

“We trust you.” It was something about the man that made you feel you could trust him. He was so honest, so authentic, and so entirely himself. It was an amazing moment.

Here it is almost 50 years later, and I remember that evening in Richmond, VA, my first encounter with Ed Muskie.

I got to know him somewhat more when I worked here as a staff member for his colleague Bill Hathaway, the other Senator from Maine at that time. Then I had the privilege of interviewing him in my capacity as a public television host for a documentary in 1981, when he retired as Secretary of State.

He had a distinguished career here in the Senate. Then he went on and heeded Jimmy Carter’s call in 1980 to serve as Secretary of State during the height of the Iran hostage crisis. He served our country honorably and well during that period and then retired. But when he retired, he didn’t stop his involvement in public affairs. He became a champion of access to the legal system for the poor. He, of course, remained committed to the environment and had a very active life—mostly in Maine, in his beloved house in Kennebunkport—and was a contributor right up to his death in 1996.

Ed Muskie is a true American hero. There is no way my poor words or anybody else’s can really capture his career and the impact he made. I think perhaps the closest I could come is to recall Sir Christopher Wren’s epitaph on his tomb in St. Paul’s Cathedral. On the tomb it says, “If you seek his monument, look around you.” If you would see Ed Muskie’s memorial, look around you. Take a deep breath. Experience our great rivers. Experience the environment we now have in this country which we treasure and which is so much a part of who we are across the country and in, of course, the State of Maine. Ed Muskie was a great man. He was a great member of this body and it is an honor for me—to say it is an honor is a gross understatement—to be standing today in his seat, the seat that he held for those important years from 1958 to 1980 and when he served our country so, so well. Ed Muskie is a man who belongs to the ages, who we all miss, and who made such a difference in all of our lives.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I suggest the absence of quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRANKEN). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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

JUSTICE FOR ALL REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I urge Members from both sides of the aisle to come together and support passage of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2013, an important and bipartisan bill that will improve the effectiveness of our criminal justice system. This legislation was voted unanimously out of the Senate Judiciary Committee on October 31, 2013. It is fitting that the full Senate is considering this legislation now, ahead of Crime Victims’ Rights Week.

This important legislation, which is cosponsored by Senator JOHN CORNYN of Texas, reauthorizes the original Justice for All Act of 2004. That landmark law took significant steps to improve the quality of justice in this country by increasing the resources devoted to DNA analysis and other forensic science technology, establishing safeguards to prevent wrongful convictions, and enhancing protections for crime victims. The programs created by the Justice for All Act have had an enormous impact, and it is crucial that we reauthorize them.

We must do more than just reauthorize these vital programs, however.

The legislation before us strengthens key rights for crime victims, reauthorizes the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program, includes provisions to improve the quality of indigent defense, and increases access to post-conviction DNA testing to protect the innocent. It also includes new measures to help ensure the effective administration of criminal justice in the States.

The reauthorization strengthens the Kirk Bloodsworth Post Conviction DNA Testing Grant Program. Kirk Bloodsworth was a young man just out of the marines when he was arrested, convicted, and sentenced to death for a heinous crime that he did not commit. He was the first person in the United States to be exonerated from a death row crime through the use of DNA evidence.

The Kirk Bloodsworth Post Conviction DNA Testing Grant Program provides grants to States for testing in cases like Mr. Bloodsworth’s—when someone has been convicted but significant DNA evidence was not tested. The reauthorization clarifies the conditions set for this program, so that participating States are required to preserve key evidence, and are given further guidance that will make the program more effective and allow more States to participate.

The Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2013 also takes important steps to ensure that all criminal defendants, including those who cannot afford a lawyer, receive effective representation. It requires the Department of

Justice to assist States in developing an effective and efficient system of indigent defense, and it calls on the States to produce comprehensive plans for their criminal justice systems. I know from my time as a prosecutor that the justice system only works as it should when each side is well represented by competent and well-trained counsel. The principle that all sides deserve zealous and effective counsel is at the bedrock of our constitutional system, and I am glad the legislation before us today embodies this belief.

The bill reauthorizes and improves key grant programs in a variety of areas throughout the criminal justice system. Importantly, it increases authorized funding for the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grant program, which is a vital program to assist forensic laboratories in performing the many forensic tests that are essential to solving crimes and prosecuting those who commit those crimes.

It is also important to note that this bill would make all of these improvements while responsibly reducing the total authorized funding under the Justice for All Act. These changes will help States, communities, and the Federal government save money in the long term.

I thank the many law enforcement and criminal justice organizations that have helped to pinpoint the needed improvements that this bill will provide and I appreciate their ongoing support. I also thank Senators COONS, UDALL of New Mexico, MCCONNELL, KLOBUCHAR, FRANKEN, PORTMAN, FEINSTEIN, HATCH, SCHUMER, LANDRIEU, BURR, COLLINS, and MERKLEY for cosponsoring this critical legislation, and I thank the lead Republican cosponsor Senator CORNYN for working with me on this and on broader legislation to improve the use of forensic evidence in criminal cases.

Together we will continue to work toward a criminal justice system in which the innocent remain free, the guilty are punished, and all sides have the tools, resources, and knowledge they need to advance the cause of justice. Our criminal justice system is not perfect and we are all less safe when the system gets it wrong. Americans need and deserve a criminal justice system that keeps us safe, ensures fairness and accuracy, and fulfills the promise of our Constitution. The Justice for All Reauthorization Act will take important steps to bring us closer to that goal.

DISAPPEARANCE OF SOMBATH SOMPONE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I rise today to express my concern with the lack of progress in the case of Sombath Somphone, who has been missing in Laos since December 2012. Mr. Somphone disappeared while working on civil society development, and despite repeated calls by the U.S. government for a transparent investigation