



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 165

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2019

No. 192

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our Father, be with us not only in great moments of experience but also during mundane and common tasks. Through the power of Your Spirit, may our Senators mount up with wings like eagles, running without weariness and walking without fainting. Give them the wisdom to be patient with others, ever lenient to their faults and ever prompt to appreciate their virtues.

Lord, rule in the hearts of our lawmakers, keeping them from sin and sustaining their loved ones in all of their tomorrows. Surround us all with the shield of Your mercy, as You provide us with a future, hope, and blessings too numerous to be stored.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I would like to address the Senate for 1 minute as in morning business.

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

IRAN

Mr. GRASSLEY. I hope a lot of Americans have been able to watch on

television what is going on over in Iran right now. I hope Americans have an opportunity to listen to some Americans of Iranian descent who are commenting on what is going on over there because, recently, thousands of Iranians have taken to the streets protesting their country's corrupt regime. Frustrated by a lack of opportunity and frustrated by constant political oppression, these largely young and non-violent protesters have stood up to say: Enough is enough.

In response to these protesters, we see the regime engaging in a brutal crackdown, and that crackdown is on a scale not seen since the 1979 revolution, killing hundreds of civilians within the last few days.

The United States is not an enemy of the Iranian people. In fact, Americans of all backgrounds can't help but sympathize with these brave protesters seeking a more prosperous, more responsible Iran and having the Iran Government give that sort of an environment. We need to tell the Iranian leaders the world is watching.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, this week, House Democrats are continuing their 3-year-long quest to impeach the President and are continuing

to obstruct urgent bipartisan legislation. This has been the Democrats' strategy for months now—obsess over impeachment and obstruct everything else.

Take the USMCA, which would create 176,000 new American jobs. Speaker PELOSI has been stalling it for months, constantly saying she is optimistic or getting close or almost there. For months, it has been this broken record. I understand, this very week, while the Speaker of the House has apparently flown to Madrid to discuss climate change, she keeps offering the same empty rhetoric that is no different than what she was saying 10 months ago. American workers have waited and waited and waited. House Democrats keep stalling.

Consider the appropriations process. Even after signing a bipartisan agreement to forgo poison pills, Democrats ignored it and thrust other policy disagreements back into the appropriations process. They voted twice to filibuster funding for our Armed Forces. Well, last week, Chairman SHELBY and Chairwoman LOWEY reached an important agreement to address allocations at the subcommittee level. This was an essential step. It will take a lot of work and cooperation to move the appropriations process forward in the short time ahead of us. Our Democratic colleagues will finally need to rediscover that our men and women in uniform are more important than their partisan fights.

Speaking of our Armed Forces, let's talk about the NDAA. Congress has passed an annual defense authorization bill every year since 1961. Every year, after some jousting and jostling, the Congress has put aside all of our extraneous disagreements to fulfill one of our most basic responsibilities and reauthorize our Armed Forces, but remember the Democrats' new playbook: Obsess over impeachment, obstruct everything else, including, apparently, even our troops and national security.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Imagine being so far left that even the routine annual bill to reauthorize the U.S. military is some controversial thing you have to be goaded into supporting. House Democrats abandoned longstanding traditions of compromise and larded up the NDAA with partisan policy riders. For what appears to be the first time ever in either Chamber, they passed an NDAA on a pure party-line vote—the first purely partisan NDAA in 58 years. In the Senate, by contrast, Chairman INHOFE and Ranking Member REED collaborated on a bill that passed the Senate 86 to 8. We certainly did our part to stick with an annual tradition.

Now my colleague, the Democratic leader, is moving the goalpost and enabling Speaker PELOSI's reckless strategy. Longstanding bipartisan precedent says that in order for any subject outside the Armed Services Committees' jurisdiction to travel in the final NDAA, the chairmen and ranking members of the actual committee of jurisdiction need to give bipartisan signoff. This basic test protects the Senate; it protects our committees; and it protects the NDAA from being held hostage for specific partisan ends. Every year, dozens, if not hundreds, of provisions meet that bar. Those that don't end up on the cutting room floor.

Thus far, in the Senate, Chairman INHOFE and Ranking Member REED have worked hard to respect those norms, but this year, the Speaker of the House and my colleague the Democratic leader want to scrap this precedent, undermine the committees, and demand special treatment for partisan priorities that have no business being crammed into this essential legislation for our Armed Forces.

We are talking about a new taxpayer-funded benefit for all Federal employees and sweeping changes to U.S. foreign policy. This is what they are trying to shoehorn into the NDAA. It is not good-faith policymaking, not when these demands pour in at the eleventh hour over must-pass legislation for our servicemembers. It is just political theater that is taking precedence over our Armed Forces. So, right on cue, I am sure we will hear made-for-TV histrionics about all of the new provisions the Speaker and the Democratic leader want to shove into this bill—by-passing hearings, markups, and negotiations between chairmen and ranking members.

We will probably keep hearing the dishonest myth that the Republicans are soft on Russia—never mind that a few years ago, President Obama was mocking the Republicans for being too tough on Russia; never mind that this administration has aggressively pursued sanctions, expelled Russian operatives, provided lethal defensive weapons to Georgia and Ukraine, taken major steps to protect our elections, and more. It is just more bluster and histrionics to distract from the core fact that is crystal clear to the entire country: There is no legislation, no

matter how crucial, that the Democrats will not obstruct in order to pick fights with this President.

The very bills the Democrats are resisting are essential for our national defense strategy—for our needed investments in cutting-edge weapons, in the European Defense Initiative, in modernizing our nuclear force. They are all critical for competing with, deterring, and defending against Russia and China. If the Democrats divide Congress over nondefense issues and kill these bills, they will have played right into our adversaries' hands. If we jettison the longstanding bipartisan process for negotiating the NDAA, they will have made this basic national security requirement far more difficult in the future.

Our Democratic colleagues must understand that national security comes before "the resistance." The country cannot afford this new tactic of obsessing over impeachment and obstructing everything else. I hope this changes soon.

TRIBUTE TO JOHNNY ISAKSON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on a totally different matter, the Senate has set aside today to honor our distinguished colleague, the senior Senator from Georgia, JOHNNY ISAKSON.

It has been about 3 months since JOHNNY announced he would retire at the end of December. Since then, I think we have all been taking stock of everything our dear friend has accomplished and everything he means to so many people. I have long said, if the Senate were to hold a secret ballot popularity contest, JOHNNY ISAKSON would win in a bipartisan landslide—quite possibly in a unanimous vote.

He commands bipartisan respect and affection to a degree that is truly remarkable. Yet, if you think about it, it makes sense for a man whose personal mantra goes like this: "There are only two kinds of people: friends and future friends." For most people, that might be a noble aspiration but unrealistic. For JOHNNY ISAKSON, it is a statement of fact. Nobody is an enemy, and nobody is a stranger—just a friend and future friend. That is it. With a motto like that, it is no wonder that JOHNNY's first career was a successful stint in real estate—a field in which relationships are everything.

It strikes me there could be two ways you could thrive in a business in which friendships and connections matter so much. You could be either good at faking a smile, at feigning interest in others, or you could genuinely love meeting everybody and learning how you might be able to help people. That second kind of person is exactly who Ed and Julie Isakson brought up in Atlanta, GA—warm, honest, forthright, incredibly kind. No wonder JOHNNY's neighbors jumped at the chance to hire him to be their State representative, then their State Senator, then their

Congressman, and then their U.S. Senator. So his retirement this month will cap a 45-year career in public service, packed with one significant accomplishment after another.

First and foremost in JOHNNY's long legacy is his work for our Nation's veterans. He spent 6 years in the Georgia Air National Guard as a young man, and he has spent the half century since then as one of his fellow veterans' best friends at any level of government.

Under JOHNNY's chairmanship, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs has passed literally scores of bills: more accountability at the VA, more education benefits, better community care programs, better procedures for when veterans appeal determinations, an updated GI bill with no more expiration date, and, of course, JOHNNY's landmark bill—the VA MISSION Act. It is now law. It provides many of the most significant reforms in the history of the VA by taking power away from bureaucrats and giving it back to the veterans and their doctors.

Yet, somehow, in the midst of compiling this singular record for our Nation's veterans, JOHNNY racked up countless more legislative successes that impact literally every American—from securing pension protections to reforming education policy, from regional infrastructure projects like the Savannah Harbor Expansion to combating hunger worldwide. One look at the list of laws bearing JOHNNY's fingerprints and you would be forgiven for thinking he never met a problem he could not solve.

But alas, every Senator sometimes encounters requests from back home on which he cannot deliver. Sometimes you have constituents on both sides of an issue. Sometimes a request might conflict with your principles. Whatever the reason, everybody in office eventually disappoints somebody. Yet JOHNNY's staff marvels at the fact that even when Georgians come up here to meet with him and, unfortunately, go away disappointed, they still walk out of the meetings, beaming with praise for their Senator: "Can you believe JOHNNY? He is the greatest guy ever. What a Senator"—and these are the people he just said no to.

The same traits explain why JOHNNY is just as popular under this dome as he is back home, and I don't just mean with his fellow Members. JOHNNY ISAKSON is practically an honorary member of every other Member's staff and an honorary elevator operator and an honorary Capitol Police Officer and an honorary member of Chaplain Black's team and on and on. He knows and values absolutely everybody.

I can't count how many times I would hear a peal of laughter from out in my staff bullpen and realize that JOHNNY ISAKSON had dropped by, not to see me but to chat with my team, to ask after their families, and to maybe check up on a couple of Georgia's priorities while he was there.

There is one classic story that really distills this man's character. Most people who have hung around JOHNNY and his team long enough know the famous tale of the "gin and tonic in the laundry room."

Here is the deal: Back in 2006, JOHNNY was still a new Senator. We were tackling some thorny pension issues, and thousands of Georgians stood to be affected if things didn't get hammered out. So this freshman Senator dove in. He went toe to toe with big players like Ted Kennedy and Bill Young over in the House. He didn't get a seat on the conference committee, but he basically appointed himself an honorary member. JOHNNY worked it like crazy. He sleuthed out where they would be meeting, and he spoke to everyone. Because it is JOHNNY we are talking about, we know how this ends: He delivered for Georgia.

Afterward, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution wanted to hear how this freshman Senator had pulled off this victory. Among other things, the reporter asked how JOHNNY had celebrated. Did he clear out the champagne at some beltway steakhouse?

Here is what he said:

Isakson said that after the vote, he went straight back to his Capitol Hill area apartment and celebrated—by doing his laundry. He did not want to leave dirty clothes behind for a month.

He said further: "So as I was putting coins in the machine, I had a gin and tonic in the laundry room."

This anecdote is almost the perfect encapsulation of JOHNNY ISAKSON. It starts with tenacity and a can-do spirit, propelled forward by charisma, smarts, and stubborn patience. It ends with a win for Georgians and one celebratory cocktail while being wrist-deep in laundry detergent.

Yet there is one other story, I think, that reflects this remarkable leader even more perfectly. It starts with one name—Kate Puzey.

In 2009, JOHNNY was reading his local paper and found an obituary for a young lady from northern Georgia who had been in Africa with the Peace Corps. She was just 24. JOHNNY didn't know Kate and didn't know her family, but he felt called to attend her funeral. He sat quietly in the very back and listened to her friends, her family, ministers, and Peace Corps colleagues.

Unassumingly, he invited the family to stay in touch if there was anything he could ever do. Only later, did they relate what wasn't in the obituary. Kate had been murdered in the dark of night after sounding the alarm on child abuse in her village in the African country of Benin.

JOHNNY ISAKSON was on the case from that day forward. Not only was he a fixture on the Foreign Relations Committee, but he was actually the ranking member on the Africa Subcommittee. So he put a framed photo of Kate on his desk and leapt into action. Senator ISAKSON flew to Benin to personally lean on its President. He

met with Peace Corps officials. He built a legislative coalition for reforms to better protect volunteers.

As I said earlier, because this is JOHNNY ISAKSON we are talking about, we know how the story ends—with results. He helped Kate's parents pursue justice, and just a couple of years after JOHNNY sat down in that pew, the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act was law.

Now, that is JOHNNY ISAKSON in one story. He starts out trying to do good for his neighbors and winds up literally changing the world.

Of course, changing the world can be grueling work. We all know JOHNNY's health has made his tireless service more and more challenging in recent months. As much as the other 99 of us hate to hear it, he has decided it is time to find new ways to serve that don't involve twice weekly air travel or winding trips through the Capitol Complex.

But we know our friend is not riding off into the sunset or kicking up his heels. I know he is bound and determined to keep putting his expertise and institutional knowledge to work on behalf of Georgians who need him. I have no doubt that he will keep on advocating for Georgians with a pen and a phone, more friends across the country than anyone can count up, and maybe a few of his eight grandchildren by his side. It sounds like a pretty enviable work arrangement, and no doubt JOHNNY has earned it. He has earned the right to a little less late night voting and a little more time with his lovely wife Dianne.

So on behalf of all of his colleagues, I will tell JOHNNY to go ahead and relax just a little and maybe find something to drink, but, this time around, he should enjoy it on the front porch with Dianne and leave the laundry until later.

We are savoring our last few weeks alongside our good friend here in the Senate. We are so lucky to have called him our colleague.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Eric Ross Komitee, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I appreciate the opportunity to be on the floor today to speak about something of significance, certainly to Kansas but to the country.

We await House action on USMCA—the trade agreement between Canada, the United States and Mexico. It is a trade agreement that is attempting to replace NAFTA and an agreement that is of significance, as I say, to the folks back home in my State.

For the last 2 years, I have engaged in a campaign to try to elevate the importance and to make sure my colleagues, the administration, and people here in Congress understand how important exports and trade are to the United States' economy.

In Kansas, we are an export State. What we produce, what we manufacture, and what we grow in the fields of our State in many, many instances end up someplace else outside the United States.

I have spoken on the Senate floor before. I have met with the President. I have talked to his Cabinet officials. I wrote an open letter to U.S. agricultural groups, encouraging them to fully engage in support for USMCA approval. I have had speaking engagements in places across the country, trying to rally farmers and ranchers and manufacturers and others to fight to preserve our trading relationship with Canada and Mexico.

On Saturday, at home in Kansas, I was with the Kansas Farm Bureau at a townhall. It kicked off their 101st annual meeting to discuss issues facing Kansas agriculture. The topic of trade and its importance to the products that we grow was the most important and most discussed topic at that townhall meeting.

USMCA was signed over a year ago. It is time for the House to pass this important agreement, and, in order for the House to pass it, the Speaker needs to bring it up for a vote.

Canada and Mexico are Kansas's No. 1 and No. 2 export markets. They account for over one-third of exports from our State. Since 2013, unfortunately, farm income at home has fallen by 50 percent. So net farm income in Kansas is down half in the last 6 years.

Many producers are struggling. They have struggled to hang on to their operations, and when farmers aren't doing well, it means that the communities they live in and support aren't doing well. The question is often this: What business will we lose when farmers are not having financial success? What young men and women who grew up on a farm or grew up in that small town will, perhaps, even reluctantly,

find a job someplace else because the economy is not helpful to them as they start their careers?

USMCA will continue to provide duty-free market access to farm commodities, while also expanding trade opportunities for dairy producers and leveling the playing field for the wheat we export to Canada.

USMCA is important to manufacturers as well. USMCA will protect the integrated North American supply chain that is critical to manufacturers in our State.

Wichita is known as the air capital of the world due to aerospace and aviation manufacturing. Kansas is also home to automobile, farm equipment, and other manufacturers.

Twenty-five percent of Kansas manufacturers—mostly, small to medium-size businesses—export to Canada and Mexico.

Nearly 25 years after its enactment, NAFTA was due to be modernized and to reflect changes in today's economy. USMCA will strengthen the rules on intellectual property rights and address digital trade issues. This modernized agreement will serve as a template for future trade negotiations, putting the United States in the driver's seat for setting global trade rules and norms.

Kansas, as I said, is an export State. If we are not exporting, the ability to earn a living, to save a family farm, and to keep our small manufacturers across the communities that dot our State disappears. The ability to earn a living in Kansas depends upon selling food and manufactured goods around the world.

We must continue the fight for more trade, not less. Again, I ask the House of Representatives to quickly consider and please do not let this calendar year come to an end without the NAFTA replacement in place.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

IMPEACHMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, as the House of Representatives continues to hold hearings as part of the impeachment inquiry into President Trump, it is incumbent on all of us here in the Senate to review the evidence, keep an open mind, and avoid prejudging the case. If impeachment articles are served to the Senate, Senators must act as judges and jurors, take an oath to do impartial justice, and see to it that the Senate conducts a fair trial.

So I have been hugely disappointed in the partisan conduct of some of my colleagues on the Republican side, who, in their rush to defend the President, have attacked career public servants and former members of the armed services because they didn't like their testimony, and then they spread baseless conspiracy theories and use their powers of a congressional office to play defense for the President.

The Republican chairman of the Judiciary Committee, for example, has

attempted to send the State Department on a wild fishing expedition for documents to support an already debunked rightwing conspiracy theory.

Meanwhile, the State Department is blocking or delaying the production of documents related to several legitimate and ongoing investigations, many of which were requested months ago.

I would expect that Senator GRAHAM's request, outlandish as it is, would go at the back of the line. It would be another total debasement to the process if Secretary Pompeo were to further politicize the production of documents to Congress and say it is OK to release the documents that Senator GRAHAM wants but not the ones that the House committee wanted. Privilege is privilege. I don't believe it applies in each case, but it is privilege. You can't do it to one and not the other.

Also, it is appalling that, in recent days, certain Members on the other side of the aisle have repeated the lie invented by Vladimir Putin's intelligence services that Ukraine was somehow involved in 2016 election interference.

I have a simple message for my Republican colleagues: Stop spreading Putin's propaganda.

By spreading the false and unsupported narrative that Ukraine, not just Putin, was responsible for interfering in the 2016 elections, Republicans are endangering our democracy and empowering Vladimir Putin at the same time. Even wondering aloud about the debunked Ukrainian interference theory helps Putin muddy the waters and deflect the blame away from his country, which our intelligence services have all agreed—I think it is 17 of them—that he interfered in the election. He is trying to create a diversion, and our Republican colleagues are going along.

Republicans need to stop putting the wind into the sails of Putin's propaganda. More than that, Republicans need to forcefully and unequivocally refute the lie that Ukraine had anything to do with election interference in 2016.

ELECTION SECURITY AND DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

Madam President, on election security and the NDAA, earlier this year, FBI Director Wray, Trump's appointee to run the FBI, said: "The Russians are absolutely intent on trying to interfere with our elections." That is what Mr. Wray said in response to a question from the senior Senator from South Carolina. Director Wray went on to say: "My view is, until they stop, they haven't been deterred enough." As a reminder to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, Director Wray is a Republican and Trump appointee.

It is the testimony of Director Wray and other national security leaders over the past 3 years that has reinforced our commitment on the Democratic side to secure passage of legislation that includes tough, mandatory, and deterrent sanctions against Putin

and against any foreign adversary who would seek to interfere with our elections.

This wasn't a figment of our imagination; this came from our own intelligence and security agencies, that Russia interfered and that they are going to keep interfering until we stop them. So it is not a radical idea; it is a bipartisan idea. It is a part of bipartisan legislation introduced by Senators VAN HOLLEN and MENENDEZ and supported by Senators RUBIO and GRAHAM. This legislation needs to be included in the Defense authorization bill. Defending our democracy is at the core of our Nation's defense. But at the moment, it is being blocked by Republican Leader MCCONNELL and several Republican committee chairs.

I am sure Leader MCCONNELL and his colleagues, rather than explain their opposition, will do what they usually do: point their fingers at Democrats and say "They are holding up the Defense bill; we are not." That is a time-honored Republican tradition, to deflect blame, and it just doesn't hold water.

Just this morning, we heard the Republican leader claim that Democrats are not supporting the defense programs needed to counter Russia. This is laughable coming from the other side when it is Leader MCCONNELL who has fought so often to prevent funding to protect us from Russian interference. It is my Republican counterparts who green-lit the President's treating the Defense Department as a personal piggy bank, including raiding funds from the European Deterrence Initiative—a program designed to counter Russia—to build the President's wall.

Democrats are ready to roll up their sleeves and work with our Republican colleagues to clear any substantive objections they might have to election interference sanctions legislation, as well as any other issue they might have with the Defense authorization bill, but we need to get serious soon about including these provisions. The annual Defense bill might be our last chance to pass significant reforms to secure our elections.

So, Leader MCCONNELL, are you for securing our elections against Russia or not? Because if you are for it, we can move this Defense bill forward much more quickly.

What is holding it up, in good part, is Leader MCCONNELL's opposition to spending the funds necessary and the legislation and sanctions necessary to stop Russia from interfering.

TRIBUTE TO JOHNNY ISAKSON

Madam President, on a bittersweet note, JOHNNY ISAKSON—what a fine man. Today, Members of this Chamber will hold a bipartisan lunch to say goodbye to one of our most beloved colleagues, JOHNNY ISAKSON of Georgia, who is retiring before the end of the year.

Over the last few months, there have been numerous tributes to JOHNNY on

the Senate floor. He has been called “a real friend,” “a mentor,” “more than a colleague,” “humble and tenacious,” “they don’t come any better”—and that is just by Democrats. That is one of the reasons I suggested to Leader MCCONNELL that we have a lunch for JOHNNY ISAKSON, which we are having this afternoon.

Just as there is good reason to praise JOHNNY ISAKSON in the ways Democrats did, there is good reason that during his chairmanship, ISAKSON’s committee passed so many bipartisan bills—57, to be exact—to help veterans. It is because he treated everyone—Democrat, Republican, Independent, newly elected or committee chair—with respect. JOHNNY never let the cynicism of our political times dim his faith in our ability to get something done.

JOHNNY ISAKSON didn’t have the loudest voice in the room, but it was often the most influential. That is because he built years’ worth of trust. You never doubted his word. He was an honest broker. So whenever a chasm seemed to separate the parties on a certain issue, ISAKSON was often the one spanning the divide. I know that from experience, over and over again. As an example, when families in New York struggled to recover from disasters, like Sandy, only to find that flood insurance rates were crushing them with enormous debt, it was Senator ISAKSON, whose State has suffered its fair share of disasters, who worked with my office to find a solution.

We made enormous progress working together to strengthen media shield laws, protecting fearless and independent journalism at a time when we needed to stand up for a free and open press.

In this most recent important appropriations process, we worked together to help the widows and children impacted by 9/11 gain access to a special terror victims’ funding. I want to thank him personally for that, and more broadly, I want to thank him for the example he set for many other Senators.

There are many fine adjectives that will be used to describe Senator ISAKSON, and all of them will be well-deserved, but one word used to describe Senator ISAKSON is not often found in the Halls of Congress: “kind.” JOHNNY ISAKSON is one of the kindest, most thoughtful Senators I have known in my time here. He is a true statesman. That is why I know that independent of any party or politics, everyone here will miss JOHNNY.

I will have more to say about our friend at the bipartisan lunch this afternoon, but for now, I would like to note for the record Senator ISAKSON’s many years of faithful service to his beloved State of Georgia and his country. We wish him and Dianne the very best as he enters the next chapter of his life.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Arkansas.

CHINA

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, the New York Times has recently obtained a secret trove of documents from the highest ranks of the Chinese Communist Party. Those documents reveal some chilling, terrifying details about Beijing’s campaign to stamp out all dissent and religious diversity in Xinjiang Province in the north, where the party has concentrated more than 1 million Uighurs, Kazakhs, and other minorities in reeducation camps.

These documents bring to mind George Orwell’s famous novel “1984,” not as the cautionary tale as he meant it, but as an instruction manual for the totalitarian government in Beijing. This reign of terror began in 2014, after a string of terror attacks in Xinjiang Province. But instead of bringing those terrorists to justice, the Chinese Communist Party used the attacks as an opportunity to eradicate all dissent—all wrong-think, if you will—from a province with 25 million residents. It would be as if you tried to turn the State of Texas into a concentration camp.

These secret documents reveal a stunning order from General Secretary Xi Jinping. He said, “We must be as harsh as them and show them absolutely no mercy.” So to beat these terrorists, Beijing chose to adopt the tactics of terror. Every Uighur and dissenter in the province is suffering as a result.

