

can make progress. You can make progress, and that is what I think both Senator GRASSLEY and I have worked on together. We try to make progress, especially for the people of Iowa.

I thank the Senator for his kind words. I know we are not supposed to say this on the Senate floor; we are always supposed to speak in the third person. But I never wanted to follow all of the rules anyway. So I wish to speak directly and say: Thank you very much, CHUCK GRASSLEY, for your friendship, your counsel, and for working together through all these years. I will miss that relationship—working on the Senate floor.

I will be in Iowa. I will be working with the Harkin Institute at Drake University. I will be spending a lot of time on the disability policies and advancing the cause of people with disabilities in some way, shape or form. I don't know how but in some way. It is a nonpartisan institute, and we have a great board of directors. The former chair of the Iowa Republican Party is on the board of the Harkin Institute, and I want to keep it nonpartisan.

I ask that my friend come and speak—and perhaps lead a discussion at some time—at the institute at Drake University. I would be honored if my friend would do that sometime down the road. I don't know when, but sometime when we can work it out. I know my friend will be well received, and I think the young people at Drake need to hear the conservative side of the story as well as the liberal side of the story. They need to have that kind of input. I hope we can work it out.

I say again that I know in the future my friend and his wonderful wife Barbara, a great and wonderful person, and Ruth and I will maintain friendships and our connections as we move into the future. If there is any way we can work together for the benefit of Iowans, just let me know, and I will be glad to be the Senator's lieutenant in the field out there in Iowa sometime.

Again, I thank my friend so much for so many years of counsel and friendship and working together. Thank you, CHUCK.

I yield the floor.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I thank my colleague for his kind remarks and for being here and for serving the people of Iowa.

Mr. President, I wish to take 4 more minutes to speak on another subject.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, on Saturday, many children and families around the country will celebrate National Adoption Day. It's a day that many adoptions are finalized and youth find their forever families.

It's very comforting and fitting that this day helps kick off the holiday season. Families will be formed and

strengthened. This Thanksgiving, many children will celebrate with their new families and not have to worry about their next placement or their next meal. And this month, we give thanks to the men and women who make their dreams come true.

Since the first National Adoption Day in 2000, nearly 50,000 children have joined "forever families" during National Adoption Day. In 2013 alone, adoptions for 4,500 children were finalized through 400 National Adoption Day events across the country.

These are impressive numbers—numbers that make us proud of the work being done to help children in foster care find loving families. But there is always more work to be done.

Today, there are over 102,000 children in the foster care system. Iowa alone has over 6,200 children in foster care, many of whom are waiting for a loving family to adopt them.

There are so many issues facing foster youth—in addition to being torn apart from their families. They face serious trauma. They are likely to be treated differently and don't get to do the same activities as other kids. They transition from home to home and school to school. They don't know normalcy, and they may never know permanency. And, after years of challenges, some are forced to transition to adulthood on their own. Unfortunately, each year over 23,000 youth age out of care in the U.S.

Too many older children in foster care, especially those with special needs, are often the ones who wait the longest to leave foster care. Foster youth simply desire to have what so many of us were blessed to have—a home with caring, loving parents and siblings. These kids are less likely than younger children to find "forever homes."

That is why I helped form the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth. I wanted to draw attention to the challenges that older foster youth face. The caucus has allowed congressional leaders to become more aware of the issues faced by young people and families who are involved in the foster care system.

The caucus cannot function without the input and insight from foster youth. These children are the experts on the foster care system. They tell us what works or what needs to change. They share their experiences and provide us with real world stories about how our policies truly affect them.

The caucus and the youth who share their experiences remind us that no child is unadoptable. No child should be without a mom and dad, and we must remember that foster care should be a layover, not a destination.

November is National Adoption Month, a time to raise national awareness of adoption and celebrate families, advocates, and volunteers involved in adoption. It's also a time to devote more attention to policies and practices that protect the safety and well-being for all children.

I am hopeful that Congress will continue to look for ways to improve the foster care system and promote adoptions. I am glad Congress worked to enact a bill this year to renew the adoption incentives program and to do more to screen and help foster youth who may be trafficked. We must continually examine how the system is treating youth and whether the policies in place are strengthening families.

There are many youth who will celebrate this holiday season without a permanent family. Hopefully, our celebration of National Adoption Month will raise awareness of the issues they face and the need to find them a mom and a dad. We need to keep working together to break down the barriers to adoption.

So today, I thank all those who have adopted or who have fostered children who needed it, and I thank the many individuals and organizations that work to make permanency possible for children. I know many dreams will come true this Saturday, and I wish the very best to the youth as they begin their journey with their new families.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise in recognition of National Adoption Month, and I know our great colleague Senator LANDRIEU will be here to also address this important month. She has been such a great leader in fighting for this cause. She has literally gone to Guatemala to make sure that children who are awaiting loving homes in our country get to come to those homes. She literally knows the names of those kids and is hands-on every step of the way and has been the leader in Congress.

She established the Congressional Coalition on Adoption, which has brought together Senators and Members of Congress on behalf of children who need loving homes and families who want to welcome them home. We are very pleased with her leadership.

Senator LANDRIEU is joining us right now, and I will be able to flip it over to my friend at any time it is appropriate. But I do wish to speak about National Adoption Month. It is especially important in my home State of Minnesota.

Many people don't know this, but Minnesota actually has the highest rate of international adoptions in the country. Minnesota families have opened their homes and their hearts to children from all over the world—from