

Committee, the Senator from Iowa, for the honorable, principled, and commonsense way in which he led this committee through the last number of weeks and months as he shepherded through this body the confirmation of Judge—on Monday, Justice—Gorsuch.

The chairman from Iowa is a special man, and the 100 of us—or the 99 of us—who are privileged and blessed to serve with him know he is the model of how to conduct oneself honorably in this job, and America will benefit from Judge Gorsuch's joining the Court.

I add my voice to those commending the senior Senator from Iowa for the way he has helped shepherd this body.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The majority leader.

CONGRATULATING NEIL GORSUCH AND THANKING THOSE INVOLVED IN THE CONFIRMATION PROCESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I am proud to say the Senate has now confirmed Judge Neil Gorsuch as an Associate Justice on the Supreme Court. I want to congratulate Judge Gorsuch on this significant achievement. I look forward to observing his good work in the years to come.

The confirmation process was certainly a significant undertaking—one that would not have been possible without the dedicated efforts of so many. I would like to take a moment to recognize them now.

First, I would like to thank the man who made this moment possible by sending us this outstanding nominee. He is our President, Donald Trump. This has been one of the most transparent judicial nomination processes anybody can remember, and President Trump should be commended for his efforts.

I also appreciate the role Vice President PENCE played in moving this nomination forward as well as the outstanding work of the White House staff, led by Don McGahn, and for the wise counsel they provided throughout this process.

Of course, we all know how tirelessly our dear friend Senator GRASSLEY has worked in leading the Judiciary Committee through this process. He has been an unwavering leader, though we know it has not always been easy. Chairman GRASSLEY worked long and hard to ensure this process ran efficiently, to give Members on both sides ample opportunity to review the nomination, to see that the nominee was treated respectfully, and, ultimately, to help bring this well-qualified jurist over the finish line.

I would be remiss if I did not also mention the work of the Judiciary Committee collectively for its time and effort as well. I am referring to members of the committee, and I am referring to Chairman GRASSLEY's excellent Judiciary staff as well. They were critical to this effort.

Specifically, I thank the following: Staff Director Kolan Davis, Chief Nominations Counsel Ted Lehman, Communications Director Beth Levine,

Megan Lacy, Lauren Mehler, Kasey O'Connor, Katharine Willey, Bill Lane, Carol Szurkowski, Dan Guarnera, and Katie Roholt.

To that end, I would also like to acknowledge our former colleague Kelly Ayotte. From dozens of meetings with Senators to lengthy days-long hearings, she helped to ensure that this process ran as smoothly as possible, and she did so with a sense of grace that we all came to know when she was one of our colleagues.

Similarly, I want to recognize several White House Legislative Affairs staff who helped guide Judge Gorsuch through this process, including Mary Elizabeth Taylor, Marc Short, and Amy Swonger.

There are several others I would like to thank as well.

To the floor staff, Laura Dove, Robert Duncan, and their team, thank you for keeping the floor running smoothly and guiding us through Senate procedure. You all do incredible work and very difficult work, and you make it look effortless during each and every time.

To the folks who keep our institution running—the Parliamentarians, the clerks, the reporters of debates, the doorkeepers, Capitol Police, and numerous others who have sacrificed and worked long—often grueling—hours, thank you for everything you do and for always doing it with a smile.

Of course, I would also like to thank my Republican colleagues for their months of hard work. It has been a winding and sometimes bumpy road, but together we were able to confirm a judge who, I believe, will serve his country very well.

In particular, let me thank Republican whip, JOHN CORNYN, and his team, led by Monica Popp, for their efforts. Theirs is certainly not an easy job, but it is a necessary one.

There are a few others I could not leave today without mentioning.

To each and every member of my own staff, I want to express my sincere appreciation. There are almost too many names to mention, but, if I may, I would like to acknowledge a few individuals who have been particular assets through this entire process.

My chief of staff, Sharon Soderstrom, led our team through this lengthy and arduous confirmation process while balancing a never-ending list of demands. She has been a constant source of support and, as always, an indisputable and fearless leader.

