

our two countries so much more difficult and highly unlikely. I think that would benefit the people of Cuba, but their government continues to take an unjust course. Alan should be released and Cuba should do the right thing. Mr. Gross devoted his professional life to helping others through his work in international development. He and his family have suffered more than most could endure over the last 3 years.

Continuing our efforts to bring Alan home, next week, on December 3—the 3-year anniversary—Senator CARDIN and I will introduce a resolution calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Mr. Gross. I ask my colleagues to join us in supporting this resolution to help send the clear message to Cuba that even those of us who want a better relationship, even those of us who have been willing to cast the votes to increase that opportunity for a relationship between the United States and Cuba, want Alan Gross to come home. It is my hope the Cuban Government will reverse course and that Alan can finally come home to his wife Judy and to their family.

I ask my colleagues to join me in that effort and perhaps, more importantly, I ask Americans to join us in the prayer for Alan's release.

I yield the floor.

TRIBUTE TO BAILEY FINE

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and give thanks to my State director, Bailey Fine, who is retiring at the end of the 112th Congress after 27 years of devoted service. There is great sadness but deep appreciation as I say goodbye to Bailey who, in 1982, ran my reelection campaign to the Maryland House of Delegates; then served as my campaign aide during my first congressional race in 1986; as my district director for 20 years; and, finally, as my State director during my first term in the Senate.

Over the years, Bailey has been a friend to my entire family, a trusted confidant, a reliable sounding board for my legislative district and statewide agendas. For more than three decades I have been truly fortunate to have her at my side, providing knowledgeable advice and a commonsense approach to the many issues that face Members of the House and Senate.

Bailey is a people person who understands how our work in Washington affects the everyday lives of Marylanders, and she regularly reminds my staff and me of that fact. Bailey's knowledge of Baltimore and of Maryland is unparalleled. She grew up in Northern Virginia but settled in Baltimore in 1970 where she worked first for the Housing Commissioner and later for the late Mayor William Donald Schaeffer.

During her years handling special projects for the mayor, Bailey developed a deep love for Baltimore City and a true understanding of how Baltimore works. Bailey became a creative genius at promoting and highlighting the

many achievements of the city under Mayor Schaeffer. Before Mayor Schaeffer left city hall, he nominated Bailey to serve as president of the Baltimore City school board. In that role, she helped parents navigate the school bureaucracy, suggested workable solutions for teachers, and brought a commonsense approach to the Baltimore City school system.

But Bailey's knowledge and expertise goes beyond how government works. She has her pulse on Baltimore and on Maryland. She knows the key players in the city and the State, many of them on a personal level. For many years Bailey has been the go-to person when people need to get things done.

Without a doubt, Bailey has been an invaluable resource to my entire staff, to me, and to the people of Maryland. But she is also a tireless advocate and a voice for families and individuals who may not have had the understanding or resources to access the services they need. Whether it is working with the mayor of Oakland when spring floods threatened a dam near the town, getting housing and other services for a veteran, or working with community groups to improve their schools, Bailey is a relentless public servant. There is also no denying that her energy and enthusiasm are unstoppable and unsurpassed and that her retirement will leave a real void.

Through her efforts, so many people have been connected to jobs, affordable housing, quality health care, or government benefits. So many of these people have benefited from her advocacy, their lives changed for the better, and most of them will never know her name. To me, that is the highest form of public service.

I ask my Senate colleagues to recognize the many contributions that Bailey has made and the example she has set for public service. I also want to take this opportunity to thank Bailey's family, her husband Stanley, and her children Michael and Laura, for their support and understanding as Bailey has worked to help others.

Today is Bailey and Stanley's 41st wedding anniversary, and on December 8 Laura will be married. Please join me in wishing Bailey Fine a healthy and happy retirement and well-deserved time with her family.

REFORMING THE SENATE RULES

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. President, I wish to talk about our efforts to change the Senate rules. There has been a great deal of comment on this subject lately.

I have listened with great interest to the arguments against these changes by the other side. Let me just say at the outset: Senators MERKLEY, HARKIN, and I are not talking about taking away the rights of the minority. We are not abolishing the filibuster.

But there must be change. The unprecedented use and abuse of the filibuster and other procedural rules has

prevented the U.S. Senate from doing its job. We are no longer the world's greatest deliberative body. In fact, we barely deliberate at all.

For most of our history, the filibuster was used very sparingly. But in recent years, what was rare has become routine. The exception has become the norm. Everything is filibustered, every procedural step of the way, with paralyzing effect. The Senate was meant to cool the process, not send it into a deep freeze.

For some reason, ever since the Democratic majority came into the upper Chamber in 2007, the Senates of the 110th, 111th, and current 112th Congress have witnessed the three highest totals of filibusters ever recorded. A recent report found the current Senate has "passed a record-low 2.8 percent of bills introduced in that chamber, a 66 percent decrease from the last Republican majority in 2005–2006, and a 90 percent decrease from the high in 1955–1956."

Our proposal to reform the rules is simple, it is limited, and it is fair. Again, we are not ending the filibuster. We preserve the rights of the minority. We are only proposing that, No. 1, Senators should be required to go to the floor and actually tell the American people why they oppose a bill or nominate in order to maintain a filibuster; and No. 2, motions to proceed to a bill or to send a bill to conference should be nondebatable. These are sensible changes. Yet we are warned that these simple reforms will transform the very character of the Senate, will leave the minority without a voice. These arguments are covers for continued abuse of the rules.

The reforms are modest—some would say too modest. But they would discourage the excessive use of filibusters. The minority still has the right to filibuster, but not the right to do so by simply making an announcement and then going out to dinner or, more likely, to a fundraiser.

Nevertheless, the other party insists we are attacking the rights of the minority. But there seems to be another message, too, with a truly odd logic. They say that if we make any reasonable changes in January, they may make radical ones in the future. In short, if we dare to reform any rule, they might throw out all of them when they are in the majority. How this comports with their stated concern for the rights of the minority is unclear.

It is also being argued that we are breaking the rules to change the rules. This has been repeatedly charged by the minority leader. We disagree. We are reforming the rules to save the Senate. The status quo is abusing the rules and debasing the Senate. It is a choice between rules reform and rules abuse.

History contradicts the minority leader as well. Members of the other side have agreed with changing the rules when they have been in the majority. The RECORD is already chock