

needed ammunition, but refused medical attention until the wounds of all the other soldiers in his unit were tended. Asked why he showed such courage even though he was not yet a U.S. citizen, Mr. Rascon replied "I was always an American in my heart." So impressed were they by his bravery that fellow soldiers who witnessed his acts have urged that he receive the Medal of Honor.

I could tell many more such stories. But let these three suffice to show the commitment to America's ideals and way of life that has been shown by so many brave young soldiers and sailors over the years.

We owe a debt to all these people for keeping our nation free and safe in a dangerous world. And we owe a continuing debt of gratitude to those today who serve, guarding our country, our homes and our freedom. Like all good things, freedom must be won again and again. I hope all of us will remember those, immigrants and native born, who have won freedom for us in the past, and stand ready to win freedom for us again, if they must.

May we never forget our debt to the brave who have fallen and the brave who stand ready to fight.

I yield the floor.

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RECOGNIZING JEAN FORD FOR  
HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE  
GREAT STATE OF NEVADA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a Nevadan whose dedication, foresight and work on behalf of women and minorities has profoundly changed the face of the Silver State. Jean Ford can be called a role model and an inspiration for generations to come, not only in Nevada but across our great Nation. Time and again she has given of herself to better the lives of those around her and she has created a legacy that will long endure in the history of Nevada.

Jean Ford has been a State legislator, an educator, a successful businesswoman and I am proud to say a true friend to me and my family. Over the years we worked together on a great many projects, and I have come to deeply admire Jean's compassion for all people, and her devotion to protecting and preserving Nevada's natural beauty.

I first met Jean Ford more than 25 years ago when she was elected to Nevada's State Assembly. Jean quickly rose to become a driving force for women's equality in Nevada, introducing the equal rights amendment in our State and working to end sex discrimination and break down long standing gender barriers. Through the years, her work in the legislature also carried over to other minority groups who found in Jean a voice, and a visionary willing to lead them on what was often a long, hard struggle for equal treatment under the law. Senior citizens, the disabled, single mothers, they were all important to Jean, and in turn, she

helped make them important to each of us.

It was through working with Jean that I came to realize the importance of many of the issues that I have taken on in my own legislative career. Women's health, child care, the environment, equal rights, protecting our seniors and the list goes on. I also owe her a great deal of thanks for bringing to my attention the need for involvement by women at every level of the political spectrum. From the State legislature where Jean and I both cut our political teeth, to this very body I stand before today. Diversity of opinion is the lifeblood that feeds democracy and I am grateful that people like Jean Ford helped break down the walls that once kept all but a privileged few out of the political realm.

For her work in opening these doors, Jean has been honored dozens of times by groups throughout Nevada, including being named "Outstanding Woman of the year" by the Nevada Women's Political Caucus, and "Civil Libertarian of the year" by the ACLU. Jean's legacy also encompasses several political organizations which she helped co-found including the National Women's Legislator's Network, and the Nevada Elected Women's Network.

More recently, Jean has dedicated herself to helping future Nevadans through her work in the classroom. Since 1991, Jean has been an instructor at the University of Nevada—Reno, where she served as acting director of the Women's Studies Program. She has also been an instructor of History and Political Science, and helped developed the Nevada Women's archives through the University library system. It is only fitting that Jean is also the current State coordinator for the Nevada Women's History Project.

But in spite of all that she has endeavored to create, the magnificent achievements of Jean Ford are truly overshadowed by the warmth and graciousness which she has exhibited through the many years that I have known her. I am sure if you could count them, her friends would number in the thousands, and her admirers would number even more. That is the true testament to a life long list of accomplishments.

I ask all my colleagues to join with me today to recognize a true pioneer who changed her world for the better, and whose efforts have touched not only those who call Nevada home, but the hearts and minds of all who have had the pleasure and the honor to know my friend Jean Ford.

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JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS DURING  
THE FIRST SESSION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as we wrap up our business for the first year of the 105th Congress, I believe it is appropriate to take account of the Senate's advice and consent on judicial nominations. As I have said many times this year in the Judiciary Com-

mittee and on the Senate floor, the Senate has failed to fulfill its constitutional responsibilities to the Federal judiciary.

In recent days, the Senate has quickened its painfully slow pace on reviewing and confirming judicial nominations. I have commended the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee for holding two judicial nominations hearings in September and October and for holding another hearing yesterday, which brings the total for the year to nine.

Unfortunately, we had no hearings at all in 4 months—January, February, April or August—and none is anticipated in December. I repeat that we have never had a day go by this session without having a backlog of at least 20 judicial nominations awaiting a hearing. Even with the virtual frenzy of last-minute hearings, we will close the year with more than 30 nominees having never been accorded a confirmation hearing.

I acknowledge that the majority leader has allowed the Senate to proceed to confirm 13 judicial nominees in the last week, but that still leaves eight outstanding nominees on the Senate Calendar still to be considered.

I understand that Senator BOXER has received a commitment from the Republican leadership to proceed to consideration of the longstanding nomination of Margaret Morrow by the middle of February next year. I commend the Senator from California for achieving what appeared to be impossible, getting the Senate to debate this outstanding nominee. I deeply regret that we have not proceeded to debate and vote to confirm Margaret Morrow to the District Court for the Central District of California this year. Hers is the nomination that has been stalled before the Senate the longest, since June 12.

She has twice been reported to the Senate favorably by the Judiciary Committee. She has been unfairly maligned and her family and law partners made to suffer for far too long without cause or justification. Some have chosen to use her nomination as a vehicle for partisan political, narrow ideological, and conservative fund raising purposes. She deserved better treatment. The people of California deserved to have this nominee confirmed and in place hearing cases long ago. The wait can never be rectified or justified.

I hope that the Republican leadership will not require any of the other nominees currently pending on the calendar to remain hostage to their inaction. Ann Aiken was finally reported favorably by the Judiciary Committee earlier this month. Her nomination was first received in November 1995, 2 years ago. She had an earlier hearing in September 1996 and another last month. This is a judicial emergency vacancy that should be filled without further delay.

G. Patrick Murphy would be a much-needed addition to the District Court for the Southern District of Illinois. He