

with Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac and OFHEO entered into an agreement to create a mortgage appraiser code of conduct. I applaud the work of the attorney general of New York for being proactive in trying to come up with a code of conduct in order to deal with some of the problems in the mortgage appraisal process.

While the "code of conduct" moves things in a positive direction, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are secondary market players, and the attorney general of New York has authority to deal with the conduct that touches upon the State of New York. In order to fully address the issue and create a unified standard affecting all mortgage originators, there must be a process involving all of the appropriate regulatory authorities including the Federal banking regulators who participate in the congressionally authorized Federal Financial Institutions Examination Counsel, FFIEC, subcommittee on appraisals. This would also provide regulated institutions with adequate opportunity to participate in the process.

The National Bank Act authorizes national banks to engage in mortgage lending, subject to OCC regulation. Since the early 1990s, each of the Federal banking regulators has had standards in place that deal with the conduct of mortgage appraisers. These standards were put in place to address many of the safety and soundness concerns that we are grappling with today. While I recognize the need to update and strengthen these standards, I believe that we need to be mindful of that structure, and rely upon it as part of the effort to reform the appraisal process.

The appraisal is a key component in ensuring sound underwriting both for banks and the consumer. I believe that the key concept of appraisal independence is laudable and although incorporated into Federal banking regulation, perhaps this construct needs to be strengthened.

Our goal should be to ensure that a standard exists that avoids inconsistencies, provides stronger consumer protection, and protects the safety and soundness of lending institutions. I believe that as a wake-up call to the regulators that their standards must be revamped and their enforcement stepped up.

Mr. DODD. I thank my colleague and agree with him on several fronts. The first is that I commend Attorney General Cuomo for his aggressive pursuit in ferreting out fraudulent appraisal practices. Law enforcement has said repeatedly that unscrupulous appraisers are the "enablers" of mortgage fraud.

Appraisers, seeking new business, are eager to "hit the number" needed to make sure a mortgage is approved. If they fail to give the lenders and brokers the appraisal needed to close the loan, they simply don't get any more

referrals from those lenders. As a result, appraisers were inflating their estimates of house value, adding to the frenzy that created the housing bubble.

The guidelines negotiated by Attorney General Cuomo with Fannie and Freddie, and approved by OFHEO, seek to ensure that this kind of pressure cannot be brought to bear on appraisers. They are designed to ensure independence and address the significant evidence of collusion between lenders and appraisers that Mr. Cuomo uncovered.

I understand there is great concern about the process for the reforms the attorney general is demanding. I also understand that some people don't like the new standards which will affect the practices of the lenders that sell their mortgages to Fannie and Freddie.

As a result, I agree with my colleague that the Federal banking agencies have a role in this process. These agencies already have regulations in place that set forth appraisal standards for their lenders. However, the appraisal fraud over the past couple of years, and the attorney general's action, should serve as a wake-up call to the regulators that their standards must be revamped and their enforcement stepped up.

AMENDMENT NO. 4984 WITHDRAWN

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Dole amendment be withdrawn.

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

VOTE ON MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. REID. Madam President, is the matter now the concurrence in the substitute amendment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct. The question is on agreeing to the motion to concur in the House amendment, with amendment No. 4983, as amended.

The yeas and nays have been previously ordered.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD), the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. McCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CANTWELL). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 79, nays 16, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 157 Leg.]

YEAS—79

Akaka	Baucus	Biden
Alexander	Bayh	Bingaman
Allard	Bennett	Boxer

Brown	Hutchison	Reid
Cantwell	Inouye	Reid
Cardin	Isakson	Roberts
Carper	Johnson	Rockefeller
Casey	Kerry	Salazar
Cochran	Klobuchar	Sanders
Coleman	Kohl	Schumer
Collins	Landrieu	Sessions
Conrad	Lautenberg	Shelby
Corker	Leahy	Smith
Craig	Levin	Snowe
Dodd	Lieberman	Specter
Dole	Lincoln	Stabenow
Domenici	Lugar	Stevens
Dorgan	Martinez	Sununu
Durbin	McCaskill	Tester
Feingold	McConnell	Voinovich
Feinstein	Menendez	Warner
Graham	Mikulski	Webb
Grassley	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Gregg	Murray	Wicker
Hagel	Nelson (FL)	Wyden
Harkin	Nelson (NE)	
Hatch	Pryor	

NAYS—16

Barrasso	Coburn	Inhofe
Bond	Cornyn	Kyl
Brownback	Crapo	Thune
Bunning	DeMint	Vitter
Burr	Ensign	
Chambliss	Enzi	

NOT VOTING—5

Byrd	Kennedy	Obama
Clinton	McCain	

The motion was agreed to.

