

with fairness, kindness, and courage. Daisy Beck epitomizes these qualities. She is a wonderful, positive role model for all Americans in times of adversity.●

TRIBUTE TO SCARLOTTE DEUPREE

● Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to an outstanding citizen of the great State of Alabama, Miss Scarlotte Deupree.

Scarlotte may be a young woman, but her accomplishments are numerous and exceptional. Her most recent achievement was receiving the very distinguished honor of being First Runner Up to Miss America for 2003. This honor bears important functions, including representing and advocating good American values, which is a fundamental part of the Miss America Pageant. These young women choose platforms, or issues, important to our society and use their stature to help raise awareness and bring positive changes to these areas. Before entering the Miss America Pageant, Scarlotte knew that her platform would be adult literacy, an issue she has worked with for many years.

Scarlotte has devoted a great amount of her time to helping others and raising the public's awareness of adult literacy. Included in Scarlotte's work are her efforts in forming the Sylacauga Adult Literacy Council, her coordination of the first Women in Literacy Summit, as well as her work with the Literacy Council of Central Alabama, ALERT, Habitat for Humanity, and the Ronald McDonald House. In addition, Ms. Deupree helped spearhead the Literacy Awareness Week for the cities of Homewood and Athens, AL.

For her great work, Ms. Deupree has been honored by the Daily Points of Light Foundation with the Daily Point of Light No. 660 Award. She also received the Distinguished Partner Award by the Literacy Council of Central Alabama, the Miss Alabama Community Service Award, 1999 and 2002, Miss America State Community Service Award, 2002, the U.S. Presidential Service Gold Award, 1999 and 2002, and she was voted "Most Ambitious" by her student peers at Samford University.

Scarlotte also has a great record of accomplishment in other areas, including education. She completed high school at the top of her class at Sylacauga High School, where she was a member of the National Honor Society, student council, Mu Alpha Theta Math Honor Society, Political Awareness Club, and the B.B. Comer Library Teen Advisory Board. She went on to study English and journalism at Samford University, one of the Nation's best liberal arts colleges. There she was a member of the Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Fraternity, Samford University Honor's Program, Freshman Forum, Alpha Delta Pi Social Sorority, and volunteered as a Step Sing Consultant. In addition, she

worked in my Senate office as an intern in the winter of 2000, a very busy time for our political system and country. She produced excellent work, received high marks from my staff, and contributed greatly to my office during her stay. I was very impressed with her.

She is an example of the great work our Nation's young people do. I am very proud of her and I know she will continue to give leadership to the critical area of adult literacy and that she will be a leader in whatever career she chooses. I applaud her tireless efforts on behalf of all Alabamians and would like to take this opportunity to thank her for all that she has contributed to her community, the State of Alabama and our Nation.

Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Scarlotte Deupree for her outstanding achievements and wish her well as she continues to work to improve literacy.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE UNION—PM 1

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was ordered to lie on the table:

To the Congress of the United States:

Mr. Speaker, Vice President Cheney, Members of Congress, distinguished guests, fellow citizens:

Every year, by law and by custom, we meet here to consider the state of the union. This year, we gather in this chamber deeply aware of decisive days that lie ahead.

You and I serve our country in a time of great consequence. During this session of Congress, we have the duty to reform domestic programs vital to our country . . . and we have the opportunity to save millions of lives abroad from a terrible disease. We will work for a prosperity that is broadly shared . . . and we will answer every danger and every enemy that threatens the American people.

In all these days of promise and days of reckoning, we can be confident. In a

whirlwind of change, and hope, and peril, our faith is sure, our resolve is firm, and our union is strong.

This country has many challenges. We will not deny, we will not ignore, we will not pass along our problems to other Congresses, other Presidents, and other generations. We will confront them with focus, and clarity and courage.

During the last 2 years, we have seen what can be accomplished when we work together. To lift the standards of our public schools, we achieved historic education reform—which must now be carried out in every school, and every classroom, so that every child in America can read, and learn, and succeed in life. To protect our country, we reorganized our government and created the Department of Homeland Security—which is mobilizing against the threats of a new era. To bring our economy out of recession, we delivered the largest tax relief in a generation. To insist on integrity in American business, we passed tough reforms, and we are holding corporate criminals to account.

Some might call this a good record. I call it a good start. Tonight I ask the House and Senate to join me in the next bold steps to serve our fellow citizens.

Our first goal is clear: We must have an economy that grows fast enough to employ every man and woman who seeks a job.

After recession, terrorist attacks, corporate scandals, and stock market declines, our economy is recovering—yet it is not growing fast enough, or strongly enough. With unemployment rising, our Nation needs more small businesses to open, more companies to invest and expand, more employers to put up the sign that says, "Help Wanted."

Jobs are created when the economy grows; the economy grows when Americans have more money to spend and invest; and the best, fairest way to make sure Americans have that money is not to tax it away in the first place.

I am proposing that all the income tax reductions set for 2004 and 2006 be made permanent and effective this year. And under my plan, as soon as I have signed the bill, this extra money will start showing up in workers' paychecks. Instead of gradually reducing the marriage penalty, we should do it now. Instead of slowly raising the child credit to a thousand dollars, we should send the checks to American families now.

This tax relief is for everyone who pays income taxes—and it will help our economy immediately. Ninety-two million Americans will keep—this year—an average of almost \$1,100 more of their own money. A family of four with an income of \$40,000 would see their federal income taxes fall from \$1,178 to \$45 per year. And our plan will improve the bottom line for more than 23 million small businesses.

You, the Congress, have already passed all these reductions, and promised them for future years. If this tax