

THE INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS
BILL

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, at some point soon the Senate must either return to the consideration of the Interior appropriations bill or else consider an omnibus bill that includes provisions relating to the appropriations for the Interior Department or, dare I say, at a time when perhaps the Interior appropriations bill would come to the Senate, not directly to the floor, but via a conference report, where the conference report is not debatable. But when any of those events occur, we are going to face the issue of antienvironmental riders which are currently in the Senate Interior appropriations bill. In anticipation of that debate, I will take some time this afternoon to explain why I and several of my colleagues intend to offer an amendment that would delete many of those riders.

Three years ago, there was an attempt to fill appropriations bills with various riders—you know, those attachments that go on to appropriations bills that have virtually nothing to do with the bill—riders that made very controversial changes to our Nation's environmental laws: riders that would weaken, for example, the Clean Water Act, weaken the Clean Air Act, slow down the cleanup of hazardous waste sites, and prevent the protection of any more endangered species.

We all remember what happened. The President vetoed the bills, demanding that the riders be deleted. Congress refused. There was a standoff. The Government was shut down. A fierce public backlash occurred, not only against the Government shutdown, but also against the effort to lace appropriations bills with antienvironmental riders.

After that, we seemed to have learned our lesson. Chairman STEVENS urged us to "get on with our work" and get the appropriations bills passed. We pretty much did, keeping controversial riders out of most of the appropriations bills.

A few weeks ago that changed. When we took up the Interior Department appropriations bill it became, as Yogi Berra said, "deja vu all over again." The anti-environmental riders are back. The Interior appropriations bill that the Senate was considering just a short while ago is replete with controversial provisions that would weaken the protection of our environment and environmental laws, our water, our forests and parks, and our wildlife.

The administration objects to about two dozen of the riders in this bill. It says it is an attempt to roll back environmental protection. The amendment that I and several other Senators plan to offer is much more focused. It strikes only eight of the most egregious antienvironmental riders. Let me describe them. I will be brief because I and perhaps some other Senators will discuss each of these at a future date in more detail.

The first rider locks in new and existing rulings for commercial fishing at Glacier Bay National Park, AK. It jeopardizes the protection of one of the crown jewels of our national park system.

The second rider grants a right-of-way to build a road through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and Wilderness, also in Alaska. For the first time ever, Congress would allow a road to be built through a wilderness area.

The third rider prevents the Forest Service from decommissioning any of its authorized roads until it has dealt with every mile of unauthorized roads, the so-called ghost roads. This, in effect, would make it impossible for the Forest Service to manage the National Forest/Road System to protect public safety and the environment.

The fourth and fifth riders prevent the Forest Service from revising any more forest lands until the Forest Service publishes comprehensive new planning rules. What is the effect of this? It would lock in old, outdated plans that no longer reflect how our citizens want their forests to be managed.

The sixth rider requires the Forest Service to sell 90 percent of the allowable sale quantity of harvestable timber from one national forest, and one only. That is the Tongass, in Alaska. This would create a unique entitlement to take public timber from that one forest.

The seventh rider prohibits the reintroduction of grizzly bears in Montana and Idaho, disrupting a locally oriented public process designed to answer the very question of whether and how reintroduction should occur.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BAUCUS. I ask unanimous consent to use the time that has been allotted to the Senator from Vermont.

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

Mr. BAUCUS. I thank the Chair.

The eighth rider prohibits changes to the management and operation of any dam in the Columbia River Basin without congressional approval. That would override environmental laws, make it impossible to protect the salmon and other endangered species, and establish congressional micromanagement of one of the largest river systems in the world.

I have been in the Senate for about 20 years. I like to think that I understand the appropriations process pretty well. And in some cases it is perfectly acceptable to make policy changes in an appropriations bill, for example, where there is a broad consensus or an emergency. I have supported provisions like that, and every Senator here has probably done the same. But that is not what we are talking about here.

We are talking about a slew of riders that go way too far, making dramatic and controversial changes in our environmental laws. In some cases, the rid-

ers micromanage the agencies. In other cases, they substitute a one-size-fits-all Washington, DC, decision for a decision that balances national concerns with the concerns of local residents. In still other cases they improperly favor special interests at the expense of the national interests.