FISA AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2008—
MOTION TO PROCEED

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, pursuant to rule XXII, the clerk will report the motion to invoke cloture.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 827, H.R. 6304, the FISA Amendments Act of 2008.

Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray, Max Baucus, Tim Johnson, Ken Salazar, Barbara A. Mikulski, John D. Rockefeller, IV, Herb Kohl, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Daniel K. Inouye, Mary Landrieu, Blanche L. Lincoln, Mark L. Pryor, Dianne Feinstein, Thomas R. Carper, Joseph Lieberman, Claire McCaskill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 6304, the FISA Amendments Act of 2008, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. BYRD), the Senator from New York (Mrs. CLINTON), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. KYL. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. McCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 80, nays 15, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 158 Leg.]

YEAS—80

Akaka	Domenici	Murkowski
Alexander	Dorgan	Murray
Allard	Ensign	Nelson (FL)
Barrasso	Enzi	Nelson (NE)
Baucus	Feinstein	Pryor
Bayh	Graham	Reed
Bennett	Grassley	Reid
Bingaman	Gregg	Roberts
Bond	Hagel	Rockefeller
Brownback	Hatch	Salazar
Bunning	Hutchison	Sessions
Burr	Inhofe	Shelby
Cardin	Inouye	Smith
Carper	Isakson	Snowe
Casey	Johnson	Specter
Chambliss	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Coburn	Kohl	Stevens
Cochran	Kyl	Sununu
Coleman	Landrieu	Tester
Collins	Levin	Thune
Conrad	Lieberman	Vitter
Corker	Lincoln	Voinovich
Cornyn	Lugar	Warner
Craig	Martinez	Webb
Crapo	McCaskill	Whitehouse
DeMint	McConnell	Wicker
Dole	Mikulski	

NAYS—15

Biden	Durbin	Leahy
Boxer	Feingold	Menendez
Brown	Harkin	Sanders
Cantwell	Kerry	Schumer
Dodd	Lautenberg	Wyden

NOT VOTING—5

Byrd	Kennedy	Obama
Clinton	McCain	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 80, the nays are 15. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The majority leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 3221

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate concur in the amendments of the House—this is on the housing bill—striking titles VI through XI to the amendment of the Senate; and finally that the Senate then disagree to the amendments of the House adding a new title and inserting a new section to the amendment of the Senate to H.R. 3221, notwithstanding rule XXII; further that a managers' amendment which has been cleared by the managers and the leaders also be in order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. ENSIGN. Madam President, I will object. I have been attempting, with the Senator in the chair right now, to attach the Clean Energy Tax Stimulus amendment to the housing bill and get a vote on it. This is an amendment that passed on the housing bill a couple months ago by a vote of 88 to 8 in a bipartisan fashion in the Senate.

People say: What does this have to do with housing? Well, it has several things to do with housing. There is energy efficiency built in for new home

construction. If somebody wants to upgrade their home with renewable energy products, they can do that with the help of tax credits in this amendment. It is a good amendment because this country is facing an energy crisis and gasoline prices are too high; home heating oil is too high; and natural gas has gone up by 70 percent. We need to have more renewable energy in the United States. All we have to do is have a vote on this amendment, and we could proceed with the housing bill.

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. ENSIGN. In a moment. I would say in closing that people have said—we can't do this. The House of Representatives would object because it isn't "paid for." Well, there is \$2.4 billion in unoffset tax provisions included in the Dodd/Shelby amendment and a large amount of this does not even relate to housing. Why should the House of Representatives accept \$2.4 billion worth in tax incentives not paid for and object to our clean energy tax provisions at the same time? That is an example of why there is inconsistency in objecting to our amendment being voted on.

I yield for a question.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I would like to ask, through the Chair, the Senator from Nevada if he could tell me the name of the State that has had 17 consecutive months leading the Nation in foreclosures.

