

that legislation, which was written over the last 3½ years, doesn't address one specific issue that I think must be addressed now in the context of what is happening in my State of Ohio and around the country, because it is not just prescription drugs and not just heroin. Increasingly, it is this synthetic heroin called fentanyl or carfentanil and sometimes U-4. This is poison and it is getting into our communities. It is much more powerful than heroin. Ingesting just a few flakes of it can kill a human being.

We have seen huge spikes in overdoses in Ohio over the last couple of months. In my hometown of Cincinnati, we had 174 overdoses in the space of 6 days. Miraculously, most people were saved by Narcan but sometimes having to be administered four or five or six times. The authorities knew it wasn't just heroin, and sure enough, we were able to get a sample of carfentanil to them thinking that might be the problem. They tested it, and sure of enough, many of these overdoses were caused by this synthetic heroin which is 100 times stronger than heroin in some cases. By the way, it is a large animal tranquilizer used for elephants in zoos. Yet these traffickers and pushers are using this drug and not just causing overdoses but causing overdose deaths.

We need new legislation. Last week, we introduced legislation in this Chamber to be able to stop this fentanyl, carfentanil, U-4, and these other synthetic drugs from coming into our communities.

What we were told by the authorities is, the drugs come in by way of the mail system primarily from China and sometimes India. There are chemists in sophisticated laboratories in these countries sending this poison into our community. All we are asking for in our legislation is let's ensure that packages coming from those countries have the information provided so we know where they are coming from, where they are going, and what the contents are. Unbelievably, that is not required now. FedEx, UPS, and other private carriers require it, but our mail system, including our U.S. mail system, does not require it. Talking to law enforcement, including Customs and Border Protection, DEA folks, and the people who are in the trenches dealing with this issue, all agree this legislation makes sense so we can try to stop some of this poison from coming into our communities.

I have been on this floor every single week since our legislation came up back on March 10. I have been talking about the importance of getting legislation passed, and that has now happened. I have been talking about the importance of implementing it quickly, and that is now happening. The Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act was supported by an amazing 92-to-2 vote in this Chamber because every State is affected.

I believe we need to do even more with regard to the specific issue of

these synthetic drugs coming into our country through the mail system. I ask my colleagues to support it—with 92 of us supporting that legislation—and please look at this legislation. Let's support it, get it to the floor, get it to a vote, and let's begin saving more lives as we have to deal with this new wave of synthetic heroin coming into our communities.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Gibson nomination?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) would have voted "yea".

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) would each vote yea.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 93, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 142 Ex.]

YEAS—93

Alexander	Fischer	Murray
Baldwin	Flake	Nelson
Barrasso	Franken	Paul
Bennet	Gardner	Perdue
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Peters
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Booker	Grassley	Reed
Boozman	Hatch	Reid
Brown	Heinrich	Risch
Burr	Heitkamp	Roberts
Cantwell	Heller	Rounds
Capito	Hirono	Rubio
Cardin	Hoeven	Sasse
Carper	Inhofe	Schatz
Casey	Isakson	Schumer
Cassidy	King	Scott
Coats	Kirk	Sessions
Cochran	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Collins	Lankford	Shelby
Coons	Leahy	Stabenow
Corker	Lee	Sullivan
Cornyn	Manchin	Tester
Cotton	Markey	Thune
Crapo	McCain	Tillis
Cruz	McCaskill	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Udall
Donnelly	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkeley	Warren
Enzi	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murkowski	Wicker
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden

NOT VOTING—7

Ayotte	Kaine	Vitter
Boxer	Moran	
Johnson	Sanders	

The nomination was confirmed. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Alaska.

REMEMBERING THE VENERABLE NORMAN H.V. ELLIOTT

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, it seems I am coming to the floor of the Senate on an increasingly frequent basis to honor the pioneering men and women who arrived in the State of Alaska prior to statehood who truly have left a lasting impression on the history of the 49th State.

