

Sen. Kennedy was never afraid to work across the aisle to get things done. We can all learn from the example he set and work together to build a stronger nation.—Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.)

Today, America mourns the death of Sen. Ted Kennedy. He was one of the most dynamic and influential legislators in our Nation's history, and his legacy will live on in the work of the colleagues he inspired, and in the lives of the millions of Americans for whom his passion for social justice made a difference. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends; even though this day was anticipated, I am sure that little can soften the blow. Throughout his final illness, Sen. Kennedy was privileged to have the best doctors and the best treatment. But he never forgot, in this as in all cases, those who were not similarly privileged: those waiting hours in emergency rooms this morning for a doctor's care; those who went to sleep last night unsure that they were covered, uncertain that their families could cope with the financial burden of an illness. For their sake, health care reform was the cause of Ted Kennedy's life. For their sake, and his, it must be the cause of ours.—House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.)

I have known Ted Kennedy for more than 47 years. In that time, it has been my greatest pleasure to work with him in the Congress to try to tackle many human problems, but I am especially gratified by his contributions to the cause of civil rights and voting rights.

At some of the most tragic and difficult moments in this nation's history, Ted Kennedy gathered his strength and led us toward a more hopeful future. As a nation and as a people, he encouraged us to build upon the inspirational leadership of his two brothers and use it to leave a legacy of social transformation that has left its mark on history.—Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.)

Sen. Kennedy devoted his entire life to public policy. At any point he could have accepted a life of leisure. Instead he carried on his family's commitment to public service.

The Senate will be a smaller and sadder place without his enthusiasm, his energy, and his persistent courage.—Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.)

The loss of Sen. Ted Kennedy is a sad event for America, and especially for Massachusetts. The last son of Rose Fitzgerald and Joseph Kennedy was granted a much longer life than his brothers, and he filled those years with endeavor and achievement that would have made them proud. In 1994, I joined the long list of those who ran against Ted and came up short. But he was the kind of man you could like even if he was your adversary. I came to admire Ted enormously for his charm and sense of humor—qualities all the more impressive in a man who had known so much loss and sorrow. I will always remember his great personal kindness, and the fighting spirit he brought to every cause he served and every challenge he faced. I was proud to know Ted Kennedy as a friend, and today my family and I mourn the passing of this big-hearted, unforgettable man.—Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney (R), who ran against Kennedy in 1994

I would like to extend our sympathies to the Kennedy family as we hear word about the passing of Sen. Ted Kennedy. He believed in our country and fought passionately for his convictions.—Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin (R)

Maria and I are immensely saddened by the passing of Uncle Teddy. He was known to the

world as the Lion of the Senate, a champion of social justice, and a political icon.

Most importantly, he was the rock of our family: a loving husband, father, brother and uncle. He was a man of great faith and character.—California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) and wife Maria Shriver, a niece of Kennedy

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, just a month ago, I joined fellow Coloradans, my colleagues in the U.S. Congress, and others across the country to celebrate and acknowledge the many accomplishments and contributions of the Hispanic community in the United States and Colorado. I am particularly proud to highlight the long history of Hispanics in Colorado, as they established some of Colorado's oldest communities, irrigation systems, and earliest businesses. I am equally proud that this community continues to be a vibrant part of the fabric of our great State.

Throughout this month, my colleagues and I have been hard at work to move forward on many policy concerns that are vitally important to Colorado's Hispanic community. From the confirmation of America's first Latina Supreme Court Justice, Sonia Sotomayor, to progress on health insurance reform, and continued support for efforts to create and save jobs, I have been working with the best interests of Colorado in mind. Still, there is much to be accomplished.

We must come together to find opportunities to improve the quality of life of all Coloradans. In doing so, it is important to keep in mind that certain populations, such as Latinos, are disproportionately affected by many of the challenges we face as a State and country. At a national level, Latinos face an unemployment rate that is 3 percent higher than the national rate. In Colorado, Latinos face a poverty rate that is 12 percent higher than the State's overall poverty rate. Latinos also face other challenges—40 percent of Hispanics in Colorado are uninsured, approximately 24 percent higher than the State average, according to a Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment report. Though these issues are not a concern for Latinos in Colorado alone, they undoubtedly raise heightened concerns for the Hispanic community, given these statistics.

These are just a few reasons I have continued to support and develop policies that provide both quality jobs and help reduce the costs of hard-working Coloradans. Most notably, we have made significant progress toward reforming our health insurance system so that it better meets the health needs of all Americans. Making our health system more efficient, fiscally manageable, and accessible is vitally important to making health insurance more affordable for Hispanic and non-Hispanic families alike.

As a member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I

have also been working to develop new ways to help low-income and working families afford to make their homes more energy efficient. By improving access to energy-saving technology and making homes more energy efficient, families can reduce their energy costs, while helping to make our environment and communities better places to live. This is just one part of a new energy economy that can bring more jobs to our State.

We have had much to celebrate during this year's Hispanic Heritage Month, but we also have much to do, and I understand there are many more goals that we have yet to achieve. So while we have enjoyed the celebration of Hispanic heritage and the contributions Latinos make in our communities over the last month, I will continue my efforts to improve the quality of life for Coloradans of all backgrounds in every month of the year.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF POINTS OF LIGHT

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I stand today to recognize and honor an extraordinary organization that began its important work 20 years ago, born from the words of a new President who was dedicated to engaging the American spirit of giving and service. The words of that President resonate even now: "I have spoken of a thousand points of light . . . a new engagement in the lives of others, a new activism, hands-on and involved that gets the job done." This 1989 speech given by President George H.W. Bush outlined the vision for the Points of Light Foundation, now merged with HandsOn Network as the Points of Light Institute, the largest volunteer network in the country.

This independent, nonpartisan organization has worked to encourage, recognize, and empower the spirit of volunteer service that is encoded in our Nation's cultural DNA and is, as President Bush stated, central to living a meaningful life.

Throughout our Nation's history, Americans have demonstrated their willingness to give back and to serve in their communities, even in the hardest of times. Last year alone, over 60 million Americans performed volunteer service in this country. I am proud that my home State of Utah had the highest volunteerism rate, with over 45 percent of adults volunteering in the State in 2008. All told, these volunteers contributed almost 162 million hours of service in a single year.

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of joining with my good friend, the late Senator Ted Kennedy in sponsoring the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, a new law that expands volunteer opportunities for Americans of all ages. I know that the Points of Light Institute will be at the forefront in realizing the full potential of this important legislation, creating healthy communities by inspiring and equipping