

have filibustered the Paycheck Fairness Act. They prevented a vote on this issue—this issue of basic fairness.

Today is a new opportunity for Senate Republicans to do what is right for America's working women and families. The Paycheck Fairness Act would help close a wage disparity by empowering women to negotiate for equal pay.

Shouldn't a woman be able to negotiate for equal pay?

This bill would also give workers stronger tools to combat wage discrimination and bar retaliation against employees for discussing salary information. Shouldn't a woman be able to talk about wage disparity without fear of reprisal?

One of the first things we passed in the Obama administration was the Lilly Ledbetter legislation, and that is one reason we are doing this today. Lilly Ledbetter worked for many years doing the same work as men in her position. She learned she was being paid a lot less, but the U.S. Supreme Court said: Too bad—you should have discovered this a lot earlier. If she had discovered it earlier, she would have been fired. This bill would give workers stronger tools to combat wage discrimination and bar retaliation against employees for discussing salary information. That is why we passed the Lilly Ledbetter legislation.

I repeat: Shouldn't a woman be able to talk about wage disparity without fear of reprisal?

This legislation would help secure adequate compensation for victims of gender-based pay discrimination. Shouldn't a woman be able to recoup wages that are illegally withheld? The answer, of course, is yes.

These are commonsense proposals that are supported by the vast majority of Americans. Why is there even a debate on the issue of equal pay? It is because Senate Republicans continue to stifle debate on this issue. They are filibustering yet another piece of important legislation.

Instead of doing what is right for working women and families and our economy, Republicans are saying: We will not even let the Senate vote on this issue.

Republicans say there really is no issue and the pay gap between men and women is exaggerated, and if there is one, it is OK. Republicans say that there are already strong Federal laws that prevent gender-based pay discrimination. I wish it were so. Some Republicans say—as one did here in the Senate last week—that equal pay for women is nothing more than a political show vote. But when all their excuses and explanations have been exhausted, their wives, their daughters, and their granddaughters are still making 77 cents for every dollar their male counterparts make for doing the exact same work—and that is not fair.

If Republicans will not stand up for the women in their homes and communities and all across this Nation, we Senate Democrats will.

American women deserve better. They deserve fair wages. They deserve a fair shot at providing for their families. American women deserve equality.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WALSH). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Vermont.

REMEMBERING THOMAS HALE BOGGS, JR.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I appreciate the kind, heartfelt words of the distinguished majority leader when speaking about Tommy Boggs—Thomas Hale Boggs, Jr. Many of us knew him well.

I was at Georgetown law school with Tommy, and we often talked about those days and the friendships we had, and so many people who we knew are still in this town. I think of him walking down the hall, and we would see each other and start grinning or laughing. Whoever his client was would wonder what we were laughing about. It was usually something that happened in our law school class from 30, 40 or 50 years ago.

He was very, very effective. He was very good. He had an easygoing attitude that somehow cloaked the fact that he had a first-class mind. He had an encyclopedia knowledge for facts.

As someone who deals with Members of Congress, he had one unfailing attribute that made him successful. He always told the truth even if it was something one didn't want to hear, and he always kept his word. He was a good friend.

JUSTICE FOR ALL REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as one who had the privilege of being a prosecutor, I have great faith in our criminal justice system and the men and women who have dedicated their lives to making it work. Sometimes mistakes are made, and those mistakes have catastrophic consequences. They can mean an innocent person spends his or her life in prison, or worse, is executed. They mean a guilty person remains free—able to victimize again. When mistakes are made, lives are destroyed.

We would like to think these kinds of mistakes are few and far between, but they happen all the time. Just this month we saw that two innocent men

in North Carolina were exonerated. They had served 30 years behind bars for a crime they did not commit. One of those men had been sentenced to death.

Can you imagine being in a prison and having those steel doors close every day all the while knowing you are there—perhaps never to leave until you die—for a crime you never committed? But even worse, you know that the person who committed the crime is out free.

Can you imagine that? I know some of these people. I have talked with them. I know it and can just begin to understand what gnaws at them when they are behind bars for a crime they didn't commit, knowing that the person who committed the crime is out free to do it again.

