

Steve Mange, the head of the Illinois Meth Project, for their assistance in crafting this legislation.

I thank my colleague from Iowa, Senator GRASSLEY, for his leadership on this issue and Senators HARKIN, BAYH, BIDEN, CANTWELL, CLINTON, CONRAD, FEINSTEIN, JOHNSON, LINCOLN, MCCASKILL, MURKOWSKI, OBAMA, and SCHUMER for their cosponsorship.

The production of methamphetamine has plagued our communities for far too long, and this legislation takes a critical step to stop it. I thank my colleagues in the Senate for the unanimous passage of this important bill.

RECESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there are things going on here in the Capitol, just to alert Members, so I ask unanimous consent that we stand in recess until 3 p.m. today, and that everyone should know that we are going to come back and try to get consent to be in recess because at 4 o'clock we have an all-Senators briefing by Secretary Gates, Admiral Mullen, and Ambassador Negroponte.

People should be aware that if they have something to do or say, they can come here at 3 o'clock. I think it would be more appropriate if we were in recess until 5, but there has been an objection to that, so I ask unanimous consent that we stand in recess until 3 p.m.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 1:07 p.m., recessed until 3:00 P.M. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. KLOBUCHAR).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. In my capacity as a Senator from Minnesota, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent that I may go beyond the 10 minutes for morning business to perhaps 12 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESPECTING REALITY

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, we are working this week, many of us working very hard this week—none harder than my friend and senior colleague from Rhode Island, JACK REED—to address a paroxysm in the financial markets, one that has been a long time coming. During that long time, people in Washington, over and over, missed opportunities to prevent it. Make no mistake, this whole episode we are going through now was preventable. This is a human failure not some natural disaster, not economic inevitability. A political sellout to fi-

ancial interests, a sellout given intellectual cover by a toxic ideology of deregulation appears to be at the heart of what happened. I was not here to see it, but all the clues point to that.

This crisis is now past preventing. We have to fix it. It is a shame on those responsible that it happened in the first place, but it is a shame on all of us if we do not learn its lesson because there is more to come.

In his famous "Give Me Liberty Or Give Me Death" speech, Patrick Henry also noted:

We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren till she transforms us into beasts.

We should heed these words from the earliest days of our democracy and not shut our eyes to the painful truth of what has happened and not shut our eyes to the painful truths that still lie before us. Folks here have too often told Americans what they want to hear and too rarely told them what they need to know.

There is no painful truth that Americans cannot deal with; there is nothing Americans cannot solve—but not if we are not told what we need to know. So we are now borrowing \$700 billion because people here refused to face a painful truth about our financial markets, about the folly of deregulation. But that is just one of many painful, in some cases inconvenient, truths that we confront today.

I remember sitting with the Presiding Officer, the distinguished Senator from Minnesota, in the Environment and Public Works Committee hearing the president of the Association of Health Directors of all the States and territories across the Nation deliver the unanimous statement of that association on global warming. It was a strong statement, a stern and sobering statement. But most important, it was unanimous. Yet in this Chamber some still ignore or deny the painful truth of the changes befalling our planet.

Our capacity for denial, for artifice, and for self-delusion has become dangerous. Phony doubts about global warming may hide the facts of our planet's condition from our people, but the Earth doesn't care about doubts. She will behave the way nature dictates, and the consequences will be on all of us.

Phony theories of deregulation may have obscured the facts of the financial markets from us, but the markets don't care about our theories. If we let them come to failure, they will fail. And now the consequences are on all of us.

The painful experiences we are going through today are, for the Bush administration, a rendezvous with reality. It is not the only one we have coming, if we don't begin to govern in a reality-based environment.

The \$7.7 trillion debt that George W. Bush has run up as President—there will be a rendezvous with reality on that. The \$34 trillion Medicare liabil-

ity, which is just one symptom of our bloated and unstable health care system—there will be a rendezvous with reality on that. The \$740 billion annual trade deficit the United States of America is running—there will be a rendezvous with reality on that. An energy policy that hemorrhages \$600 billion a year to oil-producing countries and puts us on the losing end of the biggest wealth transfer in the history of humankind, all to keep big oil happy—there will be a rendezvous with reality on that. There will be a rendezvous with reality on the tons of carbon and greenhouse gases we are pumping into our thin and delicate atmosphere. These rendezvous with reality will come.

The only question for us is on what terms will we meet them. We can decide: Will we be prepared or be caught flat-footed? Will we tackle problems while they are still manageable or wait until they overwhelm us? Will we address difficulty or face calamity? These are choices of ours and they pose the question, Are we capable of reality-based governing.

I ask these questions because there is a common narrative through all these problems, and it is a perilous one to our democracy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. I would like, through the Chair, to ask my friend from Rhode Island if I can ask a unanimous consent?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I gladly suspend for the majority leader.

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent at the hour of 4 p.m. we have a recess until 5:30.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. There is an all-Senators briefing starting at 4 o'clock. I thank the distinguished Senator from Rhode Island, one of my good friends.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I applaud the majority leader for the enormous, hard, successful work he is doing in these hours.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Democracy as an institution will not do well if we are all satisfied to be told what we want to hear and not what we need to know. Democracy will not address problems well if our elected leaders traffic in ideology instead of respecting reality. Reality bites hard when she is ignored. Democracy will not flourish if leaders tout for special interests instead of fighting for the public interest.

Democracy will suffer a terrible blow when the days of reckoning come, when the rendezvous with reality occurs and our people, particularly our young people, turn to us and say: How could you? How could you not have warned us? How could you not have been square with us? How could you have been so irresponsible?