

in governance, prosperity, and security, will begin to provide the economic opportunities and address these difficult social and law enforcement challenges in a sustainable way. I look forward to discussing these issues with our friends in the House of Representatives later this year.

More immediately, it is important that the United States carefully calibrates its response to the popular demands for reform. What is happening in Guatemala today is both unique and encouraging in the way it has inspired and united, for the first time in Guatemala's history, indigenous and non-indigenous, both rural and urban groups, poor and middle class who previously did not share a common agenda. This has enhanced the prospects for real change in a country that has been plagued for two decades by the divisive, tragic legacies of the war and by powerful forces in government and the private sector resistant to change for generations.

In this context, civil society requires support and protection, taking into account Guatemala's past history of repression and violence. I urge U.S. officials to make clear that the United States unequivocally supports the aspirations of Guatemalan civil society that is now struggling for the right of all the Guatemalan people to have transparent and accountable government, including honest and professional police and an independent judiciary.

Guatemala is a country with an extraordinarily rich culture, natural resources, and human potential. But without respect for human rights and the rule of law and real change that provides for equitable economic opportunities and political representation, that potential will remain unfulfilled. It is long past time for an end to impunity, including for public officials who misuse their office to enrich themselves, their families, and their friends, and for a new era of effective governance, prosperity, and freedom from fear for all Guatemalans.

TRIBUTE TO BRENDAN J. WHITTAKER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I wish to take a moment to recognize Brendan J. "Bren" Whittaker, a distinguished public servant and recognized leader in conservation efforts in the New England Northern Forest region. In addition to his conservation work, Bren spent more than 45 years in the Episcopal ministry, leading a full-time parish.

I know Bren first not as a priest, but as a dedicated public servant for more than 40 years. Bren has held many titles at every level of government, including town meeting moderator, town selectman, county forester, chairman of district 1 environmental commission, director of Vermont State Energy Office, Vermont Secretary of Natural Resources, U.S. Department of Agri-

culture FSA State Committee member and more.

In addition to his schooling in theology, Bren studied forestry, and he holds degrees in both disciplines. In the early 1990s, I worked with New Hampshire Senator Warren Rudman to establish the Northern Forest Lands Council, and Bren agreed to be part of that select group. He later joined the Vermont Natural Resources Council as Northern Forest project manager, and continues to work as a board member for conservation organizations in Vermont and New Hampshire. Bren served each post with distinction and has been deeply involved for nearly 40 years in the vast changes taking place across the Northern Forest.

I have been pleased to continue working with Bren since his appointment to the USDA's Farm Service Agency State Committee in Vermont. Bren continues to serve as a selectman in Brunswick, VT, and operates a vegetable farm, roadside stand and seasonal restaurant supply business with his wife, Dorothy.

I have touched on Bren's State and Federal public service, but his even greater contributions to his community may be through his ministry, as so eloquently enumerated in the article entitled Thanks to a Mentor and North Country Champion, written by Rebecca Brown, a member of the New Hampshire legislature and a student and friend of Bren. It was published in 2014 in the Littleton Courier. I ask unanimous consent that Ms. Brown's article be printed in the RECORD as a tribute to Brendan J. Whittaker's decades-long and continuing service to his neighbors, community, the States of Vermont and New Hampshire, and to the Nation.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[Littleton New Hampshire Courier, Dec. 2014]

THANKS TO A MENTOR AND NORTH COUNTRY CHAMPION

(By Rebecca A. Brown)

This season of giving thanks and celebration, I want to mark the final retirement of Brendan Whittaker from his Episcopal ministry. "Final" because he retired from full-time parish work many years ago, but has been serving in various priestly roles until the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

I write because Brendan's effect on people and the communities of the North Country have been (and I am confident will continue to be) enormous, yet he has gone about his work over the last couple of decades with little fanfare or notoriety, but with his genuine and affecting warmth. In this way he follows in the footsteps of one of his mentors, Carleton Schaller, also an Episcopal priest who we all lost earlier this year.

For much of his earlier career, Brendan was very much in the public eye, especially when he was Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources for Vermont. Walk through Montpelier or attend a conservation gathering anywhere in VT with Brendan today, and you'll encounter many people who still hold him in the highest regard. I do think he's one of the best-loved people in Vermont. Years ago, he was named the "person from away" (he was born and raised in Massachu-

setts) who most deserved to be a genuine Vermonter.

Brendan and his wife Dorothy have farmed and managed their woodlot in Brunswick, in northern VT along the Connecticut River, for over 50 years. They arrived in the late 1950s, he as a newly minted (UMass) forester working for Essex County. But an additional call pulled at him, and he took a degree from the Episcopal Divinity School in Boston. His first parish work was in Brandon, VT starting in 1963. He later was full-time rector at St. Paul's in Lancaster. He was also rector at St. Mark's in Groveton, in Island Pond, Vt., and the Church of the Epiphany in Lisbon, where he served his last day.

