

for staff. She came from Nevada. She was a legal secretary to my friend who then was an attorney and later became a justice on the Nevada Supreme Court for many years, 18 years. She came back here. Her husband was a labor leader. They moved back here from Nevada. He died within 18 months. He was dead. He was a young man. He just dropped dead. Carol kept their home in Centreville. It was a long drive back and forth for a long time working for me. She was such a hard worker and was so happy.

Many years after her husband died and her daughter returned to Nevada—she raised the girl here—she met a retired colonel, and they were married and moved to Florida. She had a wonderful—I don't know how many years it has been, maybe 8 years. Time goes fast. I don't know how long it has been.

Janice said to me: I was going to tell you last week that she had breast cancer and you should give her a call. She said she died yesterday. I feel very bad about that. She was such a good woman and worked so hard and found happiness. She was not an old woman—maybe 58, 59. I don't really know how old she was.

Every year, hundreds of thousands of women just like Carol are diagnosed with breast cancer. Breast cancer will strike approximately one in eight American women, and a new case is diagnosed every 2 minutes. We have made progress in breast cancer diagnosis and treatment, but we still do not know the cause. We do not know the cause. I don't really know if Carol died from lung cancer or breast cancer, but I want to direct my attention today to breast cancer.

Scientists have identified some risk factors. Those risk factors explain fewer than 30 percent of the cases. The Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act that I started with Lincoln Chafee, a former Senator from Rhode Island, to establish a national strategy to study the possible connection between breast cancer and the environment would authorize funding for research.

Many people believe these cases of breast cancer have something to do with the changing environment. The resulting discoveries of this research could be critical to improving our knowledge of this complex illness, which could lead to better prevention, treatment, and maybe even one day a cure.

Although we first introduced this legislation in 2000, despite strong bipartisan support, Congress has yet to act and send this bill to President Bush. In the last session of Congress, the bill was reported out of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, but one of our colleagues prevented final passage. This session, we worked in good faith to address concerns that may have been raised about this legislation. As a result, this legislation, the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act, was once again reported

out of the HELP Committee and co-sponsored by two-thirds of the Senators, Democrats and Republicans.

It is long past time for the Senate to take up this broadly supported bipartisan legislation. Too many women and their families have waited for so long. I agree with them, they waited far too long.

There are examples we can all give, as I talked about Carol, who died yesterday of cancer. In January 2007, Nevada lost a lifelong resident, somebody who worked so hard on this issue. Her name was Deanna Wright Jensen. She was a lobbyist without pay. She just thought something should be done. She thought something in the environment was causing this illness. I don't know if she was right, but we should find out. Many people agree with her. Scientists agree with her. Even as she was enduring a grueling regimen of radiation and chemotherapy, she continued to remind me and my staff through e-mails and letters about the importance of this legislation. In Deanna's words, passing the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act is a real opportunity for Congress to "step up for women and breast cancer." For her, it is too late. She did not want others to have a similar fate.

One person, one Senator is holding up this legislation. That is why I will be asking unanimous consent—I am not going to do it now. We do not have a Republican on the floor. But I told staff I am going to come back at 3:30 p.m. or thereafter. The Republicans have had adequate notice. I cannot make the entire Senate schedule convenient for one Senator who is objecting, causing this problem for all the Senate.

It is time to offer more than words of encouragement to those affected by breast cancers. Our wives, sisters, mothers, daughters, and friends have waited far too long. I am going to come back maybe at 3:30 p.m., maybe at 3:45 p.m., but I am going to come back and ask unanimous consent to take up this bill, and the Republicans are going to have to object to it if they are going to follow the lead of one person holding up this legislation.

Why, Mr. President? Why can't we take up this bill? Why wouldn't the minority go along with this effort? That is my concern.

VETERANS' BENEFITS ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in a similar vein, 9 months ago, in August of last year, the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee reported the Veterans' Benefits Enhancement Act to the Senate floor.