Secretary Xi tapped one of the most notorious enforcers to execute this mission, a man named Chen, who climbed the ranks of the Communist Party first by crushing dissent and religious diversity in the southwestern Chinese province of Tibet. The techniques that they perfected in Tibet, the Chinese Communist party took to Xinjiang. They have turned the province into a garrison state with ruthless and pitiless competence. Chen’s order to the police? “Round up everyone who should be rounded up.”

Uighurs, young and old, were loaded on into buses and taken to concentration camps with thick concrete walls and razor-sharp barbed wire. The police informed anxious relatives that these were schools and that their loved ones were being “reeducated.” And, no, they were not free to leave the school, nor would there be any recess or field trips.

A secret manual obtained by Western journalists reveals that these facilities operate more like maximum security prisons than like schools. The manual’s very first section deals with preventing escapes through the use of guard posts, patrols, internal separation, video surveillance, and double locks on dor-

mitory and hallway doors. The manual even advocates the use of “secret forces” to infiltrate the detainee population to prevent them from joining forces or planning an escape.

Beijing now holds—let me say it again—more than 1 million people in these reeducation camps, supposedly for reasons of national security, but the truth is a lot more chilling. The Chinese Communists, like all totalitarians, are paranoid about their own survival—and rightly so—as a conspiracy of greedy, power-mad princelings with no democratic legitimacy whatsoever.

Like all totalitarian rulers, the Chinese Communist Party is also a very jealous master. Every attachment, every conviction, every loyalty—whether to one’s family, one’s culture, even one’s creator—must be sacrificed on the altar of the Party. According to the Chinese Communist Party, everything must bow before it, and every tongue must profess the slogans of Xi and Mao. That means the Uighurs and also Hongkongers, Tibetans, Taiwanese, and others.

The paranoid Communist Party will not limit itself to one province or one people, nor will it ultimately limit itself to its own land. It will extend its tyrannical reach to every corner that it views as its own, creeping ever outward until it demands the deference of all the world, until it “deals with” the rebellious billions who have not yet learned to love the Chinese Big Brother.

The Chinese Communist Party is running concentration camps today, but make no mistake, its appetite for expansion is far greater, its methods of control applicable to anyone anywhere. The Free World must confront this threat in plain view and act now to avert such a dark and chilling future.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

The Senator from Illinois.

FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, a few years ago, a woman who works in my office in Chicago—who actually cleans up the office in the evenings—was so excited when she learned that her daughter had been accepted to college. It was a dream come true for a woman who had immigrated to the United States, taken some of the hardest, most menial manual jobs in the hopes that her daughter, one day, would have a better life.

She sat down with my chief of staff in Chicago to tell her about the details, and immediately, we knew there was much more to the story. Her daughter had been accepted not just to another

college or university; she had been accepted to a for-profit college in the Chicagoland area. The for-profit colleges and universities are notorious. The numbers tell the story, two separate numbers: 9 percent of all postsecondary students go attend for-profit colleges and universities—University of Phoenix, DeVry, very well-known names—9 percent of students go to those schools, but 33 percent of all of the federal student loan defaults are students from for-profit colleges and universities.

Why? Why is this one category of higher education so notorious for students starting and ending up deeply in debt to the point where they cannot pay it back? Well, the reasons are simple and very obvious. They overcharge the students, and they undereducate them. They make promises that are wild and cannot be kept. They give them courses of doubtful value and do not tell them that any credits that they have earned at these for-profit schools cannot be transferred to city colleges, community colleges, or universities.

So the students are stuck. At some point, some will quit piling on the debt and just basically walk away. All the promises and all the jobs and careers that were supposed to come from this are never going to materialize. It is a classic fraud, and sadly, our government is part of that fraud. You see, we recognize the accreditation of those schools. We tell that cleaning lady and her family that these are good schools and universities. The Federal Government does that and offers Federal loans to these students to go to these schools.

Is it any wonder that the students and their families think they are doing the right thing for their future? The Federal Government gave a stamp of approval. Well, what happens when those schools reach the end of the line? What happens when those same for-profit colleges and universities go bankrupt? The students are in a terrible position, deeply in debt with courses that are meaningless, with their lives compromised, and nowhere to turn.

We decided long ago to create an opportunity for these students to get out of this dilemma—one that we share in by accrediting these schools—something called the “borrower defense,” which allows these students, if they were defrauded, to discharge their federal student loans and get on with their lives.

Today, hundreds of thousands of students—who were defrauded by their for-profit colleges—are desperately waiting for Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos to discharge their Federal student loans under a provision in Federal law known as borrower defense. Congress created the borrower defense provision to ensure students’ lives are not ruined by their schools’ misconduct and deception.

In 2014, for-profit Corinthian Colleges collapsed. It left more than 70,000 stu-

dents nationwide with worthless credits they could not transfer and mounds of student debt. The students had been lured into those Corinthian schools with false promises, inflated placement rates and income projections. We know that for a fact. We have the data to show they were lying to the students about what graduation from Corinthian could mean in their lives.

Over the last 5 or 6 years, nearly every other major for-profit college, nearly every one of these have faced Federal or State lawsuits and investigations for predatory practices similar to Corinthian Colleges. The result has been hundreds of thousands of defrauded students across America who are seeking discharges to which we say they are entitled under Federal law.

Secretary Betsy DeVos has allowed more than 200,000 borrower defense applications to pile up at the Department, nearly 11,000 from my own State of Illinois. But listen to this, Secretary DeVos has not approved a single claim for more than a year, 200,000 applications stacking up at the Department of Education, not one approved.

So who are some of these borrowers that are languishing? What is their story? Let me tell you about two of them.

One is Jessica from Tucson, AZ. Jessica attended the Art Institute of Tucson from 2009 to 2012. It was owned by the failed for-profit Education Management Corporation, EDMC. Heartbreakingly, Jessica says: “I have experienced unbelievable amounts of stress and depression due to this situation. I have been placed on anti-depressants and anti-anxiety medication over the years and been through therapy . . . I have self-harmed and contemplated suicide, because I feel so trapped and unable to recover or move forward. I have a general feeling of worthlessness, because I feel like my potential has been squandered.”

She went to the Art Institute of Tucson, and her experience has led her to this desperate situation. She tried to harm herself. Instead of a bright future, she is left with a mountain of debt and nothing to show for it but deep financial and psychological pain. She says, “Every aspect of her life has been affected.”

And so, is Secretary Betsy DeVos trying to help Jessica? No. Secretary DeVos is making it worse. Jessica submitted her borrower defense application almost 4 years ago in 2016. She has waited for this period of time to hear anything from the Department of Education. What is their excuse? I mean, if someone writes a letter to my office and does not get a reply and they come back to me and say, Are you going to answer this, DURBIN, we send a reply. We try to do it promptly with everybody.

How can Secretary DeVos be holding these things up for years, while the students see the mountain of debt growing? As she waits, Jessica’s loans are in forbearance, where they con-

tinue to gather interest, meaning that the total amount owed continues to grow. She is just 1 of 4,518 borrowers from Arizona who are stuck waiting for Secretary DeVos to use the authority that Congress gave her to discharge fraudulent loans.

I also want to tell you about Jonathan from Colorado—3,600 defrauded borrowers are waiting for relief. Jonathan from Westminster, CO, attended DeVry University—sadly a Chicago-based for-profit school—studying to be an electronics engineer.

He is a father and a husband who was trying to provide more for his family, so he took out student loans that sounded like an investment. He currently owes almost \$100,000 in outstanding Federal student loans from attending DeVry, twice what he was told his education would cost.

Of his debt, Jonathan says, “My credit has been destroyed. I couldn’t repay these loans in two lifetimes, even if my degree had any value to employers.” Sadly, it doesn’t. Employers don’t even recognize his degree.

Jonathan says:

My student loans are the millstone around my family. The debt I owe has made my kids not want to attend college at all. They see no value in it; their own father has an engineering degree but he can’t get hired anywhere because his school was a scam.

Those are the words of Jonathan from Colorado.

So not only has this fraudulent school taken away his future by burdening him with a worthless degree and piles of debt; in many ways, it affects his children’s future.

Jonathan applied for a borrower defense discharge in 2017, nearly 3 years ago. He has been waiting to hear from Secretary Betsy DeVos. Secretary DeVos’s failure to provide him with relief, he says, “has caused [him] to lose faith that the government will actually protect students like [him].”

Secretary DeVos has cruelly ignored defrauded borrowers like Jessica and Jonathan, but what is more is that she is trying to make it almost impossible for future borrowers like them to secure the relief that Congress intended by rewriting the rules.

In August, Secretary DeVos released a new version of the borrower defense rule that places unreasonable burdens on borrowers to attain relief. The result is that the Department estimates the DeVos rule will deny nearly \$11 billion in relief to borrowers compared to the current rule.

In September, I introduced a resolution in the Senate to overturn the DeVos borrower defense rule. Forty-two of my colleagues have joined me in cosponsoring it. I plan to bring the resolution to a vote on the Senate floor where it only needs a simple majority to pass. At that time, my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will have a choice: Will they stand with Secretary DeVos’s actions—or, I should say, lack of actions for 3 or 4 years—will they deny help to defrauded students, or will

they stand with young people like Jessica and Jonathan, trying to get their lives back together and trying to get Congress to implement the one law it passed that could help them? It is a choice that seems pretty easy for most American people when they hear this scenario described to them.

A recent opinion piece in the *Anchor* Daily News criticized Secretary DeVos for siding with “for-profit colleges that have defrauded students” and “illegally [denying] student loan debt relief to thousands of students.” Even in Alaska, hundreds of borrowers are waiting for borrower defense discharges.

Nationally, Americans agree that these defrauded borrowers deserve relief. In a 2016 *New America* poll, 78 percent of Americans said that students should have their Federal student loan debt discharged if their school deceived them. That is pretty basic, isn’t it? If you were cheated, you ought to be taken care of.

When you break the numbers down by party, 87 percent of Democrats and 71 percent of Republicans—vast majorities—supported relief for these students. So when it comes time to vote on my resolution to overturn the DeVos borrower defense rule denying relief to defrauded borrowers, I hope my colleagues will stand with students and the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

ABORTION

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, my hope is that each of us in this Chamber and their families enjoyed a wonderful Thanksgiving time, being grateful for all of the blessings that we in this country have.

I know I certainly had a wonderful week. I had the opportunity to spend some time across the great State of Tennessee and to talk with Tennesseans about what was on their minds.

I will tell you this. In my opinion and experience, as diverse as Tennesseans are, there is one thing in common that I heard repeatedly, and that is that they are through with trying to guess where politicians in Washington, DC, stand on issues. This is something I think all of us need to hear and probably don’t want to hear, but our fellow Americans, and certainly Tennesseans, have no idea what their elected representatives believe. Instead, all they see up here is this endless cycle of political in-fighting and failed legislation. They consistently say: We want you to focus on things that are important to us. We want you to focus on things that are important to the country. I will tell you that it is no wonder that our country’s discourse is plagued by what is a marked cynicism for even our most earnest efforts.

As I thought about this during the week and the visits that I had across the State, I thought: You need look no further for an example of where they

see this fighting as being unnecessary than an issue that has become a magnet for derision, and that is the issue of protecting life—more specifically, the use of taxpayer dollars to fund the abortion procedures.

In poll after poll, after poll, a majority of Americans have indicated that they oppose public funding of abortion. The numbers on this are not even close.

As early as this summer, self-identified Democrats’ support for taxpayer-funded abortion struggled to even break out of single digits. The data is clear, and it is convincing. The American taxpayer does not want their tax dollar being used to fund abortion procedures.

So how is it, then, that my friends in the minority insist upon loopholes and work-arounds that make taxpayers complicit in the slaughter of the unborn?

Their cause has been frustrated, of course, by President Trump’s aggressively pro-life agenda. Last year, he proposed the “protect life rule,” which cut taxpayer funding under the title X program for any facility that performs abortions or that refers their clients to those facilities that perform abortions.

This rule closely mirrored my Title X Abortion Provider Prohibition Act. That was the first bill I filed when I came to the Senate. It is something that is very important to me.

But this year, this body’s liberal faction once again seized an opportunity to undercut the pro-life agenda via a legislative trick known around this Chamber and Capitol Hill as a poison pill. You see, they found a way to hold hostage millions of dollars attached to the fiscal year 2020 State and Foreign Operations appropriations bill. That was done via an amendment that funnels family planning dollars to domestic organizations that support abortions overseas.

Do you see what they are doing?

It is an amendment that funnels family planning dollars to domestic—U.S.—organizations, but those organizations are supporting abortions overseas. It also uses Obama-era gender policies to define sex—a clear red herring to get people arguing about gender identity so they will ignore the Democratic Party’s leftward swing on the issue of abortion.

You could chalk all this up to politics, were it not for the existence of the bipartisan budget agreement that both parties agreed to ahead of our work on appropriations. That agreement included a ban on poison pill riders like the Shaheen amendment, as well as assurances that any poison pills would be swiftly removed. We thought we had taken care of that issue with the bipartisan budget agreement, but oh, no, here we go.

Yet in order to “empower women overseas” Democrats have indicated that they are willing to throw away \$847 million for maternal and child health, \$100 million for global health

security programs, \$150 million for nutrition assistance, and \$6.2 billion for global HIV and AIDS assistance. They are doing this, throwing all that money away, so they can make a political point.

This is an interesting development coming from the party that once deployed their support for abortion in only the most extraordinary circumstances. The party of “safe, legal, and rare”—their terminology—has become the party that hedges their bets with infanticide and prioritizes convenience over human life.

Just across the river in Virginia, Ralph Northam and his cohorts were allowed to set a new reprehensible standard for what left-leaning America is willing to condone in the name of soulless politicking.

Tennesseans told me they want to see their representatives speaking up. They want to see women speaking up on behalf of life, families, and the unborn. They see clearly that if protecting life is the hallmark of the conservative movement, then, destroying life is the hallmark of a more liberal approach. They want us to draw a line in the sand and declare once and for all that loopholes and legislative tricks will no longer be tolerated because, for them, abortion is not up for casual discussion. They see how clearly and how easily the left trifles with the lives of children, and they are repulsed by it. What they want us to do is to focus on getting things done that are important to them. And, yes, to Tennesseans, being able to say the right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness is something that has a deep meaning.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Komitee nomination?

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

(Mr. CRUZ assumed the Chair.)

(Mr. CRAMER assumed the Chair.)

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator

from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 86, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 369 Ex.]

YEAS—86

Alexander	Fischer	Peters
Baldwin	Gardner	Portman
Barrasso	Graham	Reed
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blumenthal	Hassan	Roberts
Blunt	Hawley	Romney
Boozman	Hirono	Rosen
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Burr	Inhofe	Schatz
Capito	Isakson	Schumer
Cardin	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Carper	Jones	Shaheen
Casey	Kaine	Shelby
Cassidy	Kennedy	Sinema
Collins	King	Smith
Coons	Lankford	Stabenow
Cornyn	Leahy	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Lee	Tester
Cotton	Manchin	Thune
Cramer	McConnell	Tillis
Crapo	McSally	Toomey
Cruz	Menendez	Udall
Daines	Merkey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Moran	Warner
Durbin	Murkowski	Wicker
Enzi	Murphy	Wyden
Ernst	Paul	Young
Feinstein	Perdue	

NAYS—4

Cantwell	Markey
Heinrich	Murray

NOT VOTING—10

Bennet	Klobuchar	Warren
Booker	Rounds	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Sanders	
Harris	Scott (SC)	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of John L. Sinatra, Jr., of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of New York.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Kevin Cramer, John Hoeven, Rob Portman, Dan Sullivan, Chuck Grassley, Richard Burr, John Thune, Roy Blunt.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of John L. Sinatra, Jr., of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of New York, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote or change their vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 76, nays 16, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 370 Ex.]

YEAS—76

Alexander	Fischer	Peters
Baldwin	Gardner	Portman
Barrasso	Graham	Reed
Bennet	Grassley	Risch
Blackburn	Hassan	Roberts
Blunt	Hawley	Romney
Boozman	Hoeven	Rosen
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Burr	Inhofe	Sasse
Capito	Isakson	Schumer
Cardin	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Carper	Jones	Scott (SC)
Casey	Kaine	Shaheen
Cassidy	Kennedy	Shelby
Collins	King	Sinema
Coons	Lankford	Smith
Cornyn	Leahy	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Lee	Sullivan
Cotton	Manchin	Tester
Cramer	McConnell	Thune
Crapo	McSally	Tillis
Cruz	Moran	Toomey
Daines	Murkowski	Warner
Enzi	Murphy	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	Young
Feinstein	Perdue	

NAYS—16

Blumenthal	Hirono	Smith
Brown	Markey	Udall
Cantwell	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkey	Wyden
Durbin	Murray	
Heinrich	Schatz	

NOT VOTING—8

Booker	Klobuchar	Warren
Gillibrand	Rounds	Whitehouse
Harris	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 76, the nays are 16.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of John L. Sinatra, Jr., of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of New York.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following the

cloture vote on Executive Calendar No. 353, the time following the recess until 4:30 p.m. be reserved for tributes to retiring Senator ISAKSON; further that the time from 4:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. be equally divided between the leaders or their designees on the nomination, and that at 5 p.m., the Senate vote on cloture on the following nominations in the order listed: Executive Calendar Nos. 478, 381, 459, and 460; that if cloture is invoked, the confirmation votes on Executive Calendar Nos. 353, 478, 381, 459, and 460 occur at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, December 4.

I further ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Duncan nomination be waived and that the cloture votes on Executive Calendar Nos. 479, 489, and 386 occur at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, December 4, and that if cloture is invoked, the confirmation votes occur at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Democratic leader on Thursday, December 5.

I further ask unanimous consent that, with respect to all the votes ordered in this agreement, if the nomination is confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator FEINSTEIN be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes prior to the scheduled recess.

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

The Senator from California.

NOMINATION OF SARAH E. PITLYK

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to the nomination of Sarah Pitlyk to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri. Ms. Pitlyk's record is extremely troubling and raises a number of questions about her ability to be a fair and impartial judge.

Ms. Pitlyk was deemed by the American Bar Association to be Not Qualified, one of only 3 percent of people reviewed by the Bar over the past 3 years. This is the first that I have had occasion to review in total. A district court judge, as you well know, must hit the ground running. Ms. Pitlyk's lack of practical knowledge and experience would significantly disadvantage the litigants appearing before her.

I also want to acknowledge the highly unusual nature of a "Not Qualified" rating by the Bar; 97 percent of President Trump's nominees have been rated at least "Qualified" by the American Bar Association. This means that Ms. Pitlyk falls in the small minority—just 3 percent—of candidates deemed not qualified by the American Bar Association. This shows how rare that rating is. The ABA has been reviewing the qualifications, as you already know, of judicial nominees since 1989. They know what they are doing, and those of us on the committee take their evaluations very seriously.

Next, I want to discuss Ms. Pitlyk's record opposing women's reproductive rights and limiting access to healthcare. Ms. Pitlyk defended a State law banning abortion at 6 weeks, she opposed the Affordable Care Act's coverage for contraception, and she defended President Trump's Title X gag rule.

The Trump administration's Title X gag rule prohibits referrals for abortion care and imposes onerous requirements on abortion clinics, among other things. The rule effectively pushed Planned Parenthood out of the Title X program, curtailing access to healthcare for millions of low-income women and families.

Ms. Pitlyk has also filed multiple legal briefs that contain misinformation. Last year, she argued without any credible evidence that "racism plays a profound role in the delivery of abortion services."

In another case, Ms. Pitlyk claimed—again without evidence—that in-vitro fertilization leads to "higher rates of birth defects, genetic disorders, and other anomalies."

I think it is disqualifying for any judicial nominee to make unfounded and unsupported claims, especially in a court of law.

Ms. Pitlyk has also made statements in her personal capacity opposing access to healthcare. Just last year, she called the Supreme Court's decision upholding the Affordable Care Act "unprincipled." Earlier this year, she said that the Supreme Court's reproductive healthcare cases have "gross defects."

These statements and Ms. Pitlyk's legal work raise serious concerns about her ability to apply the Supreme Court's important precedents fairly and impartially. I am deeply troubled by her record, her lack of experience, and I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing her nomination.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that an article from *Politico* and a letter from the American Bar Association dated September 24, 2019, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the *POLITICO*, Nov. 19, 2019]

SUSAN COLLINS TO OPPOSE TRUMP JUDICIAL NOMINEE

(By Marianne Levine)

Sen. Susan Collins will oppose Sarah Pitlyk, President Donald Trump's nominee to become a federal judge for the Eastern District of Missouri.

In a statement to *POLITICO*, the Maine Republican voiced concern about Pitlyk's lack of trial experience, as well as her stance on abortion given previous comments on gestational surrogacy and past legal work.

"Her lack of trial experience would make it difficult for her to transition to a district court judgeship," Collins said.

She also cited Pitlyk's comments in a brief she co-wrote in 2017 as a lawyer for the Thomas More Society, an anti-abortion law firm. The brief stated surrogacy leads to the "diminished respect for motherhood and the unique mother-child bond; exploitation of

women; commodification of gestation and of children themselves; and weakening of appropriate social mores against eugenic abortion."

Collins said Pitlyk is entitled to her personal views on abortion, but she questioned "given her pattern of strident advocacy, whether she could put aside her personal views on these matters."

The Senate Judiciary Committee approved Pitlyk's nomination along party lines in October, and a floor vote is likely in the coming weeks.

While Collins supported Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation to the Supreme Court, she has voted against several Trump judicial nominees this year.

In addition to Pitlyk, Collins opposed Steven Menashi's nomination to the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, Chad Readler's nomination to the 6th Circuit, Howard Nielson for the District of Utah, Matthew Kacsmaryk for the Northern District of Texas and Jeffrey Brown for the Southern District of Texas.

All of those judges were confirmed by the GOP-controlled Senate.

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION, STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY,

Columbia, SC, September 24, 2019.

Re Nomination of Sarah E. Pitlyk to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri.

Hon. LINDSEY GRAHAM,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRAHAM AND RANKING MEMBER FEINSTEIN: The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary has received a full report on Sarah E. Pitlyk and a supplemental report by a second reviewer. The Committee has unanimously determined that Ms. Pitlyk is "Not Qualified" for the position of federal district judge. I write to offer a brief explanation of this rating. Our rating is based on the Standing Committee's criteria as set forth in the Background. The Standing Committee believes that Ms. Pitlyk does not have the requisite trial or litigation experience or its equivalent. I would like to point out that based on its peer review, the Standing Committee's rating does not rest on questions about Ms. Pitlyk's temperament or integrity.

The Background that provides guidance to our evaluation process explains that a nominee to the federal bench ordinarily should have a minimum of 12 years' experience in the practice of law. This 12-year experience guideline is neither a hard-and-fast rule nor an automatic disqualifier. The Standing Committee's criteria provide that a nominee's limited experience may be offset by the breadth and depth of the nominee's experience over the course of his or her career. Nominees with fewer than 12 years at the bar (as is the case with Ms. Pitlyk, both due to the calendar and periods of inactive status), but with substantial trial or courtroom experience and/or compensating accomplishments in the field of law, can and have been found qualified by our Committee. However, Ms. Pitlyk's experience to date has a very substantial gap, namely the absence of any trial or even real litigation experience. Ms. Pitlyk has never tried a case as lead or co-counsel, whether civil or criminal. She has never examined a witness. Though Ms. Pitlyk has argued one case in a court of appeals, she has not taken a deposition. She has not argued any motion in a state or federal trial court. She has never picked a jury.

She has never participated at any stage of a criminal matter.

The Standing Committee believes that a nominee should be professionally competent to manage and resolve the many diverse matters facing a federal judge on a daily basis. The accumulation of experience and legal knowledge that is acquired by a practicing lawyer both inside and outside of the courtroom prepares a lawyer over time to handle a broad spectrum of legal issues in a wide variety of subject matters and to manage a courtroom over which he or she will preside as a judge. The judicial system, the public, the trial bar, and the nominee are not well served by appointing to the bench a lawyer who, despite great intelligence, high character, and experience researching and writing briefs, lacks adequate trial court or equivalent experience.

