

need to vote. Folks do not have to agree with it. They can vote no on the final bill. Let us vote. On behalf of the people we represent, let us vote on the bill. On behalf of 300,000 students and their families in Michigan, on behalf of hundreds of thousands of others who are looking for the opportunity to go to college, to be able to work hard and take all the risks that come with that to be able to have a better life, I ask we simply allow a vote. Let us vote on this bill.

It is time to get on and let people know we get it, we understand what families are going through, we understand the squeeze middle-class families are going through on every front right now, and we will make sure that access to college, a higher education, is not just there for the wealthy and connected but that it is available to everybody because we are a stronger country because of that.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF NEVADA'S HISPANIC MUSEUM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and honor the Hispanic Museum of Nevada—Museo Hispano de Nevada—for its 20 years of service to our community.

For the last two decades, Museo Hispano de Nevada has been guided by its mission: “dedicated to promote awareness, education and resources of the diverse Hispanic cultures and traditions to enhance intercultural understanding among community members.” This institution has played a critical role in educating Nevadans about the diversity of Latino heritage and promoting pride and cultural understanding.

The Museo Hispano de Nevada has sponsored numerous field trips and workshops, shedding light on the different cultural traditions of the Latino population and enabling future generations to learn about their heritage through historic artifacts and art exhibits. These programs and activities have served as learning tools for educating our community about the diversity in my home State of Nevada, where 26 percent of the population is Latino, accounting for 46 percent of growth in the Silver State.

As someone who has directly witnessed the importance of having a museum dedicated to preserving the history and telling the stories of Latinos in my home State, I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the Smithsonian American Latino Museum Act, S. 1868. It is my hope that a museum illuminating the richness of the Latino culture and history, as well as the numerous contributions Hispanics have made to the United States, will be built in our Nation's Capital in the near future.

I would also like to recognize Lynnette Sawyer, executive director of the museum, for her outstanding leadership and commitment to the museum. I extend a warm felt thanks to the staff and countless individuals who have worked over the years to make this great institution a resource for all Nevadans. Please join me in congratulating the Hispanic Museum of Nevada for 20 years of great work honoring the rich diversity among Hispanics and their many contributions to our great State. I wish the Museo Hispano de Nevada continued success in their future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO RUBEN CURTIS “R.C.” WALKER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today in honor of a man who has always been ready and willing to answer the call of distress in his hometown of London, KY, in Laurel County: Mr. Ruben Curtis Walker, better known by what everyone typically calls him, “R.C.” He has served as a member of numerous first-response teams for the local people of his community for almost 60 years.

A life-long passion for service in the rescue field began for R.C. in 1952, when he joined the London Fire Department. He has maintained some kind of position there, whether volunteer or paid, ever since. R.C. has a deep desire to extend a helping hand to those in need. He enjoyed his job and he enjoyed the work he was doing for his community so much, in fact, that in 1962 Fire Chief Gilmore Phelps noticed his display of passion and asked him to start the first-ever Laurel County fire department. R.C. took on the challenge and met it with flying colors. He went on to run an excellent fire department for 18½ years before finally stepping down as chief.

Having always been active in his community and anxious to help out, R.C. didn't just devote his time to the new County Fire Department; he was involved across the board in the service arena. He was deputy coroner, then eventually coroner in 1966, the same year that he ran for county sheriff. He opened the Bowling-Walker funeral home in 1965. He has also been deputy sheriff in Laurel County, and the county jailer from 1989 to 1993.

However diverse the life of R.C. Walker was, he did not stray far from the fire department. His first love was

fire and rescue, and that is where he is most at home. Although he does not fight fires with the department today, he does still participate in other activities with the firemen, many of whom refer to him as ‘Pap.’

Mr. Walker is not only a devoted public servant, but also a beloved family man. Aside from firefighter, he holds a few other titles—like husband, father, and grandfather. He and his wife of 25 years, Marie, have four children, Eddie, Steven, Stewart, and Deborah Greenwall. R.C. is dearly cherished by all who know him. I can say with certainty that his family, the boys at the fire department, and the local citizens of Laurel County feel safe knowing a man as honest and caring as Ruben Curtis Walker is watching out for them.

I ask my colleagues in the United States Senate to join me in commemorating Mr. Ruben Curtis Walker for the great many contributions he has to his local community.

There was recently an article printed in the Sentinel-Echo: Silver Edition, a Laurel County, KY local newspaper magazine, which highlighted the countless accomplishments of R.C. Walker throughout his colorful life. I ask unanimous consent the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to appear in the RECORD as follows:

[From the Sentinel-Echo: Silver Edition,
November 2011]
HE'S DONE IT ALL
(By Carol Mills)

He has been a first responder in many ways—firefighter, rescue worker, sheriff's deputy, coroner, and jailer.

Ruben Curtis “R.C.” Walker joined the London Fire Department in 1952, and has been a volunteer fireman for the city or county most of his life.

He has also been with the London-Laurel County Rescue Squad most of the time.

“I've really enjoyed being a firefighter. I've always been helpful on the rescue squad whether I was with the city or county. I remember rescuing this fellow out of an electric line. When they were clearing the bottom out to put the new sanitation system in, I got a call from the funeral home they found somebody they thought was dead down there. He was putting a new blade on a bulldozer and he swung his boom around and he got it into 6,900 volts of electricity. I jumped in the truck and pulled it away from the electric line. The door was open on the truck, so I took a running go and jumped in. He was passing in and out, but he wasn't dead.”

Back then, the funeral homes transported patients to the hospital because the ambulance service was established on Jan. 1, 1977.

“It's just wonderful that I could be of help to somebody. I've been through a lot of situations. I devoted the biggest majority of my life to fire and rescue. My son, Steven, is a sergeant in the state police and my son, Stewart, is chief of the city police.

“Gilmore Phelps was chief in 1952, and he talked me into joining the fire department with them,” Walker recalled. “I was working around a florist and a grocery store here in town, Acton's Grocery, here on Main Street. I was with the city in '54 when I starting working at House Funeral Home on East Fourth Street.”