Some Senators will no doubt disagree with my characterization of these riders. They will argue, well, this or that rider is good public policy, justified on the merits. As with most issues that we debate around here, there will be serious arguments on both sides. But that is part of the problem. There are serious arguments on both sides.

Each of the riders involve important and complex natural resource issues. These issues require close attention and careful consideration as part of the regular legislative process. But instead, they have been tucked away in a 200-page appropriations bill, or what probably will be a much, much longer omnibus bill, that we are rushing to enact before the end of the fiscal year—only days away. And if rumors of an unamendable omnibus appropriations bill conference report are true, the Senate may never get to the debate or vote on any of these riders.

It is, to my mind, not the way to do business. We all know what is going on. These riders cannot stand up on their own merits. They cannot stand up on their own merits in the full light of day. The public does not support them. And the President does not support them. So the advocates resort to an appropriations rider.

This is not what people expect of us. Time and time again, folks back home tell us how upset they are with these kinds of riders. I hear it all the time. I am sure other Senators do, too. You know what? People are right. They certainly are in this case.

There is another problem with these particular riders, and that is that they are a poison pill. They will kill the Interior appropriations bill. Let us not forget the Interior appropriations bill is an important bill for all States, but particularly for Western States like Montana. It provides funds for our national parks, our forests, wilderness areas, and other public lands.

Senator STEVENS, Senator BYRD and Senator GORTON have done a great job with all the other parts of the bill. I do not want to overlook that, not for a moment. They have worked very, very hard. And I commend them for it. Frankly, I do not understand how they do it, how they find the time or the patience of balancing all the competing interests—funding our natural resource agencies, funding tribal programs that are so critical to Native Americans, resolving the controversy over the National Endowment for the Arts.

They have done too much good work for us to allow these riders to sully and probably sink the bill. But that is what is going to happen.

Let me talk a little bit about the official version of what the administration says, the bureaucratic version.

The administration's statement on the bill says that because of inadequate appropriations levels and because of various riders, "The President's senior advisers recommended that he veto the bill as represented to him in its current form."

Now I will relate the practical version. We all know what this means: Unless this bill is cleaned up, it will be vetoed. And we will be back where we were 3 years ago, facing a veto, gridlock, political shutdown; furthermore, if these riders find their way into an omnibus appropriations bill they will only compound the mayhem, which will be an affront to open, responsible, representative government.

I have great respect for my colleagues from Alaska and the State of Washington, the chairman of the committee and the subcommittee. They are good friends. They are good Senators. They are very good advocates. On the issues critical to the West, I am honored to work with them very closely.

With due respect, however, I believe these riders go too far. They weaken environmental laws. They undermine sound stewardship of our natural resources. For that reason, these riders don't belong in the Interior appropriations bill. They don't belong in the omnibus bill, either. They should be deleted.

When the time comes, I will offer an amendment to do just that.

Mr. President, one of the riders that my amendment would delete is section 120 of the Interior Appropriations bill, which prevents the Park Service from limiting commercial fishing in Glacier Bay National Park in Alaska.

I have a map of Glacier Bay National Park. Where is Glacier Bay? It is northwest of the Tongass Forest, in the southeastern part of Alaska. Glacier Bay National Monument was established in 1925 by a Presidential proclamation, expanded in 1939, and in 1980 it was redesignated as a National Park and Preserve by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

Now, I haven't been there, but I understand it is one of the crown jewels of our National Park System. The area is basically all that is included within this pink line. This is all Glacier National Park and Preserve—one of the largest national parks, encompassing 3.3 million acres, including Glacier Bay here and the surrounding waters.

Thousands of visitors come to the park each year for its tidewater glaciers, its abundant marine life, its scenery and outstanding wilderness qualities. A lot of tour boats come up here to visit the Johns Hopkins inlet here. It is hard to see this small photo in the upper right corner, so here is a larger copy of it. This is a photograph of Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. This is a tour boat down here, and this is to give you an example of the spectacular scenery that occurs up in Glacier Bay.

It also provides tremendous opportunities for scientists to study the ma-

rine environment, including the humpback whales. These creatures—here is a photo of one in Glacier Bay—feed in the bay during the summer months.

