

We have to change those incentives, and if we do not proceed to this legislation, we do not have a chance of doing that. So we have to move forward. Some have claimed, the Republican leader and others, that this is just a partisan exercise. It has not been a partisan exercise. We have been, under the leadership of Chairman DODD, engaged in this effort for months and months and months.

Some people might have forgotten around here, but we started the markup of the financial reform bill November 19 of last year. We had a bill. Senator DODD brought it to the committee. We started opening statements, and then everyone said: We have not had time enough to do this. We want more discussion.

Senator DODD, even with the urgency of moving on this measure, said: Fine. I respect my colleagues. I respect the process. We will stop. We will start talking.

Well, the negotiations went on and on and on. It was clear there was no sense of urgency on the other side to move to a decisive vote. Then he engaged other Members. Senator CORKER and others entered the discussion. I have been discussing derivatives in a very thoughtful way with Senator GREGG for months. But we have reached the point now where we have to take deliberate action and make some decisions.

We have to move to the floor, to debate and votes and final passage. This is something we have to continue to move forward. The way to move forward is to vote on the motion to proceed on Monday evening.

We have heard claims that this is a bailout bill, which I think would be a huge shock to many of my colleagues on the committee who have been working on this for months and months, Senator CORKER and Senator WARNER particularly, who crafted many of the provisions in this area.

The reality is, if we do nothing, which is the effect of voting against the cloture motion—if we do nothing, we could have a crisis next week. Greek sovereign debt—there is huge turmoil in Europe about Greek bonds, the ability of the Greek Government to pay, the need for support. If those talks collapse and suddenly throughout the financial system there is a rush away from sovereign debt, not just Greek debt but other countries, what will happen? We do not quite know, I suspect, who is holding all of this debt and what are the systemic effects. We have to be prepared for something like that.

The notion that this crisis has passed and we can go about our merry way without dealing with these issues is naive. The way to deal with it is to establish a resolution mechanism. Senator WARNER and Senator CORKER have done a remarkable job of crafting one. One of the questions they struggled with the most is who is going to pay for the resolution.

Frankly, they stepped up to the plate today and said: Let's put the banks on

the line for the first \$50 billion. That makes sense to me because it is clear who is going to pay: not the taxpayer but the banks. But, in any case, we cannot engage in this discussion of the mechanism and how it will finally come out until we bring the bill to the floor, debate it, and vote upon amendments or changes. That is what we have to do. But this legislation is clearly not a bailout for the banks. If it was, they would be supporting it.

Frankly, all the newspapers I read suggest the intense lobbying effort against the bill is by the banks, which, coincidentally, seems to favor the position of those who do not want to proceed to the bill. So I think we are in a situation where we have to proceed forward. As I said, if we do not move forward, we are going to have a significant issue of confidence by the American people and others in the stability of our financial system. These are complex, intricate issues. They require debate and discussion. I do not think anyone should be presumptuous enough to stand here and say: We know exactly what to do, and we are going to do it without the consent and without the input of all of our colleagues. But that consent and input comes, ultimately, on the Senate floor through debate, discussion, and voting.

Now, again, where are we if we do not take up this measure next week? Well, the \$600 trillion market in derivatives will remain opaque, complex, confusing, and a potential vulnerability for our financial system. I say \$600 trillion because when we talk about derivatives markets, billions are—you know, that is a rounding error. It is trillions of dollars, and a miscalculation, a mistake, a misjudgment in that market has huge consequences.

The big banks who sell complex, toxic instruments to pension plans, essentially taking savings and trading them, gambling with them, in some respects, they will continue to do that. They will not only take pension savings, but they will take municipalities' money in fancy bond arrangements that the municipalities never needed.

All of these things will continue.

Unregulated mortgage lenders will continue to go out and operate under the originate-and-sell model, which has led to so many problems. Payday lenders that are charging, in some cases, 900 percent interest will continue to be unregulated. Credit card companies, even after our efforts with the credit card legislation, will continue to try to circumvent the rules to maximize their profit.

