

The North Korean leadership has thumbed its nose at the Chinese, ignoring entreaties and some measure of protection offered against tighter sanctions or Security Council action. I was recently in New York meeting with our talented Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power, and I was dismayed at the challenge she faces in obtaining greater Chinese help on this matter.

Now, I know the Chinese and some other apologists will argue that North Korea is so isolated that further sanctions would not work and may even backfire. But we know that there have been effective measures against the North, for example, going after luxury goods and overseas accounts linked to the regime and ruling elite.

Yet, despite international sanctions on luxury goods to North Korea, the New York Times recently reported how China loosely defines such goods and continues to allow North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's army's to import equipment from China to build a world-class ski resort.

That is right—a world-class ski resort in a country that can't feed its own people.

In fact, according to the report, Chinese customs data showed that North Korea imported \$2.09 billion in luxury goods between 2012 and 2014, including armored cars and luxury yachts.

And, according to United Nations trade statistics, in 2014, China exported \$37 million worth of computers, \$30 million of tobacco, \$24 million of cars, and \$9 million of air-conditioning equipment to North Korea.

So I hope this legislation will tighten the measures against luxury goods used to buy loyalty for the regime. And I hope the Chinese realize that ignoring this regime is far riskier than working with the United States and others to rein in North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

Let us also not forget that in 2014, the U.N. General Assembly voted to refer the North Korean regime to the International Criminal Court for well-documented crimes against humanity.

Earlier, a U.N. commission of inquiry report documented massive crimes against humanity in North Korea, including deliberate starvation, forced labor, executions, torture, rape, and infanticide, among other crimes—most of them committed in North Korea's political prison camp systems.

The almost 400-page report concluded that the bulk of the crimes against humanity were committed "pursuant to policies set at the highest levels of the state" and were "without parallel in the contemporary world."

This criminal regime holds between 80,000–120,000 political prisoners in its system of gulags.

So I am glad this sanctions legislation also includes provisions that address North Korea's terrible human rights record.

Let me close by reaffirming my support for our South Korean and Asian

allies that are at the most immediate threat from North Korea—not to mention the more than 25,000 U.S. military personnel stationed in South Korea. As such, without progress on ending North Korea's nuclear weapons program, I support the deployment of necessary missile defense technologies to help protect these allies.

DISAPPEARANCE OF 43 STUDENTS IN MEXICO

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it has been well over a year since 43 students from Ayotzinapa Rural Teachers' College were forcibly disappeared in the state of Guerrero, Mexico. On September 26, 2014, around 100 students from the college traveled to the city of Iguala. They were there to raise money and to obtain buses to attend a commemoration of the infamous massacre of more than 600 students in the capital in 1968.

The now former mayor of Iguala has been accused of ordering the attack on the students that evening. While the motive remains a mystery, what appears to have occurred is that the police used lethal force against the students, and the 43 who are missing were handed over to the criminal organization Guerreros Unidos. Six people were killed that day, and the fate of the 43 disappeared students remains unknown.

After it became clear, thanks to the courageous and dogged work of foreign journalists that a horrific crime had been covered up by Guerrero officials and the police, the Mexican Government established the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to provide independent analysis and technical assistance to the government.

The experts' September 2015 report, released on the eve of the 1-year anniversary of this tragedy, exposed significant deficiencies in the government's handling of the investigation and provided an opportunity for the government to restore the integrity of its own inquiry. The government's decision to extend the experts' mandate in the fall was a welcome signal of political will and a desire to build credibility.

But as the end of the experts' mandate nears, President Pena Nieto is running out of time to demonstrate that that political will has a lasting impact. The manner in which this investigation is conducted has grave implications not only for the victims of the attacks in Iguala and their families, but for the victims of countless other incidents in which Mexican citizens have vanished during the past decade and remain unaccounted for.

I urge the Mexican Government to fully support the experts' investigation by ensuring maximum cooperation of all Mexican officials, including on issues related to the experts' access to all those potentially involved in this incident and the serious pursuit of all

possible leads the experts have identified, including by soliciting assistance from the United States.

I also urge the government to publicly refute the campaign that some have waged to delegitimize the experts as a way to discredit their work. If the experts' work is forced to carry on with only the passive acquiescence of the government—or worse, subtle attempts to hinder its work—rather than its active support, the progress that has been made may be lost and with it the truth and the Mexican Government's remaining credibility on this issue.