Mr. ENSIGN. Madam President, there is no question that the whole country is facing a housing crisis and it is not just housing; it actually is leading to a liquidity problem, and my State like others has experienced difficulties. I wish to solve this problem, and improve this bill with the Clean Energy Tax Stimulus amendment—

Mr. REID. Madam President, regular order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. ENSIGN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I have been very patient while my dear friend, the junior Senator from Nevada, has talked about this. Here is the situation in which we find ourselves. Everyone knows we have an extenders package. I have a letter on my desk that has been spread on the RECORD previously—218 House Members have signed it—saying the House will not accept anything that is not paid for on the extenders. We have a letter that is now also a part of the RECORD, more than 400 companies, most of them Fortune 400 companies, say it is very important to pass the extenders legislation paid for. We also had a statement in The Hill newspaper yesterday, where the National Association of Manufacturers said: Why can't they pass this bill? It is very important to pass the extenders. It is

the most important thing the manufacturers need in the country.

We have a situation where there was an agreement made on this bill, the housing bill. The agreement was that they would be related to housing. With all due respect, everyone knows the matter relating to the extenders that my dear friend from Nevada talks about has—you have to stretch a lot to have it related to housing. Why would we want to send something to the House and have them send it back to us? We have a situation on the housing bill that Senator GRASSLEY and Senator BAUCUS are going to take care of—the pay-fors. That is all part of the deal, and everyone knows that.

This is a situation where Senator SHELBY and Senator DODD have worked very hard, and not only have they been working with the House, but they have been working with the White House on this housing bill.

Let's look at where we are. The Senate has turned this week to a number of issues. We have had four main bills: Housing, FISA—the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act—Medicare fix, which is important to do; and the supplemental appropriations bill. As of this minute, we haven't passed any of those because there have been continued objections from the minority.

Now, there is no need to whip out a Velcro chart about the number of filibusters we have had, but that is the reason we are in the position we are in today, because we have this great big funnel of legislation that needs to get done and now we have the little spout and that spout is the Fourth of July and it is hard to stuff everything into that. So we have a situation now where there is no reason why housing, the Medicare fix, the supplemental appropriations bill can't be passed in the next couple days.

We have all talked about FISA. I voted on the motion to proceed, not because I like the bill, but I think it is very important that there be an opportunity to offer amendments on it. Senator BOND and Senator ROCKEFELLER recognize that and know they would also feel it appropriate to have amendments on this legislation, but right now it appears we are not going to have that opportunity. FISA enjoys support from both sides of the aisle. It, too, could be easily dealt with before the Fourth of July recess. All these bills are critical to the health, safety, and well-being of the American people.

With thousands of American families losing their homes every day—8,500 new foreclosures every day—and millions more facing the shockwaves of abandoned properties and falling equity—it is important we act quickly. This housing legislation raises limits on Federal home loans; it creates a privately funded program to help distressed homeowners; it modernizes the

Federal Housing Authority to keep pace with the current housing conditions; and it provides foreclosure counseling moneys to families in need.

This housing legislation enjoys overwhelming bipartisan support. There is no reason we shouldn't pass this legislation.

On FISA, I recognize that Members of the House and Senate have worked hard for 3 months to come up with these improvements. Some of my Democratic colleagues will support a FISA compromise. I respect their decision. Even though I may disagree with the majority of the Senate, I have an obligation, as I said last night, to do everything I can to move this forward. We should be able to do that this week.

The Medicare bill, also known as the doctors' fix, passed by a stunning 355-to-59 vote in the House of Representatives—355 to 59. Republican leaders in the House openly supported this legislation or they wouldn't have gotten a vote such as that. This legislation will both help Medicare beneficiaries and head off the looming cuts facing doctors in many different ways. This bill was very similar to a bill drafted by Senator BAUCUS and supported by every Senate Democrat and nine Republicans in the Senate earlier this month. It represents the only chance this body has to head off cuts to doctors before they take effect at the end of the month. There is no reason we can't pass the Medicare doctors' fix this week.

Who supports this legislation? AARP, the American Medical Association, the American Cancer Society, the American Hospital Association, the National Committee to Preserve Social Security, the National Council on Aging, and dozens more—dozens more.

I ask unanimous consent that a full list of the scores of other organizations be printed in the RECORD that support this Medicare fix—fixing it now. It has to be done before the end of the month.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Alliance for Retired Americans, Alzheimer's Association, American Academy of Audiology, American Academy of Dermatology, American Academy of Otolaryngology, American Academy of Ophthalmology, American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry, American Association for Homecare, American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, American College of Cardiology, American College of Physicians, American College of Radiology, American College of Osteopathic Internists, American College of Surgeons, American Counseling Association, American Clinical Laboratory Association, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, American Heart Association/American Stroke Association, American Hospital Association, American Medical Association.

