

not a statistic on that wall in DC. The rest of it is rather immaterial, frankly.”

Pardon me here if I disagree for once with Lieutenant Colonel Kettles. It was due to his bravery that those 44 soldiers returned alive and back to their families. On the battlefield, valor is hardly immaterial; it is essential. Charles Kettles proved that on his four volunteer rescue flights that fateful day.

May he rest in peace. May both of these great warriors rest in peace.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

TRIBUTE TO MAURA KEEFE

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I come to the floor this afternoon with mixed emotions—mixed emotions because I feel a tremendous sense of gratitude but also sadness because at the end of this month, tomorrow, after more than a decade of working together, my chief of staff, Maura Keefe, will leave to start a new adventure.

Maura is here on the floor today with my new chief of staff, Chad Kreikemeier, and most of our staff here in DC are in the Gallery watching. Everyone is here because we think so much of Maura, and we are so sad that she is leaving but wish her Godspeed in everything she does. She has been an incredible asset as we worked together to improve the lives of Granite Staters.

I must thank her for her service and share some of the memories from the past 10 years. In New Hampshire, where we are the home of the first primary State, public service and political engagement are part of our culture. It is a culture that is epitomized by Maura and her family.

Maura helped me get elected in 2008. Actually, she helped me before that—in 2002, when I didn’t win the election. Despite our loss, she came back and she worked with me in 2008, and then when we won, she set up the office. She had already accumulated several careers by that time in political campaigns and nonprofits and in the private sector. At each and every step along the way, Maura made new friendships, and she blazed a trail of accomplishments. Her time with us has certainly been no different.

I remember right after that election, she and a small group of people were working to set up the office. She showed me the files of people who were interested in working on the staff. I was down here for orientation, and she and the woman who would become the deputy chief of staff spent the whole weekend—while I was running around doing fun things, they were working into the night to go through those résumés to hire the best possible people to open the office.

Maura’s father, who served as chief of staff to New Hampshire Senator Tom McIntyre, whose seat I now hold, would be very proud of everything she has done and all of her accomplishments.

I will never be able to thank her enough for building our wonderful

team, for hiring a staff of dedicated public servants who work hard for the people of New Hampshire.

Those of us who have had the pleasure to work with Maura know her sense of humor. She does great birthday cards that are very funny. Every month when we do birthdays in the office, she does farewell cards that are sort of testimonials but more roasts—or equally roast and testimonial. Her sense of humanity is also what makes her special. I have certainly benefited from both of these over the last 10 years.

Maura is going to be missed, not just in our offices here in Washington and in New Hampshire but throughout the Senate because for the last several years, she has played an important leadership role among the Democratic chiefs of staff and among the women chiefs of staff. She has made a positive difference for all of our offices, and she has made important and constructive inroads with Senate leadership on both sides of the aisle. Her presence will be missed by so many people in this institution.

Of course she is going to be missed for forging important consensus on the golf course as well. Our office does a golf outing every summer, and Maura is always the one who comes out on top in those golf outings. She has two holes in one, and she displays the plaques for those holes in one on the wall that is between our two offices. They are a reminder that from the Capitol to the tee box and everywhere in between, Maura is a fierce competitor.

Over the last 10 years, there have been real historic moments. I hope those moments will be the cornerstone of Maura’s memories from the Senate—the passage of healthcare reform that was decades in the making, ushering in the first bipartisan energy efficiency legislation in a generation, working to put a woman on the twenty-dollar bill, increasing funding and resources to combat the opioid crisis, expanding critical investments for the Office on Violence Against Women, and so many other critical infrastructure projects, changes in New Hampshire that have meant jobs and that have improved the lives of so many of our citizens.

Perhaps the most succinct description of Maura can be credited to Congresswoman ROSA DELAURO, for whom Maura worked as chief of staff in the 1990s. Congresswoman DELAURO once told a reporter aptly that Maura is “someone who doesn’t mince words.” I can attest to that. When I do things that she thinks are not quite what I ought to be doing, she doesn’t mince words; she lets me have it.

