

qualify. These are the types of reforms we need instead. Overhauling our entire healthcare system to put everyone on the same subpar plan would not help anyone.

The way I see it is we have two options. One option is Medicare for All, which forces everyone onto the same plan. The government tells you what clinic to go to, what doctor to see, what brand of prescription you can get access to. You lose the power to make decisions about your own healthcare, and you simply have to take what you get on somebody else's timeframe. That is Medicare for All. It would simultaneously ruin Medicare by forcing all 330 million Americans onto the same plan, which will bring down the quality of care for our seniors, who have paid over the years into the plan, and which will bankrupt our country in the process.

I think there is a better choice, a better option. Rather than the government's telling you what you have to do, let's make smart, targeted reforms that allow patients to determine the coverage and care they want at more affordable prices. I believe we can implement these reforms in a way that will bring down costs without reducing choice.

We can continue to protect Americans with preexisting conditions, which is something we all agree should be done. We can lower the costs of prescriptions and out-of-pocket costs and stop the bad actors who game the system. We can provide the States with more flexibility to allow for more coverage options so that families can pick the plans that are right for them. Yes, we can also encourage innovation so our country will remain at the forefront of medical solutions and innovation.

Those are two words you don't ordinarily see—"government-run" plan and "innovation"—in the same sentence. As a matter of fact, they are polar opposites.

Finally, we need to preserve Medicare for our seniors who have paid into this over their lifetime.

I appreciate my colleagues who are hard at work to make these kinds of reforms a reality. And I have heard from my constituents loud and clear. When it comes to healthcare, they want more choices, more affordability, not the one-size-fits-all that Medicare for All would provide.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:30 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BURR).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY

Mr. LANKFORD. I rise to remind the Senate of two anniversaries that are happening this week. This week is the 75th anniversary of the invasion of Normandy. It is commonly known as D-Day. One hundred sixty-thousand-plus individuals crossed the English Channel by aircraft, by boat. They moved in every way possible, starting in the middle of the night and with the major invasion that was the largest naval invasion in the history of the world. They would have crossed into France—what was the beginning of the end of Nazi Germany.

The loss of lives of Americans and Allied forces was catastrophic as they pushed in. The boys, 18, 19, 20 years old, got on aircraft, got on ships, launched out into the water, knowing there was a tyrant on the other side who had to be stopped. It is entirely appropriate for the Nation to pause to remember D-Day, to know the freedom we have right now was protected by a generation that stood for that freedom. As the Nation looks toward Normandy a couple days from now, I think we should once again thank the "greatest generation" that guarded our freedom.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT

Mr. President, today is also a 100-year anniversary, though. One hundred years ago today, June 4, 1919, the Senate voted to pass the right for women to vote. As a son of a pretty amazing mom and as the husband of a really remarkable lady and as the dad of two daughters who are both voters now—they cannot thank the ladies enough who started in the 1800s working toward a basic human dignity and right; that is, the right for people to vote. It is astounding to us as a nation to think that it took that long, all the way up until 1919, to have a vote in the Senate to allow women to vote. That vote—with 36 Republicans and 20 Democrats that day who voted on June 4, 1919—changed the direction of how we would vote and how we would cooperate together as a nation.

Now, we have a lot of other areas to fix, but that one was a big one, and my family is grateful for what was done in the past. People who come through the Rotunda of the Capitol often see a statue there that looks like it is not finished. It is a block of stone, and there are three ladies who are carved out of it, but a part of it is not carved. I often hear people say they don't understand that statue. That statue is Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucretia Mott, the three ladies who led the movement of ladies all over the country to just speak out and say ladies should have the right to vote. Those three ladies are carved into stone that is in our Rotunda, but what is interesting is, the statue is unfinished because the assumption was in the days ahead, there would be more ladies in the future who would step out and would lead a nation to make sure that we allow the rights of every single individual to be honored.