While we respect the clerkship for which the nominee served after graduation from law school, her legal practice to date does not compensate for the short time the nominee has actually practiced law and her lack of litigation, trial, and courtroom experience. It is the Standing Committee's judgment that Ms. Pitlyk does not meet the minimum professional competence standard necessary to perform the responsibilities required by the high office of a federal district court judge.

Thank you for the opportunity to explain our rating to you.

Very truly yours,

WILLIAM C. HUBBARD.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, 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 12:56 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. CAPITO).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate.

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

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, it is an honor to be here today on what is not my last day, but everybody is acting like it.

A few months ago, I had to announce that after much consideration, to be able to continue to serve the people of Georgia as best I could in any way possible and also to keep true to the commitments I made in every race I have ever won, that when I knew I couldn't do the job, I was going to quit and let somebody do it who wouldn't be hampered. I am not hampered yet—I am pretty tough—but it is getting close. So in August, I decided to tell my wife about it, and we decided to go ahead and retire at the end of December, which I have announced and said I was going to do. The Governor of Georgia is making an appointment to take my place.

A few days from now, you might look into the history books somewhere—current history—and they might have an Isakson in the glossary, but I doubt it. You may never see this name again.

I have been here for 15 years and loved every minute of it. This is the most enjoyable thing I have ever done in my life, to be a part of the U.S. Senate. It is not because I like being a Senator but because I like to be with the people who are in the Senate.

Politicians get a bad rap in this day and time—a real bad rap. A lot of things are said about them by people they are aware don't matter, like those in some of the media and other places, but others will take potshots at people who are politicians and who serve the people in their communities. I never do that—not because I am one but because I know, because I am one, what you have to do. It is a tough job, and if it is not done right, then it is not done and it doesn't get done the way it should for the people there. So I am making sure that when I leave, the last thing I do is to leave the people of Georgia in good hands, given that I am the senior Senator from Georgia who is retiring.

Unfortunately, at lunch today, the Members gave me a luncheon and stole all of my material. Don't let this paper fool you—I threw it all away coming in here. They have stolen all of my good jokes, took over all of the things I was going to say, so I am going to make this very brief, but in the end, very brief is good.

My dad told me one time—he said: “Son, your words have more power by how few you use than how many you use.” I always remembered that. I think speeches are really important. I make short speeches. I get to the point, and I get out. I am going to give you some reasons that works.

(The Vice President assumed the Chair.)

When I knew I was going to be outshined by the other Members of the Senate at this luncheon today, I decided that I would do the best I could to honor MITCH MCCONNELL, who is the greatest leader I have ever worked for in my 45 years of public life, and people like the Vice President of the United States, who I am so proud is in the Chair. I can tell my grandkids—who are all here, by the way—I hope you remember that time you were there with MIKE PENCE, the Vice President of the United States—you could be President by then, Mr. Vice President—to hear a speech I made.

Everybody, thank you for being here. I am not going to call out names because I would miss somebody, except TESTER. You can't miss TESTER. But everybody else, I would miss. I don't want to miss anybody because every one of you is important to me—the people who help us in the lunchroom, the people who help us in stores, the people who help us get in and out of the cars, the people who help us on bad days, snowy days, icy days, and every-

thing else—just everybody who helps us. It takes a lot of people to run the Senate, and only one person to mess it up.

I want to talk about one subject today and one subject alone, and it is going to be short.

There is something missing in this place. I am given credit sometimes for being a bipartisan person. In fact, sometimes newspaper people write that I am known for being bipartisan or being a softy. Some of them say worse than that, but I am not going to address that. I am a bipartisan person. I never saw people get things done by not agreeing with each other. You have to come to an agreement. I made a living selling houses. You can't ever solve a problem if you have two people and they will not agree to a price and agree to a time to move. You have to find common ground. It is the same thing with the law. You can't pass a law—you can't solve a problem, period, end of sentence. If you are one of those people who say “It is my way or the highway,” then we are all in real trouble.

I want to talk about being bipartisan and what bipartisanship really is. I don't think most of you really know what bipartisanship is. I shouldn't say that to an educated group of people like this who have been down a lot of tough trails like I have. Being bipartisan doesn't mean a Democrat and Republican talk to each other every once in a while; it means this: Two people come together who probably have differences—probably have a lot of differences—but they find a way to get to the end of the trail, where there is the possibility of a solution, and then they do the things they have to do to get to that solution. America today is built on people who found a way to get to that end of the solution, no question about it.

I hate to ask this question, but I came in the back door. Is JOHN LEWIS here yet? Where is JOHN?

JOHN, you are getting shorter.

JOHN LEWIS is one of the finest people I have ever known and a great friend of mine. I was invited to speak to the Senate a couple of days ago, and I recognized JOHN, who was there. He introduced me and said some things that meant more to people than anything anybody has ever said to me, so I said: I want you to come to my last speech because I want to say a few things about you. Because, in essence, really, JOHN—to a much greater extent than me—and I together represent how things can really change if people want them to change and are willing to do the things that let them change.

JOHN was born in the 1940s. I was born in the 1940s. JOHN lived in Alabama. I lived in Georgia for a while. JOHN got his good senses together, and he came to—Shelby was there, so he came to Alabama. He is a good guy. JOHN came there, and JOHN lived in a shotgun house. That is where there is a hole in the back, a hole in the front, and if you throw something, you don't

hit anything. JOHN was a great civil rights leader in his youth. He was the president of SNCC, the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee. JOHN walked the streets of Atlanta, GA, where I lived. I was part of the people whom Earl Warren—there were all these signs around Georgia. I thought he was running for office. They said “Impeach Earl Warren.” I never got that figured out until I got a little older. Anyway, Earl Warren had been a part of the Brown v. Board of Education decision. The schools' separate but equal doctrine had been thrown out, and the schools were going to be integrated. Across society, the only way to prove that you were getting it done was by the numbers. So they figured how much of a percentage of how many Black people would constitute a good number to say you were desegregated and vice versa, solving the problem with statistics.

I was on some of those first buses that rode to Atlanta, GA, taking Black students to White schools, and I had some good friends who were Black. That is another thing southerners are blamed for—we always say: We have some really good friends who were Black. I have some really good friends who are Black. I still have them, and one of them is JOHN LEWIS.

JOHN LEWIS is one of my real heroes in life because I watched what he went through to help us see the light in the South, in my part of the South, Georgia. He was a hero. He was a hero to me.

When I got to Congress, one of the things I am most proud of is that JOHN introduced me to be sworn in. The Speaker of the House swore me in, and I was down at the podium. Let me tell you what happened that morning. The clerk said: We will now have Mr. ISAKSON from Georgia, who won a special election yesterday in Atlanta, GA, and has been declared the winner by the secretary of state. We would like to ask Mr. LEWIS to escort him to the front. We will give him 1 minute to make his acceptance speech, and we will go back to business.

I said, 1 minute? I have been practicing all these years, and I am only going to get only 1 minute? I can't do anything in 1 minute.

But I wasn't going to argue with the guy on my first day at work. So I went to the back of the room with JOHN. JOHN walked down the aisle on the House side. I was not paying a lot of attention. I figured the best thing to do was to follow JOHN, so I followed JOHN. When JOHN got through introducing me, I followed him to the well, and I said thank you to everybody and named three or four people who had helped me get there and then said: Well, I am going to work, and I am honored to be here.

What they didn't tell me was, if you were in the House on that particular day, the mike for people who were Republicans was on the left, and the Republicans spoke from the right. This

dummy followed JOHN, who was smart and went to the right, where he was supposed to go. I went to the left, where I wasn't supposed to go. I noticed these eyeballs in the front row just going around and around. And some guy stepped behind me after I gave my 1-minute speech and said: "So you are going to start this fast demonstrating what a liberal guy you are?" It was one of those voices that came over the back of my shoulder, just kind of like something hanging over my head. I turned around and looked, and this other guy—his name was Tom Latham—came up to me and said "Don't pay any attention to that," and then he went on about his business.

I asked somebody later that day: What did that guy mean by that?

He said: Well, the problem is, you got labeled when you got elected.

I said: What do you mean?

He said: Well, you got elected in a Republican district, but you said nice things about Democrats.

I said: Is that wrong to do?

He said: Well, we were trying to get some way to get Boehner not to appoint you to any committee. We heard you helped write No Child Left Behind.

That was how I started out in the House of Representatives. I was a Republican in a majority Democratic House who was unwanted because I was not—in fact, Newt lost—some of you know this; I see a few faces over there—Newt lost that race by seven votes in the House. Seven Members said: We will not vote for Newt as Speaker. Tom knows this. Newt couldn't get reelected as Speaker, so he resigned.

I didn't know he was going to do that. I was going to speak at the national realtors' conference in Disneyland at a convention. I got to the hotel that afternoon, and there were 72 phone messages for me.

A guy came up and said: Boy, I hope nobody died at your house.

That is a great way to arrive at a hotel.

I said: Why is that?

He said: You have 72 messages.

I said: Well, let me see them.

The first 71 were from my wife. I called her, and she said: Have you heard?

I said: Heard what?

She said: Newt quit.

I said: Quit what?

He quit as Speaker, and he quit as Member of the House, and everybody is calling on you to run.

I said: What?

Nothing computed. Very quickly I learned a lot about partisan politics. A lot of people wanted to have somebody take Newt's place. Newt's body wasn't even cold yet, and they were picking over it. They wanted to have a person who wasn't squeamish in a war like that.

Anyway, to make a long story short, partisan politics was pretty rough in those days. It is a lot rougher now, but it was pretty rough back then. People

voted not with their heads but with a hammer—not with their hearts, either. So I learned in an era where if you were a Republican, you were a Republican, and if you were a Democrat, you were a Democrat, and they didn't ever cross. Don't work with anybody. Don't make it easy. If you have the votes, use them. And we kept getting beaten or kept getting tricked all the time because the whole game plan over there was to have enough Republicans beat the Democrats or vice versa. That is what everybody would try to do, and I thought that was stupid, but I didn't say that. Four hundred and thirty-five is a lot of people, so you don't want to get run over.

A few weeks down the line, I made a speech on the floor of the House about something very important to me and my State. It was a problem we had in the State where our State was divided, rural and urban—not Republican and Democrat but rural and urban. Because Republicans were pretty much rural back then and urban people were Democrats in the suburbs, at that time, it got divided politically anyway even though it was an economic issue, an ag issue, a shipping issue, and things like that. They divided up over parties, so by the time the issue got to the floor on some kind of compromise vote, we couldn't pass anything. We couldn't pass a kidney stone, much less anything else, because we couldn't get anybody to agree on anything. We had the parties cross each other and everybody else.

So I decided then, if I am going to be in this thing, at that age—I was about 60, I guess—I am not going to spend the rest of my life down here arguing about silly and stupid things. And there were some silly and stupid things said over there. I am not going to say who was saying them, but you know who they were. They were from both parties. It was bipartisan. That was the first bipartisan thing I saw—the stupid statements.

To make a long story short, we had some real battles, but finally I decided that I was going to be an example of what we really need to be like. I tried to find every way I could to be bipartisan, which to me meant that I did what I thought was right. I think that is the way to do it.

Mark Twain said:

When confronted with a difficult decision, do what is right. You will surprise a few, but you will amaze the rest.

I tried to start amazing everybody. I voted for some things. They would send somebody over to see me from the whip side. They would say: What did you do? Did you get confused?

No, I didn't get confused.

Finally, they realized they had somebody they could deal with, which is the good part of bipartisanship. The first time the partisan people figure they have somebody they can deal with, they come deal with you. The next thing you know, you are sitting at a table with the guys who were making fun of you, and they are not.

That is the way you go with bipartisanship. That is the way I did it on my own, going through 6 years in the House of Representatives and 15 years in the U.S. Senate, trying to find that little thing that could bring two people together, notwithstanding what party they were in. I never look at the party first. That is the last thing I look at.

CHUCK SCHUMER said some nice things today. One of the nicest things he said was that he liked the kindness part of it. He said I was a kind person. My wife might differ with that, and some other people might differ with that. I try to be a kind person. I try to be someone who somebody would like to sit down with because you can't get a problem solved if you can't sit down across the table from somebody you have a problem with. You can then build everything that way.

I hope this Senate and this Congress—all of us—in the years ahead—we have some big problems. Let's start having a main goal personally that we are going to do everything we can to be a part of the solutions and the decisions that are going to have to be made. If you don't want to do it, don't do it, but you are going to find out, if you figure it out, that if you try to do it, others watch you do it, and you start making decisions and solving problems, you are going to be more popular than the other people.

This is not a popularity contest. Governing is not a popularity contest. This is a will of minds. Bipartisanship is a state of being. It is a state of mind.

There are people in the U.S. Senate whom I work with and I love working with every day—I am looking at some of them right here in the eye. They have an attitude that I like. I know I can go sit down and talk to them. If they say no, I will take it, and I will not stick my tongue out at them or call them bad names or anything else, but they know I will be there tomorrow to ask them to do something for me.

The best way to get somebody to do something for you, when you hadn't done something for them the day before, is, well, maybe if I help them out, I will get some help on my side. It is a quid pro quo—well, that is a bad term. I am glad I remembered that joke. But those are the types of things you have to do, even in levelling the playing field.

My words to you today are these: When you are fortunate enough to see a JOHN LEWIS from Georgia, or someone like him, step out of his comfort zone and do what he thinks is right, and somebody tells you "He is wrong; don't do that," judge your conscience and your heart, not some TV commentators or somebody who is loyal to hate.

We still have some people in the United States of America who will play the hate card. We have some politicians who will dance around the issue of hate. They will not use the buzz words, but they will get awful close to it. They did it in Charlottesville. I have

had people in the basement of my house from law enforcement from time to time because the issues get pretty tough, whether it is college scholarship admissions or whatever it may be. We have to stand up to the evils of society today. If we don't do it, nobody will.

I decided I was going to tell you what I really believe, and that is, America, we have a problem, just like Apollo had. Our problem is we are not going to repeat ourselves. We are not going to exist much longer.

We live in the greatest country on the face of this Earth. There is not anybody any better than the United States of America. Everybody is trying to break in. Nobody is trying to break out.

We are always passing laws, not because they are breaking out; they are all trying to break in. Why? Because it is the safest, happiest, richest place in the world. We have the best people to protect that wealth and that happiness. We have enough people go in the military on a voluntary basis. Less than 1 percent of our population serves in the military. It makes us the strongest defender of freedom and opportunity in the world.

If we ever lose that—if we ever lose the club or the two-by-four that the mule gets used to, we are going to lose our coverage of ethics, standby support, and all the other things we love and things we do. We are that close.

I see things happening—which I am asked about by people—that scare me. I have heard some people I know say some things that terrify me. We are better than the hate and the vile statements that some people make. We have to do better than that. We have to talk not over them or under them, but we have to talk to them. We have to sit down and say: Why did you say that? What is your problem? If we have a problem, let's get it out in the open and talk about it.

This is the best country in the world. The strongest country in the world cannot succumb to crushing itself inwardly if we look the other way in the challenges of life. The challenges of life today are America's changing. It is changing for lots of reasons.

There are a lot of people who are big internet people and all that, and they have all the solutions. I think the solution is right here. It is in their heart.

I am telling you from my heart that after 45 years in elected office, raising three children and eight grandchildren—and my kids have done a great job of raising them, living in a great community and working, attending a great church, and doing the things I have done—I see some of it slipping away. Churches don't have the memberships they used to have, and it is significant. School curriculum is getting a whole lot tougher than it used to be. I was chairman of the board of education for the State for a few years. A lot of the traditional things we all love and believe in, like God and country, like school curriculum, reli-

gion, Sunday school, and things like that—they have their challenges.

I am going to roll up my sleeves and do whatever I can with the life I have left. I said I am going to leave on December 31, but it is not because I am leaving you. I am not leaving you. I am going to be with you a lot longer than I thought I would because of what I am doing. I want to be here for you, and I want to be here when that bell rings to say: America, we don't have a problem anymore. We solved it. You helped us do it through our tax policies, through our Federal policies, through our education policies, and how we treat people. We helped you do it. Let's not get back in that shape again.

We have the people and the spirit of JOHN LEWIS and other people I know in this room who are willing to do it. Some think this is all just a bunch of Sunday school folly that somebody who is leaving believes in. Don't believe that. I will be back to make a speech again sometime and give you a progress report. We need some progress.

Now, the last thing I want to talk about—the best thing—the example to me of what bipartisanship means is a picture taken of JOHN LEWIS and me last week. Bipartisanship doesn't mean one is Black and one is White—could be one Black and one White, could be. But JOHN is Black and I am White, and we are different about other things.

When JOHN and I were addressing the House at a tribute to me, unfortunately for everybody else, I liked it. We had a great time. When JOHN's time to speak came, he made a beautiful speech too. It was very meaningful to me because we know what the buzz words were. We know what we said to make it sound like we were really liberal or positive. We knew we really weren't.

JOHN knew. JOHN knew who deserved cover and who didn't, which takes as much guts as somebody who knows what is right and what is wrong. So JOHN made this beautiful speech, and I said: You know, this is my time to pay JOHN back. All these years he has helped me out with so many things I have done.

I went to his 75th birthday because I am 75, and I wanted to see what I was going to look like. I looked in the mirror, and I didn't look like me.

JOHN and I turned out to be really good friends. I went to JOHN and said: JOHN, I thank you for that speech. That was the best I ever heard.

I opened my arms and hugged him, not for show and not for display and not for any purpose except to hug him because I love him. I know what he has done for me and this country, as well as so many other things.

But JOHN hugged me, and it got pretty long there for a minute, and that didn't bother me. But the TV people went crazy, so the best picture you could have seen last week among the popular pictures in magazines and the like was JOHN hugging me on the floor of the House.

TOM GRAVES and all the others from the Georgia delegation are here. I am sorry I haven't called out everybody's name; I haven't been able to see everybody. But they all came up and said: Thank you for doing that. I hope everybody back in Georgia sees that.

I said: That is what you are going to tell them. Here in the Senate at a luncheon next Tuesday, we all need to be seen doing the things they don't expect us to do. We are doing what is right for a change, and I just want them to feel good.

Politics doesn't need to be a feel-good business anymore. It needs to be a do-the-right-thing business. I tell you, I am big on bipartisanship. Whether you are Black or White, Republican or Democrat, whatever it might be, find a way to find common ground. Give it a chance to work, and if it doesn't, be a future friend. That is my slogan. When I started my business and people wouldn't buy a house from me, I would shake their hand and say: Thank you for looking for me, and when you buy your next one, call me, and I will do a better job because all I have are customers and future customers. I addressed everybody as a future customer, and I got some.

When I got into politics and I started asking people to vote for me, I said: All I have out there in Georgia are friends and future friends. So when we walked away from a Republican meeting somewhere and somebody had given me their right hand in the face and said, "We are not going to vote for you," I said, "I tell you what. I will give you another chance in 2 years so we can be a future friend, not less of a friend."

Friends and future friends are what it is all about. If you find anybody in business who helps you make it through life, you will make it through life and be treated that way. Life is a win-win proposition if you do it good. It is not a win-lose proposition. It is win-win. But you have to demand it, whichever side of the transition you are on.

So on a day in which I have had more nice things said about me than I deserve, it has brought clarity to me. I am going to tell you how much this place really means.

I am the happiest guy who could ever be. I am happy because I haven't cried yet. I am more happy because of all of you. I think you know what I am talking about. We can do it. We can do anything. We may be called liberal and may be called a RINO and may be called whatever it is. Let's solve the problem, and then see what happens.

Most people who call people names and point fingers are people who don't have a solution themselves but just want to make damn sure you don't solve it. We have to start doing that, and then bipartisanship will become a way you accomplish things, a way you live, a state of being. It will be the end of a bad time and the beginning of a new one, and I want to live long enough to see both.

God bless all of you, and thank you for your support and your friendship. It means more to me than I can ever tell you. I will always be there for you, whether it is buying dinner, going to church, or just listening to one of your speeches when I don't have anything else to do. God bless all of you.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

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

TRIBUTE TO JOHNNY ISAKSON

Mr. PERDUE. Madam President, it is always a privilege to come before the U.S. Senate. I always feel humbled by that because I think of the people who have spoken on this floor since 1859. I am always measured in what I try to bring in terms of thought or whatever, but today there is a special sense of responsibility.

Senator COONS and I have been chosen to lead our colleagues in honoring JOHNNY ISAKSON today. What we just heard was historic, I believe. It is not the first time we have had a speech on this floor that addressed that topic, nor will it be the last, I will predict.

We just heard JOHNNY admonish us to judge with our conscience and our heart. With that, I feel somewhat unworthy to try to address what I feel, and what he also talked about is his heart.

Today is truly a bittersweet occasion. It is bitter because my friend, my mentor, and partner in the U.S. Senate, JOHNNY ISAKSON, is stepping down at the end of this month. For those of us who know this man, it is tough to come to grips with that. I will dearly miss him on many levels. I will miss having him come here in the U.S. Senate alongside me. I will miss his words of wisdom. I will miss his patience. Most of all, I think I will miss his example.

However, we can still find joy in this occasion, I believe. As JOHNNY and Dianne head into the next chapter of their lives with their family, all of us can take time to reflect on who JOHNNY is and what his public service has truly meant not only to us individually and not just to the constituents in our State but to America.

JOHNNY has actually meant the world to me and for longer than I have been in the U.S. Senate. When I got involved in the political process, I had never been personally elected to anything—maybe in the 8th grade. You know how that goes. But this was a radically different experience than I personally had ever had. JOHNNY helped me personally with that transition. He gave me advice. He befriended me. He introduced me to our colleagues here in the Senate. He has been the best partner anyone could ever ask for. I remember the best advice he ever gave me. I just shared this with our colleagues at lunch: DAVE, I only have one piece of advice for you. Keep your head down, your mouth shut, and don't ever vote against the farm bill.

That was his advice, and it was sage, and I listened to that.

Over the last 5 years—and, JOHNNY, it is hard to believe it has been 5 years. To Dianne, I am sure it feels like five lifetimes. In the last 5 years, JOHNNY's advice has stuck with me on many levels. A lot of people in this town know how to talk, stick around. JOHNNY has shown us how important it is to listen and learn from each other. He has shown us how to work together on behalf of, not just ourselves or our next reelection, but truly for the people who put us here. JOHNNY is a true public servant.

I say that next to the word "servant" in the Webster dictionary is a picture of JOHNNY ISAKSON. He is devoted to getting results, not just for the people of Georgia, but for everybody in the United States. Most importantly, he does it in a way that really is worthy of this august body.

I know this body has had controversy throughout the last 230 years. Part of what makes us great is that we have differing opinions, but somehow, in the last 230 years, we found a way to put those aside to find compromise. I made a living in business for 40 years finding ways to compromise with people who had different views than I did.

One example of JOHNNY's statesmanship was with his longtime friendship with another great Georgian, Zell Miller, who happened to be a Democrat. Zell was a former Governor of Georgia and a U.S. Senator. Last year, he, sadly, passed away. What most people forget is that early in his career, JOHNNY actually ran for Governor against the same Zell Miller who ended up being, as JOHNNY calls him, the best friend he has ever had.

When Zell Miller passed away, JOHNNY was asked to speak, and he spoke on this floor. In that speech, he said that Zell Miller was "an individual I met through politics, became one of my best friends through politics, and probably had more influence on my life than anybody else I know in public service." That is a Democrat JOHNNY ISAKSON is talking about. Saxby Chambliss and I get a little upset about that occasionally, but, JOHNNY, that is a big deal. Thank you.

It is almost hard to believe JOHNNY and Zell used to be political opponents. Despite their political differences, JOHNNY and Zell remained close friends up until Zell's death. In fact, Zell even appointed JOHNNY as chairman of the Georgia Board of Education 7 years after Zell had beaten him in that same Governor's race. We can have strong differences in rigorous debates, but we should always be civil and respectful to one another, JOHNNY says. And JOHNNY lives that out every day.