The Mexican people, like people everywhere who care about human rights, deserve to know what happened to these students. As I mentioned, we also know there are thousands of other cases in Mexico of disappearances and many reports by the National Human Rights Commission and reputable human rights organizations of incidents of torture and extrajudicial killings. The only way to effectively address the kind of lawlessness that has become far too prevalent in Mexico is to conduct credible, thorough investigations and appropriately punish those responsible, so the message is clear that no one is above the law.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO FRED SEARS

• Mr. COONS. Mr. President, today, on behalf of Delaware's congressional delegation of U.S. Senator TOM CARPER and U.S. Representative JOHN CARNEY, I wish to recognize a close friend from Delaware, Fred Sears—a community leader and a passionate advocate for all in our community; a man whose name is synonymous with business leadership and public service in my home State of Delaware, and a man I am proud to call my friend.

Fred is known statewide for his generosity, his enthusiasm, and his business acumen. For decades, his impact has been felt by elected officials, nonprofit and community leaders, and countless Delawareans of all backgrounds and careers. He is a true leader, an authentic champion of the community, and the embodiment of what service means in Delaware.

Fred Sears is a Delawarean through and through, born just blocks away from his boyhood home at what was then called Wilmington Hospital, he grew up across the river from Brandywine Zoo. This Delaware native attended Mt. Pleasant Elementary, Alfred I. DuPont Junior High, and Wilmington Friends School for high school. Fred went on to earn a business degree from the University of Delaware and had a great deal of fun, including a truly memorable spring break trip to the Bahamas with JOE BIDEN, his classmate and friend.

After graduating from UD in 1964, Fred began a nearly 40-year career in banking. Fresh out of college, Fred was

scheduled to interview for a job with the Bank of Delaware, but accidentally walked into Delaware Trust instead. Fortunately, Delaware Trust was also hiring, and after starting as a management trainee, he rose to become the institution's first vice president of business development. From there, Fred went on to later work at Wilmington Trust, Beneficial National Bank, and ultimately Commerce Bank, where he was Delaware market president.

While Fred was well and widely known as a leader in our financial services industry, he found many other ways to serve our community as well. Early in his career, Mayor Tom Maloney asked his friend Fred to take a leave of absence from Delaware Trust to serve as the city's director of finance and then later as director of economic development. Fred not only fulfilled those two roles terrifically, but decided afterwards to run for an at-large city council seat in 1976. Fred won and went on to serve two full terms.

Many of us in younger generations of politics after Fred's elected service have called on his wisdom, his insight, and his ability to bring people together, as we had important decisions to make. So Fred served on the transition teams of Wilmington Mayor James Sills, Delaware Governor Ruth Ann Minner, and co-chaired my transition team after I was elected New Castle county executive in 2004.

For many of us, decades of success in finance, in business, in politics might be the hallmark of a complete and successful career, but for Fred, these experiences were just a few of the ways he fulfilled a lifelong passion for service in our State of Neighbors. Just over 13 years ago, while Fred was at Commerce Bank, our mutual friend Jim Gilliam, Jr., called Fred one day and said to him, "I have a job for you." After some convincing, Fred accepted the job, and since then, he has served admirably at the helm of one of the most important organizations in Delaware: the Delaware Community Foundation. The DCF plays an integral role in my home State, helping local nonprofits direct philanthropy to Delaware's most worthy causes and encouraging long-term charitable giving to improve our State.

Since Fred began as CEO in 2002, the DCF has tripled its long-term charitable funds and built its assets to \$285 million. Dozens of nonprofits and community funds have flourished under Fred's leadership, and he and his team and their astute financial guidance continues to generate the funding that enables them to serve. Fred didn't join the DCF though just to raise money and just to be important and recognized; rather, he sought to improve the entire philanthropic community and quality of community life in Delaware, and his success in doing so reflects his values and his vision.

Fred is a true leader: honest, insightful, thoughtful; creative, positive and confident. And Fred possesses that rare

quality: the ability to inspire others. He has used his passion for service to motivate the next generation of great leaders in our State.

