

who had the privilege to call him a friend and colleague. Almost everyone who served with John in his three-plus decades in the House has a story or two to tell. I certainly do.

I fondly remember traveling with John to Ireland as part of a peace and reconciliation summit organized by the Faith and Politics Institute in 2014. During our trip, I remember how young Irish activists connected with John's powerful work as a civil rights leader committed to nonviolent resistance to oppression and peaceful reconciliation.

The following year, I proudly marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge with John to mark the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday. One of the most cherished pictures in my office is one of John, me, and the late Hawaii Congressman Mark Takai from that day, and we were all wearing lei flown in from Hawaii.

Mark, whom we also lost too soon to pancreatic cancer 4 years ago, and I organized the delivery of hundreds of lei that day to commemorate the gift from Hawaii's Rev. Abraham Akaka to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 50 years ago for the third march in Selma. News footage from that time showed Dr. King and other leaders wearing the white carnation lei sent by Reverend Akaka, the brother of the late Senator Dan Akaka.

Over the years, that photo of the three of us in our fresh lei has always brought a smile to my face.

I know many of my colleagues have similar stories to share, and it has been meaningful to hear so many people on both sides of the aisle recognize John's life and work in statements and speeches.

It is certainly appropriate to honor John with our words, but it would be better if we honored John through our actions, because while John was certainly a gifted orator, he was also a man of action—of “good trouble.”

The best way for us to honor John's extraordinary life's work would be for the Senate to vote on and pass the Voting Rights Advancement Act, now re-named in John's honor. Action, not just words.

#### CORONAVIRUS

On education, last week we heard two unbelievable and frankly horrifying statements from the Trump administration about its push to reopen our schools. On CNN's “State of the Union,” Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos claimed that “there's nothing in the data that suggests that kids being in school is in any way dangerous.” Later in the week, White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany responded to criticism of the President's position on school reopenings and said: “The science should not stand in the way of this.”

These comments reflect a President and an administration's disregard for the health and safety of our teachers, students, and families.

The President and his enablers accuse Democrats of pushing back on his

administration's reckless policies for political reasons. The truth is, if there is one thing President Trump has made clear time and again, it is that he doesn't do anything without a self-serving political motive.

Come on. We all want our schools to open, including the teachers, parents, and the students I have spoken with. But, of course, we want schools to open safely, without risking exposure to the virus, and I really don't understand why Betsy DeVos doesn't get this.

Reopening our schools safely in the midst of this pandemic would be challenging even with competent leadership in the White House and the Department of Education. Instead, we have a President and Secretary of Education who threaten to withhold funding for schools that refuse to reopen, who support sweeping mandates for schools to reopen before it is safe to do so, and who push the CDC to weaken its guidelines on schools reopening.

The cavalier disregard for our students, teachers, principals, and administrative staff has produced considerable uncertainty in States and local communities already under tremendous stress during this pandemic. Increasingly, they are forced to create their own guidelines, leaving students, teachers, parents, and principals unsure about how to return to school safely. This uncertainty is contributing to a growing anxiety across our country, but it is a more proximate concern in Hawaii, where school districts are scheduled to reopen on August 4—less than 2 weeks away.

Earlier this summer, the Hawaii Department of Education and the Hawaii State Teachers Association corroborated on a plan to provide individual schools a measure of freedom to decide how best to begin the school year. At the time, the low numbers of COVID cases provided optimism that some schools could reopen for at least some in-person instruction at the beginning of the school year. An evolving set of facts on the ground, including a rise in new COVID infections in our State, led the Hawaii State Teachers Association to announce its opposition to resuming in-person instruction on August 4.

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, HGEA, and United Public Workers, UPW, represent school support staff. Both unions have joined HSTA in urging the State to delay students returning to classrooms, citing “lack of health strategies to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus on public school campuses.” Their position reflects the importance of relying on science and public health data to make decisions about our schools.

If circumstances warrant, our policies should change to ensure a safe learning environment. As school districts confront difficult choices with painful tradeoffs, our students and educators deserve certainty, resources, and support from the Federal Government.

I heard this message consistently in my conversations with educators and

students in Hawaii over the last 2 weeks during our State work period. Teachers are particularly concerned about how looming budget shortfalls in Hawaii could lead to a massive round of teacher layoffs and furloughs and broader cuts to education programs. These layoffs and furloughs would have devastating consequences for educators, their families, and the students they teach.

