

Last week, we introduced a comprehensive housing stimulus bill that would help hundreds of thousands of homeowners that the President's voluntary program leaves behind. It has five points to help families avoid foreclosure: First, by improving loan disclosures. Second, we help families avoid foreclosure by increasing preforeclosure counseling funds. Third, we expand refinancing opportunities for homeowners stuck in bad loans. Fourth, we provide funds to help the highest need communities purchase and rehabilitate foreclosed properties. Fifth, we amend the Bankruptcy Code to allow home loans on primary residences to be modified.

How have our Republican colleagues responded to our responsible plan? They blocked us from going forward, stopped us. The Republicans proposed an alternative plan consisting of four concepts. One of these was to change the tort law. This is not the way to go. One of their other proposals was to lower taxes. This is not the way to go. Just this week, Chairman Bernanke said the crisis demands a vigorous response. He said:

Reducing the rate of preventable foreclosures would promote economic stability for households, neighborhood, and the Nation as a whole. Although lenders and servicers have scaled up their efforts and adopted a wider variety of loss-mitigation techniques, more can, and should, be done.

Those are the words of Chairman Bernanke, a call for our legislation to pass. That is what we need to do. Voluntary programs will not work. We have to move forward. We ask the Republicans to join with us in this most important legislation and stop blocking our ability to stimulate the economy as it relates to housing. They have to stop being beholden to the big banks and Wall Street and be beholden to the people who are in trouble—middle-class America.

We have a few things left here.

My friend from Montana, who has, at this stage of the year, probably the most important job in the Senate, being chairman of the Finance Committee—every problem we have, we go to the Finance Committee to see what we can do to work it out. So I appreciate the good work of my friend from Montana. The people of Montana are fortunate to have this good man as their Senator because we all know that with Senator BAUCUS, Montana comes first, but we all know, all of us serving in the Senate, that he is a reservoir of good will, intelligence, and understanding, and he helps us all with our problems.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

TRIBUTE TO LAURIE SULLIVAN

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I speak today in tribute to a friend, Laurie

Sullivan, who passed away late last month.

Laurie was a lawyer, a legislative advocate, and a business leader. I admired Laurie professionally and personally. But I was not alone, because everyone admired Laurie.

Laurie was a cut above the rest. Washington is a place where people can lose their way. Not Laurie. She was grounded. And she was centered.

Laurie stood out because she was in it for the right reasons. She built a well-respected consulting firm, because she cared about good policy. She cared about making Government work.

People admired Laurie for her intelligence, her wit, and her graciousness. She was a breath of fresh air. A veteran of Capitol Hill, Laurie was confident enough to take her work seriously, but not so much that she couldn't laugh or share a joke.

People were drawn to Laurie because she was the kind of person who gave energy. She didn't take it.

Nothing made Laurie happier than being with her family. She talked about her nieces and nephews frequently. Her face lit up each time she mentioned their latest activities or accomplishments. She was proud of them. And she treasured the time that she spent with them. She described trips with her family as priceless memories.

Laurie was also a very generous person. And her generosity was not limited to her family. She gave generously of her time and resources to her community and her friends.

She worked with a local mentoring program focusing on teenagers who had experienced a death in the family. She hired a student from the University of Virginia at Wise. The student worked at her firm for the summer. Laurie gave him a laptop computer. She helped him pay his college bills.

Laurie also gave advice. She counseled her nieces and nephews. She counseled the students whom she mentored. She recommended strategies for her clients. And she counseled women who were starting a business.

She gave her views on healthcare and politics to me and other Senators who were lucky enough to be part of her circle of friends. Her advice was always solid.

When her nieces and nephews followed her advice, they prospered. Laurie's business grew, because her clients learned that she was right. The students she mentored succeeded in college.

Laurie was truly a wonderful person. She knew what was most important in this world. And she made the most of it while she was with us. We should all be so lucky as to live that way.

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

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

NATIONAL AFTERSCHOOL ASSOCIATION 20TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, next week, members of the afterschool community will be gathering for the 20th anniversary of the National AfterSchool Association Conference. The initial conference held two decades ago marked the first formal meeting of afterschool professionals under their own organization to discuss and develop solutions to address the needs of school-age children during their hours out of school.

Of course, back then we didn't call it afterschool. Instead, we talked about "latchkey" programs for "latchkey kids." At the outset, these programs replaced the need for latchkeys around the neck with welcoming, safe, and nurturing environments; they were a prime factor in the creation of the Act for Better Child Care.

As pioneers in the school-age movement, this passionate, dedicated group of leaders recognized that the needs of these students were distinct from those of early childhood. Their movement helped school-age providers network and share resources, culminating in the creation of the National School-Age Care Alliance, which later became the National Afterschool Association, NAA. Over time, 36 State affiliates were established.

In the past two decades, the field has evolved and NAA with it. Parents wanted more opportunities for their children, and the need for assuring quality programming became evident. In collaboration with the School Age Child Project at Wellesley College, NAA developed national quality standards and a national accreditation process for afterschool programs. These standards became the foundation for other groups' guidelines for programs for school-age children.

The NAA continues to be a leading voice in the afterschool community with almost 10,000 members nationally and internationally. The professionals who make up NAA's membership supply a critical component of quality programs, providing children with high-quality programming and positive relationships with adult mentors. The NAA has worked on behalf of the afterschool workforce to improve its quality and ensure that the profession's voice is heard. Today, their annual conference remains a key way for the afterschool community to share and network.

Afterschool has grown by leaps and bounds and now includes a diversity of programs providing a wide array of opportunities for young people. These