I have said before that JOHNNY ISAKSON is the Howard Baker of our time. Why do I say that; what do I mean? JOHNNY doesn't talk a lot, but when JOHNNY talks, people listen. What we just witnessed was, I think, historic. The paper that was on the podium in front of Senator ISAKSON just now was not a speech. I want everybody to un-

derstand this. It was a list of the 50 Senators who have asked to come to this floor over the next few hours to honor this man as he goes into retirement.

What we just saw was straight from the heart—better than anybody I have ever witnessed and in a way that I will always remember. Truly, when JOHNNY talks, people listen. It doesn't matter if you are a young child, a member of his staff, a colleague, or the President of the United States, not only do people listen to JOHNNY, but I will add one thing to what I have been saying for the last 5 years, when other people talk, JOHNNY ISAKSON listens. That is a rare commodity in this town; trust me.

If you need help, JOHNNY ISAKSON is always there. We all know now that JOHNNY will no longer be with us in this body every day, but we know he will still be around to help us in any way he can. I am hoping he will still call me and give those pieces of advice that have been so valuable over the last 5 years. I know he will answer my call when I call him and ask for that same advice.

But I want to leave the body with this thought today—and I think it echoes what he just said, and I prepared these remarks some time ago in thinking about today—in the new testament in the Bible, in Matthew 23, it says that the greatest among you will be the servant. And today, I want to remind everybody in this body that the greatest among us is JOHNNY ISAKSON.

JOHNNY, it has been a true blessing. God bless you and Dianne and your family. America will always be in your debt. Thank you for everything. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. Thank you, JOHNNY. God bless you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, it is an honor to rise and speak in tribute to my dear friend and trusted colleague, JOHNNY ISAKSON of Georgia.

To follow the junior Senator from the State of Georgia, something remarkable happened just before this session on the floor of the Senate. There was a bipartisan lunch in which virtually every currently serving Senator—nearly 100—gathered, not just because there was tasty barbecue, but because we were there to thank our friend and colleague JOHNNY ISAKSON for his decade of public service, for his dedication to this body, and for the ways in which he has been the glue that has helped hold so many of us together. You just heard it again here on the floor, his passion and his commitment to working across the aisle.

JOHNNY ISAKSON has been an effective, capable, and powerful Senator because he is never worried about who gets the credit for the work he does. He has kept his word. He has a great sense of humor. He is easy to be with. He is persuasive. He is persistent, and he is principled.

Let me just start by saying to Dianne, to John and Julie and Kevin and the grandkids: Thank you. Thank you for sharing JOHNNY with the State of Georgia and with our Nation for decades.

When I first got elected to the Senate back in 2010—which was a somewhat unexpected election, I got seated right after a special election—a respected senior realtor from my hometown, Dick Christopher, came and told me I should look up a guy named JOHNNY ISAKSON from Georgia. He was someone he knew from the real estate business. He said: He is a good husband and father, a principled man. You will enjoy working with him.

I never heard of him, so I looked him up online. If all you had to judge someone by was their right-left position—he succeeded Newt Gingrich—he and I, on the surface on a few positions, would have nothing in common. But as luck or providence would have it, when I got here, he was the trainer with Barbara Boxer for ethics for the new Senators. And to his misfortune, he got assigned to be my mentor. I began what has been an adventure that hasn't yet ended—and I hope never will—of a friendship and a companionship that has taken us to some pretty wild places.

Early in 2011, I was made the chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa and JOHNNY was the ranking member. I could not have asked for a better companion or partner. We did dozens of hearings on foreign aid policy, on security and trade interests, and on the growing role of China in Africa. But then we also went and visited places—widely—places both easy and hard. We went to Mali and Congo, to Senegal and Benin, to South Africa and to Ghana.

Over several trips, we visited AIDS orphanages and hospitals, water purification plants, and Millennium Challenge Corporation trips. On these trips, we saw the terrible impact of terrorism and grinding poverty in countries like Nigeria and Mali, but we enjoyed some pretty darn good times, too, like seeing the fruits of the best pineapple plantation I have ever been on and enjoying a beautiful vineyard in Cape Town, South Africa.

But JOHNNY didn't just go because it was an assignment. He went because it was his passion, even his calling. The first trip we took together was to Benin, a tiny little impoverished country in West Africa that hadn't had two Senators visit in 50 years. We went because Kate Puzey, a young woman who was a Peace Corps volunteer from Georgia, had been murdered. She was tragically and senselessly murdered because she tried to report child abuse back to the capital.

We had a remarkable and memorable series of meetings there that I won't go into. I will just say the thing about JOHNNY is not just that he persuaded me and others to join him in the quest for justice for Kate Puzey, but he

worked and worked until. Ultimately, the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act was law in 2011. That was followed by so many others. JOHNNY is the consummate legislator. On this one small subcommittee of one of the many committees of this Senate, he and many others of us worked and passed the Electrify Africa Act, the Global Food Security Act, the BUILD Act, the Nick Castle Peace Corps Reform Act, and, of course, AGOA reauthorization—something we worked very hard on.

The secret to JOHNNY's success is he doesn't focus on the two-dimensional ways that you are different. He focuses on what you have in common. In my home State, we have a county that raises more chickens than any county in America. The whole State of Georgia raises more chickens than any other State. So JOHNNY suggested, and I agreed, that we would form a Chicken Caucus. You may not know there is a Chicken Caucus. You may not know about the great ways in which it has made the world safe and free for America's chickens—a tasty, low-calorie, incredibly environmentally sustainable and affordable source of protein for a hungry world. That was brought to you by the National Chicken Council.

At one point, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee mockingly called me the "Senator from Chicken," but our work together on AGOA reauthorization and our travels together resulted in opening new markets to American exports. On this floor, in this august body, with all the things we deal with, that might seem like a small accomplishment, but I will tell you, the chicken farmers of Delaware and Georgia are grateful.

Each of us comes here to represent our State. In the travels I have undertaken with JOHNNY, I saw a remarkable passion and commitment to his home State, which has made him such a great legislator. There are so many other things we legislated on, but I know we have literally half the Senate waiting to speak. Let me move.

The other joy I have had with JOHNNY, which has been at the other end of our decade together—he is the chairman and I am the advocacy chairman of the Ethics Committee. It is a very tough committee. We handle difficult subjects. JOHNNY runs it well and will be deeply missed. We are joined here by many of the staff of the Ethics Committee, the folks who have seen his common sense, his humor, his decency, but also his focus on getting to a result. For me, it has been just another opportunity to see how JOHNNY ISAKSON lives his values.

We have joined together almost every Wednesday morning at a bipartisan prayer breakfast, and JOHNNY has taught Sunday school for three decades at Mount Zion United Methodist. Those of us who have gotten to know the blessing of his humor, decency, and his common sense and his attitude—everyone who is a friend or future friend

knows that it is rooted in his connection with the Eternal.

JOHNNY said something important here just a few minutes ago: America, we have a problem. It is my hope that after today's good, brave, important speeches, that some of us will step forward and take up the best way to honor JOHNNY, which is to model and mimic his style, listening to each other, respecting each other, committing to practice a brand of politics that is a little less combative and a little more focused on results, and finding ways to trust each other and to work together.

In some ways, JOHNNY's best work has been his tireless, relentless work on behalf of our veterans. As I heard said: The best way to honor our veterans is to be the sort of Americans for whom they fought and served. This Senate, this body needs to step forward and be worthy of the service and sacrifice of JOHNNY ISAKSON.

JOHNNY, I can't thank you enough for all the ways you have been an amazing partner and colleague on issues large and small. Your kindness and friendship has meant the world to Annie and me. As you and Dianne go home to enjoy the blessings of family, know that I will always look forward to another visit to Georgia or Delaware, and I am always up for another trip to an obscure country that hasn't seen two American Senators in 50 years.

Thank you for your service, and God bless.

Mr. SHELBY. Madam President, today I am honored to congratulate my friend and colleague, Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON on his retirement from the U.S. Senate after 15 years of dedicated service. Senator ISAKSON served the State of Georgia and the entire Nation with integrity, inspiring future generations through his public service. He has led a remarkable career, and he will be truly missed in the Senate. I am proud to know JOHNNY, and I wish him and his wife, Dianne, all the best in his retirement.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia for allowing me to participate in this colloquy and pay tribute to his remarkable career of public service.

I think you could ask anyone in this Chamber, Republican or Democrat, what they think of JOHNNY ISAKSON, and you probably get the same answer every time: He is a gentleman and a statesman, somebody who knows how to find common ground and understands why that is still important. Sometimes, it was the little things—a bipartisan barbecue to just get Senators in the same room for a few minutes. As a chairman he brought folks together on one of the few remaining pieces of bipartisan territory: caring for our veterans.

Even on issues that often divide us, JOHNNY has spent his career looking for ways to get to yes, and he has a track record to prove it, particularly on the issue of healthcare. This is an issue that JOHNNY approaches from a place of deep knowledge but also deep empathy.

One of my proudest moments in the Senate was working with Senator ISAKSON, along with Senator Hatch, Senator WYDEN, and others, on improving care for the millions of Americans with multiple chronic illnesses. As many of you know, this is pretty personal for me. My mom had Alzheimer's for 10 years before she passed away; 9 of those she couldn't speak.

Working with JOHNNY on that Chronic Care Working Group—you knew he wasn't just transacting business or playing politics; he was personally invested in making life better for folks with these conditions.

I can't think of a better testament to the JOHNNY ISAKSON way than the fact that just a couple months after one of the toughest fights to ever take place over healthcare, we passed the Chronic Care Act on an overwhelmingly bipartisan basis.

A lot of people in politics can tell you what they are against, but not many people can show you what they have accomplished. And as JOHNNY ISAKSON heads home to Georgia, he leaves behind a legacy of bipartisan accomplishment that will live on for many years to come.

JOHNNY, I want to wish you, Dianne, and your family health and happiness.

In closing, I just want to say thank you for your years of service to our country and for your years of friendship.

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, I join my colleagues in recognizing Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON for a lifetime of service and achievement, from the Georgia Air National Guard, to the Georgia Legislature, and finally to Congress.

Georgians know JOHNNY as a trailblazer, a proud Republican in a State that was once solidly Democratic. Americans know him as a friend to veterans and taxpayers, a strong conservative who loves and fights for his country. Those of us in this body know JOHNNY as a leader, a man of great integrity, and a statesman whose legacy will last a very long time.

We are sad to see you go, but proud of what you built while you were here. Thanks, JOHNNY, for your work on behalf of our country and the State of Georgia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, one thing I am always going to remember about JOHNNY ISAKSON is that with every conversation with him, he always included some words of encouragement for the work that I am involved in or how we are working together. I think you saw that in his remarks today, that he wants to encourage all of us. In this town of Washington, DC, where a lot of people think that they are the most important person in the room, JOHNNY ISAKSON is known instead for his unassuming manner. He is unfailingly kind and considerate to Senators and staff alike, and I think I expressed that in my first

statement about his giving encouraging words in almost every conversation one has with him.

In fact, my staff told me a story wherein Senator ISAKSON came to the Senate Committee on Finance when I was previously the chairman, and he asked to speak to a member of my tax staff. The staff assistant didn't recognize Senator ISAKSON. When asked who he was, he simply said, "Senator ISAKSON." It was not until after my tax staff came out that he realized that it was Senator ISAKSON himself.

Throughout my Senate career, it is safe to say that when it comes to me, all roads lead to Iowa. For JOHNNY, it is no exception. JOHNNY has close friendships with the famous Knapp family of Des Moines, IA. In fact, the Knapp family is known all throughout Iowa. Now, you are probably thinking: How in the world does a southern boy from Georgia get acquainted with Iowans? Well, for JOHNNY, a common answer is the golf course. That is where he first became friends with the Knapp brothers, Paul and Bill. In fact, JOHNNY delivered the eulogy at Paul's funeral in 2008. Paul and Carol, his wife, were friends of the ISAKSONS for more than two decades. Bill, Paul's brother, is a senior statesman of the Democratic Party of Iowa. Partisan glasses will not fool commonsense Iowans, particularly when it comes to JOHNNY's charm and heart. JOHNNY reminds me that he was the first Republican who Bill Knapp ever supported.

I guess, JOHNNY, you beat me to the punch on that one.

JOHNNY said today that Iowa produces some of the finest people he knows, but I say today that Georgia produces very fine people as well. At the top of my list is JOHNNY ISAKSON.

JOHNNY brings a smile to each person he encounters when he walks the halls of the Senate. As a result, he will be greatly missed by everyone. That includes me and our fellow colleagues. It also includes a lot of people who don't get much attention around the Senate, the young staffers who answer the phones and the support staff who do things like cleaning the bathrooms. JOHNNY is always interested in how you are doing and has a word of encouragement to share, the same sort of encouragement he gives me in every conversation.

We have heard it before, but I haven't said it; he is a workhorse, not a show horse. No one can doubt JOHNNY ISAKSON's dedication to the people of Georgia and the United States, not to mention our country's veterans, where he has worked very hard as a member of that committee and as the chairman of that committee to bring justice to our veterans and to keep our promises to those veterans.

JOHNNY ISAKSON is a true public servant. I am proud to have served with him, and I am proud of the work he has done on the Committee on Finance, which I chair.

Now, JOHNNY, I am sorry to see you go, but I wish you and Dianne, your

wife, the best as you step back from public life.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I am so glad to have the chance to be here today to recognize Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON. He is a dedicated public servant to the people of Georgia and is a dear friend of mine here in the Senate. I am pretty sure every single person here in the U.S. Senate building would say the same.

I have had the good fortune to have been office neighbors with Senator ISAKSON for several years now, and like any good neighbor, Senator ISAKSON has made it very clear that his door is always open whenever I need someone to help work out a problem, to swap stories, or to just share a laugh. Over the years, in working together and in walking together to the Senate floor, we have managed to take a lot of steps to help the families and the veterans back in our States and across the country.

I remember back when Senator ALEXANDER and I were working to replace No Child Left Behind, and I kept telling him that early childhood education just had to be a part of this. After I pushed and pushed and pushed, Senator ALEXANDER finally said to me: OK. Go talk with JOHNNY. If you two can work something out, I will accept it in the committee.

I knew right then and there that we were in business because I knew Senator ISAKSON was someone who really cared about early childhood education and who also knew how to work with people across the aisle. He understands not everyone is going to have the same ideas, but he listens to other people. He respects their views, and he works so hard to find common ground so as to pass something that can actually help our families, and that is exactly what happened there. When the Every Student Succeeds Act was signed into law, it included a strong focus on early childhood education, thanks to the efforts of JOHNNY ISAKSON, and I so appreciate that.

It is also exactly what happened when I worked with Senator ISAKSON to pass support for military caregivers. Throughout that process, every time there was something that tried to derail it, Senator ISAKSON was right there, working with me to get things back on track, because he understood it was not about politics; it was about people. It was about the spouses and the family members who stepped up to make sure our servicemembers had the support they needed no matter what.

That is something that has been clear on every issue Senator ISAKSON has worked on. He has always known the people behind the words of legislation. He has always understood how personal the work is that we do here for our families back home.

That has possibly never been clearer than it was last year when we worked

on legislation in the HELP Committee to respond to the opioid epidemic. Senator ISAKSON spoke up throughout that process about the loss of his own grandson, a victim of the opioid crisis. He shared his family's story in the hope it would help other families who struggle with the disease of addiction so that they would seek and find help.

I have no doubt that, because of your work, they did.

As usual, the bill that we passed was stronger thanks to Senator ISAKSON's efforts and thanks to the perspective he brought that always kept families top of mind.

Now, of course, Senator ISAKSON hasn't just brought an important perspective to the Senate but a distinctive voice. A few years ago, we worked together to update our country's workforce training programs. The bill that we passed represented years—and I mean years—of bipartisan effort and was an important step forward for workers in our country.

I remember heading back to our offices after the bill passed. I said how excited I was to finally get this done, and Senator ISAKSON said:

Me, too. I was grinning like a mule eating Breyers.

Well, we don't have charming phrases like that in the State of Washington, so I am certainly going to miss those. Yet colorful sayings aren't the only reason Senator ISAKSON's words have always been so notable.

The real reason is, when JOHNNY ISAKSON gives you his word, you know he is going to keep it. Some people will say something to you just to get you out of the way or it is said without their really meaning it. Senator ISAKSON never did that. When he said, "I am going to get this done," you knew it would get done. Just as he kept his word to me so many times, I think it is safe to say, as he leaves the Senate, that he kept his word to the people of Georgia.

His No. 1 priority has never been to get the most coverage on Sunday talk shows or to start political fights. Instead, his legacy will be that when he came into these halls every day, he came in with the people of Georgia in his head and in his heart and that he did the absolute best he could do, each day, to make their lives better.

I am so grateful I have been able to work with him throughout our time together here in the Senate, and I know so many families are grateful, as well, for the tremendous work he has accomplished. I am going to miss having a friend like JOHNNY ISAKSON across the aisle and down the hall from me.

JOHNNY, as you head home to Dianne and your family and the State that you love so much and the State that you have done so much for, I hope, when you think back on all of the work you have done, you will still grin like a mule eating Breyers. Thank you so much.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, I am honored to pay tribute to JOHNNY ISAKSON. I don't know how I could top anything that has been mentioned by Senator PERDUE and, especially, Senator COONS—Senator CHRIS COONS has given us a charge to follow JOHNNY's example—and Senator GRASSLEY and now Senator MURRAY and everybody who will follow me.

I have a problem. I did all of this on Veterans Day. I tried to point out that his committee has passed 57 bills. I don't know of any other committee that has done that on behalf of the people who wear the uniform of the United States—who do so much on our behalf—and, more especially, for the VA and what that is all about. There has never been a better chairman than JOHNNY ISAKSON. I said all of that. I also said, in this body, there are those who choose ideology and partisan issues while JOHNNY is someone who works with his colleagues to pass legislation that benefits not only our Nation's veterans but every American's pocketbook and daily life.

The reason I just sort of read through that is that we have just had lunch wherein nearly every Senator was in attendance with the exception of those who are running for President, and they would have liked to have been there. By my count, there were seven standing ovations—seven. Each Member, both of the leaders, and the people who have served with JOHNNY either as a minority member or as a chairman gave their amazing tributes to this wonderful man.

Isn't it amazing that in this very difficult time in the Senate, when the bar of civility is about forehead high—you don't want to run into it here—that here is a man who has given us a way out? I have never seen that before.

JOHNNY has had, I think, 50 years of public service. I have him beat if you add in staff time and 40 years of public service—by the way, of being elected 24 to 0. I have never seen such an outpouring of affection and genuine admiration for an individual, be he a Member of the House or the Senate, as was experienced at this lunch.

It was CHRIS COONS who, during his tribute, said: Why don't we use this as a wonderful way to see if we can get past all of the trials and tribulations that we have gone through in the Senate and work together for a change? People talked about, when they had come to the Senate, that it wasn't this way. Actually, it was. Yet we look very fondly upon the past. So I hope that people can take CHRIS's challenge to heart.

It is a pretty easy deal. JOHNNY knows it by heart, for that is who he is; yet, if a person or a group of people or Senators in this body love to come down here and make speech after speech—in many cases, they are very partisan, and many of the younger Members do this—I give them that. I mean, that is their right. I remember, in the early days when I was in the

House, that I did that a couple of times and then was talked to by some of the senior Members who said: We don't do that here in order to get along, especially in the all-powerful House Agriculture Committee and now the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee. We always work together because we are nonpartisan on that committee.

So you ignore that. Then, if you really do take the time to know that individual, as opposed to the individual you have seen on the floor, you will find out this is a person who is very interesting. You will find out this is a person worth knowing. You will find out that you have common ground. You will find out that you can get a vote for them in order for them to vote for the farm bill or for a veterans' program or for any other thing.

So I think that is the example that JOHNNY has set. I don't know if there is anything more I can add after seven standing ovations and obviously many, many people actually telling the truth about you. I know, JOHNNY, it must be a little much for you. Frankly, I am getting a little tired of it.

I would just like to say what I said back then when I was speaking of your tremendous success as chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee when I said: "JOHNNY, thank you for your service; now thank you for your message; now thank you for being simply who you are." And I said: "Senators eventually come and Senators go."

I do not think we will see the likes of Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON for years to come. We love you. I love you. I will miss you greatly. Thank you for your fortitude and courage in fighting Parkinson's as an example to so many.

Semper fi, my dear friend.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, it really is a privilege to join with so many of my Senate friends in honoring the service of Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON.

I would also say to Senator ISAKSON: Isn't it nice to hear all of these wonderful things while you are alive and can be enjoying it?

I have had the privilege of serving with 391 U.S. Senators. I respect the office they hold, but some of those 391 I respect not just for the office but for who they are.

JOHNNY ISAKSON stands out among the 391 because of who he is: a lifelong Georgian through and through, born and raised in Atlanta. As we have heard from others, he went on to serve in the Georgia Air National Guard and had a wildly successful career in real estate in his home State.

It was a call to service that led him to seek opportunities to represent his fellow Georgians in the State legislature, in the U.S. House of Representatives, and, to the benefit of every single Senator in both parties, ultimately, here in the U.S. Senate.

I have seen him, as chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, fight for

our Nation's servicemembers. He tried to make our system of care for our veterans more efficient, higher quality, and most importantly widely accessible.

The VA MISSION Act was a wonderful signature accomplishment of Senator ISAKSON's tenure on the Veterans' Affairs Committee. But his commitment to our nation's veterans extends far beyond healthcare. He was a key leader of the Forever GI Bill, which made GI bill benefits available to veterans at any time in their career, without expiration.

As I said, I hold in my mind a very special group of the 391 Senators I have served with. JOHNNY, you know you are in that very, very special group. I remember when I first came to the Senate in the wake of Watergate, I spent time cultivating bipartisan relationships that might help my advocacy for Vermonters and for the Nation.

I forged relationships with Senators with whom I had strong differences of opinion, but with whom I could find common ground. I valued the partnership of Members who, when they gave their word, they kept it. That is why I value Senator ISAKSON. He is a Senator in that mold whom I looked up to the most when I first came here. He reflects the best of those Senators of both parties, who, over the decades, have shaped my knowledge of this body.

He is a public servant devoted to his constituents, devoted to his country, devoted to this Chamber. The Senate needs more people like JOHNNY ISAKSON.

I know that he and Dianne will welcome the calmer days that lie ahead of them, but the Senate is going to miss him and his efforts to promote bipartisanship. I have even learned to like Georgian barbecue, which I never had before I met JOHNNY ISAKSON. I also like the good spirit he brought with him and the fact that he had Republicans and Democrats across the political spectrum sitting and enjoying each other's company, enjoying the example of JOHNNY ISAKSON.

JOHNNY, as I have told you privately, I am sad to see you leave, but I so value our friendship.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, the State motto of Georgia is "Wisdom, Justice, and Moderation." Those three words aptly describe Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON's more than four decades of service to the people of Georgia and to our Nation.

He has indeed served with wisdom, justice, and moderation, setting an example for all of us.

I would add to that description that JOHNNY is extraordinarily effective and beloved on both sides of the aisle. His life of public service is characterized not only by his extraordinary integrity, intelligence, and statesmanship but also by his kindness to everyone.

As was mentioned several times at our luncheon honoring JOHNNY today, if ever there were a poll held in the Senate to determine the most popular Senator, he would win, hands down.

It has been such a pleasure and honor to serve with this remarkable leader on issues ranging from supporting research and cures for rare pediatric diseases to improving education. JOHNNY is always thoughtful, informed, and determined to achieve a result to make a difference.

As a veteran himself, and as chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, JOHNNY has led the way in reforming veterans' healthcare to make the VA more responsive to those who have served. What a wonderful legacy to leave, to know that you have been responsible for improving healthcare for those who have worn the uniform of our country.

JOHNNY, as we have heard today, has always sought common ground rather than partisan advantage. I thought it was so telling, as I listened to his farewell remarks today, that JOHNNY did not take the time to list his own legislative accomplishments, even though they are so impressive and so numerous.

Instead, he posed a challenge to us. He called on us to put aside the petty bickering that has prevented progress in America. He called upon us to work together. He reminded us that we achieve the best legislation when we sit down and negotiate with one another, when we listen with respect to each other. Those were his final words to us as a U.S. Senator.

