

good stewards of the planet. Why don't we have that debate on the floor of this Senate before we send this bill back to the House?

Another colleague has amendments that say: OK, we are going to vote on a trillion-dollar stimulus package that creates a trillion-dollar debt. Shouldn't we tie it to some kind of trigger for fiscal responsibility that will kick in maybe 24 months out so we do not head recklessly down a path into extraordinary debt that deeply damages our Nation even further?

So fiscal responsibility—tie some fiscal responsibility measures to this package. That is a good idea. I applaud my colleague from Oregon who has raised that idea, Senator WYDEN, who has done a lot of work on how we can create fiscal responsibility tied to a package going through now. It will say something to the international financiers that this short-term deficit spending is going to be marked by substantial fiscal discipline, and that in itself may serve other things, such as keeping the interest rate low that we pay, so fewer of our dollars go out in interest.

These ideas, these amendments deserve a debate on this major decision facing this body over the next few days.

I will close by saying that I am deeply concerned—deeply concerned—about the deficit and the debt. I am deeply concerned about the Bush tax breaks that have done so much damage and are being extended into the next decade. I am deeply concerned about the poor design of the stimulus, deeply concerned about Social Security being made dependent upon borrowing from China, deeply concerned that this package is being put together and may not have the opportunity to have the debate over elements that should be debated because if they do not stand up on the floor of the Senate in debate, they do not belong in this package.

So with that, I say to our friends across the Nation, you have a few days only to weigh in. Please do weigh in. Let us hear your voice. Let us consider your views. And let us fully deliberate on this package before we pass it.

#### TRIBUTES TO RETIRING SENATORS

BYRON L. DORGAN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I join my colleagues in honoring the service of Senator BYRON DORGAN. Over his nearly 30 years in Congress, Senator DORGAN has been a strong and dedicated advocate for the people of the State of North Dakota.

Senator DORGAN's long career in public service began in 1969 when he was appointed North Dakota State Tax Commissioner. Assuming this position at the age of only 26, Senator DORGAN became the youngest constitutional officer in North Dakota's history.

Since 1980, Senator DORGAN has been a voice for the people of North Dakota

in Washington, DC. After serving six terms in the House of Representatives, he was first elected to the Senate in 1992.

It is clear that Senator DORGAN's upbringing in the small town of Regent, ND, has shaped his tenure in Congress. Throughout his years in Congress, Senator DORGAN has been a formidable advocate for rural America and the family farmers of his state. He led the effort to make permanent the disaster aid program, which provides an essential safety-net for farmers and ranchers affected by severe weather, in the 2008 farm bill.

Senator DORGAN also has been a great advocate for North Dakota's energy sector. As the country moves toward renewable and domestic energy sources, he has worked to put his state at the forefront of the industry.

After so many years of public service for the people of North Dakota, Senator DORGAN's time in the Senate is coming to a close. I am proud to have served with him, and I thank him for his service in the Senate. I wish Senator DORGAN and his family the best in the next chapters in their lives.

ROBERT F. BENNETT

Mr. President, I also join my colleagues in recognizing Senator ROBERT BENNETT of Utah.

I have had the privilege of working with Senator BENNETT since I entered the Senate in 1997, four years after Senator BENNETT began his Senate service. I have admired his enthusiasm and dedication to serving the people of Utah ever since.

It was clear that public service was in his blood. From his election as student body president at the University of Utah, to his time in the Utah Army National Guard, Senator BENNETT's priority for his entire adult life has been serving the people of his home State.

His first taste of real politics came in the 1960s when he helped his father Wallace Bennett win re-election to this very Chamber. And while he did not seek office himself until almost 20 years following his father's retirement, he worked in the private sector in Utah, deepening his ties to the State and his devotion to the people of Utah.

I have had the privilege of working side-by-side with Senator BENNETT on the Appropriations Committee for many years. I have seen his passion for service, his respect for the Senate, and above all else, his love of Utah.

He has managed to stay true to the fiscal principles that he gained as a businessman and CEO, while understanding the need for compromise when it was required of him for the sake of his State and the rest of America.

During his tenure here, Utah has become a premiere destination of the West—he has worked for quality education for Utah's children, fought to preserve its natural landscapes, and paved the way for the development of 21st century infrastructure back home.

Senator BENNETT also made America proud in 2002 when he helped the Salt

Lake City Winter Olympics become one of the most successful and safe Olympic games in recent memory.

Of course, Senator BENNETT and I have not always seen eye-to-eye on many issues. But my respect for his beliefs has always been deep. And in 2008, when America was on the brink of financial collapse, I was moved by his eagerness to reach across the aisle to do what was right for Utah and Illinois, alike. This has always been his character, and the Senate will miss him for it.

Senator BENNETT leaves us this month in the same way that he has served here for almost 20 years: with dignity and conviction. I am proud to call him a friend, and wish him and his family all the best in the future.

#### REMEMBERING CHARLES WHEELER

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today in solemn remembrance of a dear friend of mine from Ashland, KY, who passed away peacefully at his home this Veterans Day. Mr. Charles Wheeler was a consummate small businessman, local official, and advocate for higher education. I knew Charles for over 30 years, and I can tell you that the love he felt for his community in the Commonwealth was surpassed only by his affection for his beloved wife of 60 years, Mary Kathryn Wheeler.

Born in Paintsville, KY, Charles owned and operated a local hardware store in Boyd County for nearly 40 years—helping to build his community and assist all who met him, literally and figuratively. It is no wonder then, that Charles's friendly manner and smart tact got him elected as an Ashland city commissioner by the age of 28. Before long, his friends and neighbors elected him to represent them in the Kentucky General Assembly, where he served for 8 years.

My friend continued to serve his community by serving on the Morehead State University Board of Regents for a decade during a period when that institution saw great growth. His pursuit of excellence in higher education undoubtedly changed the lives of countless students.

I could surely continue to draw to mind the instances when Charles helped meet the need of his community, and this Senator, but I would simply ask that my colleagues join me in remembering the life of a humble man who showed incredible character throughout his entire life. And I would further ask that they join me in expressing my sincerest condolences to Charles's beloved wife, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, siblings and other family members.

The Ashland Daily Independent recently published an editorial that highlights some of Charles Wheeler's accomplishments, and I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.