Commercial fishing has been illegal in the park since 1966. For many years that prohibition was not enforced, largely out of concern for the commercial fishermen. As a result, commercial fishing still occurs in and around Glacier Bay.

Let me add that this issue is not about subsistence fishing in the Park. Fishing for personal use, whether by Natives or other local residents, is allowed in the park; the proposed rule by the Park Service would not change that. The real issue here is commercial fishing.

Since 1966, there have been growing concerns about the effects commercial fishing was having on the Park, its unique natural resources, and on the hundreds of thousands of visitors to the Park each year. For example, in the late 1970s, the Park Service noticed a sharp decrease in the number of humpback whales that used the Park during the summer months. To help protect them, the Park Service prohibited commercial fishing in the bay for shrimp and other species on which whales feed. We will get the map of Glacier Bay up here again. It prohibited commercial fishing here within Glacier Bay.

The Park also provides a unique refuge for hundreds of thousands of people who visit Glacier Bay each year. In the last 10 years, the number of visitors to the Park has doubled. Many of those visitors come to experience solitude and quiet and escape from modern civilization. Commercial fishing is inconsistent with that wilderness experience.

In 1997, the Park Service tried to balance all the competing interests in the Park and proposed regulations that would allow commercial fishing in some areas, phase it out in other areas, and prohibit it altogether in a few other areas.

More than a thousand written comments have already been received. I will tell you where it is allowed and where it is prohibited. Basically, commercial fishing will be phased out in the bay. It will be prohibited in several small inlets, and there are about five of them. It will be allowed just outside of the bay here, still within the line; that is, coastal fishing would still be allowed.

At this point, I might say, Mr. President, that 70 percent of all the commercial fish are caught outside the bay, not inside the bay. So what I am really saying is, even though in 1966 commercial fishing was prohibited—and it has not been enforced since 1966—the new rule proposed by the Park Service would phase out commercial fishing over 15 years within the bay only, and it would allow fishing outside the bay, in the coastal area right along the land here. And a full 70 percent of the fishing is outside the bay.

In the meantime, more than a thousand written comments have been received since the publication of the proposed rule. The comment period doesn't close until November. Final rules are due out next year.

That is where the rider comes in. Section 120 of the appropriations bill prevents the National Park Service from finalizing the proposed rule. Worse, it even prevents the Service from enforcing existing prohibitions against commercial fishing in the Park, such as the prohibition adopted in 1985 to protect endangered humpback whales, as long as the fishing complies with State laws and regulations.

I understand the concern that the Alaska Senators and others have that the fishermen and their families will be affected by these limitations on commercial fishing. But I believe the rider takes the wrong approach, for four reasons:

First, Glacier Bay National Park is a very special place, like Yellowstone National Park and Glacier National Park in Montana. In fact, Glacier Bay National Park is our country's largest marine protected area, with over 600,000 acres of marine waters. That is nearly the size of Rhode Island. So we have to make an extra effort to protect the Park, its whales, seals, and sea lions, and the wilderness experience many visitors are seeking.

Second, there are serious concerns about the effects of commercial fishing. For example, commercial shrimp harvesting can reduce the food supply for humpback whales. The Park is also an important laboratory for studying how natural marine ecosystems can function. But it is very difficult to study a natural system if it is being fished commercially—in this case, to the tune of 4 million pounds of fish each year. If the Park Service cannot finalize the new rules or even enforce the existing prohibition, then this rider will put at risk the Park's marine resources.

Mr. President, I have a chart here that is a little wordy, and I apologize for that. It says, "The Effects of Proposed Moratorium." First, the effect on natural resources. It will prevent the Park from achieving its purpose as a marine-protected area; it won't be protected anymore. It would also allow trawling and other commercial fisheries that have been prohibited since 1985. It would allow commercial fishing in a congressionally designated wilderness area. Second, it will also adversely affect scientific research because the park is a laboratory for scientific study. Finally, the rider prevents the Park Service from completing a fair and open planning and rulemaking process. It just says: This is it, folks. No rule. This is it. The rider will stop the Park Service from implementing a proposed rule to balance local, regional and national interests.