Henry Lee McCollum and his half brother Leon Brown were teenagers. They were arrested in 1983 for a heinous crime—the rape and murder of an 11-year-old girl. They were interrogated for hours, and then these two mentally disabled teens gave false confessions. They were ultimately convicted of a crime they did not commit. While these innocent men sat behind bars, the unthinkable happened—the real offender went on to rape and murder another young girl.

These men have lost so much. They were not there when their mother or grandmother died. They have never married or had children. Mr. McCollum had to be placed in isolation every time another inmate was taken to the execution chamber to keep him from harming himself in his distress. It was only this year when a cigarette butt left at the crime scene was finally tested for DNA that their names were cleared and the real perpetrator identified.

That critical DNA test was made possible by the Kirk Bloodworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing Grant Program, which is part of the Innocence Protection Act that I wrote more than 14 years ago. I was proud to be there with President Bush when he signed it into law as part of the Justice for All Act of 2004. The program was named for a man whom I consider my friend, Kirk Bloodworth. Kirk was a young man just out of the Marines when he was arrested, convicted, and sentenced to death for a heinous crime he did not commit. He was the first person on death row to be exonerated by DNA evidence. He had been convicted on eye witness identification, even though he made it very clear he wasn't anywhere near where this happened. Do my colleagues know that when they finally exonerated him and identified who the real person was, there was someone at the prison who said, Oh, yeah, we have that guy locked up for another crime. Boy, they do look alike, don't they?

Unfortunately, hundreds of others have gone through the same hell Kirk lived through. Well over 300 Americans have been exonerated using DNA testing. But then I wonder how many others are going to have to suffer before

we act. The U.S. attorney in Washington, DC, announced last Thursday he will launch a conviction integrity unit following five recent exonerations. Similar programs exist in Dallas, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Jose, and Detroit.

This underscores the fact that mistakes can happen all too often. Any good prosecutor fears the possibility of a mistake happening because usually prosecutors are going to get convictions. They want to make sure they prosecute the right person. Unfortunately, though, there are some who have been willing to accept less than adequate evidence or ignore the fact that no real effort was made to find all of the adequate evidence.

For example, we are just beginning to understand the scope of the systemic errors committed by hair and fiber analysts at the FBI crime lab in the 1980s and the 1990s. I know as a young prosecutor I relied on that FBI crime lab. Now we find there were errors and they were hidden and covered up—errors involving the question of the convictions of 2,600 defendants, including 45 on death row.

In a separate inquiry involving the same FBI unit, more than 60 death row convictions were potentially tainted by agent misconduct.

Those statistics are bad enough, but according to the Justice Department's inspector general, three of those defendants were executed before their attorneys were notified of the misconduct. One of them would not have been eligible for the death penalty without the FBI's flawed work. Whether someone is for or against the death penalty, it should shock our conscience. It is unacceptable. We may have executed an innocent man. I will hold the FBI accountable. I will demand they take the necessary steps to ensure that such a systemic failure never occurs again. I know the ranking member on the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, shares my outrage about this situation.

So it is against this backdrop of these shocking cases that I come to the floor and urge the Senate to take swift action. Let us reauthorize the Justice for All Act, which includes the post-conviction DNA testing program that is a lifeline to the wrongfully convicted.

There is nothing partisan or political about ensuring we have the right person behind bars and we are not locking up an innocent person. That is an issue both Republicans and Democrats agree on, and that is why the Justice for All Act has the support of the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, and the Republican leader, Senator MCCONNELL, and as I said cosponsored by me and Senator CORNYN.

Justice is the bedrock of our great country. Our Founders understood that a government's legitimacy is eroded every time an innocent person is sent to prison for a crime he did not com-

mit. They sought to protect against this erosion by enshrining fundamental protections for the accused in our Bill of Rights. While those protections are critical, they are not fail-safe. We have to do more. Lives are in the balance. Lives are in the balance.

