

Lackawanna County legal community have recalled his unique ability to resolve disputes and bring parties to the table with his sense of humor and deep respect for all people appearing before him. He worked tirelessly on behalf of the people of the Middle District, and he continued to hear matters before the court until his death.

Judge Conaboy is survived by his wife of 68 years, Marion, as well as their 12 children, 48 grandchildren, and 49 great-grandchildren.●

REMEMBERING WILLIAM J. NEALON

● Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life and career of U.S. District Court Judge William J. Nealon.

Appointed to the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania by President John F. Kennedy in 1962, Judge Nealon became the longest serving Federal District Court judge in U.S. history on August 28, 2018.

Born and raised in Scranton, PA, Judge Nealon attended Miami University until he put his education on hold to join the Marine Corps during World War II. He served his country from 1942 to 1945, and when he returned, he earned his bachelor's degree from Villanova University and his law degree from Catholic University.

Judge Nealon distinguished himself early on in the practice of law. In 1960, less than a decade after joining the Pennsylvania bar, he was appointed to the Lackawanna County Court of Common Pleas, the youngest such judge in the Commonwealth. Less than 3 years later, on December 13, 1962, President Kennedy appointed him to the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, and Judge Nealon became the youngest Federal District Court judge in the country. He went on to serve in this role for over 55 years.

Judge Nealon was a brilliant jurist, committed to fairness and "equal justice under law" in every case for every party who appeared in his courtroom. He will be remembered for his work ethic and commitment to his family. In addition to leaving behind a legacy of judicial and community service, Judge Nealon is survived by his wife of 70 years, Jean, 5 of their 10 children, 30 grandchildren, 26 great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

The Federal courthouse in Scranton, which bears his name, will ensure that his decades of service to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and our country will continue to inspire new generations of public servants.●

TRIBUTE TO LARRY SHELLITO

● Ms. SMITH. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and celebrate the career of retired lieutenant general and current Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs commissioner Larry Shellito. Commissioner Shellito will be retiring from the Minnesota Depart-

ment of Veterans Affairs on January 7, 2019, after leading the department for the past 7 years. His leadership has ensured the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs will continue to provide excellent care and services for years to come.

Commissioner Shellito began his career in 1968 when he enlisted in the U.S. Army, during which time he served in Vietnam as a mobile advisory team leader. In 1973, he joined the Minnesota National Guard where he served for the next 37 years. Starting as a rifle platoon leader, Commissioner Shellito went on to serve in nearly every command position within the Minnesota National Guard, and in 2003, he was appointed adjutant general by Governor Tim Pawlenty. In this final position, Commissioner Shellito diligently led the Minnesota National Guard in responding to domestic incidents, transforming the force from a ready reserve to an operational force through multiple deployments to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. He made sure the needs of his soldiers and their families were met when they returned home through the creation and implementation of the Nation's first Yellow Ribbon Program. Commissioner Shellito's leadership transformed the Minnesota National Guard into one of our Nation's most respected and well-known organizations.

While most people would retire after such an extensive career, Commissioner Shellito stepped up to the plate when Governor Mark Dayton asked him to serve as commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs in 2011. At the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, Commissioner Shellito has assisted Minnesota's 337,000 veterans and their dependents get the benefits and services they have earned. His stewardship has ensured veterans can find a place to call home, can find jobs in the public and private sectors, and have access to the services they need to help them heal from physical and psychological wounds.

In the past year alone, Commissioner Shellito has led the department in obtaining funding for three new veterans homes, improving residential satisfaction at Minneapolis veterans homes, opening a new state-of-the-art 100-bed skilled nursing care facility in Minneapolis, and establishing the Nation's first veterans home fixed dental care facility. The work Commissioner Shellito has done these past 7 years has set the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs up for success for years to come and is a testament to Commissioner Shellito's character and commitment to service.

On behalf of myself and all Minnesotans, I want to congratulate Commissioner Shellito on an amazing career. Your more than 45 years of excellent public service, on Active and civilian duty, represents the finest Minnesota has to offer. We recognize your service, we are grateful for it, and we thank you.●

TRIBUTE TO ANCHORAGE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS

● Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, it is coming up on the end of the week, time when I get to do one of the things I love to do best here on the Senate floor: recognizing an Alaskan or a group of Alaskans who help make my State so special. I call them our Alaskan of the Week.

Last time I spoke, I recognized all Alaskans who were impacted by the massive earthquake, a 7.0-magnitude earthquake centered about 7 miles north of Anchorage, that we experienced on Friday, November 30.

The earthquake was the second largest that Alaska had experienced. The extent of the damage is still being evaluated, but the best guess is that it caused hundreds of millions of dollars of damage to homes, schools, roads—infrastructure throughout the area.

Aftershocks continue, at least 4,000 of them, and at least two dozen have been larger than 4.0 magnitude.

Residents of Anchorage and the Mat-Su—Southcentral we call the area—are still rattled, but Alaskans are generous, strong, and resilient, and they are skilled. They know what to do during an emergency.

Today I want to recognize a group of Alaskans who, under immense pressure, did their jobs and served our State with cool heads, smart minds, and the upmost courage: the air traffic controllers who were on duty in both the Anchorage International Airport and at Merrill Field at the time the earthquake hit.

Before I talk about the extraordinary actions they performed to keep air traffic running smoothly through the earthquake and the lengths they went through to make sure passengers were safe, let me spend a few minutes talking about how important aviation is and air traffic controllers are to my State.

So you know that my State is the biggest State in the country, more than twice the size of Texas. If you want to get a sense of how big it is, come up to my office where I have a map in the front room and cutouts of all the other States, to scale.

Many of those States that make up our great country are basically dots on the map.

We are big, but most of Alaska is only accessible by air. In fact, 82 percent of our communities—251—are not accessible by road. You have to fly to get there.

The airspace serves as our highways. Alaska's people travel by air eight times more often per capita than those in rural areas of the Lower 48 and ship 39 times more freight per capita, nearly one ton per person per year.

Not only that, Anchorage is the crossroads to the Asia Pacific—we have one of the world's best cargo hubs—and the air traffic controllers working the towers guide passengers and goods to the Far East, Iceland, and across the globe.