I have had so many wonderful experiences with JOHNNY, whether it was working on legislation or having an informal dinner, but perhaps the most memorable experience occurred this past June on a bipartisan codel that JOHNNY led to France to commemorate the 75th anniversary of D-day.

It was a privilege to join him in honoring the American heroes who began the liberation of Europe from Nazi tyranny.

JOHNNY, I thank you for your service but, most of all, for your friendship. You have indeed set an example of civility and bipartisanship that everyone who serves in this great institution should emulate.

I wish you and your wonderful wife Dianne, whom I enjoy so much, all the best, and I want to tell you that I will always miss your friendly greeting, your big smile, and your even bigger heart.

Thank you for all you have done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I am honored to stand and join tributes to JOHNNY ISAKSON. A lawyer from Springfield once gave a pretty famous speech, and it was only 275 words long. This speech may be a little longer, but I don't believe a speech has to be eternal to be immortal. So I will try, in just a few words, to say what I feel in

my heart this moment as you are preparing to leave the U.S. Senate.

Your heart is good, and I know that because I saw something on the floor of the Senate today. Your relationship and your comments about your friend JOHN LEWIS were so genuine and so heartfelt, and the fact that you would point to a photograph taken of the two of you embracing one another as one of the signature photographs of your career in public service tells me a lot about you, JOHNNY ISAKSON.

Our lives have been led along the same path. We know how many changes there have been in America during the course of our lives and how many more we need to be even better in the future. JOHN LEWIS was one of the real leaders in our Nation who led us all to look very closely at the issue of race and the issue of civil rights. It was painful, many times unpopular. For his heroic work, he was given the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and he deserved it more than anyone I can think of. The fact that he counts you as a friend and comes over here for your farewell address and that you would embrace him and announce that to the United States and the world, tells me your heart is good, JOHNNY ISAKSON. That simple experience tells me that.

The other thing I know is that your word is good. It was 2 years ago when we had a debate on the floor of the Senate about a measure that means quite a bit to me, the Dream Act—the idea that young immigrants brought to this country would have a chance to become part of America's future. I worked on that legislation for 19 years, so I remember when people voted with me on the Dream Act, and you voted with me. It wasn't easy 2 years ago. Immigration was not a popular thing, but you stood up, and when I went to you afterward and thanked you, you said it was the right thing to do. I will never forget that. It told me that your word is good, and your heart is good.

And, finally, let me tell you, you have struggled with affliction, illness, and you have done most of it very openly so that people with similar challenges in life can watch as you live through this challenging experience.

All of us can remember moments here when you were willing yourself to come to this floor, to that chair, to cast your vote. I have never seen courage like that. Your determination will stick with me forever.

Now you are going to have some time for yourself with your family, Dianne, and others and have some relaxing time together, but I am going to miss you. I am going to miss you as a special colleague whose heart was right, whose word is good, and his courage was there for all of us to see.

Thanks, JOHNNY. I wish you the best.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I have had the pleasure of serving in the Senate alongside JOHNNY ISAKSON for close

to 15 years, and it has been a privilege to work and join with him on a number of legislative efforts, but, more importantly, JOHNNY is the big brother I never had, whom I aspired to be like. I will never have the speaking ability he does, but he is a brother because although we grew up across the country from each other, we shared many experiences that shaped our formative years and continue to influence our work in the Senate. We both served in the Air National Guard; we both were in business before entering politics; and we both were Sunday school teachers. Even our spouses, Dianne and Diana, have similar names. We both served in the State legislature before we came here.

Besides his speaking ability, there are many things I will never match. JOHNNY served in the Georgia legislature for 17 years, beginning in 1974. After serving as the chairman of the Georgia Board of Education for 2 years, he was elected to the House of Representatives in 1999 and then to the U.S. Senate in 2004.

Throughout his time in both the State and Federal legislatures, JOHNNY was nothing short of a pioneer in the State of Georgia. He was the first Georgian ever to be elected to both Houses of the Georgia State legislature and both Houses of Congress. He is the first Republican in Georgia to be elected to a third term in the U.S. Senate, and he is the only Republican Senator currently serving as the chair of two committees at the same time.

Now, despite these tremendous achievements, JOHNNY never lost sight of what was important and remains committed to legislation that is important to the folks in Georgia and across the country.

I remember when I was chairman of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, there was a mine accident in West Virginia. Senator KENNEDY, who was the ranking member, and I decided to go down there to take a look, and Senator ISAKSON asked if he could come along. We went down, and we talked to the safety inspectors; we talked to the mine owners; and, most importantly, we talked to the families of the men who had been trapped in this mine. We learned the story of how coal mining had been decreasing over the years, so the people who sell the safety equipment quit inventing the safety equipment because they never had the market for it. Consequently, when coal mining started coming back up again, the equipment wasn't in place for it. We found out what was needed, but JOHNNY was the real salesman for it. He has a picture of one of the family members. He carried that picture with him everywhere, and anytime the subject of mine safety came up, he brought that picture out so everybody could see a real person—there it is—a real person whom we were trying to provide for the future and see that accidents didn't happen.

I also had the pleasure of working with JOHNNY on the Senate Finance

Committee. We passed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which reformed America's Tax Code for the first time in 30 years, and gave hard-working families more choices about how their hard-earned money should be used. We were both businessowners in the private sector before entering politics and understand the burden that heavy taxes and Federal regulations can place on families and businesses. His expertise and insight was invaluable when the Committee was considering this historic piece of legislation, and instrumental in helping it become law.

Throughout his time in the Senate, JOHNNY remained committed to ending reckless Federal spending and reining in out-of-control national debt. This is an issue we cannot ignore anymore. It is a focus of mine as chairman of the Budget Committee. Senator ISAKSON has repeatedly introduced the biennial Budgeting Appropriations Act, which would take concrete, serious steps toward fixing our appropriations process. It has been a pleasure to work with a friend who understands how dire our situation is and has a commitment to finding lasting solutions that will not only secure a better future for today but also for generations to come.

JOHNNY understood that the United States owes all its servicemembers, veterans, and families a great debt of gratitude for their service and sacrifice they have made. He knew our country would not be the Nation it is today without those who are willing to give so much of themselves. JOHNNY took those values to heart as chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs and enacted policies that significantly improved the lives of our most vulnerable veterans.

He was instrumental in the passage of the MISSION Act, which took significant steps toward reforming veterans' healthcare through the Department of Veterans Affairs. Senator ISAKSON truly understood that military service requires sacrifices not only for the servicemember but of the entire family. He ensured that those who gave so much for their country received not only the benefits they deserve but knowledge that those efforts in protecting their homeland did not go unappreciated.

Probably most important, though, is that JOHNNY is a man of faith. Despite the tremendous achievements, he never lost sight of what truly matters and never wavered in his commitment to God and to do what is right. My mother used to tell me: Do what is right, do what is best, and treat others as they wish to be treated. JOHNNY lives by these words and never forgets why he is here, which is to represent and serve the people of Georgia and the United States to the best of his ability.

I am deeply saddened that JOHNNY will be leaving us soon. His experience, knowledge, and friendship will surely be missed as you can tell from the speeches here so far today.

Diana and I send our best wishes and appreciation to JOHNNY and Dianne. We

wish them all the best as they take time to spend with their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Together they have been great examples of the importance of public service. We wish them the best in whatever adventure they choose to pursue next. God bless you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I join my colleagues honoring Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON of Georgia who is retiring from this body. He is a dear friend and a great example of a great Senator.

JOHNNY and I have worked together on a number of public health priorities. I had the privilege of serving with JOHNNY on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. We forged a shared commitment to improving public health, from cancer prevention to better surveillance of neurological diseases, from strengthening regulations of indoor tanning devices to improving trauma care. JOHNNY has the privilege of representing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC headquarters in Atlanta, GA, made up of some of the greatest professionals in the healthcare field across the globe. He has always been a fearless advocate for the CDC and its staff, and the critical work being done by the CDC. He has always been a fierce advocate for all of his constituents in Georgia.

During our time on the HELP Committee, we developed a partnership while working on skin cancer prevention. We spent many years advancing legislation to require improved labeling on indoor tanning beds to better reflect their dangers. We also worked hard to make sure there was disclosure of the ingredients in sunscreens, and we were proud to see signed into law in 2014 the Sunscreen Innovation Act. It was a work JOHNNY led with such distinction.

Building on that skin cancer prevention and other preventive health measures, JOHNNY is, again, a fierce advocate for improving the health of children, particularly children with cancer. I was so proud to work with JOHNNY on the Conquer Childhood Cancer Act and later the Childhood Cancer Survivorship, Treatment, Access, and Research Act, the STAR Act, tremendously benefiting children who have cancer. That goes, I think, to JOHNNY keeping his commitment to doing the right thing, doing it well, and helping the most vulnerable in this country.

As mentioned, JOHNNY has been on the veterans' committee and has chaired that committee since 2015. He is a veteran himself, a veteran of the Georgia Air National Guard from 1966 to 1972. He has done significant work for veterans and, as a veteran, I thank Senator ISAKSON.

He was instrumental in passing the VA MISSION Act, critical legislation that enhances the ability of comprehensive caregivers to assist veterans. Further, after the VA MISSION

Act, he has been working so hard, and he was also able to pass—and I was proud to work with him—the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act. This is known as the Forever GI Bill because it made critical improvements to the GI bill, but most important is the law ends the 15-year limit on the use of GI bill benefits, allowing the use of those benefits throughout the lifetime of the recipient. He has been an extraordinary leader, doing so much.

I wish Senator ISAKSON, his wife Dianne, and his entire family well. Finally, what I want to say is, the true measure of an individual is not the sum of their legislative achievements, JOHNNY has had many of those; not political victories, JOHNNY has had many of those; not success in any one realm of any endeavor, public or private; the true test of an individual is the sum of their kindnesses, of what they have done for and with other people. By that measure, no one surpasses the gentleman from Georgia, and I thank him.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I will bet Senator ISAKSON is a little bit surprised that his farewell address would produce such an eruption of bipartisan speeches, both in the luncheon we just had for nearly 100 Senators—almost everybody was there, Democrats and Republicans—and then the 50 or so Senators who are going to speak on the floor.

As I listened carefully to Senator ISAKSON's own remarks about bipartisanship, it kind of reminded me of the preacher on Sunday talking to the congregation saying: I am not so worried about what you do during this 1 hour during church. It is what you do between now and the next Sunday during the 1 hour in church.

I think what JOHNNY Isakson is saying is that the speeches about bipartisanship are honorable and good, but what he would like to suggest to us is that what we need to do is have a little bit better behavior, follow those speeches a little bit better between now and the next time we have a group of speeches.

JOHNNY learned a long time ago that if all you want to do is take a position or make a speech, you don't need to go to all the trouble to come to the U.S. Senate. You can get a radio program or get a street corner. If you want to come to the U.S. Senate, you are supposed to get something done.

I like to say to our constituents in Tennessee that I encourage them to look at Washington, DC, as if it were a split-screen television set. On the one side, you see where most people are watching. You see impeachment, tweets, and Supreme Court controversies. On the other side, where very few probably watch, you see Senators like JOHNNY ISAKSON working to pass an opioids bill or Senators working to pay songwriters a fair amount for what

they do or Appropriations members working to set a record, as Senator BLUNT and Senator MURRAY have, for example, in terms of funding for biomedical research. All of that is on the side of the television screen where JOHNNY ISAKSON has spent most of his 15 years.

Senator MURRAY of Washington, during her remarks, talked very accurately about what happened in 2015 when we were working on fixing No Child Left Behind. That was not easy to do. Working on legislation to try to set rules for elementary and secondary education is like being at a University of Tennessee football game, where you have 100,000 people in the stands, all of whom know what the next play ought to be, and when the coach doesn't call it, they have an opinion about that.

Well, everybody has had a little education, and so they had a lot to say about how we would fix No Child Left Behind. Finally, we just ground to a halt over preschool education and what the Federal role ought to be. Senator MURRAY felt very strongly about it. As she said, she is a former kindergarten teacher. So I stepped back and said: Why don't you and Senator ISAKSON sit down and see if you can come up with a solution, and if you do, we will take that.

They did. They presented it to us. We took it. It went in the bill, and President Obama signed the law called No Child Left Behind and called it a Christmas miracle.

The same thing happened on the Workforce Investment Act. Again, Senator MURRAY and Senator ISAKSON sat down and worked together to solve a problem that the rest of us couldn't solve.

Senator REED, who just spoke, worked with JOHNNY on sunscreen; Senator TESTER worked with JOHNNY to make it easier for veterans to get care nearer their home; Senator CASEY from Pennsylvania—all these Democrats—working with Senator ISAKSON on the most important piece of legislation to govern the sale of over-the-counter drugs, which I hope the Senate will adopt either this week or next week.

All of that was done not because these Senators gave up their principles or not because they were not good negotiators. I think JOHNNY would say Senator MURRAY is as tough a negotiator you will find in the U.S. Senate. But the difference is they also understood that we are here to get results—not just to take a position, not just to make a speech, but to see if we can get a result.

That is why Senator ISAKSON has had so many Senators praise him today, because he understands that it is hard to get here, it is hard to stay here, and while you are here, you might as well try to accomplish something for the country. JOHNNY ISAKSON knows it is hard to get here. He started in 1974. He lost his first race. Then he was on the ballot 20 times. He won 18 of those

times. He knows it is hard to stay here. A year before he ran for reelection this last time, he announced that he has Parkinson's disease.

JOHNNY ISAKSON has legislated, as has been mentioned, with his heart. When we worked on skin cancer, he talked about his skin cancer. When we worked on the Opioids Response Act, he talked about his family's loss because of an opioid overdose. And he has not been afraid to stick his neck out. There was a time during the Atlanta Olympics when one of the county commissions passed a bill saying: Gays are not welcome at the Olympics. Senator ISAKSON said—he was not a Senator then—“The Bill of Rights does not have an asterisk in it. The Bill of Rights is for everyone.”

And as his comments about JOHN LEWIS would reflect, JOHNNY ISAKSON was willing to speak out for civil rights in the South when not everybody was.

I often think that members of the U.S. Senate are generally men and women who once sat in the front row of their first grade class with their hand up, hoping that the teacher would call on them. These are not a reticent bunch of men and women, and I am sure JOHNNY ISAKSON sat on the front row of his first grade class. But I am also sure that he raised his hand and he conducted himself and caused all of his classmates to like him and admire him and elect him as their leader, because that has happened all throughout his life.

The luncheon we had today was an extraordinary event, a bipartisan occasion. I do not remember anything like it in my time here, just to honor a retiring member of the Senate. And as someone said, listening to the speeches by the handful of Democrats and Republicans who spoke, you would not have known which party JOHNNY ISAKSON came from.

Our love for JOHNNY is great, but his greater legacy is something else. What is more important is that he, by his example, has reminded us why we are here, reminded us that if you are a U.S. Senator, it is hard to get here, it is hard to stay here, and while you are here, you might as well try to accomplish something good for the country.

That is JOHNNY ISAKSON's legacy, and that is something we should be grateful for and remember.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I join my colleagues in expressing our genuine affection for JOHNNY ISAKSON. This is surely a sad day as Senator ISAKSON is leaving us as a member of the U.S. Senate.

But frankly, his retirement from the Senate has given us an opportunity to recognize how fortunate each one of us is to be a Member of the U.S. Senate and that we can get things done if we follow Senator ISAKSON's recommendations and model to work together to find common ground.

One other thing that I will always remember about Senator ISAKSON is that he has taught us that the Senate family really is family and you can form genuine friendships in the U.S. Senate and it makes no difference your party affiliation in forming those friendships.

I first got to know Senator ISAKSON when he was Congressman ISAKSON. We were both serving in the House of Representatives. The House is a much larger body, and we did not have the opportunity during those years we served together in the House to get to know each another in a personal manner. But when I was elected to the U.S. Senate in January of 2007, it was Senator ISAKSON and Dianne that reached out to Myrna and me to welcome us to the Senate family.

It was not a one-time, let's get to know each other and try to understand each other. We come from different backgrounds and different States. We have different religions. But he and Dianne, Myrna and I, really wanted to try to understand each other.

You heard Senator ISAKSON talk about finding common ground. Well, you cannot find common ground if you do not know the other person you are talking with. And Senator ISAKSON has lived by example to develop that type of genuine friendship with his colleagues, so that we can really understand what our priorities are and how we can find that common ground to get things done.

So we have enjoyed a professional relationship, but it has been a true friendship. And as Senator ISAKSON has said, the way to get things done is through understanding what bipartisanship is about. Bipartisanship works, as Senator ISAKSON has said many times, to find common ground. And Senator ISAKSON has lived by that example throughout his whole life.

You have heard he is the only Georgian to have served in the State House, the State Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives from Georgia, and the U.S. Senate from Georgia, so he has been the whole legislative route in the State of Georgia.

But by using that approach of getting to know each of us and spending the time to become friends and finding out what our priorities are all about and be able to find common ground, he has been able to accomplish an incredible record of success for the people of Georgia and our Nation.

Let me give some examples. You have heard many of them, but I am going to talk a little bit from a personal point of view. Yes, I had the distinction of serving on the Ethics Committee for a short period of time on one case, and I got to see Senator ISAKSON at work and how he defended the integrity of this institution.

As I was listening to his leadership during that deliberation, I had no idea what party he belonged to in the way that he conducted that investigation. It was done with one thing in mind: to protect the integrity of the institution

and to find common ground in order to serve the institution right. He has a deep respect for the U.S. Senate, he has a deep respect for the legislative branch of government, and he has demonstrated that, over and over again, by his leadership.

You have heard about his experiences as chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. Well, I had the opportunity to travel with Senator ISAKSON to Normandy to celebrate the 75th anniversary of D-Day, and I must tell you the emotion of that moment as I saw Senator ISAKSON interact with our veterans and saw that genuine way that he connected to those who have served our Nation.

You see, his presence was important, his words were important, but he has also shown his appreciation through the deeds of what he has been able to get accomplished. It has been pointed out that the Veterans' Affairs Committee under Senator ISAKSON's leadership has produced numerous bipartisan bills to help our servicepeople.

We can mention maybe the one that I am most proud that we were able to get done is dealing with the healthcare issues because the healthcare issues were not fair to our veterans. Senator ISAKSON was able to find common ground in a very difficult environment so that we could pass the appropriate legislation, so that the members of the armed services could get the healthcare and our veterans could get the healthcare that they so richly deserve.

I have had the chance to work with Senator ISAKSON on the Senate Finance Committee. We have worked together to protect pensions for workers, an area that is very important to all of us. And we helped first-time home buyers. I must tell you, Senator ISAKSON's experience as a realtor helped us get through that issue as to how we could help a recovery at the time that the economy was not doing well.

You see, Senator ISAKSON had taken his experiences as a successful independent real estate leader, president of the largest company in the southeast, to his responsibilities here in the U.S. Senate, taking that business common sense of what works in the community to what can work here in the U.S. Senate.

We have worked together on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. You have heard the examples of what we have been able to do in boosting trade and development in Africa—the Global Food Security Act, which helps starving people around the world. Very few, if any, will ever know Senator ISAKSON's name. Millions have been helped, thanks to the leadership of this incredible U.S. Senator. And you heard the personal example of the Peace Corps, how he went not only the extra mile, but the extra tens of thousands of miles to bring safety to those who volunteered in the Peace Corps.

You have heard Senator ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY talk about the

Health Committee and work he has done on education and health. I particularly appreciate the work on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, a critically important bill that, again, has Senator ISAKSON's motto throughout.

He has been a champion for the people of Georgia and the United States. I particularly appreciated Senator ISAKSON's reference to Congressman JOHN LEWIS who was on the floor during Senator ISAKSON's speech. Congressman LEWIS and I came to the U.S. Congress the same year; we were both elected to Congress in 1987. We have been friends ever since.

Senator ISAKSON is correct that Congressman LEWIS is an icon of civil rights. He says what he believes, and he calls it the way it is. He is not going to change. That is who Senator ISAKSON is as a person. And as JOHN LEWIS said about Senator ISAKSON, "He did not just talk the talk, he literally walked the walk."

Over and over again, Senator ISAKSON has been in the forefront in the civil rights for all Americans.

So to my friend—and I mean a true friend—we will miss you in the U.S. Senate. It is a sad day because we know we will not have the benefit of your wisdom as a Member of the U.S. Senate, but all of us are better off because of being given the opportunity to serve with you in the U.S. Senate.

You said in your comments that you want to come back to ring the bell when we work together to promote the values that made the U.S. Senate the greatest deliberative body in the world. Well, I am going to tell you, I believe we will reach that day sooner because of what Senator ISAKSON has done and the example he has set for all of us. I look forward to ringing that bell with my friend.

With that, I yield floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I rise to join my colleagues today in celebrating the distinguished career of our friend, JOHNNY ISAKSON. It is a great moment for all of us to talk about our shared aspirations as representatives of the American people, to recognize the role that we play—that all Americans play—in supporting our country, and to celebrate some of our successes. We have heard a lot about Senator ISAKSON's successes as a legislator and maybe to shrug off a few of our failures, but reaffirm our determination to make self-government work.

The senior Senator from Georgia did not set out to build a long, storied career in politics, I am told, or even to enter public service at all, for that matter. After graduating from the University of Georgia, he began a 40-year career in real estate. He opened a branch of Northside Realty and would later spend more than 20 years as that company's president.

JOHNNY's career in public service began in a unique way. It was by winning an election that he never entered. He made the mistake of not showing up at a meeting where he was selected as a member of a new commission, as new commission president, with the host of zoning issues that riddled the community, so that was JOHNNY's first election, as the new commission president of the zoning commission.

Of course, in that position, you could imagine he listened to his neighbors' concerns, and he would work with the commission to make improvements, but the truth is, from that point onward, JOHNNY was hooked. He went on to serve in the State house, the State senate, the U.S. House, and finally in the U.S. Senate, as the first and only Georgian to hold all four titles.

As we have heard—but it bears repeating—at each step, he never lost sight of his most important responsibility: to listen to his constituents and to work every day to make their lives just a little better.

Here in the Senate, I have had the privilege, as we all have had, of working with JOHNNY on a number of bills to empower our military, strengthen American agriculture, and improve our Nation's healthcare, but I believe his lasting legacy, the thing that perhaps is the most important to my mind that he should be very proud of—and I know he is—is our collective work together to support our Nation's veterans.

JOHNNY is a veteran himself, and he didn't take the position as chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee lightly. He never stopped listening to America's veterans or fighting to ensure they have the services and the support they have earned.

One of the seminal pieces of legislation that we passed thanks to JOHNNY's leadership was the VA MISSION Act, which made significant reforms to the Department of Veterans Affairs and strengthened healthcare options for all veterans. This was not an easy piece of legislation to move through the legislative process, which, as we all know, under the Constitution and under the way Congress works, essentially, the system is dead set to defeat you, and you have to find a way to navigate it in a way to get things done, which is hard work. But at every step, JOHNNY helped guide this legislation from a bill that looked good on paper to a law that has made a real difference in the lives of our veterans. He did what he does best; that is, listened, learned, negotiated, and built consensus between people who had very different views of what that law should look like. In the end, it was because of his hard work and dedication that it passed and was signed into law.

As great as his legislative impact has been, his personal impact on all of us has been immeasurable. During the time I served as the Republican whip, I had a chance to work with him most often and saw how this soft-spoken master operated.

Two years ago, we were working on tax reform, and I remember one crucial meeting at a luncheon conference we had. We wanted to make sure everybody was on the same page because we knew that failure was not an option. Our Members heard from colleagues who were subject-matter experts, who had been working on tax reform, but I think the most encouraging words we heard came from JOHNNY ISAKSON.

It reminds me of that old movie that Ronald Reagan was in where the coach, Knute Rockne, talked about an ailing player, George Gipp. He talked about winning one for the Gipper. Well, JOHNNY told us to win one for the Gipper that day, and we all left excited, inspired, and eager to accomplish our goals.

That meeting showed a lot about who JOHNNY ISAKSON is. He is rarely the loudest voice in the room, but when he speaks, people listen. He isn't the type to pat himself on the back. He isn't afraid to work behind the scenes or let his work go unnoticed in the press, and he cares about getting results and results alone. He doesn't care who gets the credit.