An elementary teacher in Kona on Hawaii Island told me how the threat of furloughs and budget cuts are impacting his life. He is the son of Central American immigrants and a first-generation college graduate. He and his fiancée, who is also a teacher, would like to buy a home and start a family, but they can't proceed with their plans under the threat of being furloughed. He has been a teacher for 9 years and loves his job.

Teachers are also concerned about being forced to return to school to teach without adequate childcare for their own school-age children, some of whom may be physically in classrooms or not. A middle school teacher in Ewa on Oahu had to quit her job and return to Maryland so her parents could care for her infant daughter. The school has been forced to fill the position with substitute teachers who are not certified.

Another major concern for teachers is the learning loss that accelerates when students are not in class.

A high school science teacher on Maui is worried that his students do not have the technology and devices they need to be successful in a distance learning model. Teachers must share computer carts because their school doesn't have enough laptops for each student. He is worried about how students will complete their assignments if they are learning from home 2 or more days a week.

A teacher at my alma mater, Kaimuki High School, added that many of her students either share laptops or don't have access to a laptop or tablet at home.

Student government leaders I have spoken with have also shared their concerns about learning loss and how the pandemic has transformed their education.

A recent graduate headed to college in Boston commented that distance learning was difficult for her to navigate because she did not have access to technology growing up. She described the move to distance learning as “frantic” and explained that it was “discouraging” to continue her studies without the student-teacher interactions she previously had.

A rising senior at Moanalua High School in Honolulu shared how difficult it was to stay motivated through distance learning, especially as his peers stopped participating. He acknowledged that he had probably experienced learning loss.

Another senior found it harder to learn online because she is a visual

learner. Some of her teachers did not offer visual lessons, so she had to teach herself. She also found that less interaction with teachers made it more difficult for her to complete her assignments.

These stories underscore the urgency and immediacy of the challenges we face in reopening our schools.

It is time for the Senate to step up and confront this crisis in American education. The first thing we should do is pass the Heroes Act—legislation our colleagues in the House passed over 2 months ago. Heroes provides an additional \$90 billion in an education-stabilization fund, but we should go even further. Recently, I joined 40 of my Democratic colleagues to request an additional \$175 billion for K–12 schools through the Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief Fund. These funds would help schools purchase cleaning supplies and laptop computers and implement programs to make sure we are meeting the social, emotional, and academic needs of our students.

Hawaii's superintendent estimates this need would cost \$234 million for our students just in Hawaii. We have a statewide school system with about 180,000 students K–12. These programs are especially important for our vulnerable students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, students with disabilities, English language learners, and others.

We should also pass the Child Care is Essential Act, which would provide \$50 billion for childcare providers who desperately need financial assistance to continue operating. How do we expect people to go back to work if they don't have childcare options?

This crisis in American education requires a robust national effort to meet the needs. Instead of stepping up to meet this moment, we have a President and Education Secretary who have shown they do not care about our students and our teachers. That means the rest of us must care—the Senate. We are a separate, coequal branch of government. We need to step up in this enormous vacuum of leadership by putting the safety of our teachers and our children before the President's political self-interests.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO DYLAN NICHOLSON, TREVOR MORGAN, MASON DALLMANN, A.J. SIMEON, AND SKYE MORGAN

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, it is that time of the week where I get to come down and talk about an Alaskan—this time five Alaskans—who is doing great things for our community, our State, and sometimes our country.

It is what we call the Alaskan of the Week or Alaskans of the Week. This is one of my favorite parts of the job. I know the Presiding Officer loves these speeches too. When we had pages here, they really loved it. We will get them back here soon, hopefully.

In all seriousness, of course, our country is facing very challenging times, and we have been tested as a nation and as a State on so many levels. If you read the newspaper, you think there is nothing going right, but I will tell you one thing I certainly see in my State. I was home for 3 weeks this past State work period, and I noticed this. There is empathy, kindness, understanding, and people working together and coming together. That is the big story, and I think we ought to keep an eye on that.

People are putting aside their own interests to help their neighbors, to help the elderly, our elders, our seniors. People are partaking in conversations about the soul of our Nation—sometimes uncomfortable conversations but I think overall constructive, important conversations in trying to help each other, to make our communities better, stronger, and make our country better and stronger as we struggle through an unprecedented pandemic.