Today I rise to remember the Venerable Norman H.V. Elliott. Father Elliott was an Episcopal clergyman who arrived in Alaska in 1951. He was truly a profound spiritual force in Alaska from the day he arrived in our State until his death on Friday, September 9 of this year. Father Elliott passed at the age of 97. To say he lived his life to the fullest would be a huge understatement.

Father Elliott lived a life as big as the State of Alaska. As we reflect upon that life, it would be no overstatement to characterize Norman Elliott as a true Alaskan icon.

Father Elliott was born in England. He moved to Detroit, MI, when he was 4 years old, and according to the stories, he decided very early on, about middle-school age, that he wanted to enter the ministry.

That future was somewhat interrupted by World War II. Father Elliott was drawn to military service, and after considering the possibility of joining a Canadian Forces battalion in neighboring Windsor, Ontario, he chose the U.S. Army instead. He was assigned to a new experimental light infantry division which was patterned after a German light division. After training in the swamps of Louisiana and California's mountains, he was deployed to Europe. Initially deployed to France, he fought in Luxembourg and Germany.

I had an opportunity to come to know Father Elliott very well over the years. Several years back, he agreed to sit for an interview as part of our Veterans Spotlight series. This is an oral history project I sponsored to capture the stories of Alaskan veterans. We worked in conjunction with the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress. In that interview, Father Elliott talked about the realities of the war. He said:

I remember good times. I remember bad times. I remember times where I barely escaped by the skin of my teeth. You never forget. I remember, and there are things I wish I had done or didn't do. I hope that as a whole, Alaskans remember what we did, because as a Nation, we are losing our remembrance of World War II.

Well, Father Elliott never let us forget our veterans, whether it was our veterans who fought honorably in World War II or the returning men and women who are coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Father Elliott's history after the war took him to Alaska. He attended Virginia Theological Seminary. He intended to serve as a missionary in India. There wasn't a slot available there for him, but there was one in Alaska. Father Elliott ended up in Alaska. His first stop was at St. Mark's Episcopal Mission in Nenana, a church and boarding home for Native children. Then he went to St. Barnabas's Mission in Minto and St. Stephen's Mission in Fort Yukon. Over time, his responsibilities expanded to missions throughout the Gwich'in communities on the Upper Yukon—communities such as Eagle, Circle, Chalkyitsik, Arctic Village, Venetie, Beaver, and Stevens Village. To cover this very large territory, Father Elliott would often travel by dogsled. He became a pilot and flew his own aircraft. I think he called his yellow plane the "Drunken Canary."

Father Elliott was truly "as unique as Alaska itself," in the words of one of his parishioners.

His duties in the villages were hardly romantic. Father Elliott was forced to confront the dual scourge of alcohol abuse and suicide and the loss of faith that comes along with despair. As a member of a joint Federal-State Commission on Alaska Natives in the 1990s, he encouraged a shift in government policies toward Native people. Instead of the government doing for Native people and doing things perhaps poorly, he believed the Native people themselves needed to be heard. He was an incredible advocate in so many ways.

He was more than your village priest, though. In various villages, Father Elliott would come in and do whatever task was needed.

In an article in our local newspaper, the Alaska Dispatch, just a couple of days ago, it was reported this way:

[Father] Elliott did every kind of task—he was a policeman, a tax collector, a school teacher, a delivery person and a messenger. When he arrived in one village to do church services, he first vaccinated everyone for typhoid. He usually carried penicillin in his sled bag, giving anyone who needed it an injection in the rump, including any sick dogs in his team.

Now, that is an individual who cared for everyone in whatever the capacity.

After being in the remote interior of the State, Father Elliott's next assignments were in relatively urban corners of Alaska. In 1958, Father Elliott moved to Southeast Alaska where he served at St. John's Church in Ketchikan. In 1962, he settled in as rector at

All Saints Episcopal Church, a beautiful church in downtown Anchorage. Father Elliott officially retired in 1990 when he reached the age of 70 in accordance with the church rules.