American Mental Health Counselors Association, American Optometric Association, American Psychological Association, American Society of Anesthesiologists, American

Society of Plastic Surgeons, Association for Community Affiliated Plans, American Osteopathic Association, California Medical Association, Center for Medicare Advocacy, Clinical Social Work Association, Federation of American Hospitals, Food Marketing Institute, Kidney Care Partners, Leadership Council of Aging Organizations, Medical Group Management Association, Medicare Rights Center, Mental Health America, National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders, National Association of Chain Drug Stores, and National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors.

National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, National Community Pharmacists Association, National Council on Aging, National Rural Health Association, Society of Gynecologic Oncologists, Society of Hospital Medicine and Suicide Prevention Action Network USA (SPAN USA).

Mr. REID. Madam President, it is legislation that every State in the Union is calling us about, their Governors and other representatives, to please take care of this. That is what we need to do. Are we doing this to take care of the doctors? Partially, yes, but the other reason we are doing it is we are doing it to preserve Medicare. If we do not do this, there will be more doctors who drop out of taking care of Medicare patients.

What does that mean? It also means there will be other people who are reimbursed by insurance companies and other health care providers who base their reimbursement on what Medicare pays. So we have to do this fix. It is not only to take care of the doctors, it is to take care of patients and Americans from one end of this country to the other.

Finally, we have a supplemental appropriations bill. I would hope we could pass that before the Fourth of July recess. It is an emergency supplemental. We know it funds the war fighting. No matter how people feel about the money that has gone to pay for this war, costing us in Iraq alone \$5,000 every second, I would hope everyone understands we are not going to vote on the war funding in this measure that is before us now. But we have other things we have to vote on or the war funding would not come forward, and that is important issues such as the GI bill of rights and unemployment compensation extension which States are drastically in need of.

It does other good things. There is money in here as a result of the floods that have taken place. That is important. There are Medicaid fixes. Out of the seven regulations that are causing a problem with every Governor in America, six of them will be repealed by this legislation. So there is no reason that we can't do this legislation.

I have said repeatedly we can pass all four of these bills this week. We can do them tomorrow, as a matter of fact. But as with everything else we try to accomplish around here in a closely divided Senate, passing them will require

the cooperation of Members from both sides of the aisle.

The filibuster chart is now up to 78. Of course, this is an alltime record for obstructionism. I have said our Republican colleagues, on occasion, have acted Orwellian this year; they say one thing and do another. I guess today is an appropriate day to say this because it is George Orwell's birthday today. He would be 105 today.

So I would hope everyone understands there will be no going home tomorrow unless we complete the things we are obligated to the American people to complete. Now, some say, well, that may mean we are going to have to be here Saturday. Yes, it may mean we have to be here Saturday because that is the way it is, and if we can't complete our work by Saturday, then we can continue our work. It wouldn't be the first time in the history of this country that important legislation was worked on during a holiday. Now, the Fourth of July doesn't come until next Friday or Saturday, a week from the day after tomorrow. So we may have to work here. Everyone should understand that. Everyone has obligations. I do. I don't get to go home as much as a lot of people. I would love to be able to go home on Friday, but we may not be able to. We have to, in my opinion, complete the supplemental appropriations. That is extremely important. We have to complete the Medicare legislation before we go. If we can complete FISA, I am not going to stand in the way of that. I think we should do that too. It appears now, realistically, with this objection to the housing bill, it appears very clear to me that is going to take more time, and we will not be able to do it by the day after tomorrow, but we are going to complete it. We have gone too far to do that. I tell all those people who are objecting to our completing this housing legislation: We will complete it. It may not be tomorrow, it may not be Friday, it may have to wait until the first week we get back. I understand the procedural aspects of that. It could require two more cloture votes, but two more cloture votes would only bring us to 80. We have worked through more difficult things than that. We have a relatively short work period in July, and it is guaranteed that we will do—we will complete the work on the housing bill the first week we get back.

