

## REMEMBERING 9/11

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to join my colleagues in commemorating the anniversary of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Twelve years ago America was dealt a blow, but in the years since, we have continued to rebuke the message of hate that was brought to our doorstep. What is more is that we affirm our core American values that were magnified in the days following those attacks.

We are still “one Nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” We are still a diverse nation of many races, religions, and ideas united under the same flag. Maybe most important, we are still at our best when we come together.

Every year we are reminded that though we are a strong and determined nation, we are still healing from the wounds we suffered that day 12 years ago. No amount of time can rationalize the senseless violence or bring back a loved one. It is important to note that we have brought many of the terrorists, including Osama bin Laden, to justice, and we have made great strides in ensuring that those who wish to do us harm like they did on 9/11 will be unable to do so.

Our men and women in uniform, the intelligence community, Foreign Service officers, and the people entrusted with safeguarding our borders, bridges, air and seaports and key infrastructure, have made great sacrifices to ensure our continued safety in a post-9/11 world and we owe so much to these men and women, and the families who support them.

Today, we join together to show the world that our Nation is united and firmly resolved to defend our freedom and safeguard our liberty against any enemy.

We also take time to remember those Americans who perished on 9/11 and to remember them and their families with a special prayer. We reflect on the heroism of the firefighters, police officers, medical workers, city officials, and ordinary citizens who gave their own lives trying to save others. Who could ever forget the images of firefighters and other first responders going up the stairs of the World Trade Center as everyone else was heading to safety? Each of us has been affected by 9/11. It is a day seared into the national memory.

We cannot forget 9/11 because the virtues that carried us through the days, weeks, and years have been with us since the beginning: 9/11 did not teach firefighters and police to sacrifice, nor did it teach unity among neighbors. It did not teach empathy toward strangers or compassion toward friends.

Rather, these quintessential American virtues were with us all along; 9/11 just put them under a spotlight for all to see. On 9/11 we showed the world a brand of resilience, compassion, and strength that could only be “made in America”.

And so, 12 years after the most heinous attacks in our Nation’s history,

we stand tall. We stand tall, not weighed down by the gravity of 9/11 but made stronger by it. We remain united in our diversity like no other nation on Earth, “one Nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

Mr. CHIESA. Mr. President, I vividly recall, as do most Americans, exactly where I was 12 years ago this morning. My son, Al, who had only recently celebrated his third birthday, was beginning his very first day at preschool. It was a big day for my wife Jenny and me, filled with that mixture of excitement and trepidation that is familiar to all young parents.

Shortly after waving goodbye to Al, we heard the shocking news—an airplane had hit the South Tower of the World Trade Center.

As a native New Jerseyan, raised in the shadow of the Twin Towers, I could picture the scene in my mind’s eye.

My first assumption was that a small plane—perhaps one of the sightseeing planes that provided visitors with a bird’s-eye view of the wonders of Lower Manhattan and the harbor—had somehow flown off course into the building.

Less than 20 minutes later, however, when the second plane hit, I knew, as we all did, that this was no accident. America was under attack. And as the morning unfolded and the horror increased—the Pentagon was hit, the towers fell, United flight 93 was brought to the ground near Shanksville, PA—my thoughts turned to faith and family.

I thought of my son—young and innocent, starting his very first day in school—and I realized the world that existed when we dropped him off that morning had changed.

I thought of so many friends and neighbors who might very well have been on the plane that flew out of Newark that morning or in those proud buildings that had been reduced to rubble. I hoped and prayed that they were safe.

I thought of the people who had surely lost their lives in the attacks—in numbers more than any of us could bear, as Mayor Giuliani so eloquently put it—and prayed for them and their families.

And as the day drew to its awful conclusion, I knew that for so many, the terrible anguish of this day was just beginning, and the reminders of that were everywhere: the children whose parents would never arrive to pick their children up from school, the empty place at the dinner table, the gaping hole in the hearts of those who loved those who perished.

Twelve years later, the passage of time has, for many, helped to bring some measure of healing. But the scars remain, and they will never completely fade away.

So today we remember, as we do every year and as we should every day, all those who lost their lives, both in the terrorist attacks themselves and also on foreign fields of battle in the

defense of our freedom and our way of life.

We remember today, as we do every year and as we should every day, all those who were injured in the attacks and on the battlefield.

We remember today, as we do every year and as we should every day, all those who responded to the attacks with bravery and determination and many of whom still struggle with the aftermath of their courageous actions.

And we remember today, as we do every year and should every day, all those who lost friends, colleagues, and family members in the attacks and in the years since. Their suffering is our suffering and we must never forget that.

Today is also a day for renewal, for renewing the sense of purpose that united our nation in the aftermath of the attacks, for renewing the spirit of cooperation that made it possible for our country to move forward, both through individual acts of courage, kindness, and compassion and through acts of governance that helped us meet the challenges we faced, and for renewing our determination to keep America safe while also safeguarding our liberties.

Twelve years ago today, when Jenny and I dropped off our son for his very first day of school—he is, by the way, now a high school freshman—we could never have imagined how much the world would change before he had even settled in to his new preschool routine.

But although so much has changed, one thing remains constant: America, is, as she always had been, a beacon of hope to the world. No act of terror—no matter how brutal—will ever diminish the bright, shining light of the American spirit.

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 REMEMBERING NICOLAE GHEORGHE

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, on August 8, Nicolae Gheorghe, one of the leading figures of the Romani civil rights movement, passed away. He was devoted to improving the situation of Roma, ultimately playing a pivotal role on the international stage and especially within the OSCE. Gheorghe lived an extraordinary life and will be long remembered for his singular contribution to the advancement of human rights.

Nicolae Gheorghe was born in 1946 in Romania during the aftermath of the fascist regime led by Marshall Ion Antonescu. His mother had narrowly escaped the mass deportations of 25,000 Roma planned and implemented by the Antonescu regime.

Members of the Helsinki Commission first met Nicolae Gheorghe when Senator Dennis DeConcini and Representative STENY HOYER, then-Chairman and Cochairman, led a delegation to Romania in April 1990. At that time, Gheorghe was emerging as one of the clearest and most compelling voices sounding the alarm about the deplorable situation of Roma. Although the