

I do not believe there are others who wish to speak. Let me do a couple of unanimous consents.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein up to 10 minutes each.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REVIEW EXTENSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter from Senator LEVIN to me dated June 15, 2007.

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

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, June 15, 2007.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR REID: On June 4, 2007, S. 1538, the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, was referred to the Senate Armed Services Committee pursuant to paragraph 3(b) of S. Res. 400 of the 94th Congress, as amended by S. Res. 445 of the 108th Congress. In accordance with that resolution, I now request an additional extension of five days to enable the Committee to complete its review of the bill.

Thank you for your assistance.
Sincerely,

CARL LEVIN,
Chairman.

REMEMBERING SENATOR CRAIG THOMAS

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I was deeply saddened to hear of the sudden passing of my colleague from Wyoming, Senator Craig Thomas. The loss we all feel at his passing Craig is tempered by the happy memories I have of working with him on so many issues of mutual interest. His efforts and his leadership on the panels on which we served together—the Senate Finance Committee, Senate Agriculture Committee, and Senate Environment and Public Works Committee—will remain foremost in my memory. I particularly admired his staunch advocacy for the needs of rural communities and farmers. Craig brought a special passion and expertise to issues affecting ranching families. His focus on their unique needs spanned the trade, economic, environmental, and public lands management issues of rural communities.

Craig brought to Congress his vision for the needs of Wyoming and rural States, and he became a strong advocate of effective resource and energy policies. I am pleased to have partnered with him in applying technologies to improving our Nation's energy generation. Although he lived his life modestly, he became a leader in national park stewardship, and the

American people owe him a debt of gratitude for his promotion of the undeserved national parks system. I also appreciated his long and thoughtful counsel on ways to update the Endangered Species Act.

In recent months, Craig took a prime role on the Finance Committee in working to simplify the Federal Tax Code and improve entitlement and health care assistance to the least fortunate. As one who took to heart the importance of protecting the taxpayers' dollars, Craig was a strong proponent of restoring the sustainability of our Nation's welfare system. And Craig understood that economic development in rural States like Wyoming was inextricably linked to trade promotion that ensured open and fair markets abroad. I will miss his stalwart and consistent advocacy for farming communities as the Senate considered trade legislation.

As a man who represented a small State in population, Craig towered large over the landscape of thoughtful conservative Members of Congress. I think a fitting tribute and legacy to our late friend would be to adopt his resolution making July 28, National Day of the Cowboy. My thoughts and prayers are with Craig's family and friends. I will miss my good friend and colleague.

RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD AND HEALTHY FAMILIES ACT

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, yesterday, just days before Father's Day, I was pleased to join my colleague and good friend Senator BAYH in reintroducing the Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Families Act. Within the next few days companion legislation will be introduced in the House of Representatives by Congresswoman CARSON of Indiana and my friend from Chicago, Congressman DANNY DAVIS.

It is time to address the crisis of absentee fathers. We must ask ourselves why more than a quarter of all American families have only one parent present, and more than a third live without their father. We must get a handle on why 40 percent of the children in America who live without their father have not seen him in over a year.

There is no question that most single mothers are doing a heroic job raising their kids. They are working two and three jobs, dropping their kids off at school or daycare or with friends or relatives, responding to their illnesses, and, quite frankly, doing the work that is often a challenge these days for even two parents. My appreciation for single mothers is unwavering. My own father was not around when I was growing up, and my mother and grandparents had to step up to the plate to fill my father's role.

But most people would agree that children are almost always better off with both parents contributing their fair share, and the data shows this.

Children are more likely to be poor and to do worse in school without both parents in their life. And a healthy relationship between children and their father is important to healthy growth and development.

The Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Families Act addresses these problems by removing government barriers to healthy relationships and responsible fatherhood. It improves the economic stability of parents who accept their parenting responsibility. Our bill sets a high standard for parents and helps them to reach it with incentives, support, and tougher enforcement of child support obligations.

It takes courage to raise a child. We can't simply legislate that courage and expect all parents to get and stay married. We can't legislate good parenting skills or good behavior role models. We can't legislate economic success for all families. But we can help those who are trying to do the right thing and eliminate some of the roadblocks they face. And we can provide some tools to help these courageous parents succeed.

This act removes government roadblocks by eliminating a perverse disincentive to marriage in the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program. Congress is sending the wrong message by telling States that they may be penalized for serving married couples. There should be equality for two-parent families receiving TANF, and States should not be required to meet a separate work participation rate for the two-parent families in their caseload.

This act also makes vital improvements to the child support system, which affects noncustodial fathers as much or more than any other government program. It will restore funding for child support enforcement and require States to pass the full amount of child support collected along to the family. Research has confirmed that a father is more likely to pay child support if he knows that the money is going to his kids.

We also require States to review the amount of child support arrears that are owed to the state, and we clarify existing state authority to forgive such arrearages. A father who earns only \$10,000 per year, and who has \$20,000 of child support debt because the State billed him for the Medicaid birthing costs of his child, is probably going to work underground and avoid paying child support altogether. It is in the best interest of all members of his family that a father has an incentive to get a legitimate job and to begin taking care of his family.

States are also provided funding to assess any other barriers to healthy family formation or sustainable employment created by their child support and criminal justice systems. They are encouraged to establish commissions to propose state law changes that would be in the best interest of children.