Sharon, I am immensely grateful to you for being at the helm of my leadership office.

My deputy chief, Don Stewart—"Stew" as we like to call him—always knows exactly what to say or not to say, as the case may be. He has been a critical member of the team in charting the way forward and in helping convey our efforts to the American people.

Stew, thank you for your discerning advice and, yes, for your good humor as well.

My policy director, Hazen Marshall, has steered our policy objectives forward, balancing numerous legislative items and making it look effortless along the way.

So thanks, Hazen, for your sound counsel and for driving the train forward on so many different issues.

To my counsel, John Abegg, where do I begin? John has been an invaluable member of my team, a guiding source of wisdom, and a driving force in bringing Judge Gorsuch over the finish line. He has put in countless hours and has never stopped working, even in the most trying of times.

John, literally, this moment would not have been possible without you.

I know there are many others whom I wasn't able to name right now, but I want them to know we recognize their efforts, and we are immeasurably grateful for the work they do.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL OSSEN D'HAITI

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the life and service of Col. Ossen D'Haiti, who is retiring from Active Duty in the U.S. Marine Corps after 27 years.

From an early age, he felt called to military service and attended the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point. As an engineering cadet, he sailed abroad on four ocean-going vessels with port calls in Egypt, Israel, Greece, Italy, Spain, Germany, Holland, and England. In 1990, he graduated Kings Point with a bachelor of science in marine engineering and a U.S. Coast Guard third assistant engineer's license.

Commissioned as a Marine Corps officer, Colonel D'Haiti spent the next 27 years as an AV-8B Harrier pilot, completing notable assignments both in and out of the cockpit. He has deployed with aviation detachments aboard the USS *Nassau*, LHA-41, and the USS *Bonhomme Richard*, LHD-6, and has flown over 150 combat missions during Operations Joint Endeavor and Guardian Retrieval in 1996, Operations Enduring Freedom and Anaconda in 2002,

and Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2006–2007. He has also served on the staff of the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Navy, the Commandant of the Marine Corps' Strategic Initiatives Group, and the Marine Corps Forces Central Command Coordination Element forward deployed in Bahrain. His personal decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with Gold Star in lieu of Second Award, the Air Medal with 6 strike device, the Navy Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Gold Star in lieu of Second Award, as well as numerous campaign and service awards.

While serving, Colonel D'Haiti also made numerous civic contributions and is a leader within his community. After a 7.0 magnitude earthquake devastated Haiti in 2010, Colonel D'Haiti volunteered for nearly a month with the Haiti Micah Project, working to provide hot meals and shelter to street children in Mirebalais. Colonel D'Haiti is married to the former Maxine Hall of Sharon, MA, and loving father to Elizabeth, Grace, and Benjamin.

On behalf of my colleagues in the U.S. Congress and the thousands of sailors and marines you have led and mentored, thank you. Your life and service are the hallmark of the American Dream and will be an enduring inspiration for generations of young men and women after you. I wish you fair winds and following seas in all of your future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO NEIL SMIT

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I want to recognize a constituent of mine, Neil Smit, for his service to our country, volunteer work in the community, and accomplishments in the business world. Earlier this year, Neil stepped down as president and CEO of Comcast Cable after 7 years with the company, but he will continue to work for the Comcast Corporation in his new role as a vice chairman.

Many know Neil for his business success and acumen, but his impressive career began as a member of the Armed Forces. Neil served on Active Duty with the Navy SEAL teams for over 5 years and retired from the service as a lieutenant commander. Neil never forgot the actions of his fellow servicemembers, which is why he championed Comcast's pledge to help Active-Duty servicemembers find jobs and make the transition into the civilian workforce. In particular, Neil spearheaded Comcast's commitment to hire 10,000 veterans, Reservists, and their spouses, as well as improving the company's military leave policies.

Neil is active in community service, both nationally and in the Philadelphia region. He currently sits on the executive committee of the board of trustees for the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and he serves on the board of directors of the National Cable and Telecommunications Association and C-

SPAN, which broadcasts the Senate's proceedings nationwide.

