

my point person for moving nationally significant legislation through the committee and the Senate. When I was the majority leader, she led the Senate Energy Task Force staff efforts.

Beth has been a key figure in the enactment of several important bills into law: the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and its previous incarnations, the Vision 100—Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act, the Aviation Investment and Revitalization Vision Act, and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act—A Legacy for Users. She also shepherded the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2005 through the Senate and the Advanced Telecommunications and Opportunities Reform Act through the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee during the 109th Congress. During the 110th Congress, she has already guided the Aviation Investment and Modernization Act through the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee. Beth always ensured that these bills were good for the Nation and good for Mississippi.

While Beth is as gracious and charming as one would expect from her Mississippi upbringing, she is also assertive and confident, and deserving of respect for her abilities. She never hesitated to take charge of her areas of responsibility or speak up if she felt she or anyone else was being overlooked.

Beth is not just a hard working, skilled staff member. She has been part of my personal office family for almost 10 years. Whether training a new staff member, guiding interns through their Washington experience, or cutting birthday cakes, Beth has been a trusted, steady, and caring colleague. As a former intern, she always ensured that our legislative interns were provided challenging assignments and treated with respect.

Mr. President, Beth has come a long way from Brandon, MS, and the University of Mississippi. In addition to being a seasoned staff member, she also is a wife and a mother. Beth now moves on to a new phase in her life, leaving for the private sector and making more time for her husband Les and young daughter Ann Miller. We all will miss her very much. I wish her the very best as she heads out in a new direction and pray that God will continue to bless her and her family.

#### NOPEC

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am proud to be an original cosponsor of S. 879, the No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act of 2007, or NOPEC. The Judiciary Committee today reports that bill favorably, with an accompanying committee report. This is not the first time the committee has reported this legislation, but it ought to be the last. Indeed, the Senate Judiciary Committee under three different chairmen has now considered and recommended this legislation for passage. It is long past time for this bill to become law.

NOPEC will hold certain oil producing nations accountable for their collusive behavior that has artificially—and drastically—reduced the supply and inflated the price of fuel. It authorizes the Attorney General to take legal action against any foreign state, including members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, OPEC, for price fixing and artificially limiting the amount of available oil.

Just this morning, I read in the Washington Post that the Energy Department declared that “gasoline prices last week came within a half penny of tying the modern era’s inflation-adjusted record set in March 1981,” and that the nationwide average price at the pump is \$3.218 a gallon. That is a rise of more than 11 cents a gallon just in the last week, according to the Energy Information Administration. These increases in price have led to renewed calls for investigation into their causes, but we already know well one significant cause: anticompetitive conduct by oil cartels.

While OPEC actions remain protected from antitrust enforcement, the ability of the governments involved to wreak havoc on the American economy remains unchecked. If OPEC were simply a collection of foreign businesses engaged in this type of behavior, they would already be subject to the antitrust laws.

I am disappointed that the administration recently announced it would oppose this bill and recommend that the President veto it. When entities engage in anticompetitive conduct that harms the American consumers it is the responsibility of the Department of Justice to investigate and prosecute. It is wrong to let OPEC producers off the hook just because their anticompetitive practices come with the seal of approval of national governments.

Americans deserve better, and it is time for Congress to act. With the summer months approaching, there is no end in sight to the rise in gas prices. I am hopeful that the Senate will take up and pass this legislation in June. I thank Senator KOHL for his leadership on this important issue.

#### REVEREND JERRY FALWELL

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I want to say a few words about Reverend Jerry Falwell, who passed away last week. Reverend Falwell loved God, loved people, and loved his country. He not only spoke about what he believed, he acted on what he believed and worked to help people and to make this country better.

Jerry Falwell led a remarkable and inspiring life. He was born in Lynchburg, VA, the son of a nonreligious bootlegger and the grandson of a staunch atheist. This family background makes all the more real, some might say dramatic, his conversion to Christianity and his lifelong unwavering commitment to Christ.

In 1956, he founded Thomas Road Baptist Church. Just 35 people attended its first meeting in the local elementary school. Although Reverend Falwell became known to most for his national political efforts, he was in his heart a local church pastor and he led that congregation for more than 50 years, seeing it grow to more than 24,000 members.

Reverend Falwell knew that faith cannot be segregated from life and that Christ calls us to be doers, rather than simply hearers, of the Word. Reverend Falwell founded the Elim Home in 1959 as a residential program providing spiritual restoration and help for those battling alcohol and drug addiction. The home still operates today, just north of Lynchburg.

Proverbs 22:6 says to train up a child in the way he should go and so, in 1967, Reverend Falwell founded Lynchburg Christian Academy for children from kindergarten through high school. Four years later, he founded Lynchburg Bible College with just 154 students and 4 full-time faculty. Today, Liberty University is the largest evangelical college in the world, fully accredited with more than 20,000 students from around the world. In recent years, Reverend Falwell returned to this mission of Christian education and he was at work in his office when he passed away. His vision there continues to unfold. Liberty University Law School, which achieved provisional ABA accreditation in just 18 months, graduated its first class this year and a medical school is on the drawing board.

When it came to issues such as the sanctity of human life, Reverend Falwell once again put action to his words. He founded the Liberty Godparent Foundation in 1982, opening a home for unwed mothers while other evangelicals were content simply to protest abortion. I certainly agree that abortion is wrong because of what abortion is and does, but Reverend Falwell demonstrated that there is more to being pro-life than simply being opposed to death. He set an inspiring example, and today there are more crisis pregnancy centers than abortion clinics in America.

Reverend Falwell is perhaps best known for what launched him onto the national stage, founding the Moral Majority organization in 1979. This effort brought millions of Americans into the political process and made them more informed, more active citizens. In 1995, he launched a monthly magazine, the National Liberty Journal, which reaches hundreds of thousands of pastors and Christian citizens. The author of more than a dozen books over nearly 30 years, Reverend Falwell continued to write his own e-mail newsletter and columns distributed widely through the world.

Reverend Falwell certainly gained his share of notoriety for positions on certain issues or particularly controversial statements. That happens to people who speak out, especially those