

ethic that has made Liz famous. When she has a task to accomplish, she simply doesn't rest until it is done.

She is a workhorse and one of the kindest, most dedicated people I know.

Liz was a staff assistant on the Select Committee for Presidential Campaigns and the Budget Committee before joining my team in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1975. Liz continued her career in the U.S. Senate. As one of the first members of my team, Liz has literally helped thousands of Montanans over the years.

She has also worn many hats over the last thirty-seven years proving that no job is too small or too large for her to tackle with heart and soul.

In many ways, Liz and I grew up together learning the ropes of Congress. Little did we know back in 1975 when I first hired her how much we would be able to accomplish for Montanans. She has helped support Montana outreach efforts on three farm bills, four highway bills, four major rural water project bills, and the Affordable Care Act.

In her early years in my Washington, DC office, she was my office manager. In 1995, she moved to Montana to be assistant to the state director. Her titles from 1996 through today include grants coordinator, State casework director, agriculture issues eastern Montana and director of constituent services, and Montana economic development director. As our economic development director, Liz has played a key role in making our Montana Economic Development Summits a success—helping make connections that have resulted in hundreds of Montana jobs. More recently, she has been an ambassador to energy-impacted communities in the Bakken region helping them to understand and access the myriad of Federal programs available to absorb the pressures of the Bakken oil and gas boom. While we will all miss having her on staff, I am thrilled to know that she will have the opportunity to continue serving Montanans through her passion for economic development.

Liz has worked on more than 17,000 cases for Montanans on issues such as small business, labor, agriculture, veterans, appropriations, transportation, housing, postal services, health, environment, energy, banking, and economic issues. I have always been thankful to have Liz in my corner. I can only imagine how each and every one of those 17,000 individuals felt knowing that Liz answered the call when they needed help.

In addition to her legislative achievements and impressive constituent work, Liz mentored thousands of interns and young staff assistants over the years, gently educating them in all facets of protocol, policy, and poise.

Always on the road, working tirelessly on individual casework and larger community issues, often I received e-mails and notes from Montanans sharing their gratitude for Liz's support and knowledge of the issues that

matter most to them. One of her greatest talents is bringing key people together for discussions and setting the table for meaningful teamwork.

While she is known statewide for her work, Liz is truly a pillar of the Billings community. Whether there is a road to build, a bridge to fix, a new store opening, or a building burnt down, Liz has always been there to uplift those in need or help with the groundbreaking, ribbon-cuttings, dedications, and donations. I cannot fully express how amazing Liz has been as a liaison for our office.

While I could go on and on about Liz's professional accomplishments, I know she is most proud of her wonderful marriage to Kevin Dowling and the beautiful family they have raised together. Her amazing family is truly a testament to the type of person she is. Liz and Kevin have three terrific children: Tierney, Aidan, and Seanan, and one grandson Kaiven.

Everyone privileged to know Liz is touched by her contagious zest for life and endless energy. Her colleagues in Washington, DC, and Montana have the highest regard and appreciation for her many years of service, friendship, and determination to do everything she can for all Montanans in need of any kind of assistance.

I personally owe her a big thank-you. Liz, you are truly one of a kind. We are all rooting for you on your new adventures.

HONORING STAFF SERGEANT JEFFREY KEAS

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, as we confront the many challenges facing this institution, it can be easy to lose sight of what is so unique and special about America. From time to time, though, we are reminded of the America we all know and love—a Nation filled with men and women of character and a remarkable ability to put the interest of others ahead of self.

I was recently reminded of the true American character in reading the story of an Oklahoman and true American patriot, SSG Jeffrey Keas, who recently succumbed to cancer at the age of 44.

As the Tulsa World recently reported, Jeff's journey to military career began at an age when others are usually leaving the service. At the age of 38, Jeff attended a local baseball game that paid tribute to active duty military and veterans. He later told family members that he felt ashamed that he could not stand with his son that day, a recent enlistee, as service men and women were asked to rise for recognition. So Jeff signed up for a long-term commitment with the Army and went on to serve our Nation in Iraq and Korea and most recently at Fort Hood, TX.

At the time of his enlistment, Jeff's dad asked him, "Why in the world, at your age, would you do this, Jeff, when the military is designed for a 19-year-old?"

Jeff's answer says a lot about him and the country he loved so dearly. He said, "If I can go to Iraq or Afghanistan, and that can allow some 19-year-old to come home to his mom and dad or girlfriend, then that's what I want to do."

Tragically, SSG Jeffrey Keas passed from this world earlier this month, but not before he inspired countless Americans with his selflessness, his courage, and his service.

With men and women like SSG Jeffrey Keas, we should never count America out. We face many challenges, but this land of freedom and opportunity was built and is defended by men and women like Staff Sergeant Keas. I am in awe of the example he set for his own family, his neighbors and all those who came in contact with him.

This is the America I know.

On behalf of my fellow Oklahomans, I want to thank Staff Sergeant Keas for this remarkable example and to share our great sadness with the Keas family. Thank you for your sacrifices, and for sharing Jeff, as he served so honorably.

375TH ANNIVERSARY OF PORTSMOUTH, RHODE ISLAND

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I am pleased to join with my colleague, Senator WHITEHOUSE, to help mark the 375th anniversary of the settlement of Portsmouth, RI.

Portsmouth is predominantly located on Aquidneck Island in Narragansett Bay, and also encompasses a number of smaller islands including Prudence, Hog, Patience, and Hope. It is the second oldest community in Rhode Island and is home to over 17,000 people. With over 50 miles of coastline, Portsmouth enjoys beautiful views of the surrounding bay and islands.

Portsmouth has a long and rich history. In 1638, Roger Williams convinced religious dissenters from the Boston Colony to settle the area now known as Portsmouth. One of these dissenters, Anne Hutchinson, perhaps the most well-known of the founders of Portsmouth, rebelled against the Puritanical lifestyle in Massachusetts Bay, undergoing a rigorous trial before being banished and excommunicated from the Boston Church. Hutchinson founded the town of Portsmouth with fellow colonists who were also searching for religious freedom. Portsmouth is believed to be the first town in the New World that was established by a woman. The signing of the Portsmouth Compact in March of 1638 created the first true democracy in America.

The town played a role in our Nation's fight for independence. The Battle of Rhode Island, which took place in 1778, was significant to the history of the Revolutionary War because it was the first joint operation of American and French forces and also was the only battle in which black Americans fought as their own unit as part of the First Rhode Island Regiment, alongside Native Americans. The site