

Even the filibuster of one nominee is unacceptable because that means you are not allowing the President to have an up-or-down vote if somebody is brought to the floor of the Senate.

I am concerned that we will soon see the number of judges who are denied an up-or-down vote escalate from two to three to four to five to six, maybe more. Is that an acceptable number of judges who do not deserve an up-or-down vote? Of course not. Not one should be denied an up-or-down vote, once they are brought to the floor of the Senate. I believe that is true.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period for morning business.

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

TEACHING FROM SPACE PROGRAM

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, April 10, 2003, brought a new educational milestone to my State.

On that date, Alaska students from one of the most rural school districts in our Nation were the first Alaskans to take part in a live hook-up with astronauts in space.

Using distance learning technology, youngsters from my States Southwest Region School District spoke to the three-member crew of the International Space Station as astronauts orbited the Earth.

These students were participating in NASA's Teaching From Space Program, which includes science, math, and geography instruction, and features a live video question-and-answer session with the astronauts aboard the space station.

This session complemented a 6 week educational program, developed by our Challenger Learning Center in Kenai, which was included in the curriculum of the Southwest Region School District.

While the Teaching From Space Program has provided unique and motivating educational experiences to students across our country for many years, only recently were Alaska schools able to take advantage of the NASA program.

Until a few short months ago, no schools in rural Alaska had technology to allow teachers and students to communicate via video with others outside their villages.

Now that is changing, as some schools use distance learning technology to virtually bring new teachers and subjects into their classrooms.

The Southwest Region School District, one of the first in Alaska to install distance learning technology, is located on the southern coast of the Bering Sea, 350 miles southwest of Anchorage.

Eight villages are served by this school district, only one of which is ac-

cessible by road. The others are up to 120 miles from the school district's headquarters in Dillingham and may only be reached by air in winter. Some are accessible by river during summer months when, of course, our schools are closed.

The 779 students in the school district are primarily Yu'pik Eskimos. Most non-Native villagers in this region are employed as teachers.

During their 20-minute conversation with the International Space Station crew, students at Manokotak school asked questions about geography and space on behalf of their fellow students throughout the district. They watched as U.S. astronauts Ken Bowersox and Don Pettit and Russian cosmonaut Nikolai Budarin, floating inside the space station, answered their questions.

There was a special surprise, when the students learned that Alaska's own NASA astronaut, Bill Oefelein, who hails from Anchorage, flew from Houston to Manokotak to be with the students on their special day.

Many individuals and organizations contributed to the success of this educational achievement. This was a collaborative effort achievement. This was a collaborative effort of NASA, the Southwest Region School District, the Challenger Learning Center, and GCI.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all the individuals names be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

Sean O'Keefe, NASA Administrator.
Lieutenant William Oefelein, USN, NASA astronaut: flew to Manokotak to be on-site with the students.

Gwendolyn Brown, NASA: coordinated public affairs for the event.

Cindy McArthur, NASA: guided Manokotak teachers through the Teaching from Space program.

Kelly McCormick, NASA: guided Manokotak teachers through the Teaching from Space program.

Scott Anderson, NASA: guided Manokotak teachers through the Teaching from Space program.

Robin Hart, NASA: guided Manokotak teachers through the Teaching from Space program.

Randy Cash, NASA: managed the audio portion of the program.

Glenn Peterson, NASA: Mission Control Specialist.

Superintendent Mark Hiratsuka, Southwest Region School District: secured approvals for the program.

Tim Whaling, Southwest Region School District: coordinated the educational curriculum for the program.

Karen Swenson, Southwest Region School District: secured approvals for the program.

Steve Noonkesser, Southwest Region School District: managed the school district's technology and coordination with GCI.

David Piazza, Southwest Region School District: managed the school district's technology.

Principal David Legg, Manokotak School: secured facilities and staff for the program.

Kirk Kofford, Manokotak School: prepared students for the NASA link up and taught the NASA distance learning curriculum.

Dana Bartman, Manokotak School: prepared students for the link-up.

Nate Preston, Manokotak School: coordinated photography and publishing for the program.

Steve Horn, Challenger Learning Center of Alaska: secured educational curriculum for the school district.

Jamie Meyers, Challenger Learning Center of Alaska: coordinated curriculum between the center and the school district.

Martin Cary, GCI: secured telecommunications resources and personnel to link NASA and the school district.

Greg Dutton, GCI-SchoolAccess: managed GCI's participation.

David Morris, GCI: managed public affairs for the program.

Anna Sattler, GCI: coordinated communication between participants.

Tom Elmore, GCI: coordinated the video teleconference connection with school district sites.

Chad Parker, GCI: coordinated technology needs.

Brian Lichner, GCI: managed the NASA TV downlink in Anchorage.

Rob Knorr, GCI: managed the NASA TV downlink in Juneau.

Greg Farmer, GCI: managed the NASA TV feed in Juneau.

Doug Keil, GCI: connected the NASA TV feed in Anchorage to GCI-SchoolAccess.

Mark Dinneen, GCI: managed government relations for the program.

John Raffetto, Infotech Strategies: managed communication between all participants.

Nicole Angarella, Infotech Strategies: coordinated logistics and on-site materials.

Tracy Krughoff, Infotech Strategies: assisted school district with applications.

Angela Mathwig, Infotech Strategies: coordinated logistics and on-site materials.

Christopher Capps: coordinated astronaut participation.

Mike Donovan Hausler: managed design and production of graphic art.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I want to add my thoughts to the debate on the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill for fiscal year 2004.

First, I want to take this opportunity to thank the distinguished chairman and distinguished ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security for working so diligently on this bill before us. These leaders had the difficult job of allocating a very limited amount of money for one of the Nation's most pressing needs and they have done an admirable job.

I also thank this Nation's first responders. They are the ones who are on the front lines of this fight against terrorism. They are the ones who will be the first to react to any future attack upon our Nation. These brave men and women must, at a moment's notice, be ready to respond to a host of possible horrifying scenarios, including those involving nuclear, radiological, biological, and chemical devices.

Congress has been working hard to support our first responders, including providing almost \$3.9 billion in this appropriations bill. I am particularly pleased that the committee chose to maintain the successful firefighter assistance grants and fund them at \$750