I certainly see that across my State, and I am certain that the Presiding Officer sees that in his State, and it is really the best of America. It is important to remember that.

One of the reasons I love doing this “Alaskan of the Week” speech is because we get to highlight this not just for people in Alaska but for the country, people who are working hard for each other—maybe not getting the recognition they deserve but still doing very important work.

This week, I am going to honor five very fine, young Alaskans, young heroes who, because of their bravery and instincts and courage, very well likely saved lives. They are our Alaskans of the week. But before I talk about them, I always give an update of what is going on back home.

The weather has been glorious in many areas. There has been a lot of Sun—the midnight Sun, of course. There is even more Sun than in Florida right now at this time. The salmon are choking our rivers. I was out in Naknek, in the Crystal Bay region. There are huge sockeye salmon runs happening right now, which is great.

There is also struggling in other parts of the State. Fire season is upon us. This is something we have every year. I used to be the commissioner of natural resources in charge of our Division of Forestry—the brave men and women who fight fires in Alaska and all over the country, really. Sometimes we have really challenging fire seasons. Last summer was a really challenging one for us. Firefighters across the country came and helped Alaska with our challenges. They happened primarily by lightning strikes—thousands

in a day, you will get in Alaska. In just 1 day, there are thousands.

So far, the fire season in Alaska—knock on wood—this summer has not been nearly as intense as last summer, but our firefighters are still out there taking on huge fires. You don't read about them in the lower 48. It is dangerous work—very dangerous work.

That brings me to the story of our Alaskans of the week: Dylan Nicholson, who is 13 years old; Trevor Morgan and Mason Dallmann, both 17 years old; A.J. Simeon, who is 19; and Skye Morgan, who is 18.

On the afternoon of May 28, just 2 months ago, these five young men from Aniak, AK—a village of about 500 people that sits 300 miles west of Anchorage—were driving in a truck and on a four-wheeler in a gravel pit area a few miles away from the village. On their way back home, they passed a lake by the road and saw a small yellow airplane that was in the lake. It obviously had just crashed. Obviously, it had just crashed. Inside the plane were three emergency firefighters and a pilot. They had been on their way to the Kenai Peninsula south of Anchorage to support firefighters there. This is late May.

To the boys—these young men—the plane seemed to materialize out of thin air. One of them, Trevor Morgan, is quoted as saying: “I was like, ‘Dang man, that wasn't there 30 seconds ago,’” and now there is a plane in the lake.

When they heard the shouting coming from the plane and people emerging, the young men sprung into action. The 13-year-old, Dylan, called his aunt, who works at the Alaska State Trooper dispatch office. Then they did something very brave. They jumped into the freezing water.

Now, remember, this is May in Alaska. That lake was probably frozen over just a couple of months earlier. They helped two of the passengers out through the mud and onto the shore. They loaded them into a truck and drove them to a nearby clinic. Two of the other passengers, however, were still stuck in the plane in the water because they were too badly injured to leave the plane.

So, Mason Dallmann, 17 years old, waded out into the water where he stayed with them to make sure they could hang on until help arrived. Now, remember, this is freezing water. By the way, it was thick with diesel oil coming from the engine, so highly dangerous if somehow this was going to ignite.

He was in there keeping them comforted for about 30 minutes. He didn't leave their side. One passenger who was badly injured grabbed onto Mason, and Mason said: Don't worry. I am not going to leave you.

Eventually, 30 minutes in the freezing cold water full of diesel, first responders came and helped get the men out of the plane and transported them to a clinic and a hospital. Two of them

suffered severe injuries, but, fortunately, all of them are recovering, and they are recovering thanks to these five young men and boys who spotted the plane in the first place, which wasn't a given, since it was miles away from town, and then they reacted and got them help.

"We are very fortunate," said Alaska State Forest Director Chris Maisch, whom I know very well. He said: "You couldn't have asked for a better emergency response in this rural community from [these] young people."

Aniak City Councilman David Mattson arrived at the crash scene when the rescue was going on. He calls the action of these young men "heroic." Councilman Mattson said: Being a hero means going above and beyond for other people—putting others before themselves. And that is what those boys did—at such a young age. And such a quick reaction time. It is so inspiring.