So, for the sake of my mom and my aunt, my grandmother, my wife, my daughters, and millions of ladies, we cannot thank those ladies enough for standing up for what was right at that time period. I think it is appropriate that we pause for just a moment in the Senate and remember June 4, 1919, 100 years later, and thank those ladies for standing up for the rights of ladies in their generation and the ladies in the generations to come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

JOB CORPS

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, everywhere I go in Montana, I hear the same thing from my State's business owners and job creators of the State; that they need more workers. They need more highly skilled welders, bricklayers, heavy machine operators, and laborers. The list goes on and on. I will tell you that I think the biggest limiting factor to moving our economy forward is a well-trained workforce. These businesses give living-wage jobs to the folks who are able to fill them, if they have the skills to fill them.

That is why I was so appalled when the Trump administration recklessly and cluelessly moved to close so many successful Job Corps programs across this country.

While we have heard there is some sort of reprieve for the Anaconda Job Corps, we have not received word that actually means it is going to stay open or any of the other Job Corps across this country—16 of which were scheduled for privatization and 9 of which were out-and-out closures—will stay open.

In Montana's case, we have two successful Civilian Conservation Corps programs: the Anaconda Job Corps and the Trapper Creek Job Corps. The Anaconda Job Corps, of course, is in Anaconda, MT. The Trapper Creek Job Corps is in Darby. These two job training centers play an active role in our State's economy.

We have a foundry in Butte, MT. It is called Montana Precision Products. Mike Robbins is a co-owner of that. This company has hired more than 50 Job Corps graduates in recent years alone—more than 50—most of whom, if not all, were from the Anaconda Job Corps. He has promoted these folks—some of them—from entry level to mid-level managers.

So when Mike and his brother Burt need high-skilled employees, the first place they look is the Job Corps. Why? Because these folks come out with a skill set that fits their needs.

Now, you may ask: Who is going into the Job Corps? These are at-risk folks. These are folks who are having a hard time with life and a hard time getting a job, and they go in the Job Corps—young people—and they give them a skill, a skill they can use in the private sector, a skill that if the Trump administration has their way, they will no longer be able to receive.

They will be at risk. They will not be well trained. They will, in fact, probably end up in some sort of government program instead of contributing to our economy, and this is what the Job Corps allows them to do.

(Mr. LANKFORD assumed the Chair.)

Needless to say, they also provide incredible work in our forests, fighting fires, helping clean up our forests.

It is just amazing to me—it is amazing the shortsightedness of this decision to privatize 16 and close 9 Job Corps across the country. We have heard from one of its graduates—I have heard from many of its graduates, by the way—of the Job Corps in Anaconda and down in Darby at Trapper Creek. One of the graduates is named Zoey Huff. Zoey told me the Job Corps saved her life—changed it. Before her time in the Job Corps, Zoey lived with her parents. She wasn't sure what direction she wanted to take in her life. She went through the Job Corps, and now she has a CDL, which is a commercial driver's license. She has that and certificates that make her an employee who is valued and someone whom businesses across this country—because I don't think Montana is any exception—are competing against each other to hire.

The Job Corps gave her the training and the life tools she needs to succeed, but Zoey's story is not unique. My office has been flooded with stories like hers. I encourage folks who have been impacted by the Job Corps to share their story on my website.

I recently heard from Carl in Montana. Carl's father enrolled in the Job Corps nearly 50 years ago. That 1-year investment in Carl's father provided him with a career that has lasted him for 45 years, that allowed him to raise 5 children and help support 11 grandchildren. It was a good investment because 4-year colleges are great, but they are not for everybody. There are some folks who would rather work with their hands than sit at a desk. These are the folks who shower after work, not before work, and I can relate to these folks. Without important resources like the Job Corps, we are making it harder and harder for young people in rural areas to access the job training they need to succeed in this 21st century economy.

If the President tries again to close the Job Corps, not only will it immediately reduce the amount of well-trained workers in rural America, but it will also kill dozens of good-paying jobs in these small communities that don't support the Job Corps. It is a double punch in the gut that our rural counties have not felt in a long, long time—decades.

Once they are closed, by the way—the one in Anaconda has been open since 1966—once they are closed, it will be hard to get them back.

So when I received the news about the Job Corps 10 days ago, I urged Secretary Perdue, the Secretary of Agriculture, and Labor Secretary Alex Acosta to reverse course.

