

There are many stories, but one I would like to recount was shortly after President Bush's election. She went to an AIDS hospice here in Washington, DC. This was a time when the AIDS epidemic was a huge crisis. Frankly, there was a stigma attached to it and a lot of nervousness about the disease.

Barbara Bush picked up a baby with AIDS and cradled that baby. She hugged and kissed kids with AIDS. The message was very clear: There should be no stigma. We have nothing to fear. It is time for us to embrace these people. Her quote that day was everlasting: "There is a need for compassion." She spoke to the heart.

She also used the platform she had to empower people through literacy. This was one of her great causes. She believed the world would be a much better place if everyone could read, write, and comprehend, and the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy continues to do amazing work. She has touched the lives of so many—so many young people, so many adults—and brought them into a new world through literacy.

She accomplished a lot more through her distinguished life. She was dignified, straightforward, witty, and well-intentioned. She had a habit of speaking her mind freely, and sometimes that got her in a little bit of trouble, but, frankly, when she did that, almost all of us nodded our heads in agreement.

Interestingly, her Secret Service code name was "Tranquility." For anyone who knew her personally, that might have seemed to be an odd code name. Probably she chose that code name herself, by the way. She wasn't always tranquil. In fact, she was sometimes feisty—famously so.

One story that I think shows some of her feistiness was when she was having dinner one night with the President of the United States—43, who happened to be her son—and in front of many others, including staff, she commented critically on his table manners, which, of course, she loved, and so did he.

The night before she left us, that feistiness was on display when Barbara Bush, instead of asking for pain medication, asked for a glass of bourbon and, with a smile, took a sip.

I think the name "Tranquility" was also fitting for her. It was fitting for her because she was a calming influence. She made things more tranquil. I saw that firsthand at the White House, where she made life easier for everybody.

I had the pleasure of first getting to know her when I was doing volunteer advanced work for her husband, then-Vice President Bush. I traveled overseas with them, traveled around the country some with them, and got to see the calming influence she had on everyone around her.

Later, when I was in the counsel's office at the White House, I got to see

how she made everybody feel more comfortable—including me, as a young White House staffer—encouraging me, knowing people, saying hello to them, talking to them, ensuring that the morale was good.

Tranquility. It was helpful then, and it was helpful through her life, as she was there as the rock, as the adult.

My wife Jane and I had recently become married. We had a child when I worked at the White House. Barbara Bush couldn't have been more gracious. She was a dear friend ever since. In fact, a few years later, when I first ran for public office—I ran for the U.S. House of Representatives in Cincinnati, OH, the Second Congressional District of Ohio—she came to campaign for me. This was early in 1993. Recall that, in 1992, George H.W. Bush—41—had lost his reelection.

We did a political event in Cincinnati. I took her to Skyline Chili, which is a famous place in my hometown and all around Southwest Ohio. Although Skyline Chili and Cincinnati chili is an acquired taste, she at least acted like she really enjoyed it. She wore the bib, and people loved it. Maybe most importantly for me, while she was there, she cut a radio ad for me. In that radio ad, she said: "I always enjoy having Skyline Chili with ROB PORTMAN when I'm in Cincinnati." She said some other things that were kind. Frankly, as I look back on that race—there were 10 people in the primary. My name identification was about 6 percent, half of whom thought I was somebody else with a similar name. I think that radio ad played a huge role in my first election, my ability to be here today and to serve the people of Ohio. Barbara Bush was an important reason I won.

In that election, by the way, I had stuck with George H.W. Bush, who had just lost his reelection, when others were being critical, because I had so much respect for him and so much respect for her. Frankly, I think her popularity was an important reason I was able to win.

In recent years, I made a habit of making a pilgrimage to Maine every summer to see them, sometimes going to Houston during the winter as well, but going to Maine has been a wonderful way to connect with them. I have gone with my daughter. I have gone with my wife Jane a few times. I sit with them. President Bush loves to give advice still, and I love to get it.

Barbara Bush loved the political gossip, and we loved to talk about people and things and what was going on in Washington. She was curious, engaged, sharp, and up to speed.

She loved George H.W. Bush so deeply. She sometimes called him "FLFW," former leader of the free world. Again, her wit was on display everywhere she was.

I remember being with them last summer on the porch. She always in-

sisted on eating lunch outside. The waves were coming in on the Maine coast and the Sun was reflecting on the waves. Family was always around. That is when she was happiest.

I will certainly miss those moments we shared, the encouragement, and the very candid advice that she was never hesitant to offer, but as we mourn the loss of this authentic and admired American, we should all find comfort in remembering the way she lived and the incredible legacy she leaves.

She never ran for political office herself, but in a way she represented all of us, and I think she represented the best in all of us. I think that is one reason she was so popular. She showed us how to handle the spotlight and responsibility with grace, with dignity, and with the incredible way that she, again, was able to bring tranquility wherever she was.

No wife, no mother, no grandmother was more devoted to her family. She had unconditional love for her children, including the 43rd President of the United States, with whom she had a great relationship. Her true partnership with George H.W. Bush, in service to the country, all the way from the time he was an 18-year-old Navy pilot through his career as President and after is an inspiration, that unconditional love and that partnership—an inspiration certainly to me and to Jane as a role model but an inspiration to all of us as Americans.

I know I speak for all of my colleagues in the United States Senate as we pay tribute to her and also send our condolences to the entire Bush family.

Barbara Bush is now in a better place. I can imagine her smiling, surrounded by family, including her beloved daughter, Robin, whom she lost as a child. She is on a coast somewhere, dignified, witty, and feisty, all at once, and she is earning that code name "Tranquility."

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, and pursuant to the provisions of S. Res. 474, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m., Thursday, April 19, and does so as a further mark of respect for the late John Melcher, former Senator from Montana.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:35 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 19, 2018, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate April 18, 2018:

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CARLOS G. MUNIZ, OF FLORIDA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.