

debtors themselves in order to collect accurate data, the way the Harvard study actually did.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO FORMER CONGRESSWOMAN TILLIE FOWLER

Mrs. DOLE. Mr. President, I rise today with a very heavy heart. And I know the devastation and deep sadness I feel are shared by many in the Capitol, in Washington, and throughout America. For with the passing of former Congresswoman Tillie Fowler, America has lost one of her most accomplished and dedicated public servants, and I have lost one of my most precious friends.

Tillie's remarkable record of public service is well known to many of my colleagues. It began over three decades ago, when she worked as a legislative staff member here on Capitol Hill. Her talents soon attracted the attention of Virginia Knauer, Special Assistant to the President for Consumer Affairs. It was there that Tillie and I worked side by side and bonded as lifelong friends.

Following her marriage, she and her beloved husband, Buck, moved to Florida, where they would raise two wonderful daughters—Tillie Anne, and my goddaughter, Elizabeth. Tillie also devoted her talents and her enormous energy to her community as a volunteer serving in numerous leadership positions. She was President of the Jacksonville City Council—the first woman ever to hold that position, and the first Republican to preside over the council in more than a century. This, despite the fact that the Council consisted of 16 Democrats and only 3 Republicans. Clearly, Tillie's intelligence, integrity, and leadership skills were respected across party lines.

In 1992, Tillie ran for the United States House of Representatives. Her popularity was so great that the incumbent Congressman decided to retire rather than run against her.

As those who served with her know, Tillie quickly earned a reputation as one of the hardest working and most effective Members of Congress. She was recognized as one of the 1 most thoughtful and visionary members of the House Armed Services Committee,

and the 8 years she spent in the halls of the Capitol were full of accomplishments.

She became the highest ranking woman on either side of Capitol Hill, when her colleagues selected her as Vice Chair of the Republican Conference.

Term-limiting herself, she retired from Congress, but not from public service. Time and again she was called on by our Nation's leaders to serve in important and sensitive assignments. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld named her Chair—the first female Chair—of the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee, and he appointed her to lead the seven member panel created by Congress to review misconduct allegations at the Air Force Academy. He turned to her again for a blue-ribbon panel to provide independent professional advice on Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison.

Tillie Fowler was a role model of what a servant of the public should be. And she was the finest friend that one could have. Loyal and caring, she was like a sister to me—always there, always reaching out, always searching for ways in which she could help.

Poet Robert Frost wrote: "As dawn goes down to day; Nothing gold can stay." Tillie was pure gold. She will live forever in my heart.

Bob and I send our strongest support, our love, our prayers to Tillie's family.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleague from North Carolina to speak about our great loss, the loss of a great friend, the passing of Congresswoman Tillie Fowler of Jacksonville. Tillie was taken from us suddenly yesterday, passing from this Earth to a better life, and we are sad and shocked by this terrific loss that the State and the Nation has suffered.

In every way, Tillie was a great lady. She had such a unique combination of strengths that she has been referred to as a "steel magnolia." She was ever gracious and kind and a gentle soul, but at the same time she was firm in her convictions. Even though Tillie had left the House of Representatives, people in the highest levels of Government, as pointed out by my colleague from North Carolina, continually sought her advice and counsel.

Most recently she had served on the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee, which provides counsel to Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld on policy and strategy.

I relied often on her sound judgment and advice. Most recently we were talking about the Mayport Naval Base in Florida and the USS *Kennedy*, and what the Florida delegation should do in order to ensure the long-term viability of Mayport. She was an instrumental adviser to Governor Jeb Bush on the BRAC and BRAC process.

Tillie was a great friend and personal counselor to me. It was only about this time a year ago that she and I were standing near the St. John's River in Jacksonville and she announced her

support for my candidacy for the Senate. I am so grateful for her support, and so proud to have had the faith of Tillie Fowler in my candidacy. Her wisdom will be missed, but her legacy is firmly in place.

Tillie Fowler began her life as a public servant shortly after earning her law degree from Emory University. She came to Washington to work for 3 years as a legislative assistant to Representative Robert Stephens of Georgia, and shortly thereafter she went to work at the Nixon White House in the Office of Consumer Affairs.

At the White House, Tillie made one of her dearest lifelong friends, our colleague Senator ELIZABETH DOLE. Tillie and her husband Buck even named one of their daughters Elizabeth in honor of that wonderful friendship. Tillie looked to ELIZABETH DOLE as a role model for working women, as someone who could be strong without being hard edged, and she followed that example of success. I extend to my colleague my deepest condolences on the loss of your good and dear friend.

After her tenure at the White House, she and Buck moved back to Jacksonville, FL, where they settled down to raise a family. She became active in a number of community organizations including the American Red Cross and the Jacksonville Junior League. She eventually ran for the city council in the 1980s, and served for 7 years, the last year as council president. She was the first female, and the first Republican, to serve as the president of the Jacksonville city council.

In 1992 Tillie Fowler became Congresswoman Tillie Fowler and quickly rose to be one of the top ranking women in the House of Representatives. She became vice chairwoman of the House Republican Conference and, for 6 years, chief deputy whip. Congresswoman Fowler served on the House Armed Services Committee and the House Committee on Transportation as well. Both committees allowed her to become a successful advocate for the city of Jacksonville and for the State of Florida. But I think Tillie will always be remembered for her great grasp of defense policy, her impassioned advocacy on behalf of the U.S. military.

In the year 2000, Congresswoman Fowler voluntarily stepped down to honor a pledge she had made to self-limit and return to private life. Without a doubt, the most important legacy left behind by our friend Tillie Fowler is her family—her husband Buck, and their two daughters Elizabeth and Tillie.

Our hearts are with you. Our thoughts and prayers go out to you during this difficult time.

We will miss her greatly and may God bless her.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am saddened by the passing of Tillie Fowler. My wife and I had the privilege of traveling with her overseas, and I found her to be a wonderful person.