Senator BOOZMAN is on board to help reverse this shortsighted and irresponsible decision. I am proud to work with him and Senator MERKLEY on this issue and appreciate his work to protect Job Corps in rural America, but we can't do this alone. That is why I, along with Senator BOOZMAN, am introducing bipartisan legislation that will reverse the administration's action to close Job Corps not only in Montana but across this country. I am going to continue to fight until we get a firm promise from this administration that these Job Corps centers are going to be around for years to come. We will be introducing legislation to block closures and prevent these critical employment centers from being subject to the whim of a President who doesn't know what is going on in rural America.

My bill will prohibit the use of appropriated funds in fiscal year 2019 and 2020 to close any Civilian Conservation Centers. It will also prohibit any Agency Secretaries from changing the inter-agency agreement that facilitates the operation of Civilian Conservation Centers, thus preventing the privatization of these programs.

Look, the administration's decision to close these, whether it is in Montana or Arkansas or any other place, will negatively impact those States in the whole country. So it is my hope—it is my hope that this administration will open their eyes and see what is really going on in this country because, quite frankly, Job Corps has worked for decades and decades and decades. It has produced people who are valuable assets to the business community and who raised families and helped support our economy and are part of the fabric of this great country. Yet this administration, through their goal to making America great again, has forgotten about things that make America great and have made America great.

So whether it is businesses like Mike Robbins' and Burt Robbins' business or whether it is students who go through this program, like Zoey, we need everybody in this Chamber—everybody, Democrats and Republicans alike because we are smarter than that—to make sure we have Job Corps around for our next generation and generations after.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CAPITO). The Senator from Iowa.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I come to the floor today, on June 4, to take a look back at a very historic vote by the U.S. Senate. This vote changed the course of political history in America. It strengthened the social fabric and constitutional framework of our Republic.

One hundred years ago today, lawmakers in this body cast a vote for liberty and equality under the law. The Senate approved Federal suffrage legislation. At the time it was passed, it

was known as the Susan B. Anthony amendment. Today it is better known as the 19th Amendment to our U.S. Constitution.

Section 1 of the 19th Amendment reads: "The right of the citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

By adopting the measure, the 66th U.S. Congress paved the way for women's suffrage from sea to shining sea. At the time, more than a dozen States and Territories allowed full suffrage, led by the Western States of Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Idaho.

In 1919 both Chambers of Congress were led by Republican majorities. The House of Representatives adopted this constitutional amendment 304 to 89 on May 21. Two weeks later the Republican Senate voted 56 to 25 in favor of women suffrage. That was two votes more than the necessary two-thirds vote required under our Constitution.

Both U.S. Senators from my State of Iowa voted for passage. Senator William Kenyon, then the junior Senator from Iowa, later went on to serve as a Federal judge for the Eighth Circuit.

The other aye vote from Iowa was cast by my predecessor, meaning he was the only other Senator from Iowa to serve in the position I now serve in as President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate. That senior Republican Senator from Iowa was a former Governor of Iowa, Albert Baird Cummins.

To a full Gallery packed with suffragists, Senator Cummins, as President pro tempore, announced final passage of the suffrage amendment. It was reported on June 5 in the New York Times that Iowa Senator Cummins, presiding over the U.S. Senate, allowed visitors in the Gallery to celebrate with "deafening applause," and he made no effort to stop the celebration.

As President pro tempore, Senator Cummins from Iowa was present at the enrollment ceremony, watching over the shoulder of Vice President Thomas Marshall, who signed this historic bill.

After the Senate passed it, it was then sent to the States for ratification. In a special session of the Iowa General Assembly, my State became the tenth State to ratify the 19th amendment on July 2, 1919, less than a month after the U.S. Senate had approved it.

Suffragists and supporters continued the campaign they started in the Hawkeye State prior to World War I. They mobilized support among farmers to pave the way to the ballot box for women. The future Secretary of Agriculture under President Harding championed women's rights to vote in his widely circulated farm journal. Henry C. Wallace of Des Moines wrote:

I do not know how we can have a government of the people, for the people and by the people, until women have an equal voice with men. They are fully as competent as men to use that ballot wisely.

Now, others invoked the patriotism, service, and sacrifice of women during

World War I. Another compelling argument reminded Americans that, without the ballot, women suffered taxation without representation. All Americans will recall that the battle cry of taxation without representation also paved the way to America's road to independence from Great Britain, declared in July of 1776.

