

American Association for the Advancement of Science.

As a native of Baltimore, Dr. Morgan earned his undergraduate degree as well as his doctorate from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He has also completed post-doctoral studies at Texas A&M University. Dr. Morgan has been an invaluable member of my staff since October, 2007. His fellowship ends in late August and he will return to his teaching duties then.

The AAAS Fellows Program has been the source of skilled science advisers for many years here on Capitol Hill. Rarely, however, has the program made such a timely placement. With his expertise in atmospheric sciences, Dr. Morgan was especially well-equipped to advise me on global climate change issues.

As the Environment and Public Works Committee held a number of oversight hearings on climate change last year, Dr. Morgan provided careful analysis of witness testimony as well as probing questions. When Mr. LIEBERMAN and Mr. WARNER advanced their landmark legislation, America's Climate Security Act, few offices could rely on the expertise that Dr. Morgan lent this Senator. And when Ms. BOXER brought the legislation to the floor, Dr. Morgan had convinced me that a broad-based science program of monitoring and analysis was needed. Although blocked from offering my scientific monitoring amendment on the floor, Dr. Morgan has provided us with a solid framework that I intend to see as part of climate change legislation considered next year.

In addition to his expertise on atmospheric science issues, Dr. Morgan provided comprehensive support to me on the full range of issues that came before the Environment and Public Works Committee. Of special note has been his work on bills to control harmful mercury emission and another bill to simplify and automate the tracking system for hazardous wastes in this country.

Dr. Morgan has been an integral part of the Projects Team in my office and a valued friend and colleague to my permanent staff.

As he prepares to return to his academic duties, Dr. Morgan goes with my sincere thanks and best wishes.●

IN RECOGNITION OF RAY JOHNSON

● Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Ray Johnson who is retiring on September 1, 2008, from the Delaware State Pension Office after an amazing 39 years and 10 months of service to the people of Delaware. Ray literally has dedicated his life to helping tens of thousands of State employees, educators, and others prepare for their retirement. It is now my privilege to thank him for his dedication to them, to commend him for a life well lived, and to wish him the very best of luck throughout his own retirement.

I met Ray on my first day as State treasurer in November of 1976 at a time

when the State Pension Office was part of the State Treasurer's Office. He was one of the original Pension Office employees, having served for the office since its creation. Because of his long tenure with the office, Ray has served as the go-to person for just about any issue that ever arose within the office. His deep understanding and knowledge of the workings of the office, whether it be in the investment sector or the calculation of retirement benefits, made him a valuable resource for not only the people he served but to his coworkers, as well.

Ray began his career in public service on November 1, 1968, as the first senior accountant for the State Budget Commission. There, he developed the initial accounting system to track and recoup previous advancements made from something called the Advanced Land Acquisition and Advanced Planning Funds. His efforts recouped millions of dollars, resulting in additional interest earnings that were used to make advanced purchase deposits on many of the State's public park lands that are enjoyed by our residents and visitors today.

In 1971, Ray was selected to be the fiscal administrative officer for the newly created State Pension Office. In that role, he developed many of the rules, regulations, and procedures that are still used there some 35 years later.

In the late 1980s, Ray helped lead the effort to computerize the State Pension Office, enabling its staff to become more productive and to provide better service to 25,000 employees, as well as to 5,000 pensioners and their families. Many of the administrative policies developed by Ray are still in place today and continue to make a positive difference in the lives of one generation of retirees after another.

It was not just Ray's depth of knowledge and his years of experience that attracted people to him in the Pension Office. It was his giving and caring personality, as well. He always brought a ready smile to the workplace each day. Ray was hard pressed ever to refuse help to anyone who requested it. He would answer calls and questions at all times of day and mentored new workers in his free time. Ray served as a father-figure to many employees, too, dispensing advice to those who asked for it or, sometimes, just lending a sympathetic ear. His compassion for and loyalty to his work, to his colleagues, and to those they served made him an especially worthy recipient of the Pension Administration Award—the highest award given in the Pension Office and an award bestowed upon him by the vote of his peers.