So that is the best I can do. I am not upset with anyone. It has been an interesting day, but it is a day that focuses attention on the work we need to do. I haven't even mentioned the FAA extension. We have to do that some way. We tried to do that, and that was objected to. We have this global AIDS bill the President wants to do. I had a good conversation with Senator ENZI a few minutes ago, and he said he had three people who were objecting to that. He has taken care of two of them

today. He is going to deal with the other one tomorrow. I hope, in fact, that is the case. So there is a lot of work we need to do, and I hope we can do it. But everyone should understand we are not walking out of here at 2 o'clock tomorrow. If this means we have to stay until after midnight to file cloture on various things, we will do that. We have work we have to do for the American people.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, let me brighten our day and lift the mood of my good friend, the majority leader. I think by any standard this is going to be a week of considerable bipartisan accomplishment for the American people. We have a great likelihood of completing the supplemental. As everyone knows, the war portion of the supplemental, we don't even have to vote on again. The only thing we will be voting on, again, on the supplemental are the domestic parts of it that are widely supported on both sides of the aisle.

We all agree we need to do the so-called docs' fix. There is some difference of opinion about exactly how to craft that. Senator BAUCUS and Senator GRASSLEY have a history of being able to come together and work these things out in a way that makes sense for both sides.

The FISA bill enjoys almost, I assume, unanimous support on this side of the aisle and more than half the votes on the other side of the aisle. There is no reason we would not get there on that.

As the majority leader has pointed out, at some point along the way, the cobwebs and trip wires and other problems the housing bill has run into will be circumvented by the majority and we will get to final passage on a piece of legislation that the vast majority of people on both sides of the aisle think is important.

So I finish today with optimism about the chances of considerable accomplishment for the American people before the week is out.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding that the business before the Senate is the postcloture time on the FISA legislation; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. CASEY). Yes, we are on the motion to proceed to H.R. 6304.

Mr. REID. Yes, that is the FISA legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

The Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, briefly, I want to thank our colleagues. I thank the majority leader for his tremendous help in getting us this far on the housing bill. We have worked together, and we would not have been this far with-

out the cooperation of the minority leader as well. So I thank Senator McCONNELL for that. I am grateful for my colleagues to let us get cloture. Before we leave here—and the Presiding Officer knows how important this legislation is to our States—if we can get this done, I cannot think of a better message to send to the country than having Democrats and Republicans come together to make a difference to thousands of constituents who, over the next week and a half, will be in foreclosure and in danger of losing their homes.

I am grateful for the vote we just had on the Dodd-Shelby substitute. There are other hurdles to go because of the way this matter was sent to us. Any individual Senator can drag this out further. Given the overwhelming vote we have had, it seems to me it would be in our interest to try to get to the other amendments that remain and make this bill as supportive as we can in recognition of what the other body has done, with the hopes that the President might even have this on his desk for signature while we are back in our States during the Independence Day holiday. I think we can do it if we really want to. It is not that much of a difference that remains. As long as one or two individuals insist that we go through all of the remaining procedural hoops, they can delay the outcome. The outcome will happen. Unfortunately, their delays will cause others who might otherwise have been helped by this bill to possibly lose their homes. I think that is tragic indeed.

I hope the leadership will prevail upon those Senators to allow us to continue the amendment process, get through the hurdles, and complete work on this bill before we leave.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for a few minutes as in morning business.

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

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY IN IOWA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to address an issue of corporate responsibility, particularly as it relates to my hometown of New Hartford, IA, and the flood that recently took place there, and whether a large chain of convenient stores that is headquartered across Wisconsin is going to take the corporate responsibility of continuing to serve a small town that has been devastated by a flood.

It has been a tough and challenging time for Iowans over the past few

weeks. I have come to the floor on a few occasions already to update my colleagues on the natural disasters that have hit Iowa so hard.

Tornadoes and floods have caused economic and emotional toil and pain and have, sadly, taken 24 lives across the Midwest.

Just a mile from my farm is the town of New Hartford, where I have lived my entire 74 years. It is a modest town of about 650 people. On May 25, the north edge of the town suffered extensive damage from a tornado.

That same tornado destroyed half the town of Parkersburg, IA, just 10 miles west of my hometown of New Hartford, and continued damaging towns over a 43-mile range, including Dunkerton and Hazleton, as that tornado traveled east.

Then came the floods. The town and residents of New Hartford were devastated by the flood waters of what we call Beaver Creek. Much of the town's homes and businesses suffered damages from the floods.

