

come to the shores of the United States of America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

TRIBUTE TO CHRISTINE MCLEOD
PATE AND NIKOLE NELSON

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, it is the end of the week on the Senate floor, and it is my favorite time of the week. I think it is the pages' favorite time of the week, too, because we get to talk about the Alaskan of the Week. This is a speech I give every week. The whole purpose is to talk about somebody in my community, somebody in my great State, who has done something important for their fellow Alaskans or maybe their fellow Americans. Sometimes it is someone very famous. Other times it is somebody who is working hard every single day and doesn't get a lot of recognition. What we like to do is come and talk about them. We like to brag about them.

I like to brag about my State. We all like to brag about our States. When it comes to size, beauty, grandeur, and majestic nature, I think Alaska takes the cake of all the other States, but others might disagree. I know the Presiding Officer loves his State very much.

What we want to encourage people to do is come on up to Alaska, see it for yourselves. Spend some time there. We are getting ready for a little recess. Some of my Senate colleagues will be coming up and seeing our great State in the next week.

I guarantee you, if you are watching, it is going to be the trip of a lifetime. You will love it, absolutely love it. More than anything, it is truly the people of Alaska who make it such a special place. We like to celebrate these people. They are individualistic, rugged, tough but very community-oriented. We call them our Alaskan of the Week.

I am going to break a little rule on the Alaskan of the Week this week because it is going to be the Alaskans of the Week, not one but two—two people who are doing great things and, in many ways, reinforcing each other's great work in Alaska.

I am going to talk a little bit, though, about one of the challenges. We like to brag about how wonderful our States are. Let's face it, all States in our great Nation have challenges and problems. One of the ones that a number of us back home in Alaska are focused on is a really big challenge and a really problematic issue in my State; that is, the very high rate of domestic violence and sexual assault we have in Alaska. We have some of the highest rates in the country. This is horrible, and it impacts families and, of course, victims and survivors. Of course, it is not just a problem in Alaska; it is a problem all across the country. In Alaska, it is an acute problem. It is a big problem.

The good news is, we have hundreds, if not thousands, of people in Alaska

who have recognized this as a big problem and have banded together in using their energy, creativity, and drive to have turned to the survivors of this abuse and turn to help them and help them break out of what oftentimes is generational violence—family victims after family victims.

Today, I recognize two such Alaskans, who are literally leading the way on this very important issue of helping the survivors of these heinous crimes: Sitka, AK, resident Christine Pate, who is the legal director for the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, and Anchorage resident Nikole Nelson, who is the executive director of Alaska Legal Services.

These two women, for decades, have been leading the effort to bring legal services and other services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in our State. They work together. They are leaders. They have helped hundreds, if not thousands, of victims and their families—think about that—over the last 20 years.

Let's talk about them a little bit. Christine has done a great job with the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, ANDVSA, which is an umbrella organization for 25 domestic violence and sexual assault programs across the State.

Christine is a cum laude graduate of the New York University School of Law. She came to Alaska in 1993, clerked for Sitka Superior Court Judge Larry Zervos, and after that, she worked for Alaska Legal Services in Fairbanks and then has been with ANDVSA for 20 years doing this very important work.

Her demeanor was once described by a reporter as "Clark Kent-like," which I would agree with if that means she has superpowers that are used to fight bad guys and help the good guys. Those who know her just call her wonderful, and I certainly would agree with that.

At ANDVSA, she directs the coalition's statewide civil legal services program, which also includes both staff attorneys and approximately 60 active volunteer attorneys—again, to help survivors and victims of these heinous crimes. She also oversees legal training and technical assistance for program advocates. As a matter of fact, I was home a few months ago and went to one of her training programs. She does a phenomenal job.

Nikole Nelson is her compatriot-in-arms. She made her way to Alaska 20 years ago, fresh out of Willamette University's College of Law, and her first job in Alaska—still doing it—was to work for Alaska Legal Services Corporation. She rose up through the ranks, and now she is the director. She, too, in my view, has superpowers, and she channels those powers to serve in the righteous cause of justice for the too many victims in my State who need it and don't have access to an attorney to help them.

I cannot stress how important both the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence

and Sexual Assault and the Alaska Legal Services Corporation are for victims and survivors of these heinous crimes.