I believe the reason JOHNNY ISAKSON has been able to accomplish so much here in the Senate—and he has—is because of his focus on building relationships. In fact, as we have heard, you would be hard-pressed to find somebody more well-liked or well-respected by folks on both sides of the aisle.

I think JOHNNY summed it up himself pretty well recently when he said:

It's about relationships. It's about respect. It's about motivation, and it's about getting things done. So make friends. Be a friend, and know how to be a friend. It makes all the difference in the world. I am sure that is true in life in general, but it is certainly true in the U.S. Senate.

That is how our friend JOHNNY ISAKSON has gained the respect of every Senator in this Chamber. He is a straight shooter, a man of great integrity, and an honest broker. He is not just a nice guy by Washington, DC, standards; he is a nice guy by any standard.

I know our friend from Georgia is sad, perhaps, to leave this Chamber, and we are equally sad to bid him farewell. The Halls of Congress will not be the same without JOHNNY ISAKSON.

I will personally miss those Wednesday mornings together at the Senate Prayer Breakfast and catching up with my friend here on the Senate floor. I know we will all miss his great example—this humble man of great integrity, who has taught us all how to work together.

When another Georgia colleague, Saxby Chambliss, retired 5 years ago, Senator ISAKSON said Saxby would join Richard Russell, Zell Miller, and Sam Nunn and become the fourth face on the Mount Rushmore of Georgia Senators. Well, JOHNNY, I think they are going to have to make room for a fifth.

I thank our good friend JOHNNY ISAKSON for his dedicated service to his

State, to our country, and to this institution. I join all of our colleagues in wishing him well, along with his wife, Dianne, their three children, and their eight grandchildren. We wish him all the best as he retires to his beloved Georgia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, a lot of things have been said today, and some things will be repeated, but as I sit here, it occurs to me that the mark of a truly great legislator and a great friend is how many people have an individual story about JOHNNY ISAKSON.

That helpful word at a right time, the ability to come in and solve a problem and get a piece of legislation passed or to get over a particular bump in a piece of legislation—those are the kinds of things that define a great legislator.

All of us have our own personal stories about JOHNNY ISAKSON. My first memory of JOHNNY ISAKSON is long before I met him personally. In 1992, I was hiring a new pollster who also happened to be JOHNNY ISAKSON's pollster. After I hired that pollster, Linda Duvall, she brought in somebody she likes to work with in campaigns. I was looking at some campaign commercials they put together, and there was JOHNNY ISAKSON playing basketball with a bunch of seventh grade boys.

If you can play basketball with seventh grade boys, you can do almost anything. I am going to come back to the seventh grade boys in a minute.

Linda called me a few days later and said: We have been trying to figure out which of our clients you remind us of. She said: We have decided you remind us of JOHNNY ISAKSON. So in 1999, 2 years after I got to the House, when JOHNNY ISAKSON ran for the House, I was eager to meet this guy whom Linda said I reminded her of. It didn't take me very long to find out that Linda had misjudged either me or JOHNNY and that JOHNNY set a different standard than the standard most of us are able to set, but it also encouraged me to want to spend more time with him.

When he got there, I had been there 2 years. I was the chief deputy whip, and our 20 years of close friendship began then. Then I became the whip, and I asked JOHNNY to become one of the deputy whips.

JOHNNY had the worst whip card in the House. All the people he whipped were not the worse people to whip, but he definitely had more than his share of the hardest people to whip. Whoever was the most impatient with everybody else somehow couldn't resist becoming patient with JOHNNY.

Beyond that, JOHNNY somehow was always able to take the time needed. I said that JOHNNY was one of the three whips we had in the House who could take however much time it took to explain an issue to whomever he was explaining it to, in whatever level of information they needed to hear it in. He

could be very simple and basic in his explanation if that is all that was necessary, and he could be incredibly detailed if he had that unique Member who wanted to know everything before they made up their mind. But he was always ready to do what had to be done.

Back to the seventh grade boys. If you could teach a Sunday school class for 30 years that has one group of seventh grade boys after another going through that Sunday school class, you are truly ready to have the patience to be in the U.S. Congress, to be a Member of the House, and then to be a Member of the Senate and to let that become part of your extended family.

JOHNNY has such a great family who is his own family. He and Dianne have a great partnership. Dianne leads in community projects. When there is a First Lady's lunch, Dianne always does the artwork for the First Lady's lunch.

One of things you benefit from on occasion in the Congress is the ability to travel together. That has been mentioned here, some of the travels that JOHNNY has headed—the D-Day operations and other things. Not long after JOHNNY came to Congress, he, Dianne, and I had a chance to travel together. You could just tell their enjoyment in each other and their enjoyment in the people they were getting to know better.

JOHNNY's work at the VA is incredible—the VA MISSION Act, the determination that veterans would have more choices in where they get their healthcare, realizing that young veterans didn't always look at healthcare decisions the same way older veterans did, realizing that people wanted more choices than they had before, realizing that we could make that happen, and also realizing there was a standard of care that we could insist on. JOHNNY passed the legislation that allowed us to do that.

His advocacy for the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta—we have our annual discussion. I chair that committee now, and we have our annual, very subtle but, for me, almost irresistible discussion—somehow the Centers for Disease Control doesn't quite yet have everything they need, and we can do better.

Then there is the Ethics Committee. When JOHNNY announced he was going to retire, I happened to be speaking to our conference at lunch that day, to the Republicans in the Senate, and I said: The bad news is that JOHNNY is leaving. The really bad news is that someone else has to be the chairman of the Ethics Committee.

If there is a job in the Senate that you don't want, it is the Ethics Committee job. If there is a job in the Senate that you need to have exactly the right person in, it is the Ethics Committee job. Somebody has to be chairman.

In one of my favorite books, "To Kill A Mockingbird," the neighbor across the street, Miss Maude, is explaining to

Scout why her father is having to do what her father is doing. I think the best I can remember that quote is that she says someone has to do the jobs that have to be done and that nobody wants to do. JOHNNY ISAKSON has always been willing to do the jobs that have to be done, and he does them in a way that you wonder why everybody doesn't want to do them because he makes them look like they are a lot easier than they are.

We will miss you here, JOHNNY, but we are not going to miss your continued friendship. We all are already planning on how we can come up with a reason to go to Atlanta. For me, it is to check in on the CDC. Thank you for your service. Thank you for your friendship.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleagues on the floor and pay tribute to my colleague from Georgia, Senator ISAKSON, and to congratulate him on his retirement after 20 years in Congress, including the past 15 years in the U.S. Senate.

We worked together on key provisions of the SECURE Act to improve retirement planning for millions of Americans.

I would be remiss if I did not mention all the work he has done on behalf of our veterans. His work on the VA MISSION Act is important to so many people who have served our country.

We also worked together on the Finance Committee for the last 6 years on important issues like affordable housing. There has been no better advocate for the affordable housing tax credit—helping to secure billions of dollars in funding for affordable housing nationwide—than Senator ISAKSON. It is true that my colleague Senator Hatch and I had a bill that helped to increase the affordable housing tax credit, but I guarantee you, there is nobody who understood it better, could explain it better, and could bring more colleagues to join us in support of it than JOHNNY ISAKSON.

I was amazed at a debate in the Finance Committee. Some of our colleagues weren't quite sure of their support, but by the time JOHNNY ISAKSON was done speaking, I think they had to backtrack their opposition and wonder if they would ever take him on in a debate again. I thank him for that because that is an issue that has complexity to it, but at its heart and soul, it is really about providing affordable housing to our fellow human beings, and JOHNNY knew that. I so appreciated his joining us this year again as we fight to get more affordable housing.

We also have worked together on very small things with our colleague Senator FISCHER to make sure that military servicemembers didn't get charged cancellation fees for TV and internet services when they were deployed and to work on diverse issues like mass timber innovation and funding for community health centers.

One thing is clear, though, when you work on all of these issues with JOHNNY ISAKSON, you realize that not only is there great integrity behind the purpose of what he focuses on and great intelligence that he brings to the debate, but there also is just a general kindness to his personality.

You know, sometimes, I think today we have lost that kindness and ability to work across the aisle. When you read stories about our past predecessors, whether it was in the time of Scoop Jackson and Warren Magnuson, I keep thinking: Did they get along because they had to stay here? They couldn't travel all the way back to the Pacific Northwest. So they bonded together. Many of them lived in rooming houses together and did all sorts of activities and got to know each other. Our colleagues lament many times: Where has this Senate gone?

Well, I think today we saw at lunch and have seen many times over the hospitality of barbecue with JOHNNY ISAKSON that you don't have to be with each other on weekends and you don't have to stay here to get to know people. The ability to communicate just a little bit of niceness, a little bit of civility, a little bit of "I will work with you on this important issue" is what it takes to make the Senate work.

JOHNNY, I just want to congratulate you for 20 years of service in the U.S. Senate, but, more importantly, for reminding us what the Senate should be about and that just a few words and a few examples and a common attitude can really bring us together, and we mount an effort to surpass the biggest obstacles that we face because of our regions and our ideologies. That is what we have to get back to.

So, as you go home to Georgia, I hope that you will take our great gratitude for reminding us of all of that, and I know that you will always have a smile, a quick wit about you, something nice to say, and we will always remember you as the Senator who not only got things done but who made us feel like the Senate again. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, when I learned that JOHNNY ISAKSON would be retiring at the end of the year, I was saddened. I served with JOHNNY for a long time, not just here in the Senate, where we were both freshmen Members in 2005, but in the House of Representatives as well, and I have been honored to call him my friend.

It is really hard for me to imagine Congress without JOHNNY. He is, hands down, as I have said, the nicest person ever to serve in the U.S. Senate. He is a model of decency and graciousness and the kind of person who can fight hard every day for the principles that he believes in without ever developing any rancor toward his political opponents.

He is not just kind and decent. He is also a tremendously effective legislator. He is deeply knowledgeable on a

whole range of issues, and he possesses the gift of being able to explain complicated subjects in a very clear way. He gets things done. He doesn't stand around talking about things or playing to the cameras. He just rolls up his sleeves and gets to work, and he makes things happen.

If there was a decency index and we were all rated on that decency index on a scale of 1 to 10, JOHNNY would be the perfect 10. Anybody who knows JOHNNY knows that he has a real passion for people and he has a real passion for veterans.

I had the opportunity to work with JOHNNY on a couple of important issues. We served together on the Senate Finance Committee. Tax reform was something to which he brought tremendous knowledge and experience and know-how. He talked with great understanding about the complicated issues that we had to deal with when it came to reforming our Tax Code. His experience was invaluable as we did something that hadn't been done in over 30 years and reformed an outdated, archaic Tax Code that was keeping us noncompetitive in the global marketplace.

In 2015, he became the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, and he spent the past 5 years working tirelessly to increase accountability at the VA, to improve healthcare for veterans, and to strengthen veterans' benefits. Over the course of 2017 and 2018, the Veterans' Affairs Committee, under JOHNNY, passed 25 pieces of legislation, all of which were signed into law. One of those pieces of legislation was the VA MISSION Act, which was a bill that made significant reforms to the healthcare delivery system for veterans to ensure that veterans have access to the care that they need when they need it.

My wife Kimberley and I have traveled with JOHNNY and Dianne a number of times over the years. One trip that will forever stand out for me is a trip we took led by Senator BURR to a number of World War I and World War II cemeteries in Europe—the Normandy American Cemetery, the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery, and the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery, as well as several others. We walked in battlefields where American soldiers fought and bled, and we visited the graves of young Americans who died on those fields.

It was a profoundly moving trip, especially because we were able to visit the graves of soldiers from our home States of South Dakota and Georgia. While the trip would have been meaningful enough on its own, it was doubly so because JOHNNY cares so much about those issues. It meant so much to him to visit the places where American soldiers had served and died, to remember their sacrifices, and to honor their memory.

I am going to miss working with JOHNNY. His retirement is a real loss for the institution, and I am not the

only Senator who will miss his expertise and dedication, as well as his unflinching graciousness and good humor. The Senate is going to be a poorer place without him.

There have been a lot of tributes to JOHNNY since he announced his decision to retire, and one that I came across that I thought really captured JOHNNY was published in a Georgia magazine. The author of the piece is a political science professor at Kennesaw State University, and this is what he said:

As a political science professor and an administrator, I'm often asked by students if good people can serve in government and keep their integrity. Johnny Isakson is always the first example I come to. It's very often a shocking revelation to most people—that good people can, and often do, serve in government for long periods, fight hard for what they believe in, and remain true to themselves and their principles. And they don't have to sell their souls to do it. It's a great lesson, really.

I remember being down in Georgia with JOHNNY a few years ago on the weekend of the Florida-Georgia football game, and we were at one of the celebrations. I remember being struck by how well known and how well liked JOHNNY was among the college students who were there. Nowadays, we often hear about young people being disillusioned with politics, but I have to tell you that these students weren't disillusioned with JOHNNY ISAKSON. I think that is because they recognized JOHNNY's character. They knew that JOHNNY was somebody who was truly, genuinely committed to making life better for the people of the State and for the people of this country. Here was somebody who had gotten into public service because he genuinely wanted to serve.

Interestingly enough, on that trip we were near the coast of Florida or Georgia, and I had to get back to Macon, GA. My daughter was competing in a cross-country meet there. JOHNNY was kind enough—he was flying back to Atlanta—to take me on that plane and to drop me at Macon, GA, so I could watch my daughter compete.

Interestingly enough, when he got on the plane to go back from Macon to Atlanta, they had engine trouble. They had to make an emergency landing. JOHNNY ended up, I think, having to drive or have somebody—a taxi or somebody—drive him 100 miles from Macon up to Atlanta and his home, but that is the kind of person that he is. He thought it was important for me to be there and to see my daughter compete, and he was always willing to go out of his way to make it possible for somebody to be able to participate in an event like that—a family event.

That is what I think about when I think about his retirement. I am sad about his retirement, but I am happy that he is going to have a chance to spend more time with Dianne, with his family, his children, and his grandchildren. I have been lucky enough to get to know Dianne, as well as JOHNNY,

over the years, and they are just the same—the warmest, kindest, most gracious, most genuine people you will ever meet.

I know that after years of sharing him with the people of Georgia and the American people, Dianne and the rest of the family will enjoy having JOHNNY to themselves for awhile. After all, somebody has to babysit those eight beautiful grandchildren.

The Senate is losing one of its finest Members, but he has more than earned his retirement. I wish him and Dianne the very best in retirement. I pray for God's blessing upon him, and let him know how much we are going to miss him.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I am pleased to join Democrat, Republican, and Independent colleagues alike on the floor today. I understand there is an overflow that is going to be back on the floor tomorrow to say the truth and tell the truth about JOHNNY ISAKSON.

One of my friends likes to say: "Flattery won't hurt you if you don't inhale." JOHNNY, I know a lot of nice things have been said about you today, and more tomorrow, and probably for the rest of the year. So I would just say: Don't inhale too deeply, and you will be just fine.

I just want to follow up on what several of our colleagues have said. A number of them talked about how kind JOHNNY is. He is one of those people who will say hello to the folks who are custodians, the people who may run the elevators, the folks who are the security police here, and he even says nice things to the pages. Can you imagine that? That is true. He is about as kind as anybody you would ever want to meet, and it is not just occasionally. It is like that all the time.

He is also smart. I haven't heard anybody say he is smart. They may have. I may have missed it. I want to say, for the record, that he is one smart fellow—as my mother used to say, smart as a whip. He grasps complex issues, understands them, and is really good at explaining them so that even people like me can usually understand them.

I first met JOHNNY when he was newly elected to the Senate, and we had just established something called orientation. We didn't have orientation for a number of years here. George Voinovich from Ohio, LAMAR ALEXANDER from Tennessee, and Mark Pryor from Arkansas, and I put together a 3-day deal. We called it orientation for new Senators and spouses, and I remember that JOHNNY, I think, was in the first class that came through.

I had been Governor of Delaware for 8 years. I got here in the beginning of 2001. One of the Governors I served with was a Governor from Georgia named Zell Miller. Zell Miller was elected and served two 4-year terms. I think he served two 4-year terms. One of the

people who ran against him was JOHN-
NY ISAKSON. When Senator-elect JOHN-
NY ISAKSON came through orientation
right after he had been elected, I asked
him if he knew Governor Zell Miller. I
thought that they had a connection,
and, sure enough, they did because
they had run against each other in an
earlier year.

There is a saying that some of you
have heard. That saying is something
like this: Just because somebody is
your opponent, doesn't mean they have
to be your enemy.

I don't think I have ever heard any-
body say such nice things, kind things,
and generous things about their oppo-
nent in an earlier election where he
lost and Zell Miller won. That is proof
that your opponent does not have to be
your enemy. For us around here, this
day and age, that is a lesson that we
would do well to take to heart.

One of the other things I want to say
is that I want to share a story I was re-
minded of today by one of my staff
members.

My office is in the Hart Building, and
I have been in the same office for, gosh,
19 years now. My staff doesn't want to
leave. They want to stay there. They
like it. As to what makes them happy,
you know the old saying: Happy wife,
happy life. Well, happy staff, happy
life, too—they want to stay in the of-
fice, and that is where we have stayed.

Once, a number of years ago, when
JOHNNY was relatively new in the Sen-
ate, he came to a meeting on the same
floor, and he came to the wrong Senate
office. He came to my office by mis-
take. He meant to go to the office next
door where David Vitter was, a Senator
from Louisiana. His office was next
door to ours. He came into the en-
trance—the foyer, if you will—of our
office and met a couple of young people
at the front desk there. He came in and
said that he was there to see the Sen-
ator. They were looking at their sched-
ules, trying to figure out what was
going on. They didn't know quite what
to tell him. He was there to see the
Senator, and we had a wonderful gal at
the front desk who was a little bit shy.
He very kindly engaged her in a con-
versation and asked her: Well, tell me
about you.

She offered some things, and when
she stopped, he would just very gently
pull out her story and make her feel
special. There was another fellow at a
desk a short distance away in that
foyer, that entrance to our office. He
was a young man named David, and he
would say to Senator ISAKSON, "Sen-
ator"—and JOHNNY would interrupt
him and keep talking to this young gal
on our staff. JOHNNY would say: I am
not in a rush. Take your time.

David just couldn't get in a word
edgewise. This went on for several min-
utes, and, finally, the young man inter-
rupted, and he said to Senator ISAKSON:
Senator, I think you are in the wrong
office. Who do you think you are here
to see?

He said: Well, David Vitter.

His office was next door to ours at
the time.

He said: You are in Senator TOM CAR-
PER's office.

JOHNNY, without missing a beat, said:
Well, I will just meet with TOM.

And he picked up his stuff, and he
walked into my office. I am sure those
young people hadn't seen anything
quite like that.

We welcomed him warmly. He could
walk into any office, and he would be
welcomed warmly, whether he had an
appointment or not.

Recently, I served with JOHNNY on
the Finance Committee. The fellow
standing behind him is Senator
PORTMAN. We served there together.
Senator BOOZMAN, who is sitting down
next to JOHNNY right now—he and I
serve on the Committee on Environ-
ment and Public Works. In Environment
and Public Works, we had a witness not
long ago who was here for a confirma-
tion hearing, a fellow named Rob Wal-
lace. I know Senator BOOZMAN would
remember him. He had been nominated
to be a very senior guy in the Depart-
ment of Commerce. The job he was
nominated for was to be in charge of
National Parks and in charge of Fish
and Wildlife. It was a big deal. In his
testimony, he talked to us. He used to
work for Senator Malcolm Wallop from
Wyoming. He had a distinguished car-
eer. During his testimony, he said
words I will never forget. He said: Bi-
partisan solutions are lasting solu-
tions.

Think about that.

He said: Bipartisan solutions are
lasting solutions.

JOHNNY ISAKSON is as good at
crafting bipartisan solutions as any-
body I have had the privilege of work-
ing with here. Again, he is a great role
model for us.

I want to close with just a few words
on leadership. In my experience, having
been privileged to be in the Navy for
many years—I served in some wars and
in peace and had the chance to be Gov-
ernor and Senator, Congressman, and
treasurer of my State—I have seen a
lot of leaders. I have seen great leaders.
I have seen some lousy leaders. I expect
that is true of all of us. I have probably
learned more from the not-so-good
leaders as I have learned from the su-
perb leaders. In my experience, leaders
are humble, not haughty. Leaders have
the heart of a servant. They realize
that our job is to serve, not be served.
Leaders have the courage to stay out of
step when everybody else is marching
to the wrong tune. Leaders build
bridges, not walls. They unite, not di-
vide. Leaders surround themselves with
the best team they can find, and when
the team does well, the leader gives the
credit to the team. When the team falls
short, the leader takes the blame. Leaders
don't build themselves up by
tearing others down. In fact, it is just
the opposite. Leaders are aspirational.

There is a French philosopher named
Camus, I think—Albert Camus. He
would say: Leaders are purveyors of

hope. They appeal to our better angels.
Leaders are interested in doing what is
right, not what is easy—not what is ex-
pedient, but what is right. Leaders em-
brace the golden rule: Treat other peo-
ple the way they want to be treated.
Leaders focus on excellence in every-
thing they do. They essentially say: If
it isn't perfect, let's just make it bet-
ter.

Finally, when the really great lead-
ers know they are right, when they are
sure they are right, they don't give up.
They just don't give up. We need lead-
ership here in this building as much as
at any time I can remember. We need
leadership in this Capital City of ours,
and we need leadership in all kinds of
roles across our country. I just want to
say about the leadership qualities I
just described that you can find some
of them in all of us, but in JOHNNY
ISAKSON, you find all of those qualities.

There is a saying: "I would rather see
a sermon than hear one." In JOHNNY
ISAKSON, we see the sermon.

JOHNNY, again, my friend, God bless
you, Dianne, your family, and we will
hold you close to our hearts. We will
always be thankful for you, Thanks-
giving, year-round, forever. God bless
you. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Sen-
ator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, we
have too many people on the floor here
to pay tribute to JOHNNY ISAKSON, and
we all have to go quick. I will be back
again, talking about my buddy from
Georgia.

Let me make a couple of points. One
is—and this is a little straight talk be-
cause I heard so many great things
about him—we ought to know some-
thing else about him, which is, yes, he
is a gentleman; yes, he is a nice guy;
but he has the velvet hammer, as I
have said. That velvet hammer has
driven a lot of nails in around here and
ended up with a lot of great bipartisan
legislation. It is not just because he is
a nice guy. It is because he is intense,
and he is committed and determined
for the people of Georgia as an inde-
pendent voice for his constituents and
for the great country that he loves so
much.

Let me give you one example. We are
working on energy efficiency legisla-
tion right now. I work with JOHNNY on
a number of different legislative
projects. In this particular case, he is
the author of something called the
SAVE Act. The SAVE Act makes good
sense policywise. It helps people reduce
their energy costs and saves them
money on mortgages, but it is not sup-
ported by everybody around here.
There are some powerful groups
against it.

Once again, you will see in the
Portman-Shaheen energy efficiency
package, the SAVE Act is in there, and
it is in there for one reason and one
reason only, and that is because of the
persistence of JOHNNY ISAKSON, a real
estate guy who gets it.

To my friend, I have heard so many
great things about you over the last

several hours. I agree with just about all of them—almost.

To Dianne, who is by far the better half here and such a dear friend of Jane's and mine, we love you. We are going to miss you. We will stay in touch, but we are going to watch you in your retirement as that velvet hammer continues to nail things that are good for your beloved Georgia and for the United States of America.

Thank you, JOHNNY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, keeping with the brevity that we have to exercise now because I know the guest of honor may have to leave the floor and others are going to speak before he leaves, I will write a longer statement for the RECORD with detail.

JOHNNY, it goes without saying—we keep saying it over and over again—how much we are going to miss you, not only because of the bipartisan work you did and the legislative achievements but because of who you are—your decency, your integrity, your warmth even in the heat of a battle. We are grateful for all of that.

