

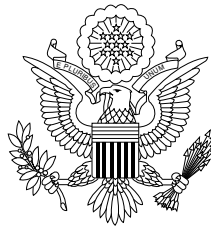
TRIBUTES TO HON. GEORGE S. LEMIEUX

George S. LeMieux

U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

TRIBUTES

IN THE CONGRESS OF
THE UNITED STATES





George S. LeMieux

Tributes
Delivered in Congress

George S. LeMieux
United States Senator
2009–2011



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of the
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BIOGRAPHY

Senator GEORGE STEPHEN LEMIEUX was born in Fort Lauderdale, FL, on May 21, 1969, the only child of George and Karen LeMieux, a building contractor and secretary to the company. He grew up in Coral Springs, FL, and graduated in 1987 from Coral Springs High School.

GEORGE LEMIEUX graduated magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa in 1991 from Emory University, where he majored in political science. He was selected by his peers to address the graduating class as senior class orator. While earning his college degree, he interned for Congressman E. Clay Shaw, Jr. and U.S. Senator Connie Mack III.

After college, GEORGE LEMIEUX went on to earn his J.D. cum laude from Georgetown University Law Center in 1994. At Georgetown he received the Vincent G. Panati Award as the graduate with the highest GPA in criminal law courses. After law school, he joined Gunster, a prominent Florida law firm, resident in the firm's Ft. Lauderdale office.

GEORGE LEMIEUX and his wife, the former Meike Sigrid Detassis, are the parents of four children: George Maximilian, Taylor Franz, Chase Karlyle, and Madeleine Meike. Max, Taylor, and Chase were born in Tallahassee, FL. Madeleine was born in Washington, DC, while GEORGE LEMIEUX served in the Senate.

Inspired by President Ronald Reagan, GEORGE LEMIEUX became active in Republican Party politics at a young age, culminating in his election as chairman of the Broward County Republican Party in 2000.

In 2002 GEORGE LEMIEUX resigned his position with the Republican Party to serve as deputy attorney general for the State of Florida. During his time in the attorney general's office, GEORGE LEMIEUX helped lead an agency of more than 400 attorneys. In 2004, on behalf of the people of Florida, he successfully argued a death penalty case, *Florida v. Nixon*, before the U.S. Supreme Court, where he obtained a unanimous reversal of the decision by the Supreme Court of Florida.

In 2006 GEORGE LEMIEUX managed a successful gubernatorial campaign and in 2007 became chief of staff to Gov-

ernor Charlie Crist. In his year serving as chief of staff, he oversaw the executive office of the Governor including the Governor's legislative agenda, policy initiatives, and the management of the agencies that reported to the Governor.

In 2008 GEORGE returned to the Gunster law firm and was selected by his colleagues to serve as chairman of the firm. In summer 2009, he was called back into public service when Senator Mel Martinez retired before the end of his term.

On September 10, 2010 GEORGE LEMIEUX was sworn in as Florida's 34th U.S. Senator, and at the age of 41, was the youngest U.S. Senator then serving. During his time in the Senate, GEORGE LEMIEUX was an active member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Commerce Committee, and the Special Committee on Aging. In the Senate, he made the debt and deficit his primary focus. He introduced a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution and opposed wasteful earmark spending, helping to lead the effort to ban all earmarks in the 111th Congress.

While in the Senate, GEORGE LEMIEUX proposed the "2007 Solution," a plan to eliminate the deficit by 2013 and cut the national debt nearly in half by 2020. He also saw several of his legislative priorities signed into law, including Medicare antifraud legislation, an export promotion act, tax relief and lending assistance for small businesses, and elimination of the monopoly given to rating agencies to determine the creditworthiness of securities. GEORGE LEMIEUX also successfully offered an amendment to the resolution of ratification to the New START Treaty with Russia, requiring the President to seek negotiations with Russia to secure and reduce tactical nuclear weapons in a verifiable manner.

For his efforts, GEORGE LEMIEUX received several recognitions including the Spirit of Enterprise Award from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Tax Fighter Award by the National Tax Limitation Committee, the Friend of the Family Award by the Christian Family Coalition, the Guardian of Small Business Award by the National Federation of Independent Business, and twice received the Taxpayer Hero Award by Citizens Against Government Waste.

