

would look in his office and see all of the books stacked up, I would think, there is a guarantee he will never leave me because he just can't bring himself to pack up all those books. But now he is going to have to, I think.

Another one of Ed's loves is music. One of his favorite musicians is singer-songwriter John Hiatt. Ed even persuaded Susan to include a John Hiatt song at their wedding, entitled "Have a Little Faith in Me."

Over 17 years, I have come to have more than a little faith in Ed Greelegs—not just his knowledge but his character and his decency. What I know about him is that you never have to worry about his motives. You never have to wonder if his advice is crafted to serve himself or a friend more than it serves the common good. His goal has always been the same: He wants the best for the people of Illinois and the best for America. When things go well, as they often do when Ed is involved, he doesn't really care who gets the credit.

They say that behind every successful man is a surprised mother-in-law. I can tell you that behind every good Senator is a talented chief of staff. For the last 17 years, it has been my good fortune to have my friend Ed Greelegs in that critical position in my office. I am grateful to him for all he has done for me, for Illinois, and for our Nation. I wish him the very best as he begins the next chapter of his career. I am sure it will be a successful chapter.

As you wander around Washington, you come to understand that there are some people whom everybody likes. Ed Greelegs is one of those people.

My favorite story, which I want to add at this point, involves the first trip to Afghanistan after the Taliban were deposed. I joined with Senator Daschle and a number of other Senators. We went in on the first daylight landing at Bagram Air Force Base in Kabul in Afghanistan. It was very tense. There were armored personnel carriers in every direction and troops with weapons to defend us as we came off the C-130. As I came down the ramp and got into an armored personnel carrier, there was a man in civilian clothes standing there.

He asked: Are you Senator Dick Durbin?

I said: Yes.

He said: I am a friend of Ed Greelegs'. I couldn't believe it. Here I am in the middle of a war zone, and I ran into a friend of Ed Greelegs'.

Whether it is war or peace, whether it is on the Hill or off, time and again, everybody knows that Ed Greelegs is genuine. He is the real thing. I have been honored to have him at my side for 17 years. I wish him the very best in his future pursuits.

Thanks, Ed.

NFC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, Senator LANDRIEU and I come to the Senate

floor for a painful—for us—but necessary task, and that is to live up to our wager with colleagues from the great State of Illinois and congratulate them on the Bears' defeat of the New Orleans Saints in the NFC championship game.

Of course, the Bears won fair and square 39 to 14, but that score really doesn't reflect how the game was actually played. It was much closer than that for a long time. The Bears' defense played exceptionally, hats-off to them, strong pass rush that really put the Saints' quarterback, Drew Brees, in some precarious situations. They also played overall a really tough physical game, defensively and offensively. Because of some of the bone-crunching hits delivered by the Bears' defenders, the Saints had multiple turnovers, and certainly that was part of the problem from the Saints' perspective. But, really, I think the Chicago Bears won the game because of their incredible ability to manage field position. Each time the Saints' offense took the field, it appeared as if they had their back to the wall, including when a safety was scored against them.

So congratulations to the Chicago Bears. Again, Senator LANDRIEU and I are here to fulfill our commitment and pay our debt. By the way, we just served Senator BARACK OBAMA's staff a lunch of great Louisiana food, and we are about to do the exact same thing for Senator DURBIN and his staff.

But as we give the Bears their due, I know both Senator LANDRIEU and I also want to praise the Saints for an absolutely unbelievable season with the biggest turnaround in NFL history, going from a 3 in 13 last year to the NFC championship game this year. Much more importantly than just that, they serve as a wonderful example of renewal and rebuilding from which we all can learn and emulate in terms of the rebuilding of the gulf coast.

A lot of folks say it is just football, it is just sports, but particularly in the context of everything folks in the greater New Orleans area are going through post-Katrina, the Saints meant an awful lot to us this season, and their example of leadership and integrity and great turnarounds and commitment is something we all took pride in and I think something we all learned from. That example is going to be repeated in many other different walks of life as we spur on our recovery on the gulf coast even further.

So with that, Mr. President, I again congratulate the Chicago Bears. I congratulate our two Senate colleagues from Illinois. I wish them all the best in this Sunday's Super Bowl. But I also note, maybe they are going to need that good luck because they face another New Orleans powerhouse, Peyton Manning, in Miami. So good luck to them.

I yield the floor to Senator LANDRIEU.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Speaking in my capacity as a Senator from Min-

nesota, I will say that our team, the Vikings, went four times and never won the Super Bowl, so there is always hope.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for joining me this morning to deliver some delicious, piping hot, and very spicy red beans and rice that he and I cooked through the night to deliver to our colleagues, Senator OBAMA and Senator DURBIN. I would like to personally congratulate the Bears on their victory and say it was a hard-fought victory during a great game of icy and cold conditions, but our Saints stood up under the tremendous pressure of their defensive line.

As Senator VITTER said, the final score doesn't reflect the battle that was actually played that day on that field. But we congratulate the Bears on their victory and look forward to watching them in the Super Bowl this Sunday.

But to the Saints, I have to say again, as I have said several times on this Senate floor, thank you for being so reflective of and mirroring the spirit of the people from Louisiana, from New Orleans, from the region, and from south Louisiana who have struggled, and like you, have been fighting back to bring our cities and our communities, large and small, urban and rural, back from the brink, in many cases, of utter destruction. The Saints have shown us the way, having experienced themselves as players and family members the loss of their homes, the loss of their places of worship, the loss of the schools where their children attended but, like so many hundreds of thousands of citizens, have literally marched their way back to victory. So we are very grateful for their inspiration and their encouragement, every member of the team.

But to the Bears, led by Rex Grossman, who proved himself to be a Super Bowl quarterback, to, again, their extraordinary defense on the field, we congratulate them.

Senator VITTER and I love pizza. We were looking forward to that Chicago pizza, but we ended up, because of what happened, having to deliver our local favorite, red beans and rice, to Senator DURBIN and Senator OBAMA. But our congratulations to them and to the people of Chicago and to the citizens of Illinois who, I know, will be pulling for their team.

I also want to say we will be looking forward to seeing Peyton Manning on the field. He is a wonderful quarterback from a great family in New Orleans that has also helped us and inspired us a great deal.

HONORING GEORGE OMAS, CHAIRMAN, POSTAL RATE COMMISSION

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President. I rise to mark the retirement from Federal service, of a loyal friend and Mississippian, and a fine public servant, George Omas.