MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO BETTY BURGER

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to Betty Burger, a remarkable public servant and extraordinarily devoted congressional staffer. Betty died on Saturday at the age of 67. Betty was my chief caseworker, and my oldest and longest serving staff person. She was still on the payroll as of Saturday.

Although I am deeply saddened by her departure, it brings me comfort to know that Betty now joins her mother, and great-grandmother slipped peacefully into the hands of their Maker.

It is fitting that Betty’s loved ones kept vigil at her bedside. For nearly 40 years, Betty Burger kept vigil for the people of Iowa. She started on Capitol Hill working for Iowa Representative Fred Schwengel. After Congressman Schwengel left office, she worked for an Illinois Congressman by the name of Hanrahan for 2 years. Then she wanted to work for Iowa. Congresswoman Schakowsky from Fairfield, IA, as she rests in peace alongside her husband John.

If Congress needed any rationale for eliminating mandatory retirement age in 1986, Betty Burger is that example. As her friend, Barbara and I extend our heartfelt sympathies to Betty’s family and the loved ones she leaves behind. As they remember their beloved mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, friend, and neighbor, please know we will dearly miss this classy and spirited Iowan who became part of our family during her honorable tenure—a lifetime on Capitol Hill.

In the last four decades, many Iowans have benefited from the tireless efforts of this dedicated public servant. Betty’s work ethic taught others to keep one’s nose to the grindstone. Her professional attitude taught them to be a positive force in the workplace. Betty was a steadfast friend and she knew with good young people in her academies, such as the ones the Senate could count on Betty to put a smile on everybody’s face. Her uncanny grasp of cultural trends and current events taught others how to embrace aging and use one’s work and life experiences for the greater good.

As her boss, I owe Betty a debt of gratitude for her tireless commitment, unwavering loyalty to this country, to the people of Iowa, and to me. As Senate Majority Leader, I place a premium on her contributions to the Senate. Betty understood this as well as anyone and exceeded my expectations each and every day she helped an Iowaan. Day in and day out, Betty untangled a knot at a Federal agency for those who may have felt at the end of their rope trying to get an answer. I often thought Iowaans that representative government is a two-way street. Well, Betty Burger lived and breathed the spirit of representative government. She was the capable, no-nonsense person on the other end of the phone who brought thousands upon thousands of Iowans hope and peace of mind. She paved the street between Iowans and the Federal agencies from which they required service.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, first, let me express my disappointment that we are here under these circumstances. This is not the way we should be handling this important national security legislation.

The fiscal year 2007 Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007

The Intelligence Authorization bill should have been considered by the Senate, in fact, 7 months ago when it was reported unanimously by the Intelligence Committee. That is usually the way things are meant to work. For reasons that are still not clear to me, it was never brought before the Senate.

Because of the importance of this legislation, Vice Chairman Bond and I made the Intelligence bill the first order of business this January when the new Congress convened. We hoped the Senate could act swiftly on the bill so we could move to the conference with the House. But an amendment held on the other side prevented us from bringing up the bill and passing it by unanimous consent. Again, I am not