

to take serious measures to reverse this troubling trend, or future generations will suffer the consequences and remember us with disappointment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

#### THE RETIRED PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2001

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would like to proceed in morning business to talk about some legislation that I sponsored. It is called the Retired Pay Restoration Act of 2001.

I introduced this bill last Congress. Out of the 100 percent of the things we needed to do on behalf of veterans, we maybe did 1 or 2 percent. There is still 98 percent to do.

This legislation addresses a 110-year injustice against over 560,000 of our Nation's veterans. We now have 64 cosponsors to S. 170. It clearly illustrates bipartisan support for this legislation.

My disappointment, though, is that this legislation passed was part of the budget. It was stripped out of the so-called "conference" that took place on this bill. That is unfair.

Every day in America—today, tomorrow, and the next day—1,000 World War II veterans die. This legislation is meant to help them.

What does this legislation do? We in Congress have repeatedly forced the bravest men and women in our Nation—retired career veterans—to forego receipt of a portion of their retired pay if they happen to also receive disability pay from an injury that occurred in the line of duty.

If you are an old veteran and you have a service-connected disability and you retired from the military, you cannot draw your disability pension. Is that fair? No, it is not fair. S. 170 will permit retired members of the Armed Services who also have a service-connected disability to receive military retirement pay and also the disability compensation. That seems fair to me.

Also, if a veteran who had a service-connected disability retired from some other aspect of the Federal Government—from the Congress, from the Department of Energy, or from the Interior Department—they could draw both pensions. But if you retire from the military, you can't. That doesn't seem fair to me.

We are currently losing, as I have indicated, over 1,000 World War II veterans every day. Every day we delay acting on this legislation means that we have denied fundamental fairness to thousands and thousands of our gallant armed service men and women. They will never have the ability to enjoy their well-deserved pensions. They earned them. If they spent 20 or more years in the military and were shot, or in some way hurt as a result of the service-connected disability, they earned that. That is an understatement.

As to the budget which we have heard so much about, the "budgeteers" should be ashamed of themselves. They took this out of the budget. It was passed on the floor, and they stripped it from the budget.

I want everyone to know that we have 64 cosponsors. It is bipartisan. I am going to look for ways of having this legislation adopted by the Congress and sent to the President.

Everyone should be alerted—Senator LEVIN, Senator WARNER—that I am going to do everything I can to make sure it is on the Defense authorization bill. I am going to do everything I can—I say to Senator INOUE and Senator STEVENS—to make sure it is on the military appropriations bill. It is just unfair.

This legislation should be passed. Every day 1,000 people are denied basic fairness in this country.

Today we have about 1.5 million of our finest serving in the defense of this Nation. The United States military is unmatched in power, training, and ability. This great Nation is recognized as the world's only superpower—a status which is largely due to the sacrifices that veterans made during the last century. But rather than honoring their commitment and bravery, the Federal Government has instead chosen to perpetuate a 110-year-old injustice.

Quite simply, that is disgraceful. It is an injustice. It has existed for far too long. We must correct it. I am going to do everything I can to make sure that this passes in some form and is sent to the President to be signed.

#### COMMENDING SENATE PAGES

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, on behalf of the Senate, I rise to bid farewell to our current class of Senate pages, who have served the Senate with distinction over the last five months. On behalf of the entire Senate, I would like to thank them for their fine work and tireless efforts to help the Senate run smoothly.

This class of pages has served during an historic time in the United States Senate. When they arrived, we were still in the midst of a close presidential election, one that held the fate of the Senate in balance. When the election was decided, they served in an unprecedented evenly divided Senate. And as they leave, they have been witness to a change in who is the majority. They've even served during a rare weekend session. And through all of these challenges, they have maintained excellent academic records.

Most people do not know of the rigorous nature of a Senate page's life. On a typical day, the pages rise early and are in school by 6:00 a.m. After several hours of classes, they come to the Capitol to prepare the Senate Chamber for the day's session by providing each

Senator with a copy of the Senate Legislative and Executive Calendars, the legislation under consideration, and the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, as well as any other document a Senator might request.

During the remainder of the day, they run numerous errands and perform a myriad of tasks, including providing Senators with the appropriate bills and resolution under consideration, obtaining documents one of us may want to refer to during a debate, running errands between the Capitol and the Senate Office Buildings, and helping out at our weekly caucus lunches.

The pages stay here as long as we're here, no matter how late. Once the Senate has concluded business for the day, the pages return to their dorm to prepare for the next day's classes, and, we hope, to get some much-needed sleep. Despite the hectic schedule, they perform their duties cheerfully and efficiently.

The presence of the pages on the Senate floor serves as a constant reminder to all of us here that the legislative work we perform is not just for our generation, but for the children and young people of our Nation as well.

It is my hope that we have given the pages some insight into the need for individuals to become involved in community and civic activities. The future of our nation strongly depends on the generation who will follow up in this august body. Perhaps a number of the current group of pages will one day return here to serve as members of the United States Senate.

These young men and women have been an integral part of our daily life here in the Senate and they have faced quite a few challenges in this historic year.

Again, we wish the pages a fond farewell. I hope that they will take their experiences here and return to their hometowns as better citizens with a greater appreciation for public service. Speaking on behalf of the Senate, we wish them well in whatever endeavors they choose.

I ask unanimous consent that a list of the current class of pages be printed in the RECORD.

The list follows:

#### SENATE PAGES

Libby Benton, Michigan; Steve Hoffman, Vermont; Alexis Gassenhuber, Wisconsin; Kelsey Walter, South Dakota; Michael Henderson, South Dakota; Kathryn Bangs, South Dakota; Tristan Butterfield, Montana; Lyndsey Williams, Illinois; Joshua Baca, New Mexico; Andrew Smith, Texas.

#### CHILDREN NEED CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions recently released a new report titled "All