

It is with great pleasure that I support her nomination today and I thank my colleagues for their vote to confirm her.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

BANK ON STUDENTS EMERGENCY LOAN REFINANCING ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO MARTHA SCOTT POINDEXTER

Mr. CHAMBLISS. It is with great pride and a touch of sadness that I stand here today to pay a special tribute to Martha Scott Poindexter, my dear friend and trusted confidant. Martha Scott is leaving the staff of the Senate after a long and distinguished career in public service.

Martha Scott has dedicated most of her professional life to the Congress, serving over 20 years in both the House of Representatives as well as the Senate. She was with me in my first agricultural hearing in the House, and as I prepare to retire from the Senate this year, she was with me today in one of my last hearings as the vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

I owe much of my success as a legislator to Martha Scott. She has served as my legislative assistant in the House, legislative director when I first entered the Senate, and later as my staff director for both the agriculture and intelligence committees.

It is no exaggeration to say that Martha Scott is one of the brightest, most talented, and well-connected individuals on Capitol Hill. She is a natural leader and manager who exemplifies a tremendous character and dedication that traditionally defines the term a public servant.

Martha Scott is an enthusiastic team player with a special talent for finding solutions to complex problems and rallying support behind her. Those are enormously helpful traits on the Hill, especially in recent years when it seems as though finding solutions has taken a back seat to partisanship.

But those are not the characteristics that define Martha Scott. Rather, those who work with her and who have known her professionally and personally are most often struck by her tremendous heart and kindness. Her infectious laugh always brings a smile to the faces of friends nearby. This place just won't be the same without it.

Above all, she is a good person, loyal to the core, and committed to always doing what is right. All she asks in return is that people say her first name correctly, Martha Scott. It is not Martha. We Southerners can be very par-

ticular that way, and we like double names.

What began in the junior position in the office of Senator COCHRAN nearly 24 years ago blossomed into a distinguished public service career that is nearly unmatched by our peers. Martha Scott has seen and been involved in so many historic events and helped author legislation that has touched and impacted the lives of all our citizens, but don't expect Martha Scott to tell anybody that. That is just not her style.

Whether it is her work on the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Agriculture, the Select Committee on Intelligence, or as a member of my personal legislative staff, Martha Scott has selflessly committed herself to the people we represent, whether it is the cotton farmer from the Mississippi Delta, the soldier in Afghanistan, or the thousands of intelligence professionals who serve our country every day.

Martha Scott has always kept our Nation's best interests at heart.

Finding a natural love of politics and policy drove Martha Scott to be a key player in the legislative process that touched every farm bill for the last 25 years, as well as the recent controversial debates on cyber security and intelligence collection.

My colleagues and I trust Martha Scott's judgment impeccably. Her exceptional performance has earned our respect and admiration, and it has inspired a generation of staff members who have had the privilege to work with her and learn from her. Her legacy will remain a part of the Senate for many years to come.

Martha Scott has a profound commitment to family and her roots in the delta define her. Growing up on the family farm provided a strong foundation and work ethic that one only gets in rural Mississippi.

Guided by her loving parents and the constant support of her sisters, Martha Scott has not only won the admiration of those for whom she has worked, but for those who have worked for her.

To her husband, Robert, we thank you for allowing us to take up so much of her time, especially in this very special year. My colleagues and I owe a deep debt of gratitude to each and every member of Martha Scott's family.

Martha Scott has been a part of my staff for 20 years, which means she has been a part of my family for 20 years. She has watched my children mature and my grandchildren grow up, and they have all come to know and love her. She has been an inspiration to so many people, but most importantly she has been an inspiration to me. While everybody is going to miss her, I am the one who is going to miss her the most.

So Martha Scott, to you we say: Congratulations on a life after the Senate. Just know how much, No. 1, we are going to miss you, but secondly and

most importantly, your country is going to miss you. We appreciate your tremendous commitment and service to our country.

God bless you and God bless your family.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, as we finished the last series of votes we were talking about the range of difficult issues we face in this Congress and also in our country—a series of issues including what to do about ISIS and how to confront this latest threat, whether or not to provide aid to the moderate rebels in Syria and what form should that aid take, continued concerns that flow from Ukraine, and the areas there along the border with Russia, cyber attacks, data breaches, Ebola outbreaks, folks trying to get into our country from all different directions, especially from Central America. These are hard issues to deal with. Try though we may, it is hard to fix them.

As my colleague who serves with us on homeland security knows, it is a busy neighborhood where we have jurisdiction. It is not that the problems are intractable. They are just hard issues, and some of them may take years to fully resolve.

But I might say as well, the economic recovery has continued now for 5 years and it has been stop and go. Every now and then we have some great encouraging news, and sometimes it is less so. But today we have encouraging news.

I wish to talk a little bit about this as we talk about the economy and lead into a discussion of where the postal system of our country actually has played a role in strengthening our economic recovery.

Every Thursday, as my colleague knows, the Department of Labor puts out information. Among the things they promulgate on Thursdays is how many people filed for unemployment insurance in the last week. They do this every Thursday, except maybe on Thanksgiving or maybe on a Christmas.

On the Thursday of the week that Barack Obama and JOE BIDEN were sworn in as President and Vice President, they put out a number that said 628,000 people filed for unemployment insurance. Any time that number is above 400,000 people, we are losing jobs in this country, and any time it is under 400,000 people, we are adding jobs in this country. It was 628,000 that week 5½ years ago.

Slowly but surely, that number has dropped and has continued to drop. It bounces up and down a little bit. Since it may go up and down from week to week, we do a 4-week running average and that kind of balances out the blips.

Well, the number has dropped from 628,000 people 5½ ago to 400,000 people and to 300,000 people. We got the new report today from the Department of