In his farewell speech to the U.S. Senate, GEORGE LEMIEUX described his service in the Senate as the "honor of his life," and quoting President Theodore Roosevelt, said serving in the Senate allowed him to enjoy one of the greatest gifts life has to offer, the opportunity to "work hard at work worth doing."

Farewell to the Senate

Tuesday, December 7, 2010

Mr. LEMIEUX. Madam President, I rise to pay tribute to the body with which I have had the privilege of serving for the past 15 months. Being a U.S. Senator, representing 18½ million Floridians, has been the privilege of my lifetime, and now that privilege is coming to an end. As I stand on the floor of the Senate to address my colleagues this one last time, I am both humbled and grateful, humbled by this tremendous institution, by its work, and by the statesmen I have had the opportunity to serve with, who I knew only from afar but now am grateful that I can call those same men and women my colleagues.

No endeavor worth doing is done alone. And my time here is no exception. In the past 16 months, I have asked the folks who worked with me to try to get 6 years of service out of that time, and they have worked tirelessly to achieve that goal.

My chief of staff Kerry Feehery, my deputy chief of staff Vivian Myrtetus, my State director Carlos Curbelo, Ben Moncrief, Michael Zehy, Ken Lundberg, Melissa Hernandez, Maureen Jaeger, Danielle Joos, Brian Walsh, Frank Walker, Spencer Wayne, Vennia Francois, Victor Cervino, Taylor Booth, and many others have made our time here worthwhile, and I thank all of them. I especially thank Vivian and Maureen who left their families and gave up precious time with their children to come to Washington to support me in these efforts.

I am also thankful to the people who work in our State office. Time and time again when I travel around Florida I am greeted by people who have received such a warm reception from the men and women who serve us in Florida and help people deal with problems with the Federal Government. I am grateful for their work.

Senator McConnell has provided me with opportunities beyond my expectations. He is a great leader, and I am grateful to him. Senators Alexander, Burr, Cornyn, Kyl, McCain,

Corker, and many others have taken me under their wings and mentored me, and I am appreciative of them.

Chairmen Rockefeller and Levin, we have had the opportunity to do great work together in your committees. I thank you for that. Senators Cantwell, Klobuchar, Landrieu, Whitehouse, and Baucus, we have worked together in a commonsense way to pass legislation that is good for the American people, and I am appreciative of your efforts.

Senator Mel Martinez, who ably held the seat before me, has been generous in his advice and counsel. Senator Nelson and his wife Grace have been warm and welcomed Meike and me to Washington. I am thankful for your courtesy. I thank Governor Crist. He has afforded me tremendous opportunities for public service, and I am grateful.

I want to say a special thank you to my parents. My grandfather, in 1951, drove his 1949 Pontiac from Waterbury, CT, to Fort Lauderdale, FL, with his wife and five kids piled in the back. He didn't know anybody. He didn't have a job. But he went there to make a better life for his family. He worked in the trades, in construction. He built houses and he taught my father the same thing. And as my father worked in the hot Florida sun, his ambition for his son was that he would one day get to work in air-conditioning. I have achieved that goal and so much more because of their sacrifice. Mom and Dad didn't go to college but they sent me to college and law school, and I will be forever grateful for what they have done for me.

My most heartfelt appreciation goes to my wife Meike. When I learned of this appointment, I met her at the door of our home in Tallahassee and she was crying. She was not just crying because she was happy; she was crying because she was worried. At the time we had three small sons—Max, Taylor, and Chase, 6, 4, and 2. She knew something that others didn't know—that we were going to have another baby and that baby was born here in Washington, our daughter Madeleine.

Throughout all of my travels, she has been an unfailing support for me, I love her dearly, and I appreciate her.

It has been the privilege of my life to serve here, but I would not be fulfilling my charge in my final speech if I did not tell you what weighs on my mind and lays upon my heart about the direction of this country. So what I say to you now is with all due respect, but it is with the candor that it deserves.

The single greatest threat to the future of our Republic and the prosperity of our people is this Congress' failure to control spending. In my maiden speech, I lamented a world where my children would one day come to me and say they would find an opportunity in another country instead of staying here in America because those opportunities were better there. In 1 year's time that lament has proven to be too optimistic, because the challenge that confronts us will not wait until my children grow up.

