

named him one of the 100 most influential Black Americans. He is also the recipient of People for the American Way's 2005 Spirit of Liberty Award and the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute's 2006 George Meany Latino Leadership Award.

One award that has special meaning for him is his inclusion in the Danville, IL, High School Wall of Fame. In the same high school where he once feared to take a science class, Reg Weaver now serves as an inspiration for students to study hard and go as far in life as their talents and passions will take them.

In closing, I want to thank Reg Weaver's family—especially his wife Betty—for sharing so much of Reg with America for so long. Above all, I want to thank Reg Weaver for his passionate advocacy on behalf of America's students, teachers and public schools.

#### GLOBAL AIDS BILL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, many of us on the Democratic side have disagreed with the President's policies—on the war in Iraq, on the economy, on education, and health care.

But an overwhelming majority of us, on both sides of the aisle, find common ground in our support for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR.

The President believes this program is one of the hallmarks of his administration. I agree. I think it is his most positive achievement as President of the United States.

In fact, I believe it is an important illustration of American smart power, a resource we have both squandered and underutilized in recent years.

Smart power is the idea that America's strength resonates not only from its military power but from the power of its ideas, the power of its values, its generosity and diplomacy.

I worry that a measure of this leadership has been lost recently. We are in a struggle of ideas across the world. Many of our harshest critics paint a picture of the United States that is not even close to reality.

When you consider the purpose of this bill—to prevent 12 million new infections; support treatment for at least 3 million people; and provide care for another 12 million, including 5 million vulnerable children—it is easy to see it as an expression of American values—of generosity and caring for those in need.

The success of the PEPFAR program has brought us a long way since 2003, when only 50,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa were receiving treatment. Today, PEPFAR and the Global Fund jointly support nearly 2 million people on treatment, primarily in Africa.

That is remarkable progress in just 5 years. The situation on the ground has been literally transformed through the

support and generosity of the American people.

We should be proud of this achievement. But, as U.S. Global AIDS coordinator Dr. Mark Dybul has reminded us many times, "We cannot treat our way out of this epidemic." To build on this progress, we are going to have to integrate our treatment efforts with other prevention activities.

Epidemics do not occur in isolation. If a person goes hungry or doesn't have safe water to drink, her antiretroviral drugs will not be effective. If there are not enough doctors or nurses in her village, she will not receive the care she needs to overcome this terrible disease.

It is essential to integrate treatment with prevention, health workforce capacity development, and other important public health efforts on the ground. We need to move away from an emergency posture to one that encourages sustainability for the long term.

This bill—the Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008—helps us do that.

The President has urged Congress to send him this important bill before the end of the year.

In March, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved the bill on an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 18 to 3. Our colleagues in the House passed a similar measure with a resounding vote—308 to 116—a few weeks later.

Some of the most vulnerable parts of the world have been ravaged by AIDS, TB and malaria. Through this bill, we have an opportunity to turn the tide on these terrible diseases.

Around the world, all eyes are on the U.S. Senate.

Although it has been a long 2½ months of negotiation with those who placed holds on the bill—and I applaud Senator BIDEN and Senator LUGAR on their tenacity and leadership in reaching an agreement last night to finally advance this bill.

I urge my colleagues to do the right thing and to support this vital, life-saving legislation.

#### CRISIS IN ZIMBABWE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have repeatedly come to the floor to talk about the genocide in Darfur, a tragedy that is now entering its sixth year, with little end in sight. Senator SNOWE and 27 other Senators joined me last month in writing to the President saying that his legacy would be largely affected by whether definitive action is taken to halt this humanitarian crisis on his watch.

Unfortunately, I fear President Bush will leave office and hand the crisis in Darfur to the next President.

Sadly, there is another African crisis that also demands the world's attention—this one in Zimbabwe.

On March 29, the country held a presidential election in which opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai won over incumbent Robert Mugabe by nearly 5 percent. Official results were withheld by the government for more than a month, raising concerns of official manipulation. Opposition leaders and supporters, election observers, and reporters were harassed and in some cases detained. Some were tortured, others killed.

Under those results, in which neither candidate received more than 50 percent, a runoff was scheduled for June 27.

The period leading up to this runoff has been a tragedy for the people of Zimbabwe, for democracy, for the rule of law, and for the entire southern African region.

President Mugabe, once a hero of Zimbabwe's independence, has used violence to destroy his country's democratic process.

Opposition supporters are harassed, attacked, and threatened if they do not vote for Mugabe. Tsvangirai has been detained repeatedly and has survived three assassination attempts. His party's secretary general, Tendai Biti, was arrested earlier this month and charged with treason.

And then this week, government thugs raided opposition party headquarters, rounding up supporters, including women and children.

Mugabe even said in regards to the next round of voting, "We are not going to give up our country because of a mere X. How can a ballpoint pen fight with a gun?"

Mugabe has driven Zimbabwe's economy into the ground, starved his own people, and brought sweeping international condemnation upon his government. He has further added to his people's suffering by manipulating the distribution of international food aid.

The process has been so undermined by President Mugabe that on Monday, Morgan Tsvangirai withdrew from the race and sought refuge in the Dutch embassy.

The man who won the most votes in the first round of Zimbabwe's election now has to seek the protection of a foreign embassy out of fear the government will take his life.

This is outrageous.

The situation in Zimbabwe is a tragedy that the international community must address. The world cannot stand idly by anymore while petty dictators destroy the lives and ignore the democratic will of their own populations.

What message are we sending when murderous governments such as those in Burma, Sudan, and Zimbabwe are allowed to thumb their noses at basic human rights and the international community?

The UN Security Council said this week that it would be "impossible for a free and fair election to take place."