is the lead in the soil of the homes and neighborhoods and playgrounds. It does call for real action from State and Federal Governments and local communities.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

## HONORING THE LIFE OF BOB BETHELL

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I woke up this morning in Kansas with some sad news. One of our State legislators, Bob Bethell, a 13-year member of the Kansas House of Representatives, died in a car wreck late last night. The Kansas legislature has had a difficult session and finally concluded, I believe after 100 days of the legislative session, this year's work in Topeka, and one of our central Kansas legislators on the drive home from Topeka back to Alden, KS, was involved in a one-car accident, a fatality.

I rise tonight to pay respect to my friend and former colleague Bob Bethell, and express my respect and gratitude for his public service, and my care and concern, in fact my love, for his wife Lorene and his family and friends.

Bob Bethell was, I suppose you could call him, a great politician in the sense that his constituents loved and admired him. They respected him. They cared about him. He could be called a great politician because in Topeka he was someone whose voice was listened to. But nothing about Bob Bethell was a politician.

Bob Bethell was a person who was a Baptist minister in his small hometown. He loved God greatly. God was the focus of his life. He loved the people God created in his community and across Kansas. In fact, Bob became the administrator of a nursing home because of his care for senior citizens. It was that extension of his care for seniors that caused him to want to serve in the legislature. Bob wanted to extend that opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the people he cared for in his profession with public policy decisions that were important to them and their future and their families in Topeka, KS.

Again, I would say there is nothing political about Bob Bethell. He was respected and someone everybody enjoyed being around, but it wasn't because he as a politician calculated what the right answer was or how to get along with people or one who took a poll to discover what the issues were that people supported; it was just that Bob Bethell, in his love of God, had a love of human beings, of citizens of Kansas. So we would see Bob Bethell with a smile on his face at every parade, at every community meeting.

I think sometimes in our lives, when we see an elected official, we may see someone walk across the street sometimes to avoid the political conversation. But, again, there was nothing political about Bob; he was somebody who cared about people and it showed. He enjoyed being around people; loved the conversation. He worked hard at being a constituent-service-oriented member in the Kansas House of Representatives. It is so sad for us to lose such a person.

I hope Lorene and her family and friends in Alden find comfort in the belief that God will care for Bob Bethell in the life hereafter. They believe that in their lives. They demonstrated that to the people across Kansas, and their focus was a love of others. Bob is a role model for all of us to make certain we focus on the things that matter—not the public opinion polls and not the calculation of how to get along with people, but the idea that we in public service are given an opportunity to make a great difference in the lives of others, and it ought to be that motivating factor, the one that Bob Bethell exhibited throughout his life, that we should exemplify.

So Robba and I—my wife and I—extend our greatest sympathies and care and concern to the people across Kansas, but especially to the family and the folks who knew Bob so well in his home district, the 113th House of Representatives District in Kansas. Our prayers and thoughts are extended to them, and we praise God for the life well lived of one of His servants, Bob Bethell.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

## MORNING BUSINESS

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

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