

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO DAVE ADKISSON

Mr. McDONNELL. Madam President, it is my pleasure today to salute a transformative leader in my home State of Kentucky, Dave Adkisson. At the end of October, Dave will retire as the president and CEO of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, ending nearly 15 years of representing our Commonwealth's employers and signature industries. His talent for advocacy and consensus-building have benefited Kentucky, and I would like to thank him for his many achievements for our State.

Dave began his career at his hometown chamber of commerce in Owensboro, KY. His creativity and successful management won him a lot of fans early on, and he was elected the mayor of Owensboro at the age of 34. Championing several development projects and attracting new businesses to the city, Dave was reelected to a second term without opposition.

Leaving public service, Dave accepted an offer to lead the Birmingham, Alabama, Chamber. The career move took Dave's talents out of Kentucky, but he wouldn't be gone for long. He returned home and began his current role leading the statewide chamber. At the helm of our Commonwealth's largest business association, Dave has grown the organization and expanded its reach. Now, it represents more than 3,800 businesses in Kentucky.

As the leader of the Kentucky Chamber, Dave has made a positive and lasting impact on the public policies enacted both in Frankfort and in Washington. His organization helped lead the charge to pass a right-to-work law in Kentucky, giving workers more freedom over their paychecks and drawing new investment into the Bluegrass State. Dave was also a key ally in our drive to pass comprehensive Federal tax reform and cut burdensome regulations. Kentucky's strong economy is a result, in part, of Dave's leadership.

He has also been recognized nationally among his peers for his important work. In 2017, the Kentucky Chamber was named the top chamber in the country, and Dave has lent his expertise to several national business associations. To foster future innovators, Dave cofounded Leadership Kentucky, a highly selective program to equip prominent Kentuckians with the skills to excel. It is just one example in a long list of contributions Dave has made to improve our State's bright future.

As Dave leaves the Kentucky Chamber, I am glad to know he will continue leading various projects around the Commonwealth. I am sure our communities will continue to benefit from his talent and guiding hand. I am also reassured to know that, while Dave is spending some well-deserved time with his wife Bonnie and their family, the Kentucky Chamber will be in the capable hands of its new president, Ashli Watts. A seasoned advocacy veteran, Ashli can build upon the years of success and help the Kentucky Chamber continue to be a strong voice for our state's job creators.

So, Mr. President, I would like to thank Dave for his years of leadership in Kentucky. As an elected official and a public policy advocate he has created a legacy of accomplishment that will be enjoyed for years to come. It is a privilege to pay tribute to my friend today, and I ask my Senate colleagues to join me in honoring Dave Adkisson and wishing him a fulfilling retirement.

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, during National Hispanic Heritage Month, we are called to honor the contributions of a critical community—that of Hispanic Americans. Now accounting for 60 million individuals in the United States, these men and women are an essential pillar of our society. Although this group has grown significantly in recent decades, individuals of Hispanic descent and culture have been with our Nation since its very founding.

Hispanic identity is a complex concept, at least with respect to how many in the United States traditionally understand race and ethnicity. The word "Hispanic" stems from "Hispanic," the Latin name for the ancient Roman colonies on the Iberian Peninsula that also serves as the origin for the modern state of España, or Spain. It was there that the Spanish or Castilian language, culture, and people developed out of the convergence of Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Celts, Basques, Visigoths and Arabs, in addition to Christians, Muslims, and Jews.

The story does not end there. Along the hallowed walls of the U.S. Capitol Rotunda are two paintings by John Vanderlyn depicting key historical scenes. In 1492, the Spanish Catholic Monarchs King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella agreed to sponsor the journey of Christopher Columbus in search of a passage to the East Indies. Columbus failed at this goal, but, as the Landing of Columbus illustrates, he did land in the island now named San Salvador in the Bahamas. This voyage prompted the Spanish exploration and colonization of the Americas, including North America, reaching as far as Mississippi in 1541, as depicted by William Henry Powell's *Discovery of the Mississippi* by De Soto, and even deep into the Pacific Northwest.

Even then, however, we are still missing other key elements of the story. The Spanish were not alone. They encountered vast empires, the Aztecs and the Incas, in addition to hundreds of other peoples, from the Mapuche in Argentina to the Maya in Guatemala. Colonization was a bloody process that uprooted and killed millions of indigenous people. Moreover, the Spanish brought millions of Africans to the Americas as part of the Atlantic slave trade. Men, women, and children had to struggle in cruel and terrible conditions as the property of others. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the indigenous and African communities have helped make the Hispanic community what it is today, whether it's in culture, art, music, food, language, or even the genetic makeup of the people themselves. Significant portions of the Hispanic community can trace their descent to these two groups—at least in part, if not entirely.

The exploration and colonization that would lead to the creation of the Hispanic world in the Americas would, in turn, set the stage for English to do the same later, beginning with the first permanent settlement in Jamestown, VA, in 1607. Eventually, these English colonies would sever themselves from the British Empire and form the United States of America. But Spanish colonies would continue to influence our Nation throughout our history. Multiple territories, such as Florida, Texas, California, and Puerto Rico, became integral parts of our country. Others, inspired by the principles of the Enlightenment and the examples of the American and French Revolutions, became their own independent countries. They have since been our neighbors in the Western Hemisphere and some of our most critical partners in trade, security, and championing the virtues of democracy.

Congress established National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15 in recognition of the pivotal contributions and legacy of this community that traces its roots to Spain, Mexico, Central America, South America, the Caribbean, and further beyond. Millions, such as the Hispanos of New Mexico and the Tejanos of Texas, are the descendants of settlers who have been on these lands for centuries. Starting in the twentieth century, millions of individuals from across the Hispanic world have come to our Nation as immigrants. Since 2000, the Hispanic population in Maryland has more than doubled, now accounting for half a million people, or nearly 10 percent of all Marylanders. Our State is home to a diverse community of individuals with origins from across the Hispanic world, with sizeable populations of Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Guatemalans, Salvadorans, and Peruvians.

Yet we must recognize that this community faces distinct challenges. Instability continues to hamper the abilities