

was. Back in the 1950s, the site visitors see today looked very different.

Where now-restored historic homes line a gravel street in a stately and peaceful neighborhood, then stood souvenir shops surrounded by a neighborhood that Paul Findley would later recall was, “rundown and decaying in all directions.” The Lincoln home itself—what Lincoln’s own private secretary once called “the precious heirloom of the republic”—was then the property of the State of Illinois.

For years, developers had tried to encroach on the historic site with the goal of exploiting the area for commercial opportunities. Some wanted a theme park. Others tried to build wax museums or hotels or buffet restaurants in close proximity. Still others had been trying unsuccessfully to ensure the home’s restoration and the preservation of the historical integrity of the surrounding area. In Congressman Paul Findley, those who wanted to honor this piece of history found their champion.

Findley traces his own interest in this project back to a presentation at a meeting of the Pittsfield Chamber of Commerce in 1955 well before he held elected office. At the meeting, a Springfield resident presented a case for preserving the Lincoln Home and developing the site commercially. While the plan for development never got off the ground, the presenter did make a point that Findley never forgot—that the Lincoln Home had largely been neglected compared to other Presidential homes. This, Findley regarded as “shameful, awful, scandalous.” It was in 1967, as the congressman representing the district that encompassed the Lincoln site that Findley became directly involved and took up the mantle of this effort. After years of lining up local, state, and national support, Congressman Findley announced in 1969 at a Springfield dinner that he would introduce legislation in Congress to make the site part of the National Park System. At that dinner was New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller, whom Findley had successfully enlisted in the effort.

The late Senators Charles Percy and Everett Dirksen introduced companion legislation in the Senate. The bills had the support of every member of the Illinois congressional delegation. But even with all this support, as those of us who have been around here long enough know, the fight wasn’t over. Money, as always, was an issue. People began trying to raise private funds. Congressman Findley worked tirelessly to get the attention of the relevant committee and subcommittee chairs—Democrats held the majorities in both Chambers at the time. Among other things, he invited key members to Springfield to tour the site after which they usually agreed to support his efforts.

I have no doubt that the commitments of these members to support his bill had as much to do with Findley’s

tenacity, passion, and determination as it did the power of seeing the Lincoln Home in person.

Then the Nixon administration threw its support behind Findley, and even asked that the bill be amended to fully authorize the appropriation required for the site—so the private fundraising was unnecessary. The House passed the bill first, and it enjoyed, as Findley says, “swift approval” in the Senate we can’t say that about too many matters around here anymore. On August 18, 1971, years of efforts culminated in a ceremony in the Old State Capitol in Springfield, just blocks away from the Lincoln Home. With Congressman Findley looking on, President Richard Nixon signed the Findley bill authorizing the establishment of the Lincoln Home National Historic Site.

Think about it, this was an effort championed by a Republican Congressman, passed by a Congress controlled by Democrats, and signed by a Republican President. It was a different time. One year after the signing ceremony, then-President of the Illinois State Senate, Paul Simon, signed legislation transferring the title for the Lincoln home to the National Park Service.

Thanks to the leadership of Congressman Paul Findley and the many local supporters of his efforts—including then-Springfield Mayor Nelson Howarth, the first superintendent of the Lincoln Home National Historic Site Albert Banton, the architect of the Lincoln Home Visitor Center and early supporter of preservation efforts Wally Henderson, and countless others—visitors to the site today can stroll the street Lincoln once strolled and take in the neighborhood in much the same way it would have looked to him more than 150 years ago.

The experience of visiting the Abraham Lincoln National Historic Site will undoubtedly inspire generations of young Americans to serve their country, just as Paul Findley has and as Abraham Lincoln did.

This is Paul Findley’s legacy.

It is a legacy that forever will be intertwined with President Lincoln—an honor that Paul richly deserves.

Throughout his 91 years on this Earth, my friend and this great American, Paul Findley, has made an indelible mark on our State of Illinois and our country—and he has not done yet.

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last week, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported out the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

How fitting that this treaty was considered and passed by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the 22nd anniversary of the enactment of Americans with Disabilities Act.

