

his law degree from DePaul University. He was appointed superintendent of the Illinois State Police by Governor Jim Edgar and held that position for 7 years. He was then called to Washington, DC, to serve as second in command at the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department.

In 2002, Terry became chief of the United States Capitol Police and was instrumental in facilitating the substantial growth of that force in the challenging days following 9/11/2001.

After a brief stint in the private sector, Terry returned to public service when he was appointed by Majority Leader HARRY REID to serve as Sergeant at Arms. HARRY REID, himself a former Capitol Hill policeman, understood the responsibility and understood Terry was the right person for the job.

As I noted earlier, during his tenure as the Sergeant at Arms, Terry has done an exemplary job of balancing security and public access to the Capitol and to the Senate. His steady management hand, his quick smile, his constant presence in the halls of the Capitol and Senate office buildings are going to be greatly missed.

I wish to thank Terry Gainer personally for his friendship, support, the little favors he has done for me and for every Member of the Senate to make our lives and the lives of our family better. You have truly added to this great institution, as much as any person who served because you have made your mark and you have kept us safe and you have kept the millions of visitors during your tenure safe as well.

That is quite an accomplishment, Terry.

Congratulations to you and especially to Irene, who has been patient throughout it all, with her own career and her own effort, raising the family and making her mark professionally. The two of you are quite an example to all of us of public service at its best.

Thanks, Terry, for your service.

And now comes the tough responsibility of following in the steps of Terry Gainer.

Majority Leader REID has announced that Drew Willison, who is in the Chamber here today, will be replacing Terry as the next Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper—officially on Monday.

Drew has spent more than 5 years in two stints as the Deputy Sergeant at Arms, and he has learned from the best—Terry Gainer.

Prior to his work in the Sergeant at Arms office, Drew was a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee staff, where we worked together. He had roles in the Energy and Water Subcommittee effort, as well as the Legislative Branch Appropriations. His experience and knowledge of the legislative branch will serve him well in his new capacity.

I congratulate Drew and wish him the very best of luck. Terry's service as Sergeant at Arms has set the bar very high, but I know, Drew, you are up to the challenge.

Mr. President, let me end by thanking again Terry, Irene Gainer, the Gainer family, and all who support them for unselfishly giving to this Senate such an extraordinary contribution—for sharing their husband, father, and grandfather with our home State of Illinois and with this great Nation for so many years.

Terry and Irene have more than earned the right to move to the next chapter in their lives and to celebrate that time with their 6 children and 14 grandchildren.

I congratulate Terry on his distinguished public service career, for his accomplishments as a law enforcement officer, a decorated veteran, and the Senate Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper. Most importantly, I thank Terry for his friendship.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO TERRY GAINER AND DARYL CHAPPELLE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, before he leaves the floor, let me offer my congratulations to the Sergeant at Arms, Terry Gainer, and also my thanks to him for his service to this great institution. We know we will miss him but also wish him well in the next chapter of his life.

Mr. President, I also want to express, as have the majority leader and the Republican leader, my best wishes to Daryl Chappelle, as he leaves after 40 years of service to the U.S. Senate.

There are some people you run into each day who sort of make you feel better and brighten your day, and Daryl was one of those people.

I know we get involved in some pretty tough debates around here, and people sometimes walk around with a scowl on their face, but it is nice when people like Daryl help break that mood and remind us that we are lucky to be alive each day and come to work in such a wonderful place as the U.S. Senate.

I wish both Chief Gainer and Daryl well in the next chapter of their lives.

VA ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I came to the floor primarily to talk about a very serious matter; that is, our U.S. military and our commitment not only to those who wear the uniform of the military—and, of course, I am aware of the Acting President pro tempore's long distinguished service—but also the solemn obligation we have to our veterans once they leave active-duty status.

They have more than upheld their commitment—in the mountains, in the valleys of Afghanistan, in the deserts of Iraq, and in postings around the world, from Japan, to Korea, to Kuwait, to Israel, to Germany, and all across the globe. Of course, they have joined generations of men and women—the “greatest generation,” of which my dad was a member, the World War II generation; and, of course, then those who fought in Korea, in Vietnam, and, of course, the most recent conflicts we have had, which I just mentioned, in Iraq and Afghanistan.

My strong conviction is that we owe a moral obligation, not just a legal obligation, to those veterans, to keep our commitments to them once they separate from military service.

I am sorry to say the Department of Veterans Affairs has repeatedly and outrageously failed to uphold its own commitment to America's Armed Forces and our veterans.

The problem, the way I see it, is we have almost become desensitized because we all know as a result of the drawdown of our military after our exit from Iraq and now Afghanistan we are getting a large number of people retiring from military service, so it is understandable there would be more pressure put on the Department of Veterans Affairs to process these claims, to process these retirements, but what we have learned is there are outrageous examples—for example, in Phoenix, where 40 veterans died because their names were taken off of the appointment system list in order to make the backlog look not as bad as it really was. Many of them had been put on what was called a secret waiting list that was designed to conceal the unconscionably long wait times endured by up to 1,600 sick veterans.

So what I mean when I say I think we have become almost desensitized to this backlog—where more than half of the claims now made with the VA are backlogged, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs' own criteria—it takes something like this, where 40 veterans have died because they were put on a secret waiting list in order to cook the books at the Phoenix VA, to hopefully wake us up and to get us to do something about this outrageous situation.

According to the investigation, high-level officials in the Phoenix VA knew about the secret waiting list, and they did nothing about it. It is even worse than that. Not only did the Phoenix officials tolerate this list, they actually defended it.

A former Phoenix VA doctor told CNN that the list “was deliberately put in place to avoid the VA's own internal rules.” That is why I call this a case of cooking the books. To avoid accountability, to avoid solving the problem, they tried to sweep the problem under the rug, and that is outrageous.

One of the victims of the secret waiting list was a 71-year-old Navy veteran named Thomas Breen. In late September, Mr. Breen was rushed to the