Ray continually worked to better the retirement system for the people he served as well as the people with whom he worked. For example, when Ray moved to the State Pension Office in 1971, all calculations for retirement benefits were done by hand—a long, tedious process for the employees. Ray recognized the inefficiency of this sys-

tem and took it upon himself to automate the calculation of benefits, a step that would reduce the workload for many of his coworkers, as well as provide the people they served with a more accurate method of determining benefits.

One of the special things about Ray was that he was not only interested in helping any person he could, but he strove to help every person who had a concern or issue. If he did not have the answer—which was rare—he would search tirelessly for one from any resource he could and would never allow anyone in need to go without some form of assistance. If a person had questions about retirement and his call was answered by Ray, he or she was sure to complete that conversation with a solution or, at the very least, a direction of where to go to find a solution.

In addition to his extensive knowledge of State pension law and of the workings of the State Pension Office, Ray's success in his career can largely be attributed to his genuine love for his work. He was always truly interested in the workings of the State Pension Office and found it both challenging and satisfying. Ray embraced and took full advantage of the opportunity to develop the State Pension Office from the ground up. A very humble human being, he took pride in his tireless efforts to make the office what it is today. He worked diligently to make Delaware's retirement system a model for the Nation, not just because it was his job, but because he genuinely cared about every person who contacted that office with questions and concerns about their retirement.

Of all of these accolades, Ray says:

Although I have been involved in recommending, developing, or implementing many enhancements in policies and processes during my tenure, I am most satisfied in knowing that I have been able to serve the Office, fellow staff members, and the taxpayers of the state to the best of my ability and have helped make the retirement process more efficient, effective, and easier for all involved.

Ray Johnson is one of the most dedicated and hard-working people with whom I have ever had the honor of working. He has earned every day the admiration and affection of his colleagues and the gratitude of the people they have served for four decades. His loyalty and his sense of service have been and remain a source of inspiration to me and to those around him. It is with a genuine sense of honor and joy that I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Ray. I wish him a long and happy retirement to share and enjoy with his equally accomplished wife Claudia and their children, Randy and Donna. On behalf of the people of Delaware, let me thank the three of you for sharing with the people of the First State your husband and your father.

Let me close by saying that I envy—just a little bit—all of the free time he will now have for fishing and relaxing with long walks on the beach with those he loves. It is my hope that he

will enjoy his own retirement as much as those whom he helped now enjoy their own.●

TRIBUTE TO STEVE THOMPSON

● Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I wish to honor Steve Thompson, his stellar career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the dedication to solving our most difficult natural resources problems that he has demonstrated time and again throughout his career. Thompson is retiring on August 4 after 32 years with the Service.

I know Steve as the regional director of Region 8, formerly the California and Nevada Operations Office, CNO, a job he assumed in 2002. From the regional headquarters in Sacramento, CA, he oversaw Service programs in California, Nevada, and Klamath Basin that administer the Endangered Species Act and Migratory Bird Treaty Act and managed 51 national wildlife refuges and 3 national fish hatcheries.

His many honors include being chosen in 1994 as the first "Refuge Manager of the Year" by the National Audubon Society and the National Wildlife Refuge Association. Even more notably, in September 2007, Thompson earned the Distinguished Executive Award, the highest Presidential Rank Award given to career senior executive service employees and the first time a Service employee has been so recognized.

I have worked now with Steve on many issues, including the Cargill salt ponds purchase and ongoing restoration, efforts to restore the Klamath River, habitat conservation planning, and CALFED. For his dedication to help find a way to purchase the Cargill salt ponds, Steve can feel pride at the migratory birds that now have a place to rest in San Francisco Bay on their long journeys along the Pacific flyway.

For his utterly tireless work to find a way to restore the Klamath River, we do not yet know what result will ensue. But thanks to Steve's leadership, we perhaps have a once in a generation opportunity to restore the River and its fisheries while providing certainty to farmers.

What I always found with Steve is that he is completely dedicated to finding that straight and narrow path through the bureaucracy to actually solve our biggest natural resource problems.

Others might find reasons why a solution can't be found or why it might be imperfect from some idealized perspective. Steve just dedicates himself to finding that solution.

He is a straight shooter. He tells you what he is going to do to solve a problem, and then he gets the job done.

All of us who care about California's natural resources will miss him.