If anyone questions how important this treaty is to the millions of Americans living with disabilities, all they

needed to do was look around the room at the hearing earlier this month. The hearing room was filled to capacity—standing room only—with people urging the Senate to ratify this important document.

The United States has led the world in creating the legal framework, building the infrastructure, and designing facilities that ensure inclusion and opportunity for those living with disabilities. We celebrated the 22nd anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act—“ADA”—by reporting the treaty out of the Foreign Relations Committee on a strong bipartisan basis. I thank Sen. Kerry for holding that hearing and moving the treaty through the committee process.

As the majority leader has made clear, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will soon be considered on the Senate floor. The Members of this body will have an opportunity to affirm our Nation’s leadership on disability issues by ratifying this important treaty. I hope that we will do so. And I hope we will ratify this treaty with the strong bipartisan support that has always characterized the Senate’s work on disability issues.

For the 54 million Americans living with a disability, laws like the ADA have provided an opportunity to learn, travel, work, and live independently. Perhaps no one knows that better than Ann Ford of Springfield, Illinois. Ann had polio as a child and for many years she commuted on crutches. This challenging and energy-consuming task required Ann to meticulously plan every trip. At the grocery store, Ann would purchase all she needed in 20 minutes, in order to be home before becoming exhausted.

After the ADA was enacted, the store manager invited Ann to use a recently purchased electric scooter. Ann remembers that day clearly, in part because she shopped for an hour and a half going up and down every aisle in the store.

Most of us don’t give a second thought to buying groceries. But for Ann and millions like her, our Nation’s commitment to removing physical barriers has expended their world. Now, we have an opportunity to demonstrate our commitment and advance disability rights around the world by ratifying this treaty.

The support for this treaty is broad and bipartisan. I thank my friend, Senator JOHN MCCAIN, for leading this effort with me. He is a great ally and without him we would not have made such great progress.

I also thank Senator BARRASSO, HARKIN, TOM UDALL, MORAN, and COONS for their bipartisan support and dedication to the ratification effort.

This treaty is supported by 165 disability organizations, including the United States International Council on Disabilities, the American Association of People with Disabilities, Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund, and the National Disability Rights Network, and 21 veterans groups, including

the Wounded Warrior Project, the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, and Veterans of Foreign Wars are also calling on us to ratify this treaty. President George H.W. Bush, who signed the ADA into law, and former Senator Bob Dole, a lifelong advocate for disability rights, are strong proponents of this treaty.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a human-rights treaty that seeks to ensure that people living with disabilities are afforded the same opportunities available to others. Thanks to the ADA and similar laws, the United States has been so successful providing opportunities, increasing accessibility, and protecting the rights of those living with disabilities that our Nation is already in full compliance with all terms of the treaty.

Before transmitting this treaty, the Obama administration conducted an exhaustive comparison of the treaty's requirements to current U.S. law. It concluded that the United States does not need to pass any new laws or regulations in order to meet the terms of the treaty. The fact that we already meet or exceed the treaty's requirements is a testament to our nation's commitment to equality and opportunity for those living with disabilities. There are, nevertheless, very important reasons to ratify this treaty.

Disabled Veterans and Other Americans Traveling Abroad—There are more than 5.5 million veterans living with disabilities. They and thousands of other Americans living with disabilities travel, study, work, and serve overseas, often with their families. Ratifying the treaty will ensure they enjoy the same accessibility and opportunity abroad that they have here at home.

Accessibility in Other Countries—ratifying this treaty will give the United States a seat at the international table, so that the U.S. can provide its guidance and expertise to other countries working to adopt laws, upgrade infrastructure, and modernize facilities to meet the very high standards we have set.

Leveling the Playing field for American Businesses—American businesses have invested time and resources to comply with the ADA. Businesses in some countries are not required to comply with similar standards. Compliance with the treaty levels the playing field by requiring foreign businesses to meet accessibility standards similar to those in the U.S.

New Markets for American Businesses—we lead the world in developing accessible products and technology. As other countries comply with the treaty, American businesses will be able to export their expertise and products to the new markets serving the more than 1 billion people living with disabilities around the world.

While this treaty will ensure inclusion and access for those living with disabilities, it is also important that we note what the treaty will not do.

