

into days and possibly weeks before we can conference this important matter.

Today, the Senate takes the first step outlined in my unanimous request, proceeding to take up the House-passed bill. Senators can cooperate in taking the additional steps outlined in my consent request to get to a conference and the Senate could proceed to appoint its conferees and request a conference without further delay, today. Alternatively, Senators can exercise their procedural rights to obstruct each step of the way and require a series of cloture petitions and votes. I hope that in the interests of school safety and enacting the many worthwhile programs in the Hatch-Leahy juvenile justice bill, they will begin to cooperate. The delay is costing us valuable time to get this juvenile justice legislation enacted before school resumes this fall. This is just plain wrong.

I spoke to the Senate before the July 4th recess about the need to press forward without delay on this bill. I contrasted the inaction on the juvenile justice bill with the swift movement on providing special legal protections to certain business interests. In just a few months, big business successfully lobbied for the passage of legislation to protection themselves against any accountability for actions or losses their products may cause to consumers. By contrast, some are dragging their feet and now actively obstructing the House and Senate from moving to appoint conferees on the juvenile justice bill that can make a difference in the lives of our children and families.

New programs and protections for school children could be in place when school resumes this fall. All of us—whether we are parents, grandparents, teachers, or policy makers are puzzling over the causes of kids turning violent in our country. The root causes are likely multifaceted. Nevertheless, the Hatch-Leahy juvenile justice bill is a firm and significant step in the right direction. The passage of this bill shows that when this body rolls up its sleeves and gets to work, we can make significant progress. But that progress will amount to naught if the House and Senate do not conference and proceed to final passage on a good bill.

Every parent, teacher and student in this country is concerned this summer about school violence over the last two years and worried about the situation they will confront this fall. Each one of us wants to do something to stop this violence. There is no single cause and no single legislative solution that will cure the ill of youth violence in our schools or in our streets. But we have an opportunity before us to do our part. It is unfortunate that the Senate is not moving full speed ahead to seize this opportunity to act on balanced, effective juvenile justice legislation.

I want to be assured that after the hard work we all put into crafting a

good juvenile justice bill, that we can go to a House-Senate conference that is fair, full, and productive. We have worked too hard in the Senate for a strong bipartisan juvenile justice bill to simply shrug our shoulders when the House returns a juvenile justice bill rather than proceeding to a conference and a narrow minority in the Senate would rather we do nothing. I will be vigilant in working to maintain this bipartisanship and to press for action on this important legislation.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that there be a period for morning business, with Members able to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I will announce that it is the intent of the majority leader to go to the Interior appropriations bill tomorrow morning. There are some procedures we are having to work through. I hope that can be accomplished overnight and we will be able to move to the Interior appropriations bill soon after morning business as possible on Tuesday. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Ms. LANDRIEU and Mr. AKAKA pertaining to the introduction of S. 1434 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. CONRAD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

(The remarks of Mr. CONRAD pertaining to the introduction of S. 1436 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

#### TRIBUTE TO MAJ. GEN. PAUL V. HESTER, USAF

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment today to recognize one of the finest officers in the United States Air Force, Major General Paul V. Hester. On July 30th, General Hester will leave his current job as Director of the Air Force Office of Legislative Liaison to take over the important posts of Commander, United States Forces, Japan; Commander, 5th Air Force; and Commander, United States Air Forces, Japan. During his time here in Washington—particularly with regard to his work on Capitol Hill—General Hester personified the

Air Force core values of integrity, selfless service and excellence in all things. Many Senators and Staff enjoyed the opportunity to interact with him on a variety of important issues and came to appreciate his many talents. Today it is my privilege to recognize some of Paul's many accomplishments since he entered the military 27 years ago, and to commend the superb service he provided the Air Force, the Congress and our Nation.

Paul Hester entered the Air Force through the Reserve Officer Training Corps from my alma mater, the University of Mississippi. While at "Ole Miss", he completed both bachelor's and master's degrees in Business Administration. He earned his pilot wings in December of 1971 at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi and was then assigned to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, where he flew the A-7D Corsair. A short time later, he was deployed to Southeast Asia where he distinguished himself flying combat missions and earned five Air Medals for outstanding airmanship and courage. Over his career, General Hester demonstrated his skill in other fighter aircraft, including the F-4, F-15 and F-16, and logged more than 2,600 hours of flying time.

General Hester's exceptional leadership skills were always evident to his superiors and he repeatedly proved himself in numerous select command positions. While stationed at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, he served as the commander of the 94th Fighter Squadron, Captain Eddie Rickenbacker's famed "Hat in the Ring Gang." He was also the first Commander of the 18th Operations Group, Kadena Air Base, Japan; Commander of the 35th Fighter Wing at Misawa Air Base, Japan, and prior to his assignment here in Washington, Commander of the 53rd Wing, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. At each and every one of these important posts, Paul Hester inspired the airmen under his command to achieve their best, and ensured our forces were sharpened and ready to undertake our warfighting commitments.

Paul Hester also excelled in a variety of key staff billets. He served in the Air Force Directorate of Plans at the Pentagon, and he was a member of the Commanders' Action Group, Headquarters Tactical Air Command, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. He experienced joint duty as both the J-5 Division Chief to the Joint Staff and as the Joint Chiefs of Staff representative to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Vienna, Austria. As a Lieutenant Colonel, he was selected as the Chief of the Air Force's Legislative Liaison Office to the U.S. House of Representatives. His performance in that important position is the reason he was brought back as a Major General to lead the entire legislative directorate for the Secretary of the Air Force.