When I came to Congress just 15 months ago, our national debt was \$11.7 trillion. Today, it stands at \$13.7 trillion. It has gone up \$2 trillion in 15 months. It took this country 200 years to go \$1 trillion in debt. Our interest payment on our debt service is nearly \$200 billion now. At the end of the decade, when our debt will be nearly \$26 trillion, that interest payment will be \$900 billion.

When that interest payment is \$900 billion, this government will fail. And long before that time the world markets will anticipate that and our markets will crash. This is not hyperbole; it is the truth. Not since World War II has this country faced a greater threat. Not since the Civil War has this threat come from within.

How has Congress arrived at this moment? For the past 40 years, Congress has spent more than it could afford. It has borrowed from Social Security and foreign governments, delaying making honest choices and prioritizing on what it should spend. Budgeting in Washington seems to be nothing more than adding to last year's budget. We are funding the priorities of the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s without any real evaluation of whether those are still good priorities and certainly not to see whether they are being done efficiently and effectively: It is as if a teenage child received not only all the gifts on their Christmas list this year but the gifts on all their Christmas lists going back to when they were 3.

It is clear Congress is capable of solving this problem with business as usual. What is needed is across-the-board spending caps to right the ship. An across-the-board spending cap will necessitate oversight and require prioritization. Congress will finally have to do what businesses and families do all across this country: Make tough choices, make ends meet.

I have proposed such a cap. I have proposed going back to the 2007 level spending across the board. Was our spending in 2007 so austere that we could not live with it just 3 years later? If we did, we would balance the budget in 2013 and

we would cut the national debt in half by 2020 and you would save America.

Unlike most problems that Congress addresses, this problem is uniquely solvable by Congress. Congress can't win wars. Only the brave men and women in our military, who we especially remember on this day, December 7, of all those who have served for our country in all of our wars to keep us safe and free, only those men and women can win a war. Congress cannot lead us out of recession. Only job creators and businesses can create jobs. But this problem is solely of Congress' making and uniquely solvable by this body.

What Congress should do is strengthen its oversight. The lack of oversight in Washington is breathtaking. Evaluate all Federal programs. Keep what works; fix what you should; get rid of the rest. Return the money to the people and use the rest to pay down this cataclysmic debt.

The recent work of the Debt Commission is a good start, and I commend my Senate colleagues who voted for this measure. It was courageous for them to do so.

Out-of-control spending is not just a threat because it is unsustainable; it is also changing who we are as Americans. Remember, our Founders told us that the powers delegated to the Federal Government were "few and defined," the powers to the State "numerous and indefinite," extending to "all the objects which in the course of affairs, concern the lives, liberties and properties of the people."

The current size and scope of the Federal Government is corrosive to the American spirit. The good intentions of Members of Congress to solve every real or perceived problem with a new Federal program, and the false light of praise that attaches to the giving away of the people's money, endangers our Republic. Every new program chips away at what it means to be an American, harms our spirit, and replaces our self-reliance with dependency, supplants an opportunity ethic with an entitlement culture. It is at its base un-American.

It is not the government's role to deliver happiness. Rather, it is its role to stay clear of that path to allow our people to pursue that God-given right.

What has created our prosperity, after all, is not our government, it is our free market system of capitalism. It is through the healthy cut and thrust of the marketplace that new technologies, new jobs, and new wealth are created. Through that dynamic process some win and some lose, but it allows all of our people, regardless of their race, gender,

creed, color, or background the opportunity to succeed or fail. And it ensures for us that unique expression “only in America” is not just a refrain from the past but an anthem for the future.

Can you imagine the tragedy if the downfall of the American experiment was caused by a failure of this Congress to control its spending? The challenge of this generation is before you and it is not beyond your grasp. There is nothing we as Americans cannot do. We have fought imperial Japan and Nazi Germany at the same time and beaten both. We have put a man on the Moon. We have mapped the human genome. And in the spare bedrooms and garages and dorm rooms of our people, our citizens have created the greatest inventions and the greatest businesses the world has ever known, which have employed millions of people and allowed them to pursue their dreams, all in the freest and most open society in the history of man.

We are that shining city on the hill. We are that beacon of freedom. We are that last best hope for mankind upon which God has shed his grace.