The dozens of exonerations made possible by the Justice for All Act are testament enough to its value. Henry Lee McCollum and Leon Brown are just the latest examples. The injustice they survived—and the fact that North Carolina nearly executed an innocent man—should dispel any doubt this legislation is needed. It is time for the Senate to pass this bipartisan Justice for All Reauthorization Act. First giving appropriate notice to both leaders, I will be asking unanimous consent that we take it up and pass it.

I see my distinguished colleague and friend on the floor, and I yield the floor.

Mr. WICKER. I thank the distinguished President pro tempore.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

ISIS

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I wish to spend a few moments speaking about national defense.

As we all know, last week, in a much anticipated address to the Nation, President Obama outlined a plan to defeat the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. I want my colleagues to know I intend to do my part to make this plan a success.

I am not alone in hoping this goal to defeat—not contain—ISIS will replace the half measures and disengagement that has defined the President's foreign policy to date. The President's previous comment that "we don't have a strategy yet" sent the wrong signal to our allies and to our adversaries.

In response to the President's address last week, Congress and the American people are now seeking specifics about the new strategy. I am hopeful the new plan is strong enough and broad enough to be successful long term. U.S. leadership and the projection of military might are critical to defeating the ISIS extremists.

Thirteen years after September 11, 2001, Americans need to send a unified message that we remain resolved to fight the scourge of global terrorism. ISIS is part of that scourge, reeking havoc in Iraq and Syria, with torture, mass executions, crucifixions, and plans for a seventh century-style Islamic caliphate. As we all know, ISIS broadcasts its savagery through gruesome propaganda online, including the horrific murders of two Americans and a British aid worker.

It is clear our efforts to date have been insufficient to overthrow this well-funded, well-equipped, and sophisticated army. It will take more than limited air strikes and the modest deployment of military advisers to curb the rapid spread of ISIS across north-

ern Iraq and Syria. The United States must be committed to building a coalition that fosters regional cooperation, dismantles the group's considerable financial network, and assists the Iraqi, Kurdish, and Free Syrian forces. I wish to help the President in his request for authorization to train and equip these forces.

This coalition needs to include Muslim-majority nations that are all in with a demonstrated resolve to defeat the Islamic terrorists in their own neighborhood.

The cost of inaction is already high. The rise of ISIS in northern Iraq and its operations in Syria have threatened regional stability and the security of our allies in Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon, and Kuwait. The involvement of foreign fighters raises fears of potential terrorist plots here at home. Earlier this month, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said there are more than 100 U.S. citizens with passports fighting for the terrorist group. He went on to say, "There may be more. We don't know."

Secretary of Defense Hagel, who will testify tomorrow before the Armed Services Committee, has called ISIS, "An imminent threat to every interest we have, whether it's in Iraq or anywhere else." Secretary of State John Kerry has expressed similar alarm, saying, "The wickedness it represents must be destroyed." I agree. But if these statements are true, then we should respond to them aggressively.

Similar to Secretary Hagel and Secretary Kerry, the American public is concerned about the threat of ISIS to the United States. A new report by the Wall Street Journal and NBC News says nearly 7 in 10 Americans believe military action against ISIS in Iraq and Syria is in our national interest.

Americans are ready for a bold international strategy to confront these extremists whose ruthless campaign of terror and ethnic cleansing has survived for too long. These radicals have driven tens of thousands of Iraq's Yazidi and Christian minorities from their homes in fear. According to news reports, thousands of civilians have been slaughtered across northwestern Iraq.

GEN Jack Keane, former Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, and Danielle Pletka, a senior vice president at the American Enterprise Institute, put it this way in a recent Wall Street Journal op-ed:

A U.S.-led international coalition can provide the military capability, including air interdiction to deny ISIS freedom of movement, take away its initiative to attack at will in Iraq, and dramatically reduce its sanctuary in Syria.

In other words, with U.S. leadership and international cooperation, we can defeat this enemy, and we ought to get about the business of doing it.

I believe Congress should support our Commander in Chief in the fight against ISIS, a fight that can result in a victory and a peace that can be sustained. I look forward to hearing more