

requires significant costs for administration.

In the coming months, it is my intent to explore legislative options to encourage the investment of additional private capital into the cleanup and redevelopment of our Nation's brownfield sites. It is my intention and desire to work on this matter in a bipartisan fashion with my good friend and colleague, the senior Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, let me thank the good Senator from Montana and take a moment to echo his remarks. I strongly supported the Brownfield Revitalization Act and applaud the strides that it is making toward remediating brownfield sites across our Nation.

In Iowa, as in many other States, we are challenged with our share of brownfields in places like Des Moines, Cedar Rapids and Sioux City. The cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield sites can help reduce health risks, protect the environment, revitalize surrounding communities, preserve open space and create jobs by reintroducing properties into the stream of commerce that have languished for years.

Philosophically, I support efforts to encourage private markets to help solve problems such as those presented by our Nation's brownfield sites. Given the size and scope of the brownfield problem in this country, I believe it behooves us to look for additional, innovative and low-cost solutions to help encourage investment in the remediation and redevelopment of these sites.

I understand that current law may discourage tax-exempt investors from contributing capital to the remediation and revitalization of brownfield sites. Let me say to my good friend and colleague from Montana that I will gladly work with him to explore legislative options to help bring additional private capital to bear on solving our Nation's brownfield problem.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I thank my good friend from Iowa. As we have worked together as chairmen and as ranking members of the Senate Finance Committee, I have always found him to approach issues in a fair and even-handed manner. Let me express my sincere appreciation to him for the many bipartisan efforts that we have worked on together, particularly the Brownfields Revitalization and Environmental Restoration Act that passed 99-0 in the Senate. I look forward to working with him on this and many other issues in the months and years to come.

#### CHIEF JUDGE LAWRENCE BASKIR

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the United States Court of Federal Claims is the only federal court where the President may appoint and dismiss the chief judge. Although this power has been available since the Court of Federal Claims was established in 1982, President George W. Bush is the first

President to use this power to remove a sitting judge. That is a regrettable decision because of the integrity and outstanding judicial record of the former incumbent, Chief Judge Lawrence Baskir. His absence is already being felt in the slower pace of important procedural reforms that Chief Judge Baskir had launched to improve the fairness and efficiency of the Court of Federal Claims.

Former Chief Judge Baskir was appointed in July, 2000 by President Clinton after the retirement of the previous incumbent chief judge, who had been appointed by President Regan. In his short, two-year tenure, Chief Judge Baskir had accomplished much in boosting public awareness of and respect for the work of this important, but little-known federal court.

The Court hears cases brought against the federal government by American citizens. It is especially important that litigants can rely on its objectivity and integrity. Some may say that because its original complement of judges was appointed by President Reagan and George Bush, Sr., its work had more of a political cast to it. Chief Judge Baskir worked hard to correct that impression, and he was scrupulous in every way in seeking to avoid even the appearance of any political involvement.

Among the ways he sought to reinforce the integrity of the Court was to ensure that incoming cases, some of which were highly charged with politics, were assigned automatically, "off the wheel," and not directed to any particular, pre-determined judge. Just prior to his removal from the bench, the Court's new procedural rules took effect, rules for which he had pressed for two years. The rules, which are critical for the administration of justice and are the procedures for litigating cases in the Court, had not been revised in 10 years. Because Court rules define the parties' rights and obligations, they can give unfair advantage to one side or another. Their content is always contentious, and previous efforts to revise them had collapsed in deadlock. Chief Judge Baskir guided the revisions through with great success.

He reorganized the Clerk's Office, putting an end to delays in document handling, and instituted a "same day" rule for recording court filings. He brought the Court's electronic data systems into the 21st Century and created both internal and external web pages. He converted the main courtroom into a state of the art electronic courtroom, where attorneys can connect their own computers to the Court system, and have access to their own records and data and exhibits.

He also helped modernize the Court's alternative dispute settlement resolution, or ADR procedures. Resolving legal disputes through ADR can be a useful alternative to long litigation in certain circumstances. ADR is an important procedural option at the Court

of Federal Claims, where citizens, often with very limited resources, are suing the federal government with its unlimited resources. ADR can serve in such instances to help level the playing field.

For example, he instituted a pilot ADR process in which incoming cases are assigned to an ADR judge at the same time they are assigned to a trial judge. This program is unique in the federal system, and has been chosen by the Federal Judicial Center as a model to examine and analyze for possible application in other federal courts.

Chief Judge Baskir made sure that ordinary citizens got fair treatment when they sued the federal government. Knowing of the large number of pro se plaintiffs, or people representing themselves, going up against the Justice Department, including parents with heartbreaking cases involving young children, he revised the system of handling these cases, and in the process referred more than 700 pro se plaintiffs to attorneys participating in the Court's vaccine program. Believing in the duty of members of the legal profession to contribute a portion of their time without charge for the good of the public, he also helped launch a pro bono program within the Court for both judges and legal clerks, and among the attorneys who are members of the Court's bar.

Many of these accomplishments would be impressive for a chief judicial administrative official whose tenure lasted a full term. This record is all the more impressive for having been achieved by a Chief Judge whose term lasted a mere 22 months. He achieved much because he brought an extensive legal and administrative background to the position, including service as Acting General Counsel of the U.S. Army, as staff director and chief counsel of a major U.S. Senate subcommittee, and as director and chief administrative officer of a major Presidential program under President Ford.

I commend Chief Judge Baskir on all that he accomplished as Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Federal Claims. I thank him for his service to our Nation.

#### WHY SLOVENIA SHOULD BE INVITED TO JOIN NATO

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the expansion of NATO is a forgone conclusion. Formal invitations are expected at the Prague Summit next week for three to nine new member countries to join. In fact, NATO enlargement represents a logical extension of the first serious American intervention in European geopolitics; namely, the famous Fourteen Points of President Woodrow Wilson, which provided substantial assistance and encouragement to the nations of Central Europe in their long-deferred aspirations to gain political independence and international recognition. History has shown that the substantial disengagement of America