I am going to greatly miss her daily doses of wisdom and wit. Her supporting counsel has always been invaluable to me. I can’t thank her enough for her dedicated service.

Thank you, Maura. We are all going to miss you but me, most of all.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

NOMINATION OF ANDREW WHEELER

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, as we are considering the leadership of the Environmental Protection Agency, I think we should pause a moment to recognize this administration’s record on the environment—or should I say the missed opportunities—and what this administration has done in moving America in the wrong direction on environmental protection. This administration’s record in dealing with the greatest challenge we have—global climate change—is deplorable.

I had the opportunity to lead a delegation of 10 Members of the Senate to the Paris climate talks in which U.S. leadership demonstrated our ability to get universal consensus that climate change is real, is happening, that it is primarily caused by the activities we do here on Earth, and that we can make a difference in the trajectory of climate change and the impact it will have on our lives. If we follow what science tells us, we can change the course for the better for future generations.

I saw in Paris the importance of U.S. leadership. We had been trying for a long time to get a global agreement to deal with this challenge. It wasn’t until America’s leadership in Paris that we were able to get a global consensus. In fact, every country in the world signed on to the Paris Agreement and recognized that every nation has the responsibility to respond because what happens in the environment knows no state boundaries—we are all in this together.

Then there was the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States. One of his first actions was to withdraw America from the Paris climate agreement. America became the only Nation in the world not to be part of the global effort to deal with climate change.

Our leadership was now going to be lost, but the Trump administration didn’t stop there. They have withdrawn the powerplant rules even though it was in 2007 that the Supreme Court, in *Massachusetts v. EPA*, determined that carbon dioxide is a dangerous air pollutant and is required to be regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency under the clean air rules. Yet the administration is moving in the other direction as it relates to clean air.

They did the same thing with water. The Supreme Court issued certain decisions in regard to regulated waters. It required Congress to act. Congress didn’t act. The administration under President Obama issued regulations that were similar to what we had before the Supreme Court decision, and now the Trump administration has withdrawn those regulations as they relate to clean water.

The list goes on. The Trump administration is now backing down on CAFE standards. That is energy efficiencies

in our automobiles. Maryland is one of 12 States under section 177 that follow California's tougher standards. That is now being jeopardized by the Trump administration.

As we are considering the leadership of the Environmental Protection Agency, we have to recognize that the Trump administration has moved us in the wrong direction. We take pride that with every administration, Congress adds to the protections we have for clean air and clean water and dealing with our environment. Yet we find with this President, the opposite is true. That puts special responsibility on us in Congress. We have to fill that vacuum. Yet the Republican leadership in Congress has made no effort to bring forward legislation to deal with climate change. They have not acknowledged that climate change is real. They have not acknowledged that our activities here are the primary cause of climate change. They have not acknowledged that science tells us that if we do the right thing, we can affect for the better the impact of climate change in our communities. All that has been denied by this administration.

What we should do is bring forward comprehensive legislation to reduce greenhouse gases. We should put a true cost on carbon. Let the market forces help solve the problems we have here. We should provide for the continued efficiency of the transportation sector. We should restore America's leadership. That is what this Congress should be considering. Yet under Republican leadership, we have had no opportunity to consider comprehensive legislation in this area.

If we acted, it would be good for our environment. There is no question about that. Why should we all be concerned about that? Let me give some examples from my State of Maryland. Over the last 50 years, Maryland has experienced a 70-percent increase in rainfall. Tell the people of Ellicott City, who have experienced two 1,000-year floods in the last 20-month period. These are floods that they have never seen before in their lifetime. A large amount of rain that fell in a very short period of time caused tremendous damage to the people of Ellicott City. Tell the 13 million people who are in danger of being displaced by the end of this century because of rising sea levels. Tell the people in the Western United States whose homes were taken by wildfires. We need to act. It would be good for our environment.