The bottom line is, the people who benefit from delay, from taking the course of action of delay and denial, I would say, because this urge to suggest this is a bailout bill is denying the facts of the bill, will be financial institutions and not consumers and not taxpayers.

So, as a result, I would urge all of my colleagues on Monday to vote to proceed to this bill. Again, we have to ask

three questions. This will be decided on Monday evening. The status quo favors the banks. If you want to favor the banks, then vote against cloture. The status quo operates to allow all sorts of arcane and exotic activities which we know have posed significant threats to our financial system.

If you want these activities to continue unimproved, uncorrected, vote against cloture. The status quo disfavors consumers and taxpayers. So if you want to see them continue to be on the short side of the sale, vote against cloture. I would urge we vote for cloture, we move forward to debate real ideas about how to improve our financial system, protect consumers, and strengthen our economy.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Maryland.

ISRAEL'S 62ND ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today to express my congratulations to Israel on the 62nd anniversary of its independence.

This week, America's closest ally in the Middle East, Israel, commemorated its Independence Day, Yom Ha'atzmaut, 1 day after its Memorial Day, Yom Hazikaron, and 1 week after Holocaust Remembrance Day, Yom HaShoah.

While Independence Day is about celebration for the people of Israel, this Memorial Day was marked by somber ceremonies and national grief over the loss of their soldiers. Nationwide sirens and moments of silence emphasize the sacrifices all Israelis have made living in their thriving, free and democratic state. These intensely personal losses in such a small country underscore the continuing threats faced by Israelis, the scale of their efforts and the importance of a Jewish homeland.

I commemorated last week's observance of Yom HaShoah in Baltimore, where I joined fellow community members to view a movie marking the 50th anniversary of Adolf Eichmann's capture and trial. Eichmann was a premier architect of the Holocaust. Rather than dealing with such a war criminal through forceful vengeance that would have been understandable, Israel prosecuted Eichmann by following the rule of law and his trial was a model of transparency and justice. This display of our shared values of law, justice, and fairness help to illustrate why the United States and Israel have continued to build upon our "special relationship" for six decades.

I observed Israel Independence Day at an event focused on the growing threat of a nuclear Iran. If Iran acquired this capability, it would be an unequivocal "game changer" in the Middle East and, indeed, throughout the world. An undeniable threat to Israel and the United States, a nuclear Iran cannot become a reality. We therefore must do all in our power to

prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear capabilities. One of our first steps should be immediate enactment of powerful and effective economic sanctions against Iran, and the foreign companies that do business with this rogue nation.

While we work to minimize the key threats to Israel's security, we must also focus on opportunities for peace in the Middle East. Israel has always been prepared to pursue those opportunities and make peace with its neighbors. Over the past six decades, despite diplomatic gestures, multiple Arab countries have repeatedly attacked Israel. We should not forget that it was the Palestinian's leaders who walked away from the negotiation table at Camp David in 2000, on the eve of what would have been a historic breakthrough for peace.

Today, it is Israel who continues to acknowledge the necessary framework for any peace agreements, a two-state solution. While Israel has shown willingness for direct negotiations, the Palestinians continue to be, an unreliable partner in moving forward towards peace. How can Israel make peace with any partner whose so-called "moderate" Fatah leaders are not willing to meet directly with Israeli's leaders and whose Parliament is controlled by Hamas, an organization still sworn to the destruction of Israel?

I am proud to have joined with 75 of my colleagues in reaching out to Secretary of State Clinton in a recent letter which included a reaffirmation of this fact as well as a reminder, that not only do the U.S. and Israel share common values but also common interests. Top among these interests is restarting the peace process and preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear state.

This is precisely why the role of the United States in this process must be one of an honest broker. President Obama must not place wrongful or unreasonable pressure on Israel or, worse, to put forward a proposal without Israel's consent.

Since Israel's founding 62 years ago, every American administration has worked to strengthen the bonds between the U.S. and Israel. This has been vital for Israel, as the nation is under constant threat of military and terrorist attacks, economic boycotts and diplomatic hostility, often merely due to the fact of its very existence. At this critical moment, when Iran is moving forward with its nuclear program and simultaneously strengthening Hezbollah's capacity to attack Israel, it is imperative the Obama administration say in clear and unambiguous language that we stand with the people of Israel and will do all in our power to protect our shared values and national bonds.