Today, there are about 150,000 young Americans serving, sacrificing, and suffering in Iraq. This legislation, which is on the Senate floor today—we are trying to get it so we can debate this bill—would provide much needed and long overdue benefits for veterans young and old.

This legislation on which we had to file cloture—here it is: Republican filibusters, 66 and still counting. They are going up, it seems, a couple times a week. It is hard to comprehend, but we have had to file cloture on allowing the Senate to proceed to debate on an issue of this importance. We should have gone to it Thursday night. No, we had to file cloture on it. We are going to vote on cloture tomorrow, and then, if we get cloture, they will make us use the 30 hours, waste the 30 hours, just eat up time.

This bill has 38 provisions and 8 titles, all extremely important. It expands eligibility for traumatic injury insurance, extends eligibility for specially adapted housing benefits to veterans who have been burned severely. As the Presiding Officer knows, those improvised explosive devices cause infernos, and people are burned often. The bill increases benefits for veterans pursuing apprenticeships or on-the-job training programs. It restores veteran status to Filipino veterans who served under U.S. command during World War II. As I mentioned last Friday, all one needs to do is watch the Tom Hanks World War II series, and you can see what the Filipinos did for us side by side in fighting the Japanese during World War II. We want them to have the benefits that are so long overdue.

We have had to file cloture and break filibusters 66 times. The prior record was 57 or 58 in a single Congress; that is 2 years. They broke that before Christmas last year. They did it in far less than a year. They broke the 2-year record.

America's commitment to the men and women who have served in uniform must never waver. At a time when one in five young men and women returns from Iraq and Afghanistan with post-traumatic stress disorders and other psychological problems, this legislation should have come to the Senate floor with no delay. At a time when tens of thousands of our troops are returning from war with wounds, many of them grievous, this legislation should have passed overwhelmingly, if not unanimously.

On many days, there is a tour guide in the Capitol who, when he spots a veteran in one of the tours, talks with them, and he has a little thing that we sign, and many times he brings them by my office.

I have seen, at Walter Reed and in my office, what this war has done to our troops' bodies. I have had a chance to visit with these young men and women, after they have been to war and come back, out of Walter Reed—sometimes temporarily, sometimes permanently. They are still teenagers. I have seen their scars. I have heard how their lives have been changed. I asked them, talked to them in detail: How did you get hurt?

The last one who was in, I said: How long were you in the vehicle?

He said: Twenty seconds. Went from the house, jumped in the vehicle—it blew up almost immediately.

He is hurt; lost his leg above his knee. He had scars that you could see on the one where he has a whole leg. He showed me the scars on that. He said it causes him more trouble than the one that is missing.

No matter what position we take on the war in Iraq, we should all agree on providing for these veterans and those who wore the uniform before them. That is a solemn responsibility we have now. This act we are trying to get on the Senate floor now helps fulfill the responsibility we have as Senators.

Every Senator has a right to oppose this legislation or try to change it. In my time as majority leader, I have tried to work with the Republican leader to reach consensus on legislation on which minority Members have objections. I have made repeated efforts to try to do so on the Veterans Benefits Enhancement Act. I am told my Republican counterparts—if the Republican side of the aisle doesn't like this, let's legislate it and take parts of it out. Unfortunately, the Republican leader has not responded positively. As a result, I was forced Thursday night to file cloture on the motion to proceed simply so we could start debating this legislation.

I would have preferred not to have had to file cloture. I wish we could just move forward on it, as we have wanted to do 65 other times. But when legislation to honor and care for our veterans languishes for 9 months because Republicans are unwilling to work with us or just simply legislate, I have no other choice. As dedicated Government watchers and C-SPAN watchers know, this is far from the first time the Republican minority has rejected our good-faith efforts on reaching compromise. Time and time again they have chosen obstruction over negotiation.