But Iowans are resilient people. The residents and the entire community are pulling together to help their neighbors get back on their feet.

But one resident is abandoning the people of New Hartford. Kwik Star has announced that the only convenience gas store in town will not be rebuilt. The decision by Kwik Star to not reopen their store is a serious setback for the town of New Hartford.

These folks have endured a tornado and a damaging flood, but they are working to rebuild, pull themselves together, and somehow get their lives back to normal.

But the one gas station and convenience store will not be around to help with that rebuilding. They view the damage to their facility as too great, too daunting to overcome. This news has added another devastation to the residents of the community. We get the story: Well, we will not rebuild in New Hartford. We will put one double the size of that one in Parkersburg, so then all the people in New Hartford can drive 10 miles to get whatever they would get in their local community.

This is a large chain of convenience stores. I am begging for corporate responsibility, to continue to serve the community. And, particularly, don't ditch people when they are most in need.

Well, their decision doesn't sit well with the residents of New Hartford. As you can tell, it doesn't sit well with me.

As the residents are cleaning up their homes, parks, and businesses, Kwik Star has decided to abandon them. Kwik Star is hurting my neighbors and friends emotionally and economically.

If they don't see the value in rebuilding in New Hartford, why should the residents have any hope? These folks are doing everything they can to bring

their properties back from this disaster, to rebuild our hometown, and Kwik Star is leaving them high and dry during this time of devastation.

It is not just the emotional pain of their decision that hurts the people of New Hartford, IA; it is also economic because Kwik Star employed 15 people before the flood. Three full-time employees—Deana Ackerson, Brenda Smith, and Barb Harper—have each worked for Kwik Star for many years.

Twelve other employees—Cindy Huberg, John Mulder, John Anderson, Matt Winkelman, Rich Moore, Teresa Peverill, Carol Grooms, Lauri and Roger Palmersheim, Mitch Konken, Pam Hargema, and Heather Hugelucht—depended on Kwik Star for employment as well.

The bottom line is that the residents of New Hartford are clinging to their hope that the town will come back even stronger than before these disasters. They are using that hope to get through this.

But Kwik Star is dashing that hope. Kwik Star is telling them that their town no longer deserves a gas station and convenience store. One flood is all that this big corporation can seem to handle. If you want gas, milk, or bread, you will have to drive 10 miles to get it in a new, refurbished store that is twice as large.

I can tell them that in another town, just 15 miles away, they had a flood, and they had two stores in that town. One of the two stores in Waverly was flooded, but they are going to rebuild that store. I don't understand this. I am working for tax changes, which is the very same thing we did for Katrina in New Orleans, and with the help of Senator BAUCUS and Congressman RANGEL, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, we are working to enact tax relief for victims of natural disasters similar to what was done to the victims of the hurricane. I hope this will encourage Kwik Star to stay in New Hartford.

This includes expensing for demolition and cleanup of debris. Another major provision would allow additional depreciation to greatly reduce or eliminate the business tax liability for the current year, including an operating loss carryback, as an example, for 5 years, which ought to be plenty of incentive for these businesses to continue in the communities where they work.

In the case of the floods, we are talking about 250 different communities in eastern Iowa, just as an example; and, in addition, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana—and now it looks as though it is going to cover Missouri as well.

I am pushing these provisions to help businesses such as Kwik Star cope with the cost of damage and rebuilding.

Mr. President, I am here to appeal to this major convenience store and corporation serving the Midwest, the

Kwik Star Corporation, and tell them that New Hartford is worthy of a convenience store. Our residents deserve Kwik Star's commitment to the community. They need to know that a company they have depended on and they have done business with for over 20 years will reverse this decision and join them in bringing New Hartford back from disaster.

IOWA FLOODING

Mr. President, I want to take a moment to provide another update on the flooding in Iowa. As you are aware, Iowa is in the middle of a crisis. Across the State, floods have devastated homes, businesses, farms, and communities, and that continues.

I have been traveling back and forth to Iowa to see the catastrophic damage, and I have been anguished to see my fellow Iowans suffering. People are hurting, and it will take a long time and a lot of hard work just to get back to normal.

However, in the midst of this devastation, I have also witnessed incredible examples of the spirit of Iowa. I have seen Iowans come together in communities across the State sandbagging, consoling, sharing, and providing a helping hand to neighbors and strangers alike. This spirit of dedication, a natural inclination to put others before self, is what makes me most proud to call myself an Iowan.

