

media markets. None of this helps consumers. None of this helps small businesses. None of this lowers prices or spurs innovation. Until these illegal firings are reversed, I cannot support Mr. Meador's nomination to the FTC.

TRIBUTE TO TIM PENNY

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Tim Penny, a public servant, former colleague, and friend who is retiring after a lifetime of service to the State of Minnesota.

Tim grew up on a family farm in southeastern Minnesota, served in both the Minnesota State Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, and has spent the past 18 years leading the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation as president and CEO.

Tim has been with me on many visits across southern Minnesota. Whether it was helping the community of Madelia recover from a devastating fire or to expand early childhood education, Tim's love for the people of Minnesota has always shined through.

To quote Tim, "I am always in awe of the accomplishments of small-town residents when they are provided the resources to realize their ambitions." And his work helped turn those ambitions to revitalize communities into reality.

Tim began his public life as a State senator in 1976. Six years later, he was elected to represent Minnesota's First Congressional District in the U.S. House, where he served for 12 years. He gained a reputation for his principles and independence.

Tim's commitment to transparency and honesty in government were central themes in the three books he wrote about his Washington experience: "Common Cents," "Payment Due," and "The 15 Biggest Lies in Politics." Talking about that book, he said, "We elect people to achieve the common good and when you get bogged down and paralyzed by mindless sloganeering you don't end up with the sort of consensus that moves policy forward."

He carried those values and commitment to the common good to the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation and in all his other work in the community.

He was a senior fellow at the Humphrey Institute and also worked for the public affairs firm Himle Horner. Tim is cochair of the Economic Club of Minnesota, cochair of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, and serves on the Board of Parent Aware for School Readiness.

Tim, thank you for your work at the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation and through your many years representing our State in Washington. Minnesota is better because of you. I wish you all the best in your retirement.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

FAITH MONTH

• Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, Faith Month is designated every April, bringing together people of faith in prayer, thanksgiving, and celebration of their faith. I embrace this special month and commend Concerned Women for America, the Nation's largest public policy organization for women, and other faith-based organizations for encouraging people to use this month to actively strengthen their faith.

Religion is often viewed as a controversial topic, but without religious faith, there would be no United States of America. Faith is deeply woven into the fabric of our great Nation. It was a commitment to faith that led the Pilgrims to flee religious persecution in Europe and seek freedom in a new land. They were followed by Roman Catholics, Baptists, Quakers, and Calvinists, all seeking the chance to practice their faith free from the bonds of a tyrannical government. The Christian faith profoundly shaped the culture and politics of Colonial America.

Faith also inspired our struggle for independence. As our founding documents declare, we are "endowed by [our] Creator with certain unalienable Rights," and our government is founded on "the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God." Acknowledging our "reliance on the protection of divine Providence," we could not be ruled by a King or taxed by a Parliament without consent. America's Founders created the first Nation in history not based on shared ethnicity or language, but rather on the belief that God grants every human being inherent value and natural rights.

The Founders worked to protect the religious freedom sought by the first Colonists. They enshrined that freedom in the very First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, as well as "the free exercise thereof." They did not want the state to be separate from the church as a means to free the state from faith, but to guarantee that Americans could worship freely and as they chose. A nation founded on inalienable, God-given rights could not ignore the importance of belief in God.

The Founders also understood that faith was an indispensable part of freedom. For a nation to govern itself without a monarch or authoritarian ruler, its people must be capable of self-government, exercising their liberty responsibly. They understood that faith fosters good character, virtue, and self-restraint—qualities that prevent society from falling into chaos.

Unfortunately, we have seen the proof of this too often in years. Attacks against faith-based organizations and individuals of particular religious groups are staggeringly high. Peaceful pro-life advocates have been unjustly jailed, churches have been vandalized and burned, and students have faced

threats and violence on their college campuses due to radical protests. The emphasis on race and sexual preference over merit have undermined our businesses and schools. As faith—and the moral foundations that come with it—declines, so does the well-being and stability of our Nation.

Yet when religion is allowed to flourish, communities thrive. Research shows that faith strengthens the family unit, promotes stable marriages, and discourages drug abuse and violence. Regular church attendance is linked to lifting young people out of poverty, and faithful people tend to be happier and more fulfilled in life.

Our Nation has always been a beacon of hope for those seeking religious freedom, and today we are enriched by a diverse religious heritage. This Faith Month, I join Concerned Women for America and millions of Americans to celebrate our distinctly American foundations. We honor the right to worship freely and openly, proud of our heritage as a people of faith. In doing so, we reaffirm our commitment to the religious liberty principles of our founding and our national motto, "In God We Trust."•

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Hanley, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a withdrawal which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

(The message received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES

REPORT OF THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 14024 OF APRIL 15, 2021, WITH RESPECT TO SPECIFIED HARMFUL FOREIGN ACTIVITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION—PM 22

THE PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of