He had lived in other cities across the country, but he gives credit to the way these boys were raised in the valleys of Aniak. He said:

We are a big family out here. It doesn't matter what you look like, or who you are or what you do—you're a fellow citizen and if you need help, [people in this part of Alaska in America] we jump in and help [others].

So these are just a few stellar examples of young Americans, young Alaskans, our next generation, who are out there doing their part—doing their part to help us during these challenging times. With young men and women like these all across our Nation and all across my State, we know we are going to continue to thrive as a country, as Americans, and as Alaskans, no matter what. We know it.

So to Dylan, Trevor, Mason, A.J., Skye, and your families, thank you for being an inspiration to us all. Thank you for your courage. Thank you for jumping in a cold lake to save lives. Thank you for your heroism. Thank you for stepping up when your community and people in need really needed you without asking any questions and without hesitating. Congratulations on being our Alaskans of the Week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 567 and 629.

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

The clerk will report the nominations en bloc.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Grant C. Jaquith, of New York, to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims for the term of fifteen years; and Scott J. Laurer, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States

Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims for the term of fifteen years.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations, en bloc.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Jaquith and Laurer nominations, en bloc?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

#### S. 3841

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am pleased that earlier today the Senate passed S. 3841 by unanimous consent. This is a commonsense measure that will ensure the \$1,200 economic impact payments Congress provided to help individuals meet essential needs during these trying times don't instead end up in the pockets of creditors and debt collectors.

The CARES Act, which authorized the economic impact payments, sought to ensure that individuals in need received 100 percent of the payment they are eligible for by generally exempting such payments from administrative offset for past due debts owed to Federal or State agencies. However, as currently written, this language does not protect these payments from bank garnishment or levy by creditors or debt collectors.

The bill we passed today will further the original intent under the CARES Act of ensuring that the economic impact payments go to help individuals struggling to make ends meet as a result of government-enforced lockdowns and economic fallout of the current pandemic. It does this by extending protections against bank garnishment to economic impact payments that are very similar to what is provided to Social Security benefits under current law. Moreover, it continues the policy under the CARES Act of providing an exception for child support enforcement orders to ensure noncustodial parents who owe back child support fulfill their legal and moral obligations to their children.

I would like to thank Senators BROWN, WYDEN, and SCOTT of South Carolina for working with me on this important bill. I hope that the House passes an identical measure as soon as possible so that we can get a bill to the President's desk and these protections can be put into effect.

#### TRIBUTE TO MARGIE MONTGOMERY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, people of faith across my hometown of Louisville gathered recently to mark 50 years of fighting for the unborn in the Bluegrass State. Together, they celebrated the Louisville Right to Life Association and its inspirational work for the most vulnerable in our society. I was proud to offer my congratulations to these champions for life. Today, I would like to look back to the group's founding and a remarkable Kentuckian's choice to pick up the phone.

One evening in 1970, Margie Montgomery watched a troubling editorial on the local news. The segment argued for the removal of legal restrictions on abortions. To say my friend was shocked would be an understatement. She called the station to voice her strong opposition. Before long, Margie appeared on that same news program to deliver a genuine and heartfelt defense of life.

That broadcast was just the beginning. What followed was a campaign of advocacy, organizing, and hard work. Margie spoke up, and she began a movement.

Her passion ignited people of faith and conscience across our Commonwealth. The Louisville group grew into a statewide organization, the Kentucky Right to Life Association. Margie helped create a grassroots network of pro-life volunteers who give voice to the voiceless.

Their work is certainly making a difference. Today, the majority of Kentuckians proudly stand on the side of life. Margie's courageous witness led thousands to join her cause.

For decades, I have had the privilege to work with Margie on many pro-life issues. I look forward to our frequent meetings, both in Kentucky and our Nation's Capital. Along with so many Kentuckians, I am constantly inspired by her passion and drawn in by her compassion. The movement is lucky to have a steadfast and loving leader like Margie.

Tragically, innocent life is still under threat in our Commonwealth and our Nation. There is more work that must be done so all people can enjoy their God-given right to life. As we continue fighting for those who are unable to fight for themselves, I am grateful Kentucky has Margie to champion our cause. It is an honor to join all those who celebrate her golden anniversary of advocacy, and I wish her many more years of celebrating the gift of life.

Mr. President, the Courier-Journal in Louisville recently published a profile