

But even before that she spent the summer interning for this brandnew Senator Barack Obama. In 2007 Tequia joined Senator DURBIN's staff. I have never truly forgiven him for that, for taking her from me. But he has done a lot of nice things, so I guess I will have to try to sweep that under the rug sometime, but it has been very hard. I do not think I have ever gotten over that. I have told him often that he stole her from me. But those things happen.

On a serious note, it was the right move for her. It was an advancement for her. She is from Illinois. It has worked out well for her. She became director of constituent services and then a legislative correspondent for Senator DURBIN, my dear friend.

Despite her hard work in my office and that of the assistant Democratic leader, Senator DURBIN, she found time to perform as a cheerleader for the Washington Redskins for 3 years. These are difficult jobs. They practice like the football team. It is hard. They have tryouts. It is quite an honor. So we have always recognized her for this accomplishment. That is certainly what it is.

When she joined the cloakroom staff in 2010, she brought her warm personality and always a positive spirit to her now role. So for 4 years Tequia has worked in the cloakroom, I repeat, the nerve center of the Senate. She has been an invaluable resource to all Senators. She has been an important mentor for Senate interns and pages. She has been a valued teammate and friend to our colleagues.

Tequia's talent, dedication, and friendly demeanor will be missed by me and Members and colleagues alike. I wish her well in this next endeavor. I know she will perform admirably. We are fortunate that she will continue to work closely with the Senate community. That is her job in her new role as a member of the White House team.

Congratulations Tequia and best of luck in everything you do in the future.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN ECUADOR

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to speak briefly, as I have several times over the past year, about the government of Ecuador's President Rafael Correa, which continues its aggressive clamp down on press freedom. Most recently, political cartoonist Xavier Bonilla was reprimanded for a cartoon he drew, and the newspaper he works for, *El Universo*, was fined for pub-

lishing it. *El Universal*, one of Ecuador's most respected dailies, has been the target of one of the dozens of harassing lawsuits filed by President Correa.

The cartoon by Mr. Bonilla, who goes by the pen name Bonil, depicts a police raid at the home of an investigative journalist, Fernando Villavicencio, who claimed to have documented evidence of corruption in the government. It shows the police knocking down the door to Mr. Villavicencio's house and parading out with computers and filing cabinets.

A government-established media oversight agency, Superintendency of Information and Communication, SUPERCOM, used Ecuador's vague communications law to sanction both Mr. Bonilla and *El Universo* for publishing an "institutional position" over the guilt or innocence of people involved in investigations. It subsequently ordered a major investigation, required a "correction" to the cartoon, and fined the newspaper. In doing so, the Correa administration sent a clear message to journalists that criticism of government misconduct will not be tolerated.

I have spoken several times about President Correa's attacks on press freedom and I will continue doing so as long as these restrictive laws are enforced and as long as journalists are threatened for their work. Most recently I recognized the efforts of Janet Hinostroza, an Ecuadoran investigative journalist who was honored by the Committee to Protect Journalists, CPJ, for her commitment to fighting for a free press. Ms. Hinostroza is continually threatened for her work exposing government corruption. Unfortunately, the harassment she and Mr. Bonilla face illustrates a norm, not an anomaly, when it comes to President Correa's attempts to intimidate and silence his critics.

The absurdity of censoring a cartoonist aside, this latest attack further erodes what remains of an independent press in Ecuador. It explains why Human Rights Watch and CPJ continually rank Ecuador among the world's worst for press freedom. It is shameful, it is an embarrassment for the hemisphere, and the people of Ecuador deserve better.

MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the legalization of marijuana is an issue that has generated significant media attention in recent months. Last year Colorado and Washington State became the first jurisdictions in the world to legalize the production, trafficking, possession and use of marijuana for recreational purposes. The consequences of legalization are only beginning to be understood. But one thing is clear. Legalizing marijuana does not make it any safer. Marijuana remains a Schedule I drug under the Controlled Substances Act. According

to that designation, it is a substance that presents "a high potential for abuse."

Colorado's previous experience legalizing medical marijuana suggests that the consequences of full-on legalization could be dire for public health and safety. From 2006 to 2010, the number of Colorado drivers involved in fatal car crashes who tested positive for marijuana doubled. The number of Colorado students who have been suspended or expelled for marijuana use has increased considerably. Nearly three-quarters of Denver teenagers in drug treatment reported obtaining marijuana from a "medical marijuana" user. Colorado has become a source State for the distribution of marijuana throughout the United States. Law enforcement in my home State of Iowa reports that the percentage of marijuana interdicted there that originated from Colorado has increased from 10 percent in 2010 to 36 percent in 2012.

Against this backdrop, the Obama administration has recently sent mixed signals, especially to young people, about the dangers of marijuana use. President Obama recently stated that in his view, marijuana use was no worse than drinking alcohol. The Department of Justice declined to challenge State laws that have legalized marijuana, despite the obvious conflict with Federal law. Additionally, the Department issued guidance to prosecutors concerning the enforcement of the Controlled Substances Act and Federal money laundering laws that is plainly intended to permit marijuana businesses in these States to grow and flourish. These actions have caused confusion and uncertainty about whether using marijuana is really something that should be discouraged because it is harmful.

However, many community anti-drug coalitions, healthcare professionals, public health officials, and law enforcement groups are speaking out about the dangers of marijuana use. One such group, Smart Approaches to Marijuana—or Project SAM for short—has recently begun to confront the marijuana legalization movement head-on.

One of Project SAM's cofounders, former Congressman Patrick Kennedy, has been outspoken in his efforts to fight the marijuana legalization movement. He has appeared on numerous television and radio shows, including ones where audiences may disagree with his views against legalization. He has bared his own struggles with addiction, offering himself up as a cautionary tale about the dangers of becoming addicted to marijuana and other substances. And he has broken with many in his party by speaking out against the President's permissive attitude toward marijuana use and the Obama administration's failure to enforce the Controlled Substances Act. Indeed, all former DEA Administrators, appointed by Republican and Democratic presidents alike, have joined with Project SAM and others to