Take, for example, one of Fred's many initiatives called the Next Generation. It is one he is most proud of—and justifiably so. Next Gen takes groups of civic-minded young professionals with limited or no experience in philanthropy and, with just the right amount of guidance and encouragement, helps mold them into nonprofit board leaders. Since 2004, Next Gen's chapters up and down the State have helped direct over \$300,000 in grants to community needs all over my home State of Delaware.

My good friend Tony Allen, who also calls Fred a mentor and a friend and a brother, tells a story of how Fred helped establish the African-American Community Empowerment Fund. The fund is today known as the Council on Urban Empowerment, and it promotes philanthropy that supports educational, social, and economic empowerment of African-American Delawareans. As Tony notes, Fred didn't just help establish the fund, he wasn't just one of its first donors; he attended every meeting of the group. In 2010, Tony introduced Fred when Fred Sears was set to receive an award for nonprofit leadership. As Tony put it then, "While patience is a virtue, impatience is a weapon. And Fred can be appropriately impatient. Fred doesn't demur to what others would call insurmountable tasks and taboo topics of conversation. He takes every opportunity to constructively push the status quo."

Tony's absolutely right, and given that legacy of leadership, it is no surprise Fred has been honored by countless organizations for his business and community efforts. He has received a Lifetime Achievement in Philanthropy Award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals. He has been given a distinguished service award from the Wilmington Rotary Club. He has been deemed a Superstar in Business by the Delaware State Chamber and was named Citizen of the Year by the Delmarva Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Those awards and merits are certainly a reflection of Fred's values and his many successes. But those of us who have had the privilege to work closely with Fred and to know him know that his commitment to service shines most brightly in the hundreds of interactions he has with Delawareans every day, whether he is offering ideas and advice or just saying a quick hello.

We know that even though Fred's leaving the Delaware Community Foundation, he will undoubtedly continue to serve the community he loves. In fact, Fred just accepted an appointment from Governor Markell to chair Delaware's Expenditure Review Commission, suggesting Fred has no intention of taking "retirement" literally.

In a testament to Fred's thoughtfulness, leadership, and sense of compas-

sion, just a day after the passing of our beloved friend Beau Biden earlier this year, Fred spoke to the Bidens and offered to help the family establish an organization in Beau's name. That idea became the Beau Biden Foundation for the Protection of Children—and 2 days after it was launched, they had already raised over \$125,000.

If this is all there was to Fred's story, it would be a remarkable one, but there is even more to Fred as a businessman, a philanthropist, and a person. If you speak to those who have been around him the longest, they will tell you his true passion is his family: his wife, JoAnn; his son, Graham; his daughter-in-law, Kathryn; his son, Jason; his daughter-in-law, Jen; and of course his treasured grandchildren, Kylie, Paxton, and Charlie. I have no doubt that Fred's retirement means he will be spending a lot more time as Pop Pop to his three treasures, becoming even more of a fixture at their frequent school functions and their baseball and soccer games.

Fred's friends and family will also tell you how much he adored his mother, Marjorie, visiting her daily at Stonegates until her passing, and how much he cares for his father-in-law today. They will tell you that Fred loves dancing, snappy suspenders, and vinyl records.

Fred's friend Tom Shopa will tell you about Fred's passion for golf and how, for decades, he has kept track of all of his golf scores, the number of putts he made, the weather that day—recording every single detail just as his father did. Fred's friends and colleagues will tell you they hear Fred say thank you dozens of times every day.

Today I pause for a moment on the floor of this great institution to say thank you to Fred. Thank you for giving your time and talents over decades to more than 40 community nonprofit organizations, for serving on countless boards, from Christiana Care to the Rodel Foundation, from the Housing Partnership, to the United Way. Thank you for your decades of service to Wilmington and Delaware and for a lifelong commitment to family, friends, and community. Fred, as our friend Tony Allen puts it, everyone in Delaware is better off because of your efforts.

On behalf of Senator TOM CARPER and Congressman JOHN CARNEY, I wholeheartedly thank you, Fred Sears, and congratulations on many jobs well done. I eagerly look forward to seeing where your so-called retirement will take you next. ●

REMEMBERING ALEX DIEKMANN

● Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, at the beginning of February, Montana lost a true conservationist. Alexander Boris Diekmann, 52 years old, passed away peacefully at his Bozeman home after battling cancer for many years. He is survived by his wife, Lisa, and his two sons, Logan and Liam.