Steve, I want to congratulate you on your years of remarkable service to our Nation's fish and wildlife and the people who value them. I hope you can now enjoy a little fishing and a few

quiet moments to contemplate what you have so honorably protected.●

RETIREMENT OF IOWA STATE SENATOR MICHAEL CONNOLLY

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to pay homage to Senator Michael Connolly on his retirement from the Iowa Senate after 30 years of distinguished public service. Mike admirably represented the citizens of Dubuque, IA, for 10 years in the Iowa House and 20 years in the Iowa Senate. He combined a passionate love for his community with progressive politics and a strong work ethic.

When Dubuque fell on hard times after the farm crisis of the 1980s and a loss of manufacturing jobs, Mike Connolly was there to ensure that the State of Iowa was a partner in the economic and cultural renaissance of the city. If you visit Dubuque today, you will find one of the most beautiful and vibrant cities in the Midwest. That did not happen by accident. Senator Connolly and other community leaders formed the Greater Dubuque Development Corporation, emphasizing the attitude that everyone would have to pull together to move the city forward. As they say, the proof is in the pudding, and I encourage you, Mr. President, and all of my Senate colleagues, to visit this jewel of a city on the Upper Mississippi.

Senator Connolly is an educator by training, and although his influence has been felt in most of the education legislation of the past three decades, his interests and work have been broad and diverse.

As chairman of the Transportation Committee, Senator Connolly boosted funding to make roads and bridges safer, and developed a new funding formula that recognized the need to enhance the transportation network linking the State's urban population centers. The construction of four-lane roads between Dubuque and Waterloo, Cedar Rapids and the Quad Cities, has led to economic growth throughout the northeast and east-central portion of Iowa.

Senator Connolly also spurred an effort to beautify Iowa's roadways through promotion of the Resource Enhancement and Protection—REAP—program, which included ongoing funding for the Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Program, a partnership between the University of Northern Iowa and Iowa counties to plant prairie grasses and flowers along the State's thoroughfares. The program pays homage to Senator Connolly's father, who was a road laborer with a sixth-grade education who worked and saved so his children could receive a college education.

Senator Connolly also helped modernize Iowa's election laws as chairman of the State Government Committee, including passing election day voter registration legislation and requiring that paper trails be included with elec-

tronic voting machines. He used his position on the Ways and Means Committee to give working Iowans a tax break by removing the sales tax from utility bills.

He was also a leader in the legislature helping to pass antibullying and civil rights legislation that will help protect generations of Iowans to come. It would be difficult, indeed, to catalog all of Senator Mike Connolly's legislative achievements; suffice it to say he has been one of the most dedicated, hard-working and productive members in the history of the Iowa General Assembly.

Iowans, especially those in the greater Dubuque community, will miss Mike's leadership. But I know he will continue to be involved in the civic life of our State and nation. His wonderful wife Martha has been a true partner with him these many years, and his accomplishments are hers as well.

I wish Senator Connolly a long and happy retirement, with plenty of time to spend with his accomplished children, Maureen and John. Thank you, Mike, and Godspeed.●

HONORING THE WINNER SCHOOL DISTRICT

● Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the Winner School District for its exceptional support to their National Guard and Reserve Employees. The Winner School District is one of 15 employers selected from across the Nation to receive top honors as a 2008 Secretary of Defense Freedom Award. The Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the Department of Defense under the auspices of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve to an employer for their outstanding support to their National Guard and Reserve employees.

The school district was nominated by 2LT Derris Buus of the 155th Engineer Company, South Dakota Army National Guard. Buus had glowing remarks for his employer, "The School District has always supported me and my family during times of deployment or training. Mary Fischer and Jim Drake have all made it a point to ensure that my family had everything they needed during my absence. They always made it very easy for me to pursue my career in the SDARNG as well as my career as an educator."

The Winner School District provides a pay supplement for the entire length of deployment for its Guard and Reserve employees. Deployed employees received numerous care packages from the school board and the students. Daily e-mails were sent to deployed employees from students, teachers, principals, and the superintendent. Returning servicemembers teach the same grade and in the same classroom as they did prior to a deployment.

School board members also aid the families of deployed employees. School board members mowed lawns, took children to athletic events, and in one