forward with those votes. The Senate proceeded to confirm judicial nominees in lame duck sessions after the elections in 2004 and 2006, and proceeded to confirm 19 judicial nominees in the lame duck session after the elections in 2010, as well. The reason that I am not listing confirmations for the lame duck session at the end of 2008 is because that year we had proceeded to confirm the last 10 judicial nominees approved by the Judiciary Committee before the election recess in September.

Republicans can no longer claim the ''Thurmond Rule'' is the reason they are holding up nominations since the American people reelected President Obama. Having said in September that they objected to proceeding because of the impending election, Senate Republicans cannot now say that their insistence on delay has made it too late in the year to proceed with confirmations. That is wrong and it results in denying Americans the judges they need to administer justice around the country.

I implore Senators to put their partisanship aside and work with the President on behalf of the American people. That is what the American people voted for in the last election. Delaying confirmation votes on nominees for the sole purpose of delay is precisely what the American people repudiated when they cast their ballots. Further delays on the 19 nominees before us do not benefit the American people.

I am encouraged that several Republican Senators have recognized this, and have said that they want votes on their home State nominees. The Republican Senators from Oklahoma and Maine, and Senator TOOMEY from Pennsylvania have all advocated for up or down votes on nominees during this lame duck session, and they are right to do so. They know that filling those judicial vacancies in their States is important.

A judge in Florida has written that persistent vacancies ''jeopardize our Court's ability to deliver the quality of justice that the citizens of Florida deserve and will inhibit our citizens' access to justice.'' Sadly, Senate Republicans' tactics of delay and obstruction has perpetuated the high level of judicial vacancies around the country. Continuing these tactics hurt the Federal courts and the American people they are intended to serve. This is a problem that has a commonsense solution: Let the Senate vote on consensus nominees that have been stalled.

With the number of judicial vacancies now at 83, and with all pending nominees having waited at least 4 months for a vote, it is past time for Senate Republicans to abandon these tactics. This obstruction is not good for the country. How does preventing a vote on Patty Shwartz benefit the people of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware? How does preventing a vote on Richard Taranto benefit Americans who seek to have their claims resolved by the Federal Circuit? How does preventing a vote on William Kayatta benefit the people of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Puerto Rico? How does preventing a vote on Robert Bacharach benefit the people of Oklahoma, Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming? How does preventing a vote on Michael Shea benefit the people of Connecticut? How does preventing a vote on John Dowdell benefit the people of Oklahoma? How does preventing a vote on Paul Grimm benefit the people of Maryland? How does preventing votes on Mark Walker and Brian Davis benefit the people of Florida? How does preventing a vote on Terrence Berg benefit the people of Michigan? How does preventing votes on Jesus Bernal, Fernando Olguin, William Orrick, and Jon Tigar benefit the people of California? How does preventing votes on Lorna Schofield and Frank Geraci benefit the people of New York? How does preventing votes on Matthew Brann and Malachy Mannion benefit the people of Pennsylvania? How does preventing a vote on Thomas Durkin benefit the people of Illinois? How does preventing votes on these nominees help the American people receive speedy justice?

If we can just have up or down votes on these 19 nominees, we can fill almost one-quarter of our Nation's judicial vacancies, and almost one-third of all judicial emergency vacancies. Most importantly, we can make it easier for hardworking Americans to have access to justice.

President Obama has worked with home State Senators and all of these nominees have the support of their home State Senators. Seven of them are supported by Republican home State Senators. Seventeen of these nominees received bipartisan support on the Judiciary Committee.

When Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush were President, Senate Democrats cleared the calendar of all but the most controversial and extreme ideological judicial nominations. The Senate needs to be allowed to vote on President Obama's judicial nominees now so that our Federal courts are better able to function and fulfill the fundamental guarantee of providing access to justice. Americans are rightfully proud of our legal system and its promise of access to justice and speedy trials. This promise is embedded in our Constitution. When overburdened courts make it hard to keep this promise, the Senate should work in a bipartisan manner to help.

I have asked, now that the American people have reelected President Obama, for Senate Republicans to work with us to fill these longstanding judicial vacancies. The American people deserve no less.