I will just make brief mention of a few issues. I will start with the Global Food Security Act, which was started here in the Senate by Senator Dick Lugar way back in the period even before 2009 when I began to work with him. JOHNNY made it possible for us to finally get that passed. What that act does is put into law to authorize into the future the Feed the Future program, one of the most successful programs the U.S. Government ever undertook. Millions of children have been saved from chronic hunger or stunting, where they literally cannot grow because they haven't been able to get enough to eat. That program will now be perpetuated over time because of the work of JOHNNY ISAKSON. I will add more numbers to that in my written version.

Here is how Feed the Future is described in their website: It is a program that works with “partner countries to develop their agricultural sectors and break the vicious cycle of poverty and hunger” the world over for the countries that are participating. I will start with that.

Second—I will be very brief on the next three—is the Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education, the so-called CHGME Program that funds residency programs at children's hospitals. JOHNNY knows about this well in the State of Georgia, and three of those hospitals are in my home State of Pennsylvania. It would not be possible for that program to continue without the good work of JOHNNY ISAKSON.

Third, disabilities. We don't have time for all of it today, but I know that JOHNNY and his wife Dianne have worked with students with disabilities for years, and JOHNNY has been a partner dedicated to improving the lives of people with disabilities. I will go into that in more detail in my written version.

Finally, the last one I will mention for purposes of today, JOHNNY, is the work that you did on the pediatric priority review vouchers program, which makes it possible for drug companies to develop new drugs for rare pediatric diseases.

JOHNNY, you and I are working these days, in these hours, to get the Over-the-Counter Monograph Reform done. Thank you for the work you have done on that.

For these and for so many other reasons, I will conclude with this, JOHNNY. There is an inscription on one of the State government buildings I worked in at Harrisburg, PA, for 10 years. It is a beautiful inscription of public service that applies to you personally and your integrity and to the work you have done: “All public service is a trust, given in faith and accepted in honor.”

You have always accepted that trust the people of Georgia gave you. You have returned that with honor.

We are grateful to be your friend. Congratulations on your work. God bless you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. In the interest of time, I am going to put my remarks in the RECORD, but I do want to take just a moment to thank JOHNNY for his friendship. I won a special election to the House of Representatives and was assigned to the Transportation Committee. Literally, JOHNNY was one of the first people I met there. He was an important person on Transportation.

I was the 435th Member of the House, and he was so very, very kind. He helped me get acclimated.

His wife Dianne was just wonderful to my wife Cathy when I came to the Senate. Nobody was any nicer, again, helping her to get acclimated to the ways of the Senate, and, certainly, this is a family affair. We appreciate that so very much.

I had the honor of serving on the Veterans Affairs Committee. The reality is, we got a bunch done under your leadership. We appreciate that so very much.

Proverbs tells us that a good man is worth more than silver and gold, and that is really what this has all been about this afternoon, just hearing Member after Member express the good name of JOHNNY ISAKSON. We appreciate you, JOHNNY. We truly will miss you more than you know.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I will submit my full comments for the RECORD as others have done. But you can tell, as we continue to go here—and we know that we have a hard stop on the vote at 5 p.m.—Senators just want to be here to express their admiration and their appreciation and their gratitude to Senator ISAKSON. We wish JOHNNY and Dianne the very best in their next endeavors.

It is hard to see Senator ISAKSON leave this body. He has added so much in an amazing and wonderful way for the time that he has been here. It is not just that, hands down, if we were going to vote as to the Senator who everybody appreciates the most, hands down, he would win that in a bipartisan vote. There is not a question about it.

At the same time, each of the Senators has remarked on something substantive and important that JOHNNY has done and they have had a chance to be part of—legislation that affects this Nation and the great people of this country in a real and meaningful way. I want to talk about that for just a minute, and that is the VA MISSION Act.

As the chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee, there is no question that Senator ISAKSON led the effort on behalf of our veterans in so many instances. He passed legislation and did many things to help our veterans—things that will help our veterans, not only today and tomorrow but for years and years to come. Included among those accomplishments is the VA MISSION Act. I had the opportunity to work with him on making sure we could include language in that legislation that would not only make sure that veterans have access to healthcare, medical care—both institutional VA care and from private providers—but also that they could access those VA benefits for long-term care and for home- and community-based care. It is legislation that, thanks to JOHNNY, we were able to include in the VA MISSION Act.

So it is not just about medical care for those veterans. It is about making sure that they can use VA reimbursement to go into nursing homes in their communities if they need nursing home care or if they need home- or community-based care. Again, it is not only the medical care but the long-term care for our veterans that will make the difference for them today, tomorrow, and in the years and years to come. This is the kind of legacy that Senator ISAKSON leaves.

To JOHNNY and Dianne, we say thank you, and God bless you. We wish you the very best.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senators GRAMHAM, TESTER, and MURRAY be allowed to complete their brief remarks before the vote previously scheduled for 5 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I will be brief.

Every one of us can stand here and talk on the floor about JOHNNY ISAKSON ad nauseam.

By the way, I have been watching this on TV, and I appreciate your stick-to-itiveness in your being on the

floor, listening to this. You are a great man.

The fact doesn't escape me that we are standing in the U.S. Senate, a body that has seen so many great Senators over the years. We can go back and have a history lesson on Clay, Calhoun, La Follette, MURRAY, Wheeler, Mansfield, Metcalf, and all of these folks. The truth, though, is the reason we are all here, talking today, is that JOHNNY ISAKSON is a very special guy, and he is special for a number of reasons.

He treats everybody with respect, and because of that, everybody treats him with respect. His word is his bond, and his handshake is worth something in this body, which is not something you see all the time. JOHNNY is somebody who can get things done. I speak from experience in being the ranking member on the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. He has shepherded through many, many very difficult pieces of legislation, and he has done it because he has developed trust.

If we ever get in a foxhole together, JOHNNY, I will have your back. Do you know what? I know you will have mine because you have exhibited it before. It has been such an incredible pleasure to be in this body, serving with you. You are one of those guys who doesn't have to be disagreeable, but if you disagree, you can disagree. Thank you very much. It has been a pleasure to serve with you.

Godspeed to my friend JOHNNY ISAKSON.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. JOHNNY, at some point, this has to be painful for you. Very few people get together at their own funerals.

What we are trying to say is that we like you. You are a breath of fresh air in a body that has a hard time agreeing on much. I have known you since I got into politics. I served in the House with you, and I have served in the Senate with you. I have traveled the world with you. I have played golf with you. I have had dinner with you. I have gotten to know your family.

To sum it up, when it comes to being a U.S. Senator, JOHNNY ISAKSON has become the gold standard.

God bless you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

NOMINATION OF SARAH E. PITLYK

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I want to turn to the nomination that is pending before the Senate and that we will be voting on as soon as I finish my remarks.

I have come to the floor many times to speak in opposition to President Trump's ideologically driven, deeply partisan judicial nominees and to express my frustration that under Republican leadership, the Senate is rubberstamping one lifetime judicial nomination after another. The Republican leaders have been willing to

rubberstamp these nominees whose qualifications are in doubt. A record number have been deemed unqualified by the American Bar Association, whose impartiality is virtually nonexistent and who are, without a doubt, chosen for their commitment to upholding President Trump's agenda rather than to upholding our Nation's laws.

These nominees have sided with shady for-profit colleges rather than with student loan borrowers—just like the President's Department of Education. President Trump's nominees have followed his footsteps on healthcare, ruling and speaking against expanding affordable healthcare to more families. They have allowed major corporations to skirt rules that are intended to help address the urgent threat of the climate crisis.

Perhaps most consistently, President Trump's judicial nominees have adhered to rigid, backward, deeply harmful ideology when it comes to reproductive healthcare. One called Roe v. Wade "radical abortion rights." Another pushed pseudoscience and claimed that birth control can lead to suicide.

The vast majority of women and men in our country would agree that these are not positions you would want a supposedly impartial judge to espouse. Unfortunately, what I have just laid out pales in comparison to what we know of the judicial nominee we are considering today, Sarah Pitlyk.

Ms. Pitlyk, whom the American Bar Association rated as "unqualified," has actively worked to erode women's access to birth control and abortion. She even defended legislation that would have allowed landlords to have evicted their tenants and employers to have fired their employees simply because they had used birth control or had gotten pregnant before they had gotten married.

These views are already wildly invasive and disqualifying. Unfortunately, there is more.

Ms. Pitlyk has also not only expressed her personal bias against assisted reproductive technology, or ART, but she has actually authored briefs that have argued that surrogacy and ART have "grave effects on society."

I am very proud to have personally worked to expand access to in vitro fertilization, or IVF, especially for our military families who struggle with infertility, and I firmly believe all families who face this painful challenge should have our strong support.

My good friend the junior Senator from Illinois, who has spoken powerfully about her struggles with fertility and how IVF gave her the opportunity to realize her dream of motherhood, wrote in a letter to our colleagues: "As a mother who struggled with infertility for years and required IVF to start my family, I would be one of the many Americans who could never enter Ms. Pitlyk's courtroom with any reasonable expectation that my case would be

adjudicated in a fair and impartial manner."

Given Ms. Pitlyk's record of supporting cruel policies that would punish women for accessing basic healthcare like birth control, her support for banning women from exercising their right to abortion, as well as her personal bias and professional actions against starting a family via assisted reproductive technology, I believe a vote in favor of Ms. Pitlyk's nomination would be indefensible.

That is why I ask my colleagues on the Republican side to stop and really consider this vote. If confirmed, Ms. Pitlyk's tenure on the courts will last for decades—well beyond President Trump's last day in the White House. That would mean, for years and years, decisions would be made that we can only expect would harm women and families, restrict women's access to reproductive healthcare, and even potentially jeopardize their ability to become parents. In other words, a vote for Ms. Pitlyk now will keep hurting people long after the President's name-calling on Twitter doesn't drive headlines anymore.

I urge all of my colleagues to do the right thing for women and families today and for years to come and join me in opposing this nomination on the floor.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Sarah E. Pitlyk, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, Richard Burr, Shelley Moore Capito, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, John Barrasso, Roy Blunt, John Thune, Steve Daines, Thom Tillis, Kevin Cramer, Chuck Grassley, Tom Cotton, Rick Scott, Cindy Hyde-Smith, David Perdue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Sarah E. Pitlyk, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Missouri, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) would have voted "nay."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Ms. MCSALLY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 371 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Alexander	Fischer	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blackburn	Graham	Risch
Blunt	Grassley	Roberts
Boozman	Hawley	Romney
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Isakson	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Johnson	Shelby
Cotton	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cramer	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Cruz	McConnell	Toomey
Daines	McSally	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	Young
Ernst	Paul	

NAYS—43

Baldwin	Hassan	Rosen
Bennet	Heinrich	Schatz
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schumer
Brown	Jones	Shaheen
Cantwell	Kaine	Sinema
Cardin	King	Smith
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Manchin	Tester
Collins	Markey	Udall
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murray	Wyden
Feinstein	Peters	
Gillibrand	Reed	

NOT VOTING—7

Booker	Murkowski	Warren
Harris	Rounds	
Klobuchar	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 43.

The motion is agreed to.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the remaining votes in this series be 10 minutes each in length.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will read.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Douglas Russell Cole, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Ohio.

Mitch McConnell, John Hoeven, Steve Daines, James E. Risch, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, John Thune, Mike Rounds, Roy Blunt, Mike Crapo, John Boozman, John Cornyn, Lindsey Graham, Thom Tillis, David Perdue, Chuck Grassley, Rick Scott.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Douglas Russell Cole, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Ohio, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote or change their vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 62, nays 29.

[Rollcall Vote No. 372 Ex.]

YEAS—62

Alexander	Enzi	Paul
Barrasso	Ernst	Perdue
Blackburn	Fischer	Portman
Blunt	Gardner	Reed
Boozman	Graham	Risch
Braun	Grassley	Roberts
Brown	Hawley	Romney
Burr	Hoeven	Rubio
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Carper	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Casey	Jones	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Kennedy	Shelby
Collins	King	Sinema
Coons	Lankford	Sullivan
Cornyn	Leahy	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Cramer	Manchin	Toomey
Crapo	McConnell	Whitehouse
Cruz	McSally	Wicker
Daines	Moran	Young
Durbin	Murphy	

NAYS—29

Baldwin	Heinrich	Schumer
Bennet	Hirono	Shaheen
Blumenthal	Kaine	Smith
Cantwell	Markey	Stabenow
Cardin	Menendez	Tester
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Udall
Duckworth	Murray	Van Hollen
Feinstein	Peters	Warner
Gillibrand	Rosen	Wyden
Hassan	Schatz	

NOT VOTING—9

Booker	Johnson	Rounds
Harris	Klobuchar	Sanders
Isakson	Murkowski	Warren

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas are 62, the nays are 29.

The motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

CHANGE OF VOTE

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, on rollcall vote 372, I voted no. It was my intention to vote aye. Therefore, I ask

unanimous consent that I be permitted to change my vote since it will not affect the outcome.

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

(The foregoing tally has been changed to reflect the above order.)

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of R. Austin Huffaker, Jr., of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Alabama.

Steve Daines, Roy Blunt, John Thune, Richard Burr, John Cornyn, Chuck Grassley, Tom Cotton, Rick Scott, Mike Crapo, Shelley Moore Capito, John Boozman, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith, David Perdue, Mike Rounds, John Hoeven, Mitch McConnell.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of R. Austin Huffaker, Jr., of Alabama, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Alabama, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 88, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 373 Ex.]

YEAS—88

Alexander	Casey	Feinstein
Baldwin	Cassidy	Fischer
Barrasso	Collins	Gardner
Bennet	Coons	Graham
Blackburn	Cornyn	Grassley
Blumenthal	Cortez Masto	Hassan
Blunt	Cotton	Hawley
Boozman	Cramer	Heinrich
Braun	Crapo	Hoeven
Brown	Cruz	Hyde-Smith
Burr	Daines	Inhofe
Cantwell	Duckworth	Johnson
Capito	Durbin	Jones
Cardin	Enzi	Kaine
Carper	Ernst	Kennedy

King	Reed	Stabenow
Lankford	Risch	Sullivan
Leahy	Roberts	Tester
Lee	Romney	Thune
Manchin	Rosen	Tillis
McConnell	Rubio	Toomey
McSally	Sasse	Udall
Menendez	Schatz	Van Hollen
Moran	Schumer	Warner
Murphy	Scott (FL)	Whitehouse
Murray	Scott (SC)	Wicker
Paul	Shaheen	Wyden
Perdue	Shelby	Young
Peters	Sinema	
Portman	Smith	

NAYS—4

Gillibrand	Markey
Hirono	Merkley

NOT VOTING—8

Booker	Klobuchar	Sanders
Harris	Murkowski	Warren
Isakson	Rounds	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 88, the nays are 4.

The motion is agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of David B. Barlow, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, Richard Burr, Shelley Moore Capito, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, John Barrasso, Roy Blunt, John Thune, Steve Daines, Thom Tillis, Kevin Cramer, Chuck Grassley, Tom Cotton, Rand Paul, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of David B. Barlow, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MCSALLY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 88, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 374 Ex.]

YEAS—88

Alexander	Feinstein	Reed
Baldwin	Fischer	Risch
Barrasso	Gardner	Roberts
Bennet	Graham	Romney
Blackburn	Grassley	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hassan	Rubio
Blunt	Hawley	Sasse
Boozman	Heinrich	Schatz
Braun	Hoeven	Schumer
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Burr	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Cantwell	Johnson	Shaheen
Capito	Jones	Shelby
Cardin	Kaine	Sinema
Carper	Kennedy	Smith
Casey	King	Stabenow
Cassidy	Lankford	Sullivan
Collins	Leahy	Tester
Coons	Lee	Thune
Cornyn	Manchin	Tillis
Cortez Masto	McConnell	Toomey
Cotton	McSally	Udall
Cramer	Menendez	Van Hollen
Crapo	Moran	Warner
Cruz	Murphy	Whitehouse
Daines	Murray	Wicker
Duckworth	Paul	Wyden
Durbin	Perdue	Young
Enzi	Peters	
Ernst	Portman	

NAYS—4

Gillibrand	Markey
Hirono	Merkley

NOT VOTING—8

Booker	Klobuchar	Sanders
Harris	Murkowski	Warren
Isakson	Rounds	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 88, the nays are 4.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of David B. Barlow, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. PERDUE. 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 MIKE CARRIGAN

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, nearly one-quarter of Illinois' workforce will see the benefit of a \$15 an our minimum wage by 2025. Also, the State of Illinois is about to embark on a massive \$45 billion infrastructure modernization and construction plan. Simply put, these are life-changing achievements. And behind both is Michael Carrigan.

Since 2010, Mike Carrigan has served as the president of the Illinois AFL-CIO, fighting for working families

across the State. At the end of the year, Mike is retiring from his decades' long service to Illinois' labor unions and its nearly 900,000 members.

In the fall of 2011, Mike was my guest for then-President Obama's joint session of Congress focusing on the economy. Mike had been an authority on creating jobs and putting people back to work for years so the invitation made perfect sense. And Mike was there to applaud a President he had worked hard to elect.

Michael Carrigan was born in Kankakee, IL, and grew up in Kankakee County. After graduating from MacMurray College in Jacksonville and completing a 4-year apprenticeship in Decatur, he became a journeyman electrician. Mike installed wiring at construction sites for everything from nuclear powerplants to fast-food restaurants. Later, he became the business manager and financial secretary for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 146 in Decatur.

In 1995, Mike ran for the city council in Decatur and won. Four years later, Margaret Blackshere chose Mike to be her running mate in an historic bid for the leadership of the Illinois AFL-CIO. Margaret was the first woman to serve as president of the labor organization, and they were the right people for the jobs at the right time. Under the leadership of Margaret and Mike, the AFL-CIO led the fight to raise the State's minimum wage multiple times, developed infrastructure plans, and strengthened labor union membership in Illinois. They brought together diverse groups and built coalitions to improve the lives of working families in Illinois, from infrastructure to healthcare.

When Margaret stepped away from her post in 2007, Mike seamlessly continued the hard work of leading Illinois AFL-CIO. In 2008, the mayor of Decatur resigned abruptly, and the city council picked Mike to finish the term. Like his work in labor, Mike took to his temporary role with enthusiasm. He served for 10 months, providing steady leadership, before returning full time to the AFL-CIO.

In 2015, a newly elected Republican Governor purposely chose Mike's hometown of Decatur to launch a campaign to break Illinois unions with right to work laws. Mike Carrigan did not back away. Mike fought then-Governor Rauner's efforts to weaken workers' rights in every corner of our State. From courtrooms to the picket line, Mike took the fight to Rauner. In 2018, the voters of Illinois retired Bruce Rauner. Within 6 months, Mike had worked behind the scenes to ensure that State workers had a new contract under our new Governor, J.B. Pritzker.

After 20 years of service to the Illinois AFL-CIO, Mike is retiring. Thanks to his hard work and dedication, the outlook for Illinois labor is bright.

Even in retirement, I know Mike will keep busy and will only be a phone call

away. I look forward to catching another Illini/Mizzou Braggins' Rights basketball game with Mike. And his holiday dinner is a favorite of the season for my wife, Loretta, and me.

I am excited to see what Mike does next and I am proud to call him a friend.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD).

VOTE EXPLANATION

● Ms. HARRIS. Madam President, I was absent but had I been present I would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 368 the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 47, Eric Ross Komitee to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of New York. ●

SECURE ACT

Mr. LEE. Madam President, as more Americans enjoy longer lives than ever before, it is more crucial than ever that retirement plans and the policies that govern them keep pace with healthcare innovation and demographic change. That is the reason why a bipartisan coalition in both houses of Congress has proposed the SECURE Act, to modernize retirement savings policies.

For the first time, it would give businesses the option to band together to create pooled retirement plans for their employees, helping them save time and money and expanding access to millions of workers to an indispensable job benefit. This would especially help small businesses who would love to offer their employees retirement plans but simply cannot afford it on their own. It would allow graduate and postdoctoral students to save for their retirements by contributing income from their stipends and fellowships to Individual Retirement Accounts. And it would allow parents to withdraw retirement funds, without penalty, for the birth or adoption of a child, providing special help to younger families when they need it most.

I support all of the above provisions, and to see them enacted, I am willing to accept multiple provisions in this bill that I oppose. Unfortunately, one provision goes over the line, would hurt the very workers it purports to help, and would set a dangerous precedent for Federal policy. This measure would allow a handful of select businesses to cut their required contributions to their workers' pension plans, while still promising those workers full benefits.

Under current law, if a pension plan fails to meet its funding target, the plan sponsor must eliminate the funding shortfall through additional plan contributions, plus interest, over 7 years. The bailout in the SECURE Act, however, would extend that period to 30 years for only a handful of struggling newspapers. Additionally, it would entitle them to legally assume a

higher return on investment than other businesses must use.

This would reduce the amount that certain community newspapers are required to contribute to their employees' plans each month and, given the longer payback window, would also make it less likely that these bailed out companies would ever make up the shortfall. In other words, this bill grants a special bailout to a handful of community newspapers by allowing them to shortchange their workers' pensions.

This is bad policy and bad precedent. This short-sighted strategy might prolong the life of these community newspapers for a while; that is what short-sighted strategies do. But it would only do so at the expense of their employees because, when these newspaper pensions inevitably become insolvent, which is the trajectory they are already on, they will most likely end up in the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation. The PBGC is a federally-chartered business that provides pension insurance through premiums paid by private companies. In other words, all the companies required to pay into the PBGC, but that do not receive a special bailout, will be forced to pay the price. This is the opposite of "secure." We ought not provide special treatment to a select group of community newspapers in the first place. And we certainly shouldn't set the precedent that those bailouts entitle recipients to raid their workers' pensions and then force more prudently run businesses to pick up the tab.

This is why I have an amendment that strikes this pension bailout provision out of the bill. A few weeks ago, Senator TOOMEY offered a reasonable path forward for the SECURE Act. He suggested allowing the Senate to consider the SECURE Act with five Republican amendments and five Democratic amendments of their choosing. Unfortunately, Senator MURRAY refused to accept that proposal, claiming that the amendments are "not in the interest of hardworking Americans."

I respectfully disagree. In addition to my amendment, which would stop corporate bailouts and protect workers from corporate raids on their pension funds, Senator CRUZ and Senator BRAUN have amendments to expand 529 savings accounts. Under their proposals, parents and grandparents could save money for the educational expenses of children with disabilities, for homeschooling, and for apprenticeships and training programs.

All of these amendments are "in the interests of American workers." The Senate should consider each of them. I hope my Democratic colleagues will recognize the need to put this bill on the Senate floor so we can vote on the underlying text, as well as the reasonable amendments that have been proposed.

REMEMBERING KAY HAGAN

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, Senator Kay Hagan was a great friend and a devoted public servant. Her loss has been deeply felt by her many friends in this Chamber.

Kay and I first got to know each other when we were running for the Senate in 2008. Throughout that campaign, we would talk periodically, and her courage in the face of the attacks she dealt with said so much about her character and her strong faith. We were sworn in together as freshmen Senators in 2009, and I had the pleasure of serving alongside her for 6 years.

Throughout her time in the Senate, Kay served the people of North Carolina with integrity. I knew her to be someone who approached every challenge not as a member of a particular political party but as someone who wanted to do right by the people of North Carolina, who were always her top priority.

She brought a valuable perspective on financial matters and significant experience in that arena to the Senate, having worked in the banking sector in North Carolina. During her time on Capitol Hill, she was known as a legislator who was always willing to listen to good ideas—no matter which side of the aisle they came from. I saw this firsthand whenever we collaborated on legislation.

Through her work Senator Hagan sought to leave behind a better nation for our future generations. In our first year in the Senate, we worked closely together on the value and innovation amendment package—an ambitious set of amendments to encourage innovation and drive down costs in healthcare. I was also proud to have worked with her on legislation to do things like strengthen America's housing finance system and bring jobs back to the United States.

Born in Shelby, NC, Kay got involved in public service early on, working as a Senate intern in the 1970s and eventually going on to work on Governor Jim Hunt's campaigns in her home of Guilford County. Before being elected to the Senate, she served in the North Carolina State Senate for 10 years, where she cochaired the budget committee.

Senator Hagan blazed the trail as North Carolina's first female democratic Senator and as the second woman to ever serve as Senator of her State. Championing a number of bills to fund expanded screening for newborns, provide medical assistance to families exposed to toxic drinking water, and safeguard tuition funding for servicemembers, Senator Hagan spent her career fighting for the well-being of North Carolina families.