I cannot talk about the spirit of Iowa without talking about the dedication and efforts of our police, fire, emergency medical services, National Guard forces, and the Civil Air Patrol. These first responders are the frontline of defense for all Iowans. These selfless individuals come to the aid of all Iowans, putting duty first to help others defend their homes, livelihoods, and lives. They do this without thinking twice and put others' lives before their own. They have worked tirelessly to build levees, to sandbag, to secure dangerous areas, and to make water rescues. They have suffered loss, just as all Iowans have; but they never waiver and they always continue to come to the aid of others.

For instance, police and fire stations across the flood zone have been damaged or destroyed. News reports have documented how the fire station in Columbus Junction, IA, was under 10 feet of water. Other reports point to devastation of police, fire, and EMS facilities across the State, including the second largest city in our State, Cedar Rapids. Despite this, first responders still continue to provide security and to help communities in distress. Their efforts are nothing short of heroic.

It is not just local police, fire, EMS personnel who are helping out. Law enforcement officers with the Iowa State Patrol and from other agencies across the State have come to the flood zone to lend a helping hand.

Some have come from out of State. For instance, Coast Guard rescue

teams based out of St. Louis came to provide search and rescue. State troopers and police officers from Nebraska and Minnesota have helped the Cedar Rapids Police Department keep the city secure as the floodwaters recede and cleanup begins.

I appreciate the sacrifice and dedication these folks have made to help Iowa in its time of need.

But it does not stop there. The Iowa National Guard has deployed over 4,000 of their members across the State, providing vital manpower to assist local communities. They have used their skills and training to help meet numerous local needs. They have helped with sandbagging, shoring up levees, saving homes and businesses, and they have secured bridges and patrolled levees. They have been assisting local law enforcement with security. They have distributed clean drinking water to communities that have no running water and provided generators to those without power.

The National Guard has also provided air support via helicopters to support the assessment of damage and transportation of vital equipment. The list of needs met by our Iowa Guardsmen goes on and on, and their dedication knows no bounds.

In fact, one Iowa Guardsman, National Guard SPC Curtis L. White, had to change his wedding plans when he was deployed in support of the flood effort. He married his wife Daniele on Thursday, June 19, on the viaduct on the corner of Highway 92 and 2nd Street in Columbus Junction where he had been assisting with the flood operations. I thank him, his new wife, and his fellow Iowa National Guard soldiers and airmen for their sacrifices and compassion for their fellow Iowans.

I also thank those in the Iowa wing of the Civil Air Patrol who flew Senator HARKIN and this Senator around the State to view the impacted areas. The Civil Air Patrol also flew photo missions to examine the extent of flooding. I commend the Civil Air Patrol for their dedication.

Finally, I thank the men and women across the State who are serving in hospitals, emergency rooms, long-term care facilities, community health centers, home health agencies, and hospices. Many of these people lost their homes to flooding, and yet they still showed up at work to do the right thing. They are to be commended for those efforts.

I know these folks were on the frontline working to evacuate patients from places such as Mercy Medical Center in Cedar Rapids as floodwaters rose. When this happened, facilities such as Saint Luke's Hospital in the same city and others nearby jumped up without hesitation to take in these displaced hospital patients.

We cannot forget the hard work and dedication of our health care professionals during this crisis, and as they

are on the road to recovery. With people such as these, I have no doubt that facilities such as Mercy Medical Center will be fully operational in no time.

As the floodwaters start to recede and Iowa moves toward rebuilding, the responsibility of public safety will still be on the shoulders of our first responders. These capable men and women who serve in law enforcement, fire departments, EMS, the National Guard, and in hospitals across the State need all the resources we can provide them in this time of need. We have a responsibility to make sure they are equipped for the job and any future natural disasters we have.

That is why I led the Iowa congressional delegation in writing to Federal agencies, such as the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice, asking that deadlines for law enforcement and first responder grant programs be extended for communities impacted by the flooding.

Communities in Iowa should not be penalized from receiving grants because they have not had the time to hurry up and beat a deadline that does not take into consideration such natural disasters. These communities should be given special consideration for applying for grant moneys because of the extensive damage.

Programs such as the Assistance to Firefighters and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Firefighters can provide vital assistance to fire departments that were impacted by the flooding. These departments may need new equipment, radios, computers, and repairs to their fire stations. These grants can provide that assistance.