WORLD AIDS DAY 2012

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, Saturday we mark another World AIDS Day dedicated to showing our support of people living with HIV. In the 24 years since the first such day, we have seen great progress in the fight against the spread of this disease.

But there is still much more that needs to be done, not the least of which includes increasing public awareness. So this World AIDS Day, especially in memory of those who have died from this disease, let us recommit to ending this epidemic once and for all.

My State of Florida has been hit particularly hard by this epidemic: over 100,000 people are living with HIV/AIDS. And for too long, Florida had a long waiting list of low income residents waiting for assistance to afford the high cost of life saving medications. At times, this list grew to over 4,000 Floridians.

Thankfully, we have made great progress over the past year through increased State and Federal investment—and, Florida's wait list is now down to 56 individuals. But no one should have to forgo life saving drugs because they can't afford them.

In the days ahead when Congress is considering ways to tighten our belt, I would urge my colleagues to avoid blindly slashing these life saving programs.

We also must remain committed to funding the goals of President Barack Obama's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief globally. Among the goals is to provide care for the more than 12 million people with HIV around the world, including some 5 million orphans and children.

Mr. President, this is not, and should not be partisan issue for lawmakers. As former President George W. Bush noted in 2008, it's a question of our moral interest.

''We believe in the timeless truth,'' the president said, ''to whom much is given, much is required.''

REMEMBERING TINKHAM VEALE II

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Tinkham ''Tink'' Veale II. Mr. Veale was a successful entrepreneur and philanthropist who contributed greatly to the success of numerous businesses and community institutions throughout northeast Ohio and beyond during his long life. The impact and proud legacy of his business expertise and generosity will be realized for many years to come.

Mr. Veale was born in 1914 in Topeka, KS and moved to the Cleveland area as a child when his father joined the Eaton Corporation. He attended Heights High School and Case Institute of Technology, graduating with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering. Mr. Veale worked for several companies including General Motors. In 1941 he married Harriett Ernst, of the Ernst and Young accounting family, who passed away in 1998. The couple had three children, seven grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

In the 1960s, Veale and his associates formed Alco Standard Corporation.

Veale developed the philosophy and strategy he referred to as ''corporate partnership,'' through which his company acquired and financed small businesses while keeping their original management structures in place. His success grew from buying small companies and helping them to succeed through keeping their management in place while contributing with capital and strategic direction. Over the years, the company operated many businesses representing diverse industries including manufacturing, mining, and banking, as well as operating office equipment and paper distribution businesses. Veale served as Alco's president and chairman until 1971 and stayed on as chairman until 1986. By 1987, the company had 175 businesses with 16,000 employees in the United States and Europe.

Mr. Veale had a unique spirit and love of life. Over the years he was active in a variety of community organizations, served as a councilman in Gates Mills, OH, and was known for raising thoroughbred horses. Perhaps most significant, was his generous philanthropy which continues to benefit communities, students and institutions in Ohio. He was a notable supporter of his alma mater, Case Western Reserve University, where the most recent pledge of $20 million from The Veale Foundation is being utilized for construction of a new university center, which will be named in his honor.

Tink Veale was a role model and a source of inspiration to us all. He will be greatly missed, and his extraordinary legacy and giving spirit will not be forgotten.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

SCONTSAS FINE JEWELRY AND HOME DÉCOR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and congratulate Scontsas Fine Jewelry and Home Décor, a small business in my hometown of Nashua, NH, as it celebrates its 100th year in business.

Scontsas, which began as a shoe shining and repair business and hat blocking service, is now a third generation, family owned small business that specializes in fine jewelry and home gifts and decoration. A century ago, a Greek immigrant named George J. Scontsas first opened his doors at 173 Main Street in Nashua, and ever since, his family's business has remained a permanent fixture at this same downtown location. The Scontsas legacy, by any measure, is a testament to the entrepreneurial spirit that makes America great.

In an effort to expand his customer base, George began stocking greeting cards, and by the mid-1940's, his store became the first Hallmark store in Nashua. The Scontsas family business continued to expand by selling children's toys, books, yarn, and gifts.