Two days after Iowa ratified the 19th amendment, Americans celebrated our Nation's 143rd year of independence on the Fourth of July. One hundred years later, we are 1 month away from celebrating our Nation's 243rd year of independence. Wow, what a difference a century can make.

The historic passage of the 19th amendment pulled back the curtain to the voting booth and cracked open the glass ceiling for women to serve in public office. Today one-fourth of the U.S. Senate are women, including my colleague from Iowa, Senator JONI ERNST. She is also the first female combat veteran elected to serve in the U.S. Senate.

In the 116th Congress, 102 women are now serving in the House of Representatives, including two women from Iowa, Representative ABBY FINKENAUER and CINDY AXNE.

In the last election, Iowans elected our first female Governor, Kim Reynolds, one of nine women now serving as chief executive of their respective States.

Today I pay tribute to all those who blazed the trail to the ballot box and helped secure women's right to vote.

At long last, the sacred right of franchise became a reality for all Americans. It had been sought by women since the American Revolution. Through the decades, it gained momentum through relentless advocacy at the grassroots.

A lot of credit is due to organizers of a convention called the Seneca Falls Convention in New York State in the summer of 1848. Just think how long that was before the 19th amendment was finally adopted. In 1848 this convention lit a flame that became inextinguishable. They launched a civic movement for the ages with enough oxygen to become a grassroots prairie fire.

For more than half a century, this organization of mostly women organized with petitions, parades, and protests, building momentum and constituencies at the State and Federal level. These early suffragists succeeded in laying a cornerstone of equality for generations to come. One of the most fundamental rights of self-government is the right to vote, and ratification of the 19th amendment enshrined their sacred civic duty into our founding charter of freedom.

I often say that the ballot box holds elected Members of Congress to account for the decisions we make on behalf of those we represent. Our institutions of government, civic organizations, system of free enterprise, places of work, schools, communities, and,

most importantly, families are stronger thanks to the suffragists of our history.

The road to ratification came down to a tie-breaking vote in Nashville, TN. A young member of the State legislature broke a deadlocked vote that otherwise would have tabled the measure. His name was Harry Burn, a 24-year-old Republican from East Tennessee.

The morning of the vote, he received a note from his mother. She invoked the name of a famous suffragist with long ties to my home State of Iowa. You hear it along with Susan B. Anthony, but not as often. The name of that Iowa woman is Carrie Chapman Catt. If you want to visit her historic farm home, you can go to Charles City, IA, and visit where she grew up and lived.

Mrs. Burns, the mother of that young Tennessee State legislator, implored her son to "be a good boy and help Mrs. Catt put the 'rat' in ratification."

Representative Burns credited his tie-breaking vote to the influence of his mother, to justice, and for the legacy of the Republican Party. In a statement explaining his vote, Representative Burn wrote:

I appreciated the fact that an opportunity such as seldom comes to a mortal man to free seventeen million women from political slavery was mine. . . . I desired that my party in both State and nation might say that it was a republican from the East mountains of Tennessee . . . who made national woman suffrage possible. . . .

On August 18, 1920, the Volunteer State became the 36th State to ratify the amendment, securing the three-fourths of the States required under the U.S. Constitution.

When the U.S. Secretary of State certified the results 8 days later, the 19th amendment became the law of the land. It ensured men and women in America would share equal rights to this fundamental civic right.

Like Harry Burn, I have a personal story about my mother. My mother influenced my interest in government. For as long as I can remember, she sowed the seeds of my quest for public office and a commitment to public service.

For years, she taught students in a one-room schoolhouse about the three R's—reading, writing, and arithmetic—as well as lifelong lessons of civic responsibility. At home, she taught the Grassley kids around the kitchen table to stand up for our beliefs. Those teachings were to choose right over wrong, to waste not, want not, and to value hard work and the value of hard-earned money. She practiced what she preached, putting honesty and integrity first and foremost.

This photo I have beside me today was published in the Des Moines Register on August 30, 1920. Approximately 8 or 10 days after Tennessee ratified it but only 1 day after the secretary of State of the State of Iowa said women could now vote, we have this photo of my mother voting. It sets the scene of a historic day near my family farm.