President Theodore Roosevelt said that one of the greatest gifts that life has to offer is the opportunity to do work that is worth doing. I can’t think of a greater gift than the work that lies before you: righteous in its cause, noble in its purpose, and essential for the prosperity of our people.

I will always cherish the relationships I have gained here and the work we have done together. God bless you, God bless the U.S. Senate, and God bless our great country.

I yield the floor.

TRIBUTES
TO
GEORGE S. LEMIEUX

Proceedings in the Senate

TUESDAY, *November 30, 2010*

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, 16 Senators will retire this year. There is a pretty big turnover in this body, but that is a lot of Senators at once. We are losing an enormous amount of talent, but, of course, we are gaining a lot of talent with the new Senators.

I wish to show my respect for those who have served, which I will do in a summary fashion because we are talking about 16 individuals with very complex and distinguished backgrounds.

One might ask, what are the characteristics of a Senator? There are a lot of different answers to that, depending on your background and attitude toward politics and government. First, I have always thought that one characteristic of almost every Member of the Senate is that he or she probably was a first grader sitting in the front row, hand in the air waiting to be recognized. This is an eager bunch or you would not have gotten here.

Second, it is a group of risk takers. Most people who end up in the Senate get here because a lot of other people who wanted to be Senators were standing around waiting for the right time to run. A lot of people who were elected to the Senate seemed to have no chance of winning at the time they decided to run, but the voters decided differently, and here they are.

Third, we are almost all professional and congenial. That is a big help. It is almost a requirement in an organization of 100 individuals who spend almost all their time with one another, who serve in a body that operates by unanimous consent, when just one Senator can bring the whole place to a halt, and whose job basically is to argue about some of the most difficult issues that face the American people. So it helps that almost every Member of the Senate is an especially congenial person.

Back in Tennessee, people often say to me it must be rough being in that job. They are awfully mean up there.

The truth is, I don't know of a more congenial group than the Members of the Senate. We begin the day in the gym. The next thing you know we are at a Prayer Breakfast, and then we are at a committee hearing. Then we are on the floor voting, and then we have lunch. It goes through the day until 7 or 8 o'clock, or sometimes later. We live together and we get along very well. We know and respect each other.

Not long ago, the Presiding Officer (Mr. Udall of New Mexico) and I were having dinner together with our wives. We were lamenting the loss of families who know one another, the way it happened when his father was serving in Congress and when I first came to the Senate to work for Senator Baker. And that's true. We've lost some of that. Still, there is an enormous amount of affection and good will here. You don't always get to be very close friends in this job, but you get to be very good acquaintances, and you learn to respect people for their strengths.

Senator Domenici said, when he left, that we don't do a very good job of saying goodbye here. That is true. As one part of saying goodbye, I wish to say at least one good thing about each one of the 16 retiring Senators. Much more could be said about each, of course. Mostly, I am going in alphabetical order. . . .

Senator GEORGE LEMIEUX of Florida made his focus balancing the budget and controlling the debt. We have not heard the last of GEORGE LEMIEUX, I am sure, in politics. . . .

It has been my privilege to serve with these 16 Senators. We thank them for their service to our country. They have had a chance to serve in what we regard as the world's greatest deliberative body; it is a special institution. We will miss their leadership, and we hope they will stay in touch with us because they are not just retiring Senators, they are all our friends.

I yield the floor.

WEDNESDAY, *December 8, 2010*

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be printed as a Senate document a compilation of materials from the *Congressional Record* in tribute to retiring Members of the 111th Congress, and that Members have until Thursday, December 16, to submit such tributes.

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

FRIDAY, *December 10, 2010*

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to our colleagues who are departing the Senate after distinguished service on behalf of their States and on behalf of the Nation. I have been privileged to work with these individuals, to learn from them, to collaborate and cooperate with them, and to, in some small way, help them do what they have done so well—represent their States with fidelity, with great effort, and to move the agenda of the Nation forward. . . .

Senator GEORGE LEMIEUX and his wife Meike served here for a short period of time but with such distinction, such character, and such concern. I want to salute him. He and I worked together on the Teacher and Principal Improvement Act. He is a brilliant and a decent civil servant. I thank him. . . .