As Israel celebrates its anniversary, let us all proclaim that the U.S. continues its unbreakable alliance with our closest ally in the Middle East.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CARDIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR DENNIS CHAVEZ

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a man who served New Mexico and the entire country with distinction for more than three decades in Washington, a man who dedicated his life to being a champion for the least of us. That man is Senator Dennis Chavez, the Nation's longest serving Hispanic U.S. Senator. This month we mark the 122nd anniversary of his birth. In everything he did, Senator Chavez showed his concern for the underdog. He fought for public education because he knew what it could do to help the children of struggling families become successful adults. He supported farmers because he knew how difficult life can be in the small communities where the trains don't stop and the roads don't go. And he fought for civil rights because Senator Chavez believed equality of opportunity is the core of the American creed.

Dennis Chavez fought for the underdog because he was an underdog. Born into poverty in Valencia County, NM, Chavez walked along a difficult road to the pinnacle of political power. A child of an isolated small town, he would see the world and help to shape it. A high school dropout, he earned a law degree and became a lawmaker. A victim of ethnic discrimination, he wrote legislation that would eventually make employment discrimination illegal and, then, unthinkable.

Dennis Chavez was a man of conviction. He also was a man of courage. At the height of anti-Communist sentiment in the 1950s, Senator Chavez was one of the first to denounce the activities of Joseph McCarthy. Here is what he said on the Senate floor during the McCarthy hearings in 1950:

I should like to be remembered as a man who raised a voice . . . and I devoutly hope not a voice in the wilderness . . . at a time in the history of this body when we seem bent upon placing limitations on the freedom of the individual. I would consider all of the legislation which I have supported meaningless if I were to sit idly by, silent, during a period which may go down in history as an era when we permitted the curtailment of our liberties, a period when we quietly shackled the growth of men's minds.

My father, who died last month, served in the U.S. Congress with Dennis Chavez in the late 1950s and early 1960s. He always said what he saw in Senator Chavez was a visionary and a man of courage. When Senator Chavez left this world in 1962, he was eulogized by Vice President Lyndon Johnson. In

that eulogy, Vice President Johnson remembered Senator Chavez as "a man who recognized that there must be a champion for the least among us."

Four years later, when the U.S. Congress placed Senator Chavez's statue in Statuary Hall, Rev. John Spence summed up the man nicely. Spence said Senator Chavez was "ever a champion of the underdog, the poor and oppressed."

But it is the quote inscribed at the bottom of the statue that best reveals the legacy of Senator Dennis Chavez. Written in three languages, Spanish, English and Navajo, it reads simply:

He left a mark that will never be forgotten in the hopes that others would follow.

El Senador makes me proud to be a New Mexican and humble to follow in his footsteps as a Senator representing the great State of New Mexico. America is a better place because of Senator Chavez. For that, we honor him today.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DEMINT. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

FINANCIAL REGULATORY REFORM

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, good morning.

I rise in opposition to the piece of legislation that Chairman DODD is calling financial reform. All Republicans want to reform our financial system and fix the things that have caused so much financial distress in our country. But rather than address the underlying causes of the 2008 financial crisis, this bill would institutionalize government bailouts for those it chooses are too big to fail. If Democrats were serious about financial reform, they would work with Republicans to permanently end too big to fail, to curb the power of the Federal Reserve, and to address the government distortions in the mortgage market that led to the financial meltdown. This bill does none of these.

Instead of focusing on solving these problems, the Democrats have eagerly crafted another massive bill designed to increase centralized government planning, and they are vilifying anyone who dares to oppose it.

Without bringing any more accountability to the government actors who contributed to the causes of the financial crisis, this bill simply represents additional regulation without real reform. Despite a recent Pew poll stating that more than 80 percent of Americans support ending bailouts, this bill ensures they will continue. The bill requires the government to keep a list of financial companies it considers too big to fail, and it provides these companies with a \$50 billion slush fund to help them when they get in trouble.