

Because I must say that nothing in the 40 years now I've been involved in the political process has given me greater satisfaction than working with so many of you in an area as sacred as water sanitation. It has been exciting to watch the commitment grow. To watch churches and synagogues and Girl Scout troops and Rotary Clubs across America understand the role that individuals can play in making sure that some of the world's neediest people have access to what we too often take for granted.

It was exciting to watch it in Johannesburg seven years ago where the United Nation's Millennium Challenge Goals focused on water and sanitation. It was great fun to work with a number of you on the passage of the Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act - I'm wearing my Paul Simon memorial bow-tie this morning.

In our nation's capital, you may have noticed occasionally there is a little bit of disagreement. But with the Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act my partner in the house was Republican Chairman Henry Hyde. In the Senate we were joined by the leaders of the two parties: Harry Reid and Bill Frist, to navigate something through Congress at a time when people were being a little cranky.

It is also true that the progress that we all hope for has been less than overwhelming. We're getting pretty good at setting the right goals, being able to make the case. But the actual performance on the ground leaves a bit to be desired. When we started, clean water funding was less than 10 million dollars for all of sub-Saharan Africa. Half the people who are sick around the world today are sick needlessly from water-borne disease. Over the course of this morning talk, more than 300 children will die.

But with help of so many here in this room I do think that we have turned the corner. I'm optimistic about the commitment of the new administration to back up the rhetoric with action. We're already seeing that—and we are fighting for in the Budget Committee this week that's keeping that 150 funds intact. I've had a very encouraging exchange with Secretary of State Clinton, and Nita Lowey, every time she passes me it the hall says "Water, water, water!" And \$300 million dollars, is an encouraging start.

In a moment you're going to hear from one of the real giants of the Senate, Senator Dick Durbin, the successor to Paul Simon and the right person at the right time to be ascendant champion. It's not just that Senator Durbin really shares the values of Paul Simon, which he does. But he has one of the most infectious wits of anybody in the Senate. He's respected, smart, principled. He has a reasonably good relationship with the administration, and his former colleague in the Senate, Barack Obama. But more than that, Senator Durbin understands how these pieces fit together. So I am tremendously encouraged with the administration, with what's happening around the world, and with the foundation that you all have participated in building.

We do need to take a step back, though and not let anybody forget the magnitude of the challenge. There are more people without adequate sanitation than in China and India combined. The magnitude of this needs to be driven. And also the fact that it is within our grasp to solve. Because those Boy Scout troops, those Rotary Clubs, those churches

and synagogues, those volunteers, know what to do. It's not expensive, it's not hard. We have the ground capacity to achieve this.

I look forward to working with you and Senator Durbin in any way that I can. Thank you for being here, I look forward to celebrating Water Week with you and look forward to the most successful session of Congress we have ever enjoyed on this issue. Thank you very much.