As CEO of Comcast Cable, Neil developed and implemented significant changes aiming to improve cable and broadband services across the country. Comcast has a strong and well-known presence in Pennsylvania, both in terms of delivering television programming and Internet service to customers and in employing thousands of hard-working individuals across a variety of careers. Under Neil's leadership, Comcast Cable accelerated its commitment to job creation and innovation, developing new products that changed how customers consume telecommunication services. Prior to his time at Comcast, Neil displayed the same leadership and dedication to teamwork while serving in senior leadership positions at Charter Communications, AOL, Pillsbury, and Nabisco.

Today I congratulate Neil Smit on his leadership and an impressive career. I thank him for his service to our Nation and wish him well in his new role.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL H. MICHAEL EDWARDS

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and commend Maj. Gen. H. Michael Edwards, who retired on March 31, 2017, after 43 years of exceptional leadership and service to our country, including 36 years in the Colorado Air National Guard.

For almost a decade in the position of the adjutant general for Colorado, General Edwards was responsible for the command administration of over 5,300 Army and Air National Guard members.

He also served as the executive director of the Department of Military & Veterans Affairs and was a member of the Governor's cabinet.

He had responsibility for the Colorado National Guard's primary missions of national defense and State emergency response. In addition, he was responsible for supporting the missions of the Civil Air Patrol's Colorado Wing.

General Edwards received his commission in 1973, after graduating from the U.S. Air Force Academy, and earned his pilot wings in 1974 at Reese Air Force Base, TX.

He served as an F-4 pilot and AT-38 Fighter lead-in instructor pilot at Osan Air Base, Korea, and Holloman Air Force Base, NM, respectively.

General Edwards joined the Colorado Air National Guard in August 1980. He has served in numerous assignments in flying and operations, as well as command positions at squadron, group, and wing levels—culminating as the adjutant general for Colorado.

During his tenure as adjutant general, more than 6,000 Colorado National Guard citizen-soldiers and citizen-air-

men have mobilized in support of overseas contingency operations.

He also oversaw the Colorado National Guard's record-setting response to some of the worst natural disasters impacting Colorado, including the High Park fire and the Waldo Canyon fire during 2012, followed by the Black Forest fire and historic flooding along the Colorado Front Range in 2013.

Furthermore, General Edwards was instrumental in bringing a new National Guard cyber protection team to Colorado, bolstering the State's cyber defenses. He also diversified the Colorado National Guard through the appointment of its first female general officer.

Over a period of 10 years, General Edwards significantly grew the Colorado National Guard's enduring relationships with the Republic of Slovenia and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan under the National Guard State Partnership Program.

These military-to-military exchanges have supported combatant command security cooperation objectives, promoted regional stability, and increased partner capacity and interoperability.

General Edwards has also overseen the missions of the Civil Air Patrol's Colorado Wing, consisting of more than 1,600 volunteers. Under his leadership, the Civil Air Patrol took on a bigger role in State response, flying fire watch, and conducting flood damage surveys.

Colorado's Civil Air Patrol was first to fly support of the U.S. Army's on-base unmanned aerial systems operations.

General Edwards has flown over 4,600 mishap-free flight hours in a variety of aircraft to include the AT-38, A-7, C-21, F-4, F-16, T-37 and T-38.

Of note, he has achieved the distinction of the wing's "Top Gun" award on five separate occasions in his decorated flying career.

Major Edwards has received numerous military decorations, including two Legion of Merit awards and three Meritorious Service medal awards, along with many others from the State of Colorado.

General Edwards' operational experience, charismatic leadership, and unyielding patriotism have served him well in a lifetime of military service, both in the Colorado Air National Guard and abroad.

Today we honor his distinguished service to our Nation as one of the most accomplished adjutant generals in Colorado history.

We offer our heartfelt appreciation to his family for their countless sacrifices and selfless support to our country spanning over four decades.

On behalf of the Senate and a grateful nation, I congratulate Maj. Gen. H. Michael Edwards on a job well done and wish him the very best as he begins a hard-earned retirement in the great State of Colorado.

I look forward to our continued friendship. Thank you. ●