Brendan's divinity school thesis was one of the earliest church "insider" calls to link Christian faith and the environmental movement. His writing foreshadowed his long career as a professional forester and a working priest, and helped move the Episcopal Church to embrace stewardship of the earth as a moral obligation.

I first encountered Brendan from afar through his role in the Northern Forest Lands Council, the pivotal group created by Congress to address the alarming forestland changes in northern New England and New York. Brendan represented Vermont. As a young journalist new in the North Country and exploring forestry, land use, and community issues, I studied the Council's 1994 report "Finding Common Ground" very closely and followed those involved with creating it. Around that time, I noted the formation of the Forest Guild as a progressive alternative to the Society of American Foresters, with Brendan among the founders. I also encountered various essays he'd written, and found him to be among the most articulate writers and thinkers about our region, someone I hoped to cross paths with someday.

We finally did cross paths in 2005 when I joined the staff of the Connecticut River Joint Commissions, the VT-NH group advising the two states on issues affecting the river and watershed. Brendan was a VT commissioner. At that time Brendan was filling in occasionally at the Lisbon church (Tod Hall was the regular vicar), and from time to time would leave me phone messages that he'd be preaching and inviting me to attend. As someone who'd never gone to church save for weddings and funerals, I did not jump at the opportunity. But eventually I decided it would be the polite thing to do, and with some trepidation agreed. The night before, he called to explain what to expect, including taking communion, which made me even more nervous. I knew that ritual only through extended family occasions in the Catholic Church where infidels like me could not and did not participate.

He assured me that taking communion could be considered a symbolic breaking of bread together as a community, and did not demand belief in the literal "blood of Christ." This was the first of many alternative insights to the Christian traditions and liturgy to which he introduced me. As someone whose understanding of Christian thought was arrested at the kindergarten level of God as a bearded man in the sky, this was an important awakening, and introduced me to a wide world of spiritual thought.

With his guidance and lending of books from his library, I read many of the now classic and radical theological texts of the mid 20th century. I found an exciting, intellectually and spiritually stimulating pantheon including Tillich, Bonhoeffer, John Robinson, and more contemporarily, Alan Watts and John Spong. At the same time, I found a wonderfully accepting and warm band of people at the Lisbon church.

I enjoyed with Brendan post-church conversations (and many while working in the

woods or at the farm) about Christian—and increasingly on my part, Buddhist—thought, and returning again and again to our shared love of the environment and what all this meant for activists and stewards. Eventually I left the Joint Commissions and started working for the Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust, a group I'd started. I asked Brendan if he'd consider becoming an advisor to ACT—expecting him to say no, for given his high level career (in addition to his government work he'd been on the board of just about every major New England environmental organization) why bother with a little start up like ACT? But he graciously agreed. Now, Brendan chairs the ACT Lands Committee, and regularly works with us on forestry issues and with landowners who are considering conservation.

Brendan is like one of his beloved stiff asters, the unusual plant that grows near the liquor store in Groveton, able to find nourishment in dry gravel, and subject of one of his most memorable sermons. His calling was to work with the underserved, and he found his parish in the great unruly life of the North Country, independent and fiercely neighborly. He also found his parish with the people working in conservation, including the game wardens he directed as ANR secretary and continues to have special regard for. He's done great service for our land and people, and I am tremendously grateful to have him as a friend, colleague, and mentor.

Former Courier Editor Rebecca Brown is director of ACT, and serves as a NH State Representative.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE DONOGHUE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to call the Senate's attention to the continued First Amendment advocacy of a Vermont journalist, Mike Donoghue of the Burlington Free Press. The Vermont Press Association has presented Mike with the prestigious Matthew Lyon Award, for his staunch advocacy of First Amendment rights.

Mike is a talented and seasoned reporter, and in more than 40 years as a staff writer at the Free Press he has covered local, State and national news, as well as sporting events—all, with integrity and vigor. He has shown a steadfast commitment to truth-telling, to getting the facts, and getting them right, for the people of Vermont.

While Mike has achieved noteworthy accomplishments and awards during his tenure at the Free Press, it is, especially, his work as an advocate and teacher of First Amendment protections that have drawn the distinction of the Matthew Lyon Award. He served two terms as president of the Vermont Press Association, where he worked to expand the use of cameras in Vermont courtrooms. As a founder of the Vermont Coalition for Open Government, he has provided testimony in front of the Vermont Legislature on a regular basis and on a variety of topics related to First Amendment rights. Mike not only is a veteran reporter and volunteer advocate but a dedicated educator as well. He is an adjunct professor of journalism at Saint Michael's College in Colchester—my alma mater—and he has trained young journalists throughout Vermont and New

England as well as through the auspices of the New England Press Association, the New England Society of Newspaper Editors, and Investigative Reporters and Editors. His commitment to teaching and defending the tenets of the First Amendment led him to participate as a trainer in Ireland after the country passed its Freedom of Information Act in 1997.