Senator Hagan will be remembered as a leader within her community and as someone who was not afraid to stand for what was right. My heart goes out to her husband, Chip; her three children, Jeannette, Tilden and Carrie; her beloved grandchildren; and her whole family.

TRIBUTE TO MARK COVALL

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, I rise to recognize Mr. Mark Covall, who, after 34 years with the National Association for Behavioral Healthcare, NABH, is retiring.

For the past 24 years, Mark ably served as the president and CEO of the NABH, which was founded in 1933 to advocate for the interests of behavioral healthcare systems and providers that treat children, adolescents, adults, and senior citizens with mental health and substance use disorders. Under Mark's steadfast leadership, NABH helped to secure parity in mental and general healthcare services, paving the way for the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008. More recently, Mark and NABH helped to ensure that Congress enacted the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act and 21st Century Cures Act in 2016 and the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act in 2018.

Mark's leadership in coalition-building, as well as his work to develop strong relationships with behavioral healthcare providers, government officials, and associations such as the American Hospital Association, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Mental Health America, and the Kennedy Forum, explain why he has been as effective in influencing regulation as he has been in advancing legislation. I am told others in the behavioral health field would go to Mark for his insight, knowing he is one of the behavioral healthcare community's most well-informed and strongest advocates.

Today, I join others in the mental health community in thanking Mark Covall for his decades of leadership, dedication, and passion for ensuring that millions of Americans have access to quality mental health and addiction treatment services.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING TOMATO EXPRESS

• Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, as the chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize a small business that exemplifies the unique American entrepreneurial spirit. Small businesses are the backbone of our economy: creating jobs, fostering economic growth, and providing services to their local communities. This week, it is my pleasure to honor a small business that exemplifies these qualities, Tomato Express of Kissimmee, FL.

More than 28 years ago, the Siracuza family decided to immigrate to the United States, leaving behind their home in Argentina and bringing with them the hope of achieving the American dream. When Pedro, Stella, and Luis Siracuza arrived in Florida, they discovered that quality Hispanic foods were difficult to find in their Kissimmee community. This observation

marked the beginning of their entrepreneurial journey. In November 1991, the Siracuzas opened the first Tomato Express, a small produce stand selling local fruits and vegetables. As Kissimmee's Hispanic population grew, Tomato Express's business expanded until their produce stand became too small to support their customer base and sales numbers. After securing private funding and a Small Business Administration loan, the Siracuza family was able to grow from a small produce stand into a larger grocery store.

Today, Tomato Express still focuses on their original vision, supplying quality Hispanic foods for their community. The Tomato Express grocery store now offers locally sourced fruit, vegetables, meat, and imported beers and wines. In its deli and bakery, Tomato Express offers various homemade Hispanic dishes from both Central and South America, but its main focus remains authentic Argentinian cuisine.

The Siracuza family has been recognized for their part in making Kissimmee the dynamic and innovative community that it is today. In 2016, the Osceola Chamber of Commerce presented Stella Siracuza with the Compadre Award commemorating her numerous contributions to the Hispanic community. As a family-owned business, Tomato Express is dedicated to giving back to the community that is their home. For example, Tomato Express is a devoted sponsor to Orlando's Community Vision, Inc., which aims to allocate resources to solve the community's complex issues with innovative solutions. The Siracuzas' expansion and success of Tomato Express has also inspired entrepreneurs in their community to open Hispanic food businesses.

Today, the Siracuza family's initiative and passion has made them a vital part of the Kissimmee community and economy. The Siracuzas' entrepreneurial journey is a key example of the success that can be achieved through dignified work. I offer my sincere congratulations to the Siracuza family and the entire team at Tomato Express, and I look forward to watching your continued growth and success.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:07 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 2103(b), and the order of the House of January 3, 2019, the Speaker appoints the following individual to the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center in the Library of Congress on the part of the House of Representatives for a term of 6 years: Mr. Robert Anacletus Underwood of Hagatna, Guam.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 6:09 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker pro tempore

(Mr. BEYER) has signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 887. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 877 East 1200 South in Orem, Utah, as the "Jerry C. Washburn Post Office Building".

H.R. 1252. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6531 Van Nuys Boulevard in Van Nuys, California, as the "Marilyn Monroe Post Office".

H.R. 1253. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 13507 Van Nuys Boulevard in Pacoima, California, as the "Ritchie Valens Post Office Building".

H.R. 1526. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Israel Road Southeast in Tumwater, Washington, as the "Eva G. Hewitt Post Office".

H.R. 1844. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 66 Grove Court in Elgin, Illinois, as the "Corporal Alex Martinez Memorial Post Office Building".

H.R. 1972. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1100 West Kent Avenue in Missoula, Montana, as the "Jeannette Rankin Post Office Building".

H.R. 2151. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7722 South Main Street in Pine Plains, New York, as the "Senior Chief Petty Officer Shannon M. Kent Post Office".

H.R. 2325. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 100 Calle Alondra in San Juan, Puerto Rico, as the "65th Infantry Regiment Post Office Building".

H.R. 2334. An act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Odessa, Texas, as the "Wilson and Young Medal of Honor VA Clinic".

H.R. 2451. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 575 Dexter Street in Central Falls, Rhode Island, as the "Elizabeth Buffum Chace Post Office".

H.R. 3144. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 8520 Michigan Avenue in Whittier, California, as the "Jose Ramos Post Office Building".

H.R. 3314. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1750 McCulloch Boulevard North in Lake Havasu City, Arizona, as the "Lake Havasu City Combat Veterans Memorial Post Office Building".

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-3315. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Almonds Grown in California; Revisions to the Accepted User Program Requirements and New Information Collection" ((7 CFR Part 981) (Docket No. AMS-SC-18-0099)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2019; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3316. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Dried Prunes Produced in California;

Decreased Assessment Rate” ((7 CFR Part 993) (Docket No. AMS-SC-19-0056)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2019; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3317. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Swine Health Protection Act; Amendments to Garbage Feeding Regulations” ((RIN0579-AE50) (Docket No. APHIS-2018-0067)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 27, 2019; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3318. A communication from the Director of the Issuances Staff, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Publication Method for Lists of Foreign Countries Eligible to Export Meat, Poultry, or Egg Products to the United States” ((RIN0583-AD72)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2019; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3319. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Bruce H. Lindsey, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of vice admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3320. A communication from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to serious human rights abuse and corruption that was declared in Executive Order 13818 of December 20, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3321. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, two (2) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3322. A communication from the Director, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Truth in Lending (Regulation Z); Screening and Training Requirements for Mortgage Loan Originators With Temporary Authority” (12 CFR Part 1026) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 19, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3323. A communication from the Assistant Director for Regulatory Affairs, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Venezuela Sanctions Regulations” (31 CFR Part 591) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 20, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3324. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Prohibitions and Restrictions on Proprietary Trading and Certain Interests in, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds” ((RIN3064-AE67)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 20, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3325. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist, Office of the Comptroller

of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Other Real Estate Owner and Technical Amendments” ((RIN1557-AE50)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 22, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3326. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Appraisals for Higher-Priced Mortgage Loans Exemption Threshold” ((RIN1557-AE68)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 22, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3327. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Addition of Entities to the Entity List, Revision of an Entry on the Entity List, and Removal of Entities from the Entity List” ((RIN0694-AH85)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 25, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3328. A communication from the Senior Legal Advisor for Regulatory Affairs, Departmental Offices, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “IMARA Calculation Under the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program” ((RIN1505-AC62)) (31 CFR Part 50)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3329. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Temporary General License: Extension of Validity” ((RIN0694-AH97)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3330. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Temporary General License: Extension of Validity” ((RIN0694-AH97)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3331. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting proposed legislation to provide for utility incentives that the Department of Homeland Security may receive, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-3332. A joint communication from the Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, and the Administrator, Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “2018 Status of the Nation’s Highways, Bridges, and Transit: Conditions and Performance”; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3333. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Miscellaneous Corrections” ((RIN3150-AK34))

received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 21, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3334. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Connecticut; Regional Haze Five Year Progress Report” ((FRL No. 10002-42-Region 1)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 22, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3335. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Vermont; Reasonably Available Control Technology for the 2008 and 2015 Ozone Standards” ((FRL No. 10002-16-Region 1)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 22, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3336. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes; Ohio; Redesignation of the Ohio Portion of the Steubenville Sulfur Dioxide Nonattainment Area” ((FRL No. 10002-56-Region 5)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 22, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3337. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Increasing Recycling: Adding Aerosol Cans to the Universal Waste Regulations” ((RIN2050-AG92)) ((FRL No. 10002-49-OLEM)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 22, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3338. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “North Dakota: Codification and Incorporation by Reference of Approved State Underground Storage Tank Program” ((FRL No. 10000-51-Region 8)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 22, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3339. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Accidental Release Prevention Requirements: Risk Management Programs under the Clean Air Act” ((RIN2050-AG95)) ((FRL No. 10002-69-OLEM)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 27, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3340. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Iowa; Revisions to Regional Haze Plan and Visibility Requirements in Infrastructure State Implementation Plans for the 2006 PM2.5, 2012 PM2.5, 2010 NO2, 2010 SO2, 2008 Ozone, and 2015 Ozone NAAQS” ((FRL No. 10001-89-Region 7)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 27, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3341. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to California State Implementation Plan; Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District and Ventura County Air Pollution Control District; Nonattainment New Source Review Requirements for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone Standard" (FRL No. 10001-66-Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 27, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3342. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to sections 36(c) and (d) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the manufacture of significant military equipment abroad and the export of defense articles, including technical data and defense services to the Philippines for the manufacture of 22 Magnum pistols in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 17-085); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3343. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license amendment for the export of firearms, parts, and components abroad controlled under Category I of the U.S. Munitions List of .300 caliber automatic rifles and spare parts to the Netherlands in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 19-066); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3344. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Estate and Gift Taxes, Difference in the Basic Exclusion Amount" (RIN1545-BO72) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3345. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Guidance to Qualified States Requesting Allocations of Unused Low-Income Housing Credit Carryovers" (Rev. Proc. 2019-45) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 26, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3346. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicaid Program; Covered Outpatient Drug; Further Delay of Inclusions of Territories in Definitions of States and United States" (RIN0938-AT09) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 22, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3347. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Per Diem Allowances" (Rev. Proc. 2019-48) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 27, 2019; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3348. A communication from the Director, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Labor's fiscal year 2016, fiscal year 2017, and fiscal year 2018 Office of Workers' Compensation Programs annual report; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3349. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Fiscal Year 2017 Performance Report to Congress for the Office of Combination Products"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3350. A communication from the Senior Advisor, Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3351. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Food Labeling: Calorie Labeling of Articles of Food Sold From Certain Vending Machines; Front of Package Type Size" (RIN0910-AH83) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 22, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3352. A communication from the Division Director for Policy, Legislation, and Regulation, Employment and Training Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Procurement Roles and Responsibilities for Job Corps Contracts" (RIN1205-AB96) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 25, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3353. A communication from the Acting Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of General Counsel, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Priority for Discretionary Grant Programs" (RIN1875-AA12) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 27, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3354. A communication from the Acting Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Office of General Counsel, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Total and Permanent Disability Discharge of Loans under Title IV of the Higher Education Act" (RIN1840-AD48) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 27, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3355. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Title I, Part C—Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged; Education of Migratory Children" (RIN1810-AB49) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 27, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3356. A communication from the Deputy Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits" (29 CFR Part 4022) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on December 2, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. CRAPO, from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, without amendment:

S. 2877. A bill to reauthorize the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act of 2002, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. ALEXANDER for the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

*Richard Giacalone, of Virginia, to be Federal Mediation and Conciliation Director.

*Cynthia L. Attwood, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission for a term expiring April 27, 2025.

*Amanda Wood Laihow, of Maine, to be a Member of Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission for the remainder of a term expiring April 27, 2023.

*Stephen Hahn, of Texas, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. UDALL, and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

S. 2963. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to allow certain individuals to terminate contracts for telephone, multichannel video programming, or internet access service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2964. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend the authority of the Secretary of Transportation to issue non-premium aviation insurance; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2965. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to repeal the requirement that the United States Postal Service prepay future retirement benefits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. MANCHIN, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2966. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make permanent the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to transport individuals to and from facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs in connection with rehabilitation, counseling, examination, treatment, and care, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself and Ms. SINEMA):

S. 2967. A bill to establish the Commission on Intergovernmental Relations of the United States to facilitate the fullest cooperation, coordination, and mutual accountability among all levels of government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2968. A bill to provide consumers with foundational data privacy rights, create strong oversight mechanisms, and establish meaningful enforcement; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. JONES (for himself and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 2969. A bill to expand adoption opportunities; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. ERNST (for herself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. MCSALLY, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2970. A bill to improve the fielding of newest generations of personal protective equipment to the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. JONES):

S. 2971. A bill to amend and reauthorize the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. JONES, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. Res. 445. A resolution recognizing the goals and ideals of International Day of Persons with Disabilities; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 225

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 225, a bill to provide for partnerships among State and local governments, regional entities, and the private sector to preserve, conserve, and enhance the visitor experience at nationally significant battlefields of the American Revolution, War of 1812, and Civil War, and for other purposes.

S. 279

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 279, a bill to allow tribal grant schools to participate in the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program.

S. 460

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 460, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the exclusion for employer-provided education assistance to employer payments of student loans.

S. 479

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 479, a bill to revise section 48 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes.

S. 511

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 511, a bill to promote and protect from discrimination living organ donors.

S. 851

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 851, a bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to issue an occupational safety and health standard that requires covered employers within the health care and social service industries to develop and implement a comprehensive workplace violence prevention plan, and for other purposes.

S. 901

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to support individuals with younger onset Alzheimer's disease.

S. 1130

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1130, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve the health of children and help better understand and enhance awareness about unexpected sudden death in early life.

S. 1190

At the request of Mrs. CAPITO, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1190, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for payments for certain rural health clinic and Federally qualified health center services furnished to hospice patients under the Medicare program.

S. 1354

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1354, a bill to require certain protections for student loan borrowers, and for other purposes.

S. 1376

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1376, a bill to amend parts B and E of title IV of the Social Security Act to eliminate barriers to providing child welfare services for children and youth in need, to provide additional resources to implement programmatic changes necessary to meet the requirements of the Family First Prevention Services Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1381

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr.

BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1381, a bill to modify the presumption of service connection for veterans who were exposed to herbicide agents while serving in the Armed Forces in Thailand during the Vietnam era, and for other purposes.

S. 1392

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1392, a bill to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct an assessment of the responsibilities, workload, and vacancy rates of suicide prevention coordinators of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 1399

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1399, a bill to amend title VIII of the Public Health Services Act to revise and extend nursing workforce development programs.

S. 1657

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1657, a bill to provide assistance to combat the escalating burden of Lyme disease and other tick and vector-borne diseases and disorders.

S. 1677

At the request of Mr. PERDUE, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1677, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide authority to postpone certain deadlines by reason of State declared disasters or emergencies.

S. 1757

At the request of Ms. ERNST, the names of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER), the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1757, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the United States Army Rangers Veterans of World War II in recognition of their extraordinary service during World War II.

S. 1781

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) were added as cosponsors of S. 1781, a bill to authorize appropriations for the Department of State for fiscal years 2020 through 2022 to provide assistance to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras through bilateral compacts to increase protection of women and children in their homes and communities and reduce female homicides, domestic violence, and sexual assault.

S. 1791

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1791, a bill to prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion,

sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), and marital status in the administration and provision of child welfare services, to improve safety, well-being, and permanency for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning foster youth, and for other purposes.

S. 1891

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1891, a bill to provide for the inclusion on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall of the names of the soldiers who died on Flying Tiger Flight 739 on March 16, 1962.

S. 1979

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1979, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to provide for the minimum size of crews of freight trains, and for other purposes.

S. 2054

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2054, a bill to posthumously award the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to Glen Doherty, Tyrone Woods, J. Christopher Stevens, and Sean Smith, in recognition of their contributions to the Nation.

S. 2085

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2085, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to eligible entities to carry out educational programs about the Holocaust, and for other purposes.

S. 2108

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2108, a bill to amend section 6903 of title 31, United States Code, to provide for additional population tiers, and for other purposes.

S. 2216

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2216, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to formally recognize caregivers of veterans, notify veterans and caregivers of clinical determinations relating to eligibility for caregiver programs, and temporarily extend benefits for veterans who are determined ineligible for the family caregiver program, and for other purposes.

S. 2246

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2246, a bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to provide equal coverage of in vitro specific IgE tests and percutaneous tests

for allergies under the Medicare and Medicaid programs, and for other purposes.

S. 2414

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2414, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the Health Coverage Tax Credit.

S. 2427

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2427, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint and issue quarter dollars in commemoration of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2481

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2481, a bill to facilitate effective research on and treatment of neglected tropical diseases through coordinated domestic and international efforts.

S. 2529

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2529, a bill to amend the Commodity Exchange Act and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to modify provisions relating to whistleblower incentives and protection, and for other purposes.

S. 2590

At the request of Mr. BRAUN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2590, a bill to protect the dignity of fetal remains, and for other purposes.

S. 2619

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2619, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the Healthy Start program.

S. 2680

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. JONES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2680, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign support for Palestinian terrorism, and for other purposes.

S. 2772

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2772, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for treatment of clinical psychologists as physicians for purposes of furnishing clinical psychologist services under the Medicare program.

S. 2794

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2794, a bill to provide for the creation of the Missing Armed Forces Personnel

Records Collection at the National Archives, to require the expeditious public transmission to the Archivist and public disclosure of Missing Armed Forces Personnel records, and for other purposes.

S. 2819

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2819, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the income-based limitations for the Lifetime Learning Credit, and for other purposes.

S. 2826

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2826, a bill to require a global economic security strategy, and for other purposes.

S. 2842

At the request of Mrs. CAPITO, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2842, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act and the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 to expand and expedite access to cardiac rehabilitation programs and pulmonary rehabilitation programs under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 2857

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2857, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to count military and veterans education benefits as Federal educational assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 2898

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2898, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for a full annuity supplement for certain air traffic controllers.

S. 2961

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2961, a bill to establish duties for online service providers with respect to end user data that such providers collect and use.

S. CON. RES. 23

At the request of Mr. CRAMER, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 23, a concurrent resolution honoring the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge fought during World War II, recognizing the valiant efforts of the Allied Forces in December 1944, and remembering those who made the ultimate sacrifice, all of which contributed to the Allied victory in the European Theater.

S. RES. 98

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Nevada

(Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 98, a resolution establishing the Congressional Gold Star Family Fellowship Program for the placement in offices of Senators of children, spouses, and siblings of members of the Armed Forces who are hostile casualties or who have died from a training-related injury.

S. RES. 404

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 404, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States should work in cooperation with the international community and continue to exercise global leadership to address the causes and effects of climate change, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 410

At the request of Mr. JONES, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 410, a resolution establishing a McCain-Mansfield Fellowship Program in the Senate.

S. RES. 411

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 411, a resolution affirming that States maintain primacy for the regulation of hydraulic fracturing for oil and natural gas production on State and private lands, that the President has no authority to declare a moratorium on the use of hydraulic fracturing on State and private lands, and that the President should not attempt to declare a moratorium on the use of hydraulic fracturing on Federal lands (including the Outer Continental Shelf) or lands held in trust for an Indian Tribe, unless the moratorium is authorized by an Act of Congress.

S. RES. 418

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 418, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the Government of Turkey's crackdown on dissent related to its incursion into northeast Syria, and broader human rights violations.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 445—RECOGNIZING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. JONES, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 445

Whereas December 3 of each year is recognized internationally as International Day of Persons with Disabilities;

Whereas the United Nations (UN) states that the observance of International Day of Persons with Disabilities aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights, and well-being of persons with disabilities and seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic, and cultural life;

Whereas over 1,000,000,000 people, or 15 percent of the world's population, live with some form of disability;

Whereas 80 percent of individuals with disabilities live in developing countries;

Whereas there are more than 93,000,000 children with disabilities worldwide according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF);

Whereas the prevalence of disabilities is approximately 50 percent higher for women than for men, and women make up 75 percent of all individuals with disabilities in low- and middle-income countries, according to UN Women;

Whereas persons with disabilities are often excluded from the labor market, political participation and meaningful involvement in public life and are more likely to experience poverty, discrimination, social stigmatization, and lack of access to vital and inclusive resources;

Whereas children with disabilities are more likely to be malnourished, subject to violence, isolation, and abuse, and less likely to attend school than children without disabilities;

Whereas issues related to disability rights cut across all sectors of foreign assistance, including democracy, voting and elections, human rights, civil rights, labor, global health, education, economic growth and trade, gender equality and women's empowerment, agriculture and food security, water and sanitation, conflict transformation, disaster risk reduction, and humanitarian recovery and relief;

Whereas there are 59,500,000 people forcibly displaced worldwide and displaced people are more likely to have a disability, according to the UN High Commission for Refugees;

Whereas forced displacement amplifies the risk experienced by refugees with disabilities with respect to violence, including sexual and domestic abuse, trafficking, exploitation by family members, discrimination, and exclusion from access to justice, education, livelihoods, a nationality, and other public services;

Whereas people with disabilities are often members of marginalized groups, including women, young people, older adults, the LGBTI community, ethnic and religious minorities, indigenous people, internally displaced people, and refugees;

Whereas the United States has shown leadership domestically on disability rights with the enactment and implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-325), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), as well as section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794), and this leadership should be leveraged to support international disability rights;

Whereas United States support for the rights of individuals with disabilities—

(1) is in the diplomatic, economic, and humanitarian interests of the United States;

(2) generates goodwill toward the United States; and

(3) highlights the values of the people of the United States through the work of governmental, nongovernmental, and faith-based organizations of the United States;

Whereas the United States Government, through the United States Agency for Inter-

national Development (USAID), promotes disability-inclusive development by—

(1) improving the quality and accessibility of education for students with disabilities through the promotion of sign language, Braille, access to assistive technology, and other inclusive education practices;

(2) increasing the participation of people with disabilities in political processes through national awareness campaigns, use of accessible polling stations and voter materials, and open exchange between disability communities and politicians to update election laws to be more inclusive and compliant with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;

(3) strengthening organizations run by and for people with disabilities to advocate on their own behalf, design, and implement international development programs and access direct funding;

(4) supporting the economic independence of women with disabilities through micro-credit programs that provide seed grants to women to invest in their families and start new businesses;

(5) integrating youth and adults with disabilities into the competitive workforce by facilitating job training, internship opportunities, and educating employers on best practices for hiring people with disabilities; and

(6) ensuring community health care providers and disaster response experts include people with disabilities in their programs by employing the principles of universal design; and

Whereas the inclusion of people with disabilities is a fundamental part of democracy, and essential to the full realization of human rights: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes December 3, 2019, as International Day of Persons with Disabilities;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of International Day of Persons with Disabilities;

(3) recognizes the importance of supporting the rights of individuals with disabilities both domestically and abroad;

(4) supports efforts by the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development to promote disability-inclusive development;

(5) supports continued leadership by the United States in bilateral, multilateral, and private sector efforts to promote and protect the rights of individuals with disabilities; and

(6) encourages other members of the international community to protect the rights and civil liberties of individuals with disabilities.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I have 6 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, December 3, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, December 3, 2019, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, December 3, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Stephen Hahn, of Texas, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services, Richard Giacalone, of Virginia, to be Federal Mediation and Conciliation Director, and Cynthia L. Attwood, of Virginia, and Amanda Wood Laihow, of Maine, both to be a Member of Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, December 3, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CLEAN AIR AND NUCLEAR
SAFETY

The Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety of the Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, December 3, 2019, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The Subcommittee on Intellectual Property of the Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, December 3, 2019, at 3 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY,
DECEMBER 4, 2019

Mr. PERDUE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Wednesday, December 4; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business

be closed, and the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of Executive Calendar No. 47 under the previous order.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:36 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, December 4, 2019, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate December 3, 2019:

THE JUDICIARY

ERIC ROSS KOMITTEE, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.