The third reason I am opposed to this rule is that I think we need a balanced

approach. We will have to see what is in the final regulation. We don't know what is going to be in it. But the proposed rule tries to balance the need to protect the Park's resources with the need to treat commercial fishermen fairly. Again, commercial fishing would be allowed outside the bay where 70 percent of the fish are caught.

The proposed rule is balanced, I think, because it divides the area into three parts. It allows commercial fishing to continue in marine waters outside the bay itself. As I have already mentioned, that is out here. It does, though, phase out commercial fishing inside the bay over 15 years. And it closes five wilderness areas—including Beardslee Islands, Adams Inlet, Rendu Inlet, Hugh Miller Inlet Complex, and part of Dundas Bay—to commercial fishing in order to comply with the Wilderness Act because these areas, I believe, are within the wilderness system.

On the other hand, I must point out the rider will allow commercial fishing anywhere in the Park, as long as it complies with State law. In effect, the rider would turn over management of the Park's fish resources to the State.

Finally, the best way to get to a balanced solution, I think, is with lots of public input and review. The proposed rules have been developed through a fair, lengthy and open process, and with ample opportunity for public input. I will put up a chart that shows that.

Since April 1997, this chart shows all of the procedures that have been followed to allow people to comment on the proposed rule. The public comment period has been extended several times, I might add. Over 1,200 written comments have been received to date, and there are still 2 months to go. Furthermore, there have been numerous workshops, open houses and hearings on the proposal.

Again, were it not for the rider, the final rule would probably be in effect sometime in 1999. There have been many, many opportunities for people to comment.

Putting all of this together, I believe the best approach is to delete the rider. That way the process of developing a balanced solution can continue and we can protect Glacier Bay National Park for future generations.

Mr. President, I would now like to turn to another section of the Interior Appropriations bill. This is section 126, which authorizes a right-of-way for construction of a road through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and Wilderness. Let me explain why I believe this rider should be deleted.

The Izembek National Wildlife Refuge is on the Alaska peninsula, approximately 625 miles southwest of Anchorage. It is a major stopover on the Pacific flyway. The Refuge was established in 1960 and is an internationally recognized refuge that provides vital habitat to hundreds of thousands of waterfowl, shore birds, and other mi-

gratory birds. It also serves as a key denning area for the Alaska brown bear, and a primary migration route for the southern Alaska Peninsula Caribou herd. In 1980, Congress designated most of the refuge as wilderness.

This is a map of Alaska that gives you a sense of where the Izembek Refuge is located. We are talking about the Alaskan peninsula, and it would be basically right in here. This is a blown-up area of this part of the Alaskan peninsula. There are two communities in the vicinity of Izembek: Cold Bay up here and King Cove in the lower right of this map.

King Cove has a population of about 800 people, and Cold Bay, a population of about 100. They are separated by approximately 20 miles of marine water. They are linked by commuter air service and by boats. However, in bad weather, emergency transportation by air from King Cove to Cold Bay is limited.

The State of Alaska is currently evaluating various alternatives to improve transportation between these two communities, especially transportation for emergency medical treatment. That is going on right now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All the time under morning business that has previously been allotted has now expired.

Mr. BAUCUS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I yield to my good friend from Missouri without losing my right to the floor.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I wanted to ask, I need about 5 minutes to introduce a bill. I wanted to find out if my good friend from Montana is going to wrap up; I didn't want to interfere. But if it would be agreeable with him, and with the manager of the energy and water bill, to briefly introduce a measure, I would ask my colleagues, if that would accommodate them, if I could do that.

Mr. BAUCUS. I might say to my good friend I am about ready to wrap up this section. It will take maybe about 4 or 5 minutes.

Mr. DOMENICI addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

I would point out that regular order is S. 442, and the motion to proceed that has been agreed to. Anybody seeking recognition will have to receive consent.

Mr. BAUCUS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask to be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I will yield, without losing my right to the floor, to my good friend from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. No, I don't need the Senator to yield to me. I wonder, when you are finished—

Mr. BAUCUS. I have 5 minutes.

Mr. DOMENICI. Do you want to ask for 5 minutes?