The Vermont Press Association each year offers the Matthew Lyon Award to an individual who has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to the First Amendment and to “the public's right to know the truth in Vermont.” It is named for Congressman Matthew Lyon, one of the foremost defenders of the Bill of Rights. He served in the U.S. House of Representatives on behalf of Vermont, as well as Kentucky, beginning in the 5th Congress. Congressman Lyon is known for his time in jail—and subsequent reelection during his sentence—on charges of sedition in 1798 for his sharp criticism of President John Adams.

Throughout his career, Mike Donoghue has worked tirelessly to promote accountability of public officials, and transparency in government agencies. As an earlier recipient of this same award, I will always feel a special kinship in these efforts with champions like Mike Donoghue.

I ask unanimous consent that this announcement from the Vermont Press Association about Mike Donoghue's selection for this award be printed into the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

BFP'S DONOGHUE WINS VT PRESS 1ST AMENDMENT AWARD

(By The Vermont Press Association, July 6, 2015)

MONTPELIER.—Longtime journalist and educator Mike Donoghue of South Burlington has been selected to receive the Matthew Lyon Award for his lifetime commitment to the First Amendment and the public's right to know the truth in Vermont.

The Vermont Press Association, which represents the interests of 11 daily and about four dozen non-daily newspapers circulating in Vermont, will honor Donoghue at its annual meeting and awards banquet at noon Thursday, July 16 at the Capitol Plaza in Montpelier.

Donoghue, an award-winning veteran news and sports writer for the Burlington Free Press, is being recognized for efforts in his spare time working as an adjunct professor of journalism at St. Michael's College, as a longtime officer with the Vermont Press Association and his volunteer efforts with various groups including New England First Amendment Coalition (NEFAC), New England Newspaper and Press Association (NENPA) and the Society for Professional Journalists (SPJ).

VPA President John Flowers said Donoghue has been on the front lines in seeking greater public accountability through a range of efforts, including that government officials and courts ensure records are easily available to the public, and that government meetings and court hearings are open to Vermonters.

“Mike's efforts in accountability journalism at the Burlington Free Press are well

documented over several decades. But the Lyon award is focusing on his efforts in educating students, the public, government officials, and journalists—both for print and electronic media outlets. Mike is called upon frequently to speak in classrooms, in the community and at professional conferences from Vermont to Ireland.”

His work has helped improve both the open meeting law and public records law in Vermont, Flowers said. He noted it was while serving as VPA President in the mid-1980s that Donoghue helped lead the media efforts in successfully obtaining approval for cameras in Vermont Courts.

St. Michael's College recruited Donoghue in 1985 to teach as an adjunct professor in the journalism department, where he still helps. He also served as an officer for the Vermont Press Association for 35 years until he resigned as its executive director earlier this year. Donoghue was instrumental in getting the VPA headquarters anchored at St. Michael's College.

Donoghue serves on the executive board of NEFAC, a six-state effort promoting the First Amendment. He was on the New England Press Association Board of Directors and various committees 1995–2001. The Society of Professional Journalists appointed Donoghue in 1990 to serve as the Vermont chairman for Project Sunshine, a nationwide First Amendment effort—a volunteer hat he still wears.

The VPA solicits nominations from Vermonters each year for the Lyon award, which honors people who have an unwavering devotion to the five freedoms within the First Amendment and to the principle that the public's right to know the truth is essential in a self-governed democracy, Flowers said.

Donoghue has been named to five halls of fame. They include induction as one of 35 charter members selected by the New England Press Association for its Community Journalism Hall of Fame in 2000. Three years later he was named one of three charter members selected nationwide by the Society of Professional Journalists and The National Freedom of Information Coalition for their National Hall of Fame for Local Heroes.

Other honors include the Yankee Quill Award in 2007 for a lifetime commitment to outstanding journalism in New England and beyond; selected the New England Journalist of the Year for print or electronic media in 2013; and voted by Gannett employees nationwide to receive “Greater Good Award” from the company in 2013.

The Lyon Award is named for a former Vermont congressman who was jailed in 1798 under the Alien and Sedition Act for sending a letter to the editor, criticizing President John Adams. While Lyon was serving his federal sentence in a Vergennes jail, Vermonters re-elected him to the U.S. House of Representatives. Lyon is credited with ousting Adams when he cast the deciding vote in favor of Thomas Jefferson when the 1800 presidential race went to Congress for a final determination.

Previous Matthew Lyon winners include Patrick J. Leahy for his work as a state prosecutor and U.S. senator; Edward J. Cashman for his efforts as Chittenden Superior Court clerk, a state prosecutor and state judge; Robert Hemley, for his many successful fights as a lawyer to keep courtrooms open and court files available to the public; Gregory Sanford, state archivist, for his work in maintaining, restoring and saving government records for public access; H. Allen Gilbert, executive director of ACLU in Vermont for fighting for greater public access to government records and for public disclosure about police misconduct; and Ken Squier and WDEV-radio for efforts to inform Vermonters about state and local issues.