I have had the opportunity and really the honor of working with both Christine and Nikole and their organizations very closely over the years. I am still a huge supporter of all they do and have watched them year after year doing the great work they do to stomp out the scourge of domestic violence in our State. Let me tell a little story of how we all worked together.

When I was attorney general of the State, we had a big campaign strategy called the Choose Respect strategy, and one of the elements of that was to get more lawyers to help victims; to get more lawyers, pro bono attorneys, to come out and help victims, survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Think about this: If you are an accused rapist, you get a Sixth Amendment right to counsel. That is in our Bill of Rights. If you are the victim, what do you get? You don't get anything. And far too often, the victims don't have any legal representation. They don't know how to use the justice system as a sword and a shield.

What we were trying to do—what Nikole and Christine have been doing for decades—was to say to the survivors and victims: Wait a minute. We can get you a lawyer. We can help you. We can empower you.

We held these pro bono legal summits throughout the State of Alaska, and dozens of lawyers came out of the woodwork and said: We will help you. We will be your sword and shield in the justice system.

That is what we have done. That is what they have continued to do, and this makes a huge difference. As a matter of fact, of all the studies throughout the country on how you change this culture of abuse—in every study, one of the most important things is to get victims and survivors an attorney. So that is what they have been doing.

We actually recently took that idea here to the Senate floor in a bill that Senator HEITKAMP and I cosponsored called the POWER Act, which would create another layer of pro bono attorneys. The idea is to create an army of lawyers by the thousands in America to provide legal services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. That passed the Senate, passed the House, came back over here, trying to hotline it, and it looks as though we hit a little glitch today. But I can't imagine any Senator who doesn't want to do this, so we will probably get this done after we are back from recess, and that will help take this idea nationwide.

The leaders in our community in Alaska have been Nikole and Christine.

As I mentioned, there are no simple solutions on this, but when an abused victim is represented by an attorney, their ability to break out of the cycle of violence increases dramatically.

Just one study found that 83 percent of victims represented by an attorney were able to obtain a protective order versus almost 30 percent of victims without an attorney.

But here is the problem: There was a recent report by a national group that focuses on these issues. In 2014, in 1 day, there were over 10,000 victims who went without services, like legal services. So there is a desperate need. Christine and Nikole have been the ones leading the charge. I talk about an army of attorneys to do this kind of pro bono legal work in Alaska—they are the captains leading this charge.

Christine likes to quote one of the advocates she works with when she talks about her work. She says: “It is so satisfying to see the relief wash over a person’s face when they realize that there’s an end in sight and they don’t have to live like that in a cycle of violence anymore because they have an attorney representing them.”

Nikole has been traveling the globe with her daughter the past month thanks to a much needed sabbatical grant from Alaska’s Rasmuson Foundation.

Nikole, I hope you are having a much needed rest.

Let me end with a quote written by her about the work Alaska Legal Services does, the work she leads in our great State. She said: “In any given day, the people who come seeking our services may be moms that have been abused by their spouse, oftentimes in front of their children, and they come to us because they do not have the financial means to leave that abuse.” They help them with that. “We may have a grandfather who is struggling to care for his grandchildren and he fears he is going to lose his home. . . . For all of these problems, there is a civil legal solution. But unlike in criminal cases where a defendant is guaranteed a court-appointed attorney if they cannot afford one, in civil cases”—in these kinds of domestic violence and civil action cases—“there is no [right to an attorney].” And what they do is they provide it, particularly to victims of these heinous crimes.

Christine and Nikole lead organizations that are doing great work not only in Alaska, but nationwide, Legal Services Corporation does this work, and I am a big supporter of them here in the Senate.

Christine and Nikole, thank you for all the great work you have done over the years. Thanks for your tremendous spirit of generosity and kindness. I know I can thank you on behalf of so many survivors of these crimes whom you have helped, and their families. Thanks for being our joint Alaskans of the week this week in the U.S. Senate.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

TRADE SECURITY ACT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I want to talk about an issue that has

gotten a lot of attention recently, and that is our U.S. trade policy. It is an important topic that affects every one of us. It affects our economy, it affects jobs, and it certainly affects our foreign policy.