The treaty will not change any U.S. law or compromise U.S. sovereignty in any way.

The treaty will not lead to new law suits because its terms do not create any new rights and it cannot be enforced in any U.S. Court.

For families that choose to educate their children at home, the treaty will not change any current rights or obligations.

The treaty will not require the U.S. to appropriate any new funding or resources to comply with its terms—not a single dime.

Leading pro life groups, like the National Right to Life Committee, confirm that the treaty does not promote, expand access, or create a right to an abortion.

Thanks to decades of bipartisan cooperation, our country embodies the worldwide gold standard for those living with disabilities.

When the Senate ratifies the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, we can be proud that our co-workers, friends, family members, and courageous veterans will soon enjoy the same access and opportunity when they travel abroad that they have come to expect here at home.

REMEMBERING SHELBY HARRIS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the life of Mr. Shelby Harris, from Rock Island, IL. When he passed away on July 25, 2012, at the age of 111, he was the oldest man in the country and the third oldest man in the world.

Mr. Harris was born in Indiana on March 31, 1901. That same year President William McKinley was assassinated and Vice President Theodore Roosevelt took over the White House, there were only 45 stars on the American flag, and the life expectancy in this country was just 47 years of age.

Throughout his 111 years, Mr. Harris lived a varied and rich life. In Indiana, he worked at a coal mine. He moved to the Quad Cities in 1942 where he enlisted in the Army during World War II. He also worked for the former Union Malleable and the John Deere Foundry in East Moline. He outlived two wives and three daughters. His oldest grandchild is 57 years old, and he was a great-great-great-great grandfather. Mr. Harris was a lifelong Democrat and credited his longevity to his faith in God.

Age did not slow him down. Mr. Harris served as a deacon of Second Baptist Church until he was 102 years old and had a bucket list that included getting remarried and playing baseball. A month after his 111th birthday, Mr. Harris was able to cross baseball off his list after he threw out the first pitch at a Quad Cities River Bandits minor league baseball game.

Living beyond the age of 110 made Mr. Harris a supercentenarian. This designation is particularly rare for a man because women typically live the

longest all over the world. The oldest person in the world today is a woman who has reached age 115.

Mr. Harris will be missed by the staff at the Rock Island Nursing and Rehabilitation Center where he lived since he was 105 years of age. For the past 5 years the nursing home has thrown a big party on his birthday, and the staff there plan to hold a remembrance for him next year on the date.

It is my honor to recognize the long and full life of Mr. Shelby Harris.

LIBOR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, It was recently revealed that at least one bank—Barclays Bank of Great Britain—attempted to manipulate LIBOR over a 4-year period beginning in 2005.

LIBOR stands for the London Inter-Bank Offered Rate. This rate is a benchmark used by industries all over the world to set interest rates for nearly \$800 trillion worth of financial instruments.

LIBOR determines how much people across the world pay for student loans, mortgages, and credit card fees. The higher LIBOR is, the more it costs a college student to borrow money for school or a business to obtain a line of credit.

This means that people across the world with student loans, mortgages and credit cards, and municipalities selling bonds may have paid more to borrow money because of Barclays' actions.

Barclays settled with U.S. and British authorities and paid over \$450 million in penalties to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the U.S. Department of Justice, and British regulators.

Now, as many as 20 megabanks, including several U.S. banks, are under investigation or named in lawsuits alleging they also rigged LIBOR.

Over the next several weeks and months we will learn more details about exactly what happened.

But it seems clear we are facing a scenario that is all too familiar: the largest banks have once again put greed and profit above the best interests of their customers and the economies of at least six nations, including the United States.

At the same time—nearly 4 years after the worst financial crisis in our lifetime and 2 years since the Democratic-majority Congress passed Wall Street reform—my Republican colleagues continue to undermine the financial regulators by cutting their funding and spending countless hours in the House of Representatives debating and passing bills to roll back the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act.

This is not good for our financial system and it certainly isn't good for the American people.

But let me back up. What is LIBOR? It is a benchmark used by industries all over the world to set interest rates

LIBOR impacts—directly or indirectly—nearly every person in the world.