Mr. BAUCUS. I ask unanimous consent for 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DOMENICI. The Senator might want to ask for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOND. I ask for 5 minutes following the Senator from Montana.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DOMENICI. When that is finished, I ask that I be recognized for 1 minute on a matter as if in morning business, and then to make a unanimous consent request.

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

The Senator from Montana is recognized for up to 5 minutes.

Mr. BAUCUS. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, as I mentioned, the State of Alaska is currently evaluating various alternatives to improve transportation between these two communities. One of the alternatives being studied is construction of a 30-mile road that would cut through 8 miles of the Izembek Wilderness and 3 miles of nonwilderness refuge lands.

You can tell from the map here, this is where the road would be. And this is the area of wilderness that would be affected. From King Cove, around the bay, up to Cold Bay. That is one alternative to be considered. Again, it would cut through 8 miles of wilderness and 3 miles of nonwilderness refuge lands.

Section 126 of the bill establishes a 60-foot-wide swath through the refuge for this road. In exchange, the bill adds 664 acres of adjacent lands to the refuge.

The avowed primary purpose of this rider is to improve public access to emergency medical services for the residents of King Cove. It is a serious problem, one that affects people's lives and health. I do not deny that. But this is also about increasing convenience for local residents and enhancing regional economic development.

My State also has vast distances and remote communities, although not as large a scale as in Alaska. So I am very sensitive to the concerns of the people of Alaska and certainly of the views of the Senators from Alaska.

However, I believe that the Izembek rider is the wrong solution to the problem that occurs between King Cove and Cold Bay. First of all, the rider establishes a very troubling precedent. Congress has never authorized the construction of a road through a wilderness area, certainly not as a rider to an appropriations bill. If we do so in this case, it will be more difficult to hold the line in the future.

Second, this road would have serious environmental consequences. The importance of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge is internationally recognized. It provides vital habitat to hundreds of thousands of waterfowl, to

brown bears, and to caribou. Its location on the Alaska peninsula makes the Refuge a critical resting and feeding ground for migratory waterfowl that pass through Izembek each spring and fall.

This is a map which shows the migratory patterns of various waterfowl and other birds, such as the Black Brant—the purple line here. They stop here at Izembek. 100,000 Emperor Geese stop here in the spring and fall; 150,000 Black Brant, 85,000 Canadian Geese, 150,000 Steller's Eider, and about 31 species of shore birds. These are the Arctic breeding grounds in the summer, and parts of the year they go south to winter. It is a very important refuge.

This rider, I might say, would cut this Refuge in half. It would fragment the coastal wetlands and tundra that are considered essential to many of these species. It would destroy the character of the wilderness area.

This, Mr. President, is the picture of a typical road in Alaska that would be contemplated by this amendment. You can see what condition it is in. This is a very good road. In comparison, this is a road that now exists in part of the wilderness area. This is what is there now. This is what would be contemplated. As you can tell, it is a pretty good size road. It is no small little cow path.

Third, and perhaps most significantly, there are many ways to address the legitimate transportation problems at King Cove without violating the Izembek Refuge: Coast Guard air evacuation is one; better port facilities and special marine ambulances are another; as well as telemedicine and other medical advances. After all, in bad weather, with high winds and blowing snow, a road can be very risky and often impassable.

In fact, I might read a letter from the Anchorage Daily News. It is a citizen, Tara P. Fuller, who is from Cold Bay. I will put it in the RECORD, but her basic point is that this is ridiculous, this amendment, this rider, which would allow this road. Because, she says, often this road would be totally impassable with snowdrifts. When storms come, the road would have to be plowed.

I ask unanimous consent to have that letter printed in the RECORD.

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

ROAD NO HELP IN BAD WEATHER

Regarding the King Cove-to-Cold Bay "Rescue Road in Alaska":

As a lifelong resident of this area, I have some great concerns with the proposed legislation to grant a right of way for a 27-mile road from King Cove to Cold Bay, 10 miles of which would be in Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and seven miles of which would be in the wilderness area.

To say this road is the only alternative to the health and safety issue is ridiculous. How could this possibly be true? When we are having inclement weather, are we to believe a vehicle could drive some 27 miles in whiteout conditions, drifting snow and

winds? I lived 3.2 miles out of the town of Cold Bay for four years, with so-called "road access" to Cold Bay, and during winter spent many days stranded either at home or in town, depending on where I was when the storm came. Drifting snow would be so bad, it would take days to get the 3.2 miles of road plowed enough to be passable.