I have followed it pretty closely over the years. I was a trade lawyer when I first started practicing law. I was U.S. Trade Representative, or USTR, under the George W. Bush administration, and now I am a member of the Senate Finance Committee, which has jurisdiction over these trade issues.

Most importantly, of course, I am a Senator from Ohio, which is a State that has a big manufacturing sector, a big agriculture sector, and a State where a lot of jobs depend on having a good trade policy. In fact, in Ohio, about 25 percent of our State’s factory workers are export workers. In other words, they make products that get exported. Today in Ohio, about one of every three acres that are planted gets exported—soybeans, corn, and wheat. These are good jobs too. Trade jobs, on average, pay about 16 percent more than other jobs and provide better benefits. So it is very important to our economy in Ohio to have these export jobs.

In America, we are about 5 percent of the world’s population. Yet we have about 25 percent of the world’s economy. So it is very important for us to have access to the 95 percent of consumers who live outside of our borders. We want to sell them more. We want to open up markets for our farmers, our workers, and our service providers.

While promoting exports, we also need to ensure that we protect American jobs from unfair trade, from imports that would unfairly undercut our farmers, our workers, and our service providers. Simply put, what we want is a level playing field where it is fair and where we have reciprocal treatment between countries.

If we have a level playing field, by the way, I believe American workers will be just fine. Our workers and businesses can compete and can win if we have a truly level playing field.

We want a balanced approach. We want to open up new markets for U.S. products, while being tougher on trade enforcement, so we can compete.

With my colleagues over the past couple of years, I coauthored a number of laws in this area. One is actually called the Level the Playing Field Act. It does just that. The other is called the ENFORCE Act. These are bipartisan laws that are helping to crack down on unfair trade that hurts U.S. jobs.

The Level the Playing Field Act helps on the front-end by making it easier for workers and businesses to win cases when foreign companies send us products that are unfairly traded because they are sold below their cost or dumped or because they are subsidized illegally. This makes it easier to put anti-dumping or countervailing duties, also known as tariffs, on those unfairly

traded products. That is a good idea. By the way, it is sanctioned by the international trade enforcer called the World Trade Organization. This law has worked over the last couple of years to raise tariffs on those unfair imports.

The second law, which is called the ENFORCE Act, helps on the back-end by ensuring that once workers win trade enforcement cases, the new duties on foreign imports are actually enforced. It is designed to keep countries from circumventing new tariffs by selling the product to a third country, a third party that then sells it to the United States to get around our tariffs. We don’t want people to evade our tariffs, and that is the purpose of the ENFORCE Act. It needs a little work, honestly, on its implementation. We need to strengthen it.

Together, the Level the Playing Field Act and the ENFORCE Act are working.

Since I came to the Senate in 2011, I have been involved in nearly 40 trade cases where American workers and producers were seeking relief from unfair foreign competition. I am proud to have received the American Iron and Steel Institute’s Congressional Steel Champion Award in 2015 for my ongoing work to allow steelworkers to compete on a level playing field.

In 2016, the Level the Playing Field Act was used to secure three big wins against China and several more against other countries in the sector of steel, particularly rolled steel—hot-rolled steel, cold-rolled steel, and corrosion-resistant steel. This is the kind of steel that is used to make cars and trucks and other things. Those products from China—rolled steel—now face tariffs of up to 265 percent thanks to our legislation and thanks to bringing these cases and winning them.

This is how trade enforcement should work. It shouldn’t just be about saying that we are going to raise tariffs just because we can because then other countries will do the same thing to us—raising tariffs, which are like taxes, and risking a trade war with escalating tariffs that would make everyone worse off. Enforcement actions should be focused on those countries that are engaging in unfair trade practices and violating our trade laws or the commitments that are required under the World Trade Organization.

We want a level playing field and reciprocity so we can open up more markets for our workers, and we want other countries to send us products that are fairly traded. It is pretty simple.

We need to be careful about taking action that increases barriers to trade. If we impose higher tariffs without justification, we invite retaliation and higher tariffs on our exports. My concern is that we are beginning to do just that, and it threatens the impressive economic gains we have seen this year.

Since the tax cuts and tax reform were enacted and since important new