A local woman named Mrs. Jens G. Theusen, of Fairfield Township, located in Grundy County, IA—I live just across the county line in Butler County—submitted her ballot in a country school in what I think was a school election.

She was one of the first women to vote after the newly ratified 19th Amendment.

My own mother, Ruth Corwin Grassley—referred to here as Mrs. L. A. Grassley, after Louis Arthur Grassley, my dad—also cast a history-making vote that day in a local election.

This picture says this is my mother here, but this is my mother right here. So the Des Moines Register was wrong in identifying this person, when this person is my mother. The Waterloo Courier got it right that this was Ruth Grassley, but instead of with two s's, the Waterloo Courier spelled it with one s.

The Waterloo Times Tribune was present at this vote and reported that "Black Hawk and Grundy County women gained fame Friday by being the first in the state and probably the first in the nation to take advantage of the privilege of equal suffrage." That is from the Waterloo paper.

You would think that I would have known about this while my mother was living. I didn't know anything about it. I have since learned that this photo was widely distributed in newspapers across the country, illustrating the historic victory of women's suffrage.

This election in Iowa was held just 29 hours after the official announcement of the ratification of the 19th Amendment.

This photo of my mother also immortalized her vote for posterity. She did so without any fanfare. She never bragged about anything, including her history-making vote in the local election. In fact, it wasn't until after she had passed away by maybe 20 years that I learned that my mother, Ruth Grassley, was one of the very first women in Iowa to cast her vote.

While I was growing up, I didn't realize what a trailblazer she was from the standpoint of women's suffrage. I knew she was a trailblazer in many other ways. Many suffragists wore their mission as a badge of honor for all to see. With 50 years of fighting to get it, I sure don't blame them for doing that. Others, like my mother, were equally as proud to carry out their newfound right and civic duty in anonymity. I am not surprised I never knew this story about my mother. My mother cast her vote to make her voice count, perhaps not even realizing she was making history at that moment.

Today, at this moment, I stand here as an Iowa farm boy, a proud son of a very early voter in Iowa—one of the first four, according to the Des Moines Register—and a U.S. Senator from Iowa because I want to share her story on the centennial anniversary marking Senate passage of the 19th Amendment.

As Americans, we celebrate the Founding Fathers who enshrined the

principles of limited government, free enterprise, and personal responsibility in our Constitution. Let us also pay tribute, then, to our founding mothers who fought and who secured these cherished blessings of freedom and liberty for their daughters and granddaughters yet to come in the same document. Today, we remember their legacy. Let's respect their legacy.

A century after the Senate voted in favor of the 19th Amendment—on this very day 100 years ago—I encourage all Americans to treasure their right to vote. The suffragists of yesterday helped shape the course of history to ensure all Americans today and for sure in the future will carry the torch of freedom, liberty, justice, and opportunity for all for generations to come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, first, I want to congratulate the senior Senator from Iowa and say what a wonderful story that is about his mom. And to see a picture like that—it is such an inspiring story. He certainly has a lot to be proud of in many, many ways.

I say to the Senator, now I know more about you, knowing that you had such a smart and strong mom. That tells me a lot. Thank you for sharing that.

I rise with two short topics today. First, I, too, want to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote. Even more so, I rise today to celebrate the brave and determined women who fought so hard and for so long for our right to make our voices heard.

I remember coming into the U.S. Senate in 2000 and finding out that it wasn't until 2001—the first year I was here—that we actually had enough women in the Senate to have one woman on every committee, a woman's voice on every committee. It is incredible, actually, that it took until 2001. But this was an important milestone at the time, as together we have been able to achieve many different milestones for women's voices, and we see that continuing to happen.

I want to speak specifically about Catharine Fish Stebbins, a woman from Detroit who was one of those women who fought so hard at the very beginning and on whose shoulders we really stand. She may not have been as well known, but she was a suffragist and an abolitionist. She signed the Declaration of Sentiments at the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls in 1848.

One of the resolutions in that document said: "It is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to elective franchise," and she took that very seriously.

In 1871, accompanied by her husband, Catharine tried to register to vote. She was told no. She tried again, this time

accompanied by a friend who lived in another ward. That friend, Nannette B. Gardner, argued that she was a widow and a taxpayer and that she should be allowed to register. But Catharine was once again told no.