Further, programs such as the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Program, called Byrne/JAG, as we all know it around here, and the Community Oriented Policing Services, and we refer to that as the COPS Program, can also provide these same types of resources to police departments in need.

Iowans will soon be facing a long process toward rebuilding. It will not be easy. However, I am proud to say that I know Iowans will be helping others to rebuild in the Iowa spirit of hard work and generosity. We in Congress are doing all we can on our end to ensure that first responders in the field have the resources they need.

So I applaud, maybe now a third or fourth time but you cannot do it too many times, these brave men and women who serve their communities and carry on the spirit of Iowa.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF GLORIA HUGHES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and honor Ms. Gloria Hughes for her committed service to Nevada. Ms. Hughes will be retiring on June 30, 2008, after over three decades of service in the Mineral County Assessor's office.

Ms. Hughes began her service in 1973 as a deputy clerk. She then served as deputy assessor, senior deputy assessor, and chief deputy assessor. In 1994, she was elected to her first of four terms as assessor.

As assessor of Mineral County, Gloria has worked tirelessly to improve the quality and efficiency of her office, never losing heart when she encountered obstacles. For example, Gloria won a 12 year battle to obtain an office vehicle, which helps the staff fulfill their appraisal duties throughout rural Mineral County. Ms. Hughes' realization of this goal and others like it ensured that her office was consistently the best it could be. Indeed, the State department of taxation repeatedly gave the Mineral County Assessor's office perfect marks in every category of methods and procedures of tax assessment.

True to her nature, Ms. Hughes expresses regret that she will not be able to see all of her goals for Mineral County realized, but is optimistic that the dedicated employees she leaves behind will fulfill them when the time is right.

Gloria will be missed by her employees—whose best interests she worked for ceaselessly—and the citizens of Mineral County who were the fortunate beneficiaries of her fervent commitment to her job, her county, and her state.

I am grateful to Ms. Hughes for her service and proud to honor her and her achievements.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF BOB STOLDAL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Bob Stoldal, a legend in Nevada news and the Las Vegas community for more than 40 years. Mr. Stoldal's first experience in a news office came in 1960, working for the Las Vegas Review Journal—first as a jan-

itor, then as a typesetter. In the next year he was hired by KLAS radio as a graveyard-shift radio disk jockey, where he was known to his listeners as Bob Free.

Over the past five decades, Mr. Stoldal has worked as a reporter, anchor, news director, and vice president of news for KLAS. He was the first ever general manager of Las Vegas One and held that position for the past 10 years.

Bob's dedication to accuracy in media content and high ethical standards in broadcast journalism have defined his career. He demands journalistic excellence and integrity from himself and those who work for him. Bob's demand for excellence has earned KLAS countless national and regional awards and recognitions.

Besides upping the ante for Nevada journalism, Bob Stoldal has impacted the field on a national level. Mr. Stoldal has been a staunch advocate for cameras in courtrooms and pioneered the charge to allow cameras in southern Nevada's courtrooms, adding a degree of public scrutiny to our legal system.

Mr. Stoldal's dedication to Las Vegas and his community extends far beyond the realm of media. Bob Stoldal has donated countless hours to the public good, working on State and local boards, commissions, and museums. He currently serves as chairman of the Nevada State Museum and Historical Society and the Las Vegas Historic Preservation Commission.

As a member of the Nevada Broadcasting Hall of Fame and the longest serving employee of KLAS, Bob Stoldal is a legend in the field of journalism; his insight, dedication, and integrity will be missed by all. I wish him an enjoyable retirement and all the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

LANCE CORPORAL LAYTON BRADLY CRASS

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life of the brave lance corporal from Richmond, IN. Layton Crass, 22 years old, died on June 14, 2008, in Farah Province, Afghanistan, from injuries sustained while his unit was conducting combat operations. He was a member of the U.S. Marine Corps, Golf Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines from Twentynine Palms, CA.

Layton graduated from Richmond High School in 2005. Outgoing and active in school, Layton also loved rollerblading, paintball, and computers. Public service was a family tradition for Layton; his father is a veteran and his brother, Donald, serves in the U.S. Marines, as well. In high school, Layton was part of the Richmond Police Youth Cadet Program and, according to his family, surprised no one when he enlisted in the Marines. It had been his ambition since he was 16 years old.