

done for North Carolina and the Nation. To be effective, she worked across the aisle to find solutions to the everyday problems facing Americans. When she entered the Senate, she said, “We have a Congress now that is kind of divided, and I want to be one of the ones that helps bring people together.”

Kay was a woman of principle. She was a key vote in support of the Affordable Care Act—that resulted in millions of Americans gaining access to health care. She stood in favor of choice for women, gay marriage, equal pay for women, the Violence Against Women Act, and expanding background checks on gun sales.

She was a fierce defender of military families, of which there are so many in North Carolina, and served on the Armed Services Committee. In hearings, she pressed the Army on the unexplained deaths of 11 infants at Fort Bragg and pushed for full disclosure of documents related to contaminated drinking water at Camp Lejeune. And before many others, she supported women serving in combat zones. “Anybody’s who qualified should be able to serve,” she said.

Kay fought for the “little guy.” She used her banking expertise to fight against payday lending. She wanted a fairer minimum wage, so families can support themselves. She supported job creation and small business. “For me in North Carolina, it’s jobs, jobs, jobs,” she said.

She understood that big money in politics was drowning the voice of regular Americans and that access to the ballot box is being blocked. After her Senate loss, Kay went on to serve as resident fellow at the Institute of Politics at Harvard University with a focus on money in politics and voting rights, saying, “We need to encourage young folks across the country to go exercise their constitutional right to vote. It is something that our Constitution gives us, but not enough people exercise it.”

Kay wanted to inspire young people—especially young women—to vote, to be informed, to run for office. Kay did inspire. And she leaves us with a legacy of integrity, commitment, and civility. I was proud to be her colleague, but I was even more proud to be her friend, and I send my heartfelt condolences to her family.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, it is with deep sadness that I remember and recognize the life of former U.S. Senator Kay Hagan of North Carolina.

I am grateful that I had the privilege to serve with Senator Hagan here in the United States Senate. Her approach to her job was something we would all do well to learn from. Kay was a model of civility, optimism, and selfless service to the State she loved.

Early in her life, Kay served as a Capitol Hill intern for her uncle, Senator Lawton Chiles of Florida. Her duties included operating the Senators-only elevator. In time, she would go on to prove that she belonged on that elevator, too.

After 10 years in the North Carolina Senate, she won election to the United States Senate and served her home State with dignity. Even in the face of one of the most expensive and challenging election campaigns in this body’s history, Senator Hagan remained focused first and foremost on how to find common ground in this Chamber and the ways she could deliver for her constituents in North Carolina.

I am particularly grateful for the model that Senator Hagan set as the cochair of the Congressional Sportsmen’s Caucus. In that role, she worked hard to forge bipartisan consensus around a comprehensive package of bills to increase public access for hunting and fishing and to extend important fish and wildlife conservation programs.

Julie and I are keeping her husband, Chip; their three children, Jeanette, Tilden, and Carrie; and all of their grandchildren in our hearts. We will all miss Kay.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I first met Kay Hagan at a People magazine photoshoot for the Senate’s “Leading Ladies” after I was elected in 2012. I appreciated how warm and welcoming she was towards me. I have fond memories of working with Kay on the Senate Armed Services Committee, and we forged a partnership through our leadership roles on the Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee.

My deepest sympathies are with her family during this difficult time.

NORTH DAKOTA

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. President, I rise today to mark the 130th birthday of the State of North Dakota. On November 2, 1889, President Benjamin Harrison signed the documents turning Dakota Territory into two States, North Dakota and South Dakota. In the 13 decades since then, the people of North Dakota have embraced the many opportunities and challenges of living in the geographic center of North America.

God has blessed us with abundant natural resources, and with hard work and innovation, North Dakotans have fed the world and fueled our Nation. We are top producers of wheat, sunflowers, dry edible beans, navy and pinto beans, canola, flaxseed, and honey. Our ranchers raise 1.7 million beef cattle—or almost three head of cattle for every North Dakotan.

As the Nation’s second largest producer of oil in the country, we are one of the reasons the United States becomes closer every year to being energy independent. As one of the country’s top 10 coal-producing States, our lignite reserves have an 800-year supply. Before there were Federal reclamation laws, North Dakota was enforcing its own, and our air quality has been ranked at among the best in the Nation. We proudly embrace an “all of the above” energy policy that, in addition to oil and coal, supports production of wind and biofuels.

Every year, visitors and new residents discover the beauty of our State, with its distinct geographic regions. A young Theodore Roosevelt’s years of ranching in the North Dakota Badlands greatly influenced his conservation policies as our Nation’s 26th President. North Dakota has been regarded the birthplace of conservation as Roosevelt, who was known as the Conservation President, established vast protections for wildlife and public lands through new national forests, bird reserves, game preserves, national parks, and national monuments. He said, “I would not have been President had it not been for my experience in North Dakota.”

My State can often be found at the top of quality of life rankings in America, largely due to the strong sense of community engagement and social support present from border to border.

I speak for all North Dakotans in the pride we have for what our State has given to the Nation and world in our first 130 years, but, in true North Dakota spirit, I believe most would agree with me that we are just getting started and the best is yet to come. Happy Birthday, North Dakota.

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH R. BRITTON

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, it is an honor to recognize the years of dedication and service of my friend and departing chief of staff, Joseph R. Britton.

Joe has served as my chief of staff for more than 4 years and has managed my Senate office in a professional and purposeful manner. He has overseen my team with incredible leadership and has consistently motivated us all to work hard and make a difference for New Mexicans each and every day.

Joe’s career on Capitol Hill began in 2003, when he served as a legislative assistant for U.S. Senator Ben Nelson from his home State of Nebraska. He then served as legislative director and deputy chief of staff in the office of U.S. Senator MARK UDALL. He also served as a senior adviser to former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack before coming to my office in 2015. He brought with him passion and expertise in healthcare, public lands, budget, and appropriations policy.

As chief of staff, Joe has led both our Washington, DC, and New Mexico offices in Albuquerque, Roswell, Las Cruces, Farmington, and Santa Fe. Joe visited every corner of our State. It is a testament to his dedication to maintaining strong working relationships that New Mexicans know that they can count on our office to be reliable, accessible, and in their corner. Joe took the time to learn about New Mexico and understand our rich history, our thriving culture, and the complex, pressing issues we face in the Land of Enchantment. Throughout his service, Joe has shared my mission and drive to solve problems and find ways to make a difference for New Mexicans.