That might be the end of the story there, but it is hardly the story for Father Elliott. Two years after his retirement, All Saints needed a replacement priest, and he came out of retirement to serve as something called a priest in charge and continued to serve until earlier this year.

Father Elliott was one of those who was everywhere. He was at every social gathering. He was at every wedding, every funeral, baptisms, everything in between. He would visit those in the hospital. At times he would stay all night. He had this uncanny sense of knowing when they were in the hospital because he was very often the first one to visit.

Father Elliott ended up in the hospital earlier this year. He was down with pneumonia. It was a bit ironic. I went to visit him. He was really pretty grumpy. He was grumpy because he knew the hospital in and out, but he didn't like being the one who was confined in the bed. He was grumpy because he had places to go and people to see. As I recall, he had a funeral to go to and a wedding to go to, and when he got out of the hospital, he resumed that active schedule.

I have remarked often that Father Elliott lived every day to its fullest, from the time he woke up in the morning until the time he went to bed at night, and his is a life well lived.

Last week, Father Elliott passed away, and that, I am afraid, is the end of his story—at least the end of the story as we know it here on this Earth. Father Elliott served his church, his Nation, and his community with great distinction, and his was indeed a life that was well lived.

I have so many wonderful memories of my friend Father Norman Elliott, and that will sustain me, but I cannot help but observe that with Father Elliott's passing, another of Alaska's great and mighty trees has fallen.

I will be in Alaska this weekend and on Monday will have an opportunity to join with Alaskans from around the State in paying a tribute to a man who truly lived a life of service to others, who truly cared in a way that goes almost beyond description. I stand with my colleagues and ask that we join in prayers for Father Elliott and the family of truly a great Alaskan.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I wasn't expecting to be on the floor when the Senator from Alaska was talking about Father Elliott. What a great story, and what a great life he lived. I am glad I happened to be here and had a chance to listen.

#### SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. CORNYN. Just a few moments ago, the Senate passed a piece of legislation that some might ask: Well, what is the big deal? The Water Resources Development Act—what we call around here WRDA by the acronym—this bill is enormously important for States like North Dakota, places like Texas that have experienced flooding, in particular, but this bill will help us maintain and expand our infrastructure related to our most precious natural resource, and that is water.

Like I said, that might sound a little boring, not particularly interesting, but it actually has a lot of relevance to every American. Like I said last week, this legislation includes provisions that will help my constituents in Texas in a number of ways, from drought and flood protection to carving out deeper ports to enhance our ability to do international trade, but the passage of this bill serves as another example of what can happen when the Senate is actually working the way it is supposed to.

I am not going to suggest to you that just because the 2014 election gave Republicans the majority in the U.S. Senate that automatically made it possible for the Senate to begin functioning again, but the fact is, leadership does make a difference. I know it was absolutely key to Majority Leader MCCONNELL's agenda that we would actually work in the committees to build consensus on legislation, and then they would come to the floor and people would have an opportunity to offer amendments and other constructive suggestions and we would work until we built that consensus and accomplished our goal of passing legislation.

It is worth reminding our colleagues that the Senate, under Senator MCCONNELL's leadership, passed the first bicameral budget that we have passed since 2009 and the first balanced budget since 2001. Under a Republican-led Senate, all 12 appropriations bills were approved by their respective subcommittees and by the Appropriations Committee itself. As the Presiding Officer knows, the only way that happens is for the chair and the ranking member of the appropriate Appropriations subcommittee to work together on a bipartisan basis and then work with colleagues on the whole Appropriations Committee to come up with legislation they will support or that an overwhelming majority—in some cases unanimously—of the committee supports.

This is the first time since 2009 that we have actually seen all 12 appropriations bills approved by the subcommittees and then by the entire Appropriations Committee. That is the good news.

The bad news is, our Democratic colleagues wouldn't let us proceed with actually voting on those appropriations bills to get them done one at a time, in a transparent sort of way, where we would be held accountable for