To all of these colleagues and their families, my deepest appreciation and my profoundest respect.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise again to recognize the service of another great Federal employee. This is a tradition that was started by our friend and former colleague, Senator Kaufman, and I am proud to carry on that tradition. But I want to first say that I appreciate the remarks of the Presiding Officer (Mr. Reed) about our colleagues who are leaving this body, and I share his great respect for not only Senator Kaufman but all of the colleagues who are leaving the body at the end of this Congress. . . .

WEDNESDAY, *December 15, 2010*

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to recognize our retiring colleague from Florida, Senator GEORGE LEMIEUX.

Senator LEMIEUX came to the Senate in September 2009, amid extraordinary economic conditions. When he took office, Floridians were facing historically high rates of unemployment—a trend too common across the country. By November 2009, an estimated 45 percent of home mortgages in Florida

were “upside down,” meaning affected Floridians owed more on their property than it was worth. Needless to say, there were significant economic challenges facing the incoming junior Senator from Florida.

It takes uncommon character and dedication to accept appointment to public office, especially in these uncertain times. Senator LEMIEUX chose to confront our country’s economic challenges by serving the people of Florida in the U.S. Senate.

Since arriving in the Senate, Senator LEMIEUX has expressed his desire to address our unsustainable fiscal condition—a problem I agree will cripple our country without bipartisan compromise. If we are to address our fiscal challenges, we must work together to craft solutions to our economic challenges.

In addition to historic economic and fiscal challenges, Senator LEMIEUX has confronted unexpected environmental challenges. Not long after Senator LEMIEUX arrived in the Senate, our country saw one of its greatest environmental disasters of all time. For 3 months, oil gushed into the Gulf of Mexico, causing extensive damage to marine life, coastline, and commerce. Senator LEMIEUX, along with his fellow gulf coast colleagues, worked to secure Federal relief to mitigate the effects of the spill on the coastal region.

It is not easy to navigate the Federal disaster relief system, especially for a new Senator. I commend Senator LEMIEUX for his work to protect his fellow Floridians from the effects of the gulf oilspill.

Despite our political differences, I respect Senator LEMIEUX’ desire to make a difference in the lives of everyday Floridians. I have appreciated the opportunity to work with Senator LEMIEUX and thank him for his service to our country.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, each year that brings a session of Congress to an end, it has long been a tradition for the Senate to take a moment to say goodbye to those who will not be returning in January for the beginning of the next session of Congress. One of those I know I will miss who will be heading home to Florida as his term concludes is GEORGE LEMIEUX.

It may surprise a lot of people to learn what a powerful presence GEORGE has been in the Senate. Although he did not serve a full term of 6 years, the months he has spent representing Florida have been very productive.

Simply put, GEORGE is an impressive individual who understands the importance of the work we must do to control spending in the years to come and, if we fail to do that, the impact it will have on our Nation and our children as they try to pursue their goals and live the American dream.

GEORGE grew up in Florida and, like me, he came to Washington, DC, for his college studies. I graduated from George Washington University, and GEORGE graduated from Georgetown University. When he returned home to begin his career, his attendance at a high school reunion proved to be a turning point in his life when he met a former classmate named Meike who soon became his wife.

Years later, when an individual of GEORGE's talents and abilities was needed to complete the Senate term of Mel Martinez, the Governor knew who would be the right person for the job—GEORGE LEMIEUX. Soon, GEORGE was on his way back to Washington, looking forward to the opportunity to use his knowledge, skills, abilities, and professional experience to serve the people of his home State.

There were some eyebrows raised when he arrived. Some people thought he wasn't the best candidate for the job. Others thought he didn't have the background necessary to be a productive Senator. It didn't take him long before he proved them all wrong.

GEORGE not only hit the ground running, but he proved to be a natural and effective legislator. I don't think I have ever seen anyone who has had such an impact on the Senate after such a short time in office.

Over the past months, GEORGE has not only fulfilled his duties as a Senator, he has taken them to another level as he came up with good ideas for legislation, especially on the need to control spending and reduce the deficit which he has referred to as the "single greatest threat" to our future and the prosperity of our people.