In 1872, she tried to register again. This time, she was told no, but she did get election officials to admit that, in their words, "Mrs. Stebbins would have all the required qualification of an elector, but for the fact of her being a woman."

Catharine never did get to cast a ballot before she died in 1904. Yet I believe she would be extremely proud of how far we have come as a country and how far we have come in Michigan.

Last November, Michigan elected a woman Governor—our second woman to be elected Governor—a woman secretary of state, a woman attorney general, reelected a woman to the U.S. Senate, and elected three new women Members of the U.S. House of Representatives. It was extraordinary.

That is progress, but in my mind, the real progress was that being women wasn't the story. We didn't win because of the novelty of having all of these women running for statewide office. We didn't win thanks to some "pink wave" that was talked about in the press. We didn't win because we focused on "women's issues" because, as we know, every issue is a woman's issue. Instead, each of us won because we were strong and qualified candidates who earned our nominations and ran forward-looking and positive campaigns focused on issues important to Michigan families. Everyone was judged on their own. People weren't talking about our gender and whether it was OK to have women in all of these top positions; instead, they were talking about our qualifications and who was the best candidate. To me, that is truly historic.

There is no question we still have a long way to go. Women now make a quarter of this Chamber. We are one out of four—a historic high. I think Catharine would agree with me that it should be at least 50 percent. That would be a good goal. I think we are maybe 54 percent of the voting population; that is good too.

On this 100th anniversary of women's right to vote, I am celebrating how far we have come and the women, like Catharine, who worked so very hard to get us here. Even more important, I think we all should recommit ourselves to the fight to move forward.

REMEMBERING THAD COCHRAN

Madam President, I would like to take one more minute to talk about a dear friend of mine who is no longer with us, who had a funeral yesterday and one today in Mississippi. I want to pay tribute to someone I was honored to call my friend, and I know that many other Members on both sides of the aisle feel exactly the same way.

Thad Cochran was the senior Senator from Mississippi, but he was so much more. He was a wonderful musician. I

have some very happy memories of joining him to play the boogie-woogie on the piano that was in his office. People couldn't believe that he actually not only had a piano, but he had a grand piano in his office. As someone who grew up in music, we immediately bonded over that, as two people who loved to play the piano.

He was a true gentleman. If he gave you his word, you knew for a fact that he would keep it. His honesty and integrity made him a joy to work with on the farm bill, as well as on so many other issues.

He was deeply devoted to public service, particularly fighting for his farmers, for cotton farmers and others in the delta, protecting the waters of the Mississippi Delta, and caring for Mississippi's children. As author of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, he helped provide healthy food for children and families from Biloxi to Battle Creek and everywhere in between.

Senator Cochran was a legislative legend in Mississippi, and he never stopped fighting for his beloved Magnolia State. He loved Mississippi, and I can tell you that Mississippi loved him right back. I had a chance to see this lifelong love affair up close when I visited Mississippi with Senator Cochran back in 2013. At the time, I was chair of the Agriculture Committee, and Senator Cochran was the ranking member. We were right in the middle of working on the farm bill, and I was invited to speak at the annual meeting of the Delta Council, which has been working to promote economic development in Northwest Mississippi since 1935.

I can tell you that you couldn't find a better Mississippi tour guide than Senator Cochran. I got to see the delta up close and listen to him talk about the waters, the conservation programs he was such a champion for, and the people who depend on them, in that soft drawl of his. Listening to him was like listening to poetry.

Senator Cochran certainly wasn't going to bring me all the way to Mississippi without stopping by a few holy sites of that American form of music called the blues. We visited the iconic Po' Monkey's Lounge in Merigold—one of the last rural juke joints in the State—and met its operator, a local farmer named Willie Seaberry. We also stopped by Clarksdale Crossroads, home of the Delta Blues Museum and the very spot where blues legend Robert Johnson said he sold his soul to the devil in exchange for songwriting success.

I will never forget the picnic by the Mississippi River that he and others hosted for me. If you have never been to a good old-fashioned Mississippi cookout, then I suggest you book a ticket right now. The only thing there was more of than food was southern hospitality. I might have been the token Yankee, but I was welcomed as one of their own.

At every stop along the way, Senator Cochran was just beaming with pride.