It seems to me what the Republicans want is a graveyard of no progress. We are going to continue to fight. We are going to do everything we can to get this legislation passed. We believe there should be progress; filing cloture as we have had to do is going to help us get progress. It is going to be slow, but we are going to continue doing it.

It seems in times like this our Republican friends would rather we accomplish nothing. Maybe they see political advantage in slow-walking. But the American people are left to suffer for their actions.

Some may not like provisions in the Veterans Benefits Enhancement Act. Let them move to change them. Some say: If it weren't for the Filipino veterans, we would allow you to move to this bill. Filipino veterans—they fought alongside U.S. troops during World War II. I do not think the valor of these Filipino troops should be questioned. These troops may have been born on foreign soil, but they served shoulder to shoulder under one flag, our flag, the American flag. It is our moral obligation to recognize the reward they are due. It is long past time we do so.

It is time for our Republican colleagues to choose. Will they stand in lockstep with an obstinate few, intent on dragging their heels on the care and support our veterans need? I hope not. We need just nine Republicans to join with us.

As you know, Mr. President, there are 51 of us. We need 9 of them to get to 60. I hope there are surely nine Republicans willing to stand on the side of our veterans, our troops. Tomorrow we will have a chance to pass the Veterans Benefits Extension Act. I extend my hand once more to the Republican leader and all my colleagues in the minority. If they would end their needless obstruction, we could get on this legislation today. We would deliver an important victory to the men and women who have served us—and will serve us today—with courage, valor, and distinction.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST—
S. 579

Mr. REID. I know there are some of my Republican friends on the floor, so I am going to ask unanimous consent now on the request I made, the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 628, S. 579, the Breast Cancer Environmental Research Act, the committee-reported substitute be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read three times, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, and any statements be printed at the appropriate place in the RECORD as if read, with no intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection? The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator COBURN, there is objection.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. I now ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to consideration of the same legislation, S. 579, the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act, at a time to be determined by the majority leader, following consultation with the Republican leader, and the bill be considered under the following limitations: that other than the committee-reported substitute, the only first-degree amendments be four amendments, two for each leader; these amendments be relevant to the provisions of the underlying bill and substitute, there be a time limit of 1 hour for general debate on the bill, and 1 hour on each amendment with all time equally divided and controlled between the leaders or their designees; that upon the disposition of all amendments, the use or yielding back of time, the substitute, as amended, if amended, be agreed to, and the bill, as amended, be read a third time with no further intervening action or debate, and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill as amended, if amended.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator COBURN, there is an objection.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from North Carolina is recognized.

VETERANS BENEFITS
ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I would like to ask the majority leader before he leaves the floor—I know he has a very busy schedule—the majority leader alluded to a bill on which we will take up a cloture motion tomorrow. I want the majority leader to know before he leaves the floor that the only thing that is contentious in the veterans bill that he has referred to is a new special pension that has been created in this bill of \$300 to Filipino veterans who live in the Philippines, who have no service-connected injuries. If that were stripped from the bill, then this bill is one that I believe we could pass by unanimous consent on the Senate floor.

In the absence of that—

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. BURR. I am happy to yield for a question.

Mr. REID. I say to my friend, the distinguished Senator from North Carolina, I understand. I mentioned that in my prepared remarks, that people have a problem with that. But I say to my friend, we should go on the bill. If people don't like that, offer an amendment, and we will debate that, vote on it, and go about our way. I think that would be such a good way to do this.

Some of us feel very strongly about these Filipino veterans, as you know. I have mentioned this before. They fought valiantly. All you need to do to prove that is to see what happened in the Tom Hanks movie.

I would also say to my friend that we need to do something about this. The average age of one of these Filipinos is about 84 years now. It is not as if we are breaking the bank to help these people who fought side by side with us. I understand the concern of my friend, but I suggest, let's move to the bill, offer an amendment, it can be the first amendment. We will have you offer the first amendment, or whoever wants to.