I would also like to say that during the 14 years I have spent living in Cold Bay, I have yet to see the bay freeze over, making a marine link with a breakwater/harbor the only viable and obvious alternative to the road.

As Murkowski, Stevens and Young are trying to ramrod this through Congress, I would like to see them show up in Cold Bay and ask some of us Cold Bay residents how we feel instead of assuming we also are in favor of this "King Cove to Cold Bay Road."

TARA P. FULLER,
Cold Bay.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask for 3 more minutes.

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

Mr. BOND addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BOND. How long, Mr. President?

Mr. BAUCUS. Three minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana is recognized for an additional 3 minutes.

Mr. BAUCUS. The State of Alaska is already evaluating various alternatives and there is provision in the current transportation appropriations bill, that the Senate passed in July, that adds \$700,000 for the Corps of Engineers to study rural access issues in Alaska. That is already in there. Alaska is now studying various alternatives that affect rural access issues.

With these two studies out there, one by the State of Alaska and the other by the Army Corps of Engineers, now is not the time to jump to conclusions and pass a rider which authorizes the construction of a road through a wilderness area.

I say, let's let the studies examine the evidence, let the studies weigh the alternatives. Let's see if the road is, in fact, the best way to meet the stated needs. It may be and may not be. But the fact of the matter is, when you look a lot deeper into this, the real impetus behind the road may not be emergency medical evacuation. That is not the real driving force here. Really, it is that the folks there have an economic interest in having a road.

I might say, too, that is true of many communities—not only in Alaska, but other parts of the country. I understand those needs. People move to and live in King Cove because they want to live there. That is their home. That is their choice. There are ways to deal with the medical needs that may arise, but I do not think it makes sense to put in an appropriations bill a requirement that a road be built when there are two outstanding studies looking at this issue to see what the best way is to solve the access issue, particularly with respect to emergency medical services.

Mr. President, with that I yield the floor. I see my good friend from Mis-

souri on the floor. I cannot, for the life of me, have any idea what he is going to talk about, given the State he is from and given the magnificent feat of one of his local citizens in the last few days, with the number 70 behind it.

I very respectfully yield the floor so my good friend from Missouri can address the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from the great State of Missouri.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Montana. I also thank the distinguished chairman of the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee.

MARK MCGWIRE INTERSTATE ROUTE 70

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, Sunday evening in St. Charles, MO, I was attending a picnic. Late in the afternoon a bright-eyed, starry-eyed 10-year-old boy came in. He had just witnessed something that is truly historic. I told the young man I hoped he had a really good memory, because I imagine that he would be telling not only his schoolmates, but his children and his grandchildren, and we might even hope his great grandchildren about it.

As a matter of fact, as we travel around Missouri and other parts of the country, people have been talking about it all over. That is, of course, that on Sunday, Mark McGwire of the St. Louis Cardinals hit his 69th and 70th home run this season; a grand total of 70 home runs. To do that, he hit 5 home runs in his last 11 at bats.

There were people who thought it would be very difficult to break the wonderful record that Roger Maris had established of 61 home runs. This year we saw something truly extraordinary. Another outstanding athlete, Sammy Sosa, hit 66. And the contest between these two superb athletes and wonderful human beings electrified this country. As somebody who has been a baseball fan for a long time, I was so delighted to see the excitement and enthusiasm as baseball came back to the status it has had as our Nation's pastime. People who never cared about sports in my State were clustering around the radios or the television whenever Mark McGwire came up.

Mark McGwire is a man of immense physical stature, conditioning and strength. When I met him I was overwhelmed with his size and muscle. But he is a man of great mental dedication, of great concentration, determination, and—reading the column in today's Washington Post by Tom Boswell—probably possessing other extraordinary capabilities of which we mere mortals cannot be aware.

He did something that, for baseball fans, was truly remarkable. It has done more for our State, the city of St. Louis—but for the country as well—when we look at the sportsmanship and the example of how hard work and determination and doggedness pay off. I would like to believe in other countries