I am proud to be one of the Senators who represent the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. There are 18 million people who live in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. We see a rise in the sea level. This is a vulnerable body of water.

The warming of the Chesapeake Bay is causing the loss of seagrasses that are important for the aquatic life. The salinity of the bay is being diminished because of more freshwater, and that is affecting the ecology of the bay. Algae growths are greater and longer because

of the warm waters. All of that affects the Chesapeake Bay. If we respond to climate change, we have a much better chance of improving the quality of the Chesapeake Bay, which is critically important for the way of life for the people who live in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

It is also, by the way, an important economic issue. If we do what is right and respond to climate change, we will also be helping our economy. The Chesapeake Bay alone adds \$1 trillion to our economy. A clean bay helps our economy. Green energy creates jobs—many more jobs than do traditional fossil fuels.

It also is good for our national security. If we use more of the renewables and fewer fossil, we as a nation will be stronger from the point of view of not being dependent on other countries that don't agree with our way of life for supplying energy needs not only to us but to our allies around the world—to the democratic countries around the world. It makes sense.

As we are considering the future leadership of the Environmental Protection Agency, let us recommit ourselves to recognizing that we have responsibilities to advance these environmental issues and implore upon the Republican leadership to bring forward comprehensive legislation that, in fact, will make a significant difference on the trajectory of climate change here in the United States and will restore America's global leadership on this critically important issue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I start by associating myself with the remarks of my friend, the senior Senator from the State of Maryland, Mr. CARDIN, both with respect to the vital importance of moving forward on climate change legislation here in the Senate and with respect to my opposition to the nomination of Mr. Wheeler. I think we need somebody at the head of the EPA who is going to make the issue of climate change and other vital environmental issues a priority.

DECLARATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY

Mr. President, I come to the floor with respect to another critical issue facing this Senate right now. I would just start by noting the fact that earlier this week, in this very Chamber, the senior Senator from Nebraska, Mrs. DEB FISCHER, gave the annual reading of George Washington's Farewell Address, reminding all of us of the advice that our first President gave our country upon his resignation. He encouraged us to review the words of his farewell address frequently as the "disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsel." Those were the words of George Washington in his farewell address as he gave us all some warnings and admonitions.

Maryland is particularly proud of the fact that President Washington re-

signed his military commission in Annapolis, in our Old Senate Chamber. Every year, in the Maryland Senate, where I once served, we honor President Washington for Presidents Day. One year, I had the honor of giving the commemorative address on that occasion, and I appreciate the fact that the U.S. Senate recognizes the extraordinary farewell address delivered by our first President. His words of warning have been prescient throughout history, from his caution against internal divisions, including geographic divisions between the North and the South, to the necessity of avoiding foreign entanglements that would imperil our own unity.

At this particular moment in time, as we reflect on President Washington's Farewell Address, we have to do it in the context of the current President's extraordinary, unnecessary, and, I believe, totally unlawful declaration of emergency powers for the sole purpose of diverting taxpayer money, which has been previously appropriated by this Congress, to a different purpose, especially to build a wall along our southern border. In that context, we really need to reflect on the words of our first President and remember that our Constitution entrusts us, through article I, as a coequal branch of government, to do our duty under the Constitution.

We know the history. We know that after winning our independence from England, President Washington, along with many of our other Founders, was concerned with the possibility of authoritarianism and of the critical need to build checks and balances into our political system. Here is the key warning in the farewell address on this score: "The habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another."

President Washington argued that this encroachment of one branch of government on the constitutional powers of another is a natural impulse and one that we must guard against as a self-governing people because of the "love of power and proneness to abuse it," and that is why checks and balances are necessary to prevent it.

He went on to write:

The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositaries and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern, some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them.

Now let's review what just happened here in our political system in the last couple of weeks. Just a few weeks ago, President Trump, after failing to achieve his desired outcome through the legislative process, through congressional action, decided that he would bypass the Congress by declaring