In 1974, George's son Peter, and his wife Joan, purchased deMontigny Jewelers in the adjacent building. Since Peter Scontsas' passing in 1995, his son Phillip and daughter-in-law Amalia have served as the principal owners of the business. Together, the Scontsas family developed a new department within the family store, featuring home and garden décor.

Since its inception, Scontsas has focused not only on growing bigger, but also on growing better. The reasons for the Scontsas family's success are many. Chief among them are the family's commitment to building enduring relationships with their customers and their strong community involvement. Scontsas Fine Jewelry and Home Décor prides itself on treating every customer like a member of the family.

In typical fashion, the Scontsas family decided to celebrate their business' 100th birthday by giving back to the Nashua community in a series of events this year. The year long celebration showcased their strong roots in the community while promoting their products. I had the pleasure of attending the city of Nashua's Annual Holiday Stroll this past weekend, where the Scontsas family unveiled their limited edition 100 Year Holiday ornament for their loyal customers.

As Nashua helps the Scontsas' celebrate a century of family, business, and community, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Scontsas Fine Jewelry and Home Décor's 100th anniversary.•

REMEMBERING WAYNE BURKE

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a true Nevadan and friend, Wayne Burke, who has been honored by the Nevada Indian Commission as American Indian Community Leader of the Year. As tribal chairman for the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Wayne led the tribal council through many successes for the betterment of Nevada. Wayne's untimely passing is a great loss, but his legacy of community and economic development in the Silver State will never be forgotten.

In addition to serving the State of Nevada, Wayne bravely served our Nation in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1993 until his honorable discharge in 1997. As a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, Wayne understood the importance of supporting those who defend our Nation. He was a member of Numu Tookwasu—Pyramid Lake Veterans and Warriors Association—and a staunch advocate for Native American veteran affairs. His vision helped launch Nevada's first annual American Indian Veteran Summit this year, which invited members of the 27 tribes of Nevada to learn about access to veteran benefits and healthcare. His legacy will help raise awareness and resources for Native American veterans for years to come.

As tribal chairman, Wayne promoted an award winning Pyramid Lake economic development and tourism plan. His advocacy for the recovery and restoration of the Pyramid Lake fishery helped to secure over 1,000 acres of water, the most in any one-month period. Under his leadership, the Pyramid Lake Tribe has enjoyed a record number of visitors to Pyramid Lake and, subsequently, numerous tourism awards. In August 2012, Wayne became the first Native American leader to serve on the Nevada Commission on Tourism.

The citizens of the Silver State were privileged that such a passionate and dedicated leader called Nevada home. My thoughts and prayers go out to his wife, Leticia; and children, Alex, Christian, and Soleil. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of a devoted Nevadan and honoring his esteemed accomplishments.•

TRIBUTE TO STEVE RANSON

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Steve Ranson on his 25 years with the Lahontan Valley News. Nevadans are fortunate to read his reporting every day and to have a dedicated voice serving the community. I applaud Steve's hard work and dedication to our Nation's brave men and women that serve in our Armed Services and the field of journalism.

Steve joined the staff in 1986 as a part-time sports writer and editor. Today, he has grown to be one of Nevada's leading reporters. Steve's journalism, reporting, and newsroom leadership has earned him countless awards including Outstanding Journalist from the Nevada Press Association. His nomination for this award also reflects his extensive overseas travel to cover the U.S. Navy and Nevada Army National Guard in Southwest Asia and Afghanistan. His series of stories covering the war efforts earned him first place awards for community service and for best explanatory journalism from the Nevada Press Association.

As a lieutenant colonel who retired in 2009 after serving in the National Guard and U.S. Reserve, understanding the role of the military came easily for Steve. During his 28 years of service, Steve participated in two tours to the Republic of Korea and Panama. I would like to extend my gratitude to Steve for his service to this great Nation and State. I am both humbled and honored by the sacrifices made by the brave men and women who have served our country.

Steve's 25 years of service with the Lahontan Valley News is a true testament to his character. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors and look forward to reading more of his great work. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me today in congratulating Steve on his 25 years with the Lahontan Valley News.•

REMEMBERING RICHARD WILKINS

• Mr. LEE. Mr. President, Today I wish to pay tribute to my professor and my