Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the Senate, we hope today or perhaps tomorrow, will be bringing this session to a close. It has been a session which has involved some historic decisions by the Senate. Of course, it began with an impeachment trial of the President of the United States, which ended in a bipartisan decision of the Senate not to convict the President. Then, shortly thereafter, we faced a rather historic challenge in terms of our role in Kosovo. So we went from one extreme in the Constitution, involving an impeachment against the President, to the other extreme, where this Senate had to contemplate the possibility, the very real possibility, of war. That is how our session began, at such a high level with such great challenges.

There were so many other challenges that were presented to the Senate during the course of the year. I am sad to report that we addressed very few of them. Things that American families really care about we did not spend enough time on, we did not bring to a conclusion. So, as we return to our homes, States, and communities after this session is completed and we are confronted by those who are concerned about their daily lives and they ask us, What did you achieve during the course of this session? I am afraid there is very little to which to point.

This morning, I received some letters from my home State of Illinois from senior citizens concerned about the cost of prescription drugs, as well they should be, because not only are these costs skyrocketing, but we find gross disparities between the charges for prescription drugs in the United States and the cost of the very same drugs made by the same companies if they are sold in Canada or in Europe.

In fact, in the northern part of the United States, it is not uncommon for many senior citizens to get on a bus and go over the border to Canada to buy their prescription drugs at a deep discount from what they would pay in the United States. That is difficult for Senators to understand as to why that same prescription drug should be so cheap if purchased overseas and so expensive for American citizens in a country where those pharmaceutical companies reside and do business.