That is the kind of Senator that GEORGE has been—strong, spirited, focused, and determined to speak out about the consequences that will come from not being good stewards of our Nation's financial resources. His concern about our debt and the world we will leave behind for our children and grandchildren means even more to him today now that his Washington experience includes the addition of a fourth child—his first daughter.

I don't know what the future holds for you, GEORGE, but I do know that we will all be watching with great interest and expectation. You have already established a reputation

for hard work that has earned you the friendship of your colleagues on both sides of the aisle. Whatever you decide to do, I am sure you know you can count on us to support and encourage you as you begin the next great adventure of your life. I am hoping it will be as the elected Senator from Florida. You can certainly run on experience. You have done more in months than some do in a career.

Diana joins in sending our best wishes to you and Meike. You have made a difference in just a few months, and we are sure there is more to come. Keep in touch when you return home. We will always be pleased to hear from you with your thoughts and suggestions about the legislation being considered by the Senate and what we can do to make it better.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the printing of tributes be modified to provide that Members have until sine die of the 111th Congress, 2d session, to submit tributes and that the order for printing remain in effect.

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

THURSDAY, *December 16, 2010*

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to my colleague, the Senator from Florida, GEORGE LEMIEUX, who will be leaving the U.S. Senate before the 112th Congress convenes. I would like to take this moment to thank GEORGE for his service, and wish him, his wife Meike, and their four children the very best as they embark on the next chapter of their lives.

GEORGE is a native Floridian who has served as deputy attorney general, and later as Governor Charlie Crist's chief of staff.

When Senator Mel Martinez retired in 2009, GEORGE was appointed to fulfill the remainder of the term. Since then he has worked to help the people of Florida through his work as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Commerce Committee, and the Special Committee on Aging.

Though he has only been in the Senate for a short time, Senator LEMIEUX has been an engaged and hard-working Member of this body. He has emerged as a strong advocate for solving our long-term Federal debt concerns, and a de-

voted advocate for the people and businesses of his home State of Florida.

While we did not share the same views on a number of issues, Senator LEMIEUX proved that he was a man of deep conviction who was not afraid to stand up for what he believed. He spoke often on the floor to advocate for his positions. However, he showed that he was a serious legislator, and leader, on issues of vital importance to our Nation.

For example, he was the lone Republican to cast a vote in favor of the Small Business Jobs Act. This legislation was designed to expand access to credit, and provide tax incentives, for small businesses. GEORGE recognized that these were two things that Florida's businesses desperately needed—much more than partisan gridlock.

After GEORGE leaves the Senate in just a few short weeks, I believe he will be remembered as a public servant who was devoted first and foremost to advancing the interests of the people of his home State, Florida.

Once again, I would like to thank GEORGE for his service, and wish him well as he leaves the Senate. It has been a pleasure working with him.

FRIDAY, *December 17, 2010*

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a man who has made the most of a short tenure here in the Senate. Shortly after GEORGE LEMIEUX was sworn in last September he said that his goal was to get years of work done in 16 months. I don't think there is any doubt the junior Senator from Florida made good on that promise.

In his short tenure, GEORGE has served the people of Florida with honor, integrity, and purpose. And while he may be leaving us soon, I am certain this will not be the last time we hear from this incredibly gifted man.

GEORGE grew up in Coral Springs, FL, or "God's country" as he refers to it. He went on to college at Emory, where he graduated magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa. As an undergraduate, GEORGE interned for Congressman Clay Shaw and Senator Connie Mack. Then it was on to Georgetown for law school and private practice back home in Florida.

GEORGE got his start in local politics as chairman of the Broward County Young Republicans. He then went on to make his own bid for the Florida State House in 1998,

knocking on more than 10,000 doors in the heavily Democratic district he was hoping to represent.

Despite GEORGE's own campaign loss, he impressed a lot of Republicans and was elected chairman of the Broward County Republican Party. In 2003, he was asked to serve as deputy attorney general. GEORGE answered the call, leaving the law firm he was working in at the time. As deputy attorney general, GEORGE was responsible for a team of 400 lawyers. He also argued and won a death penalty case that earned a unanimous ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court.

GEORGE would go on to serve as the chief of staff to Florida Governor Charlie Crist overseeing the Governor's legislative agenda, policy initiatives, and messaging.

After a year as chief of staff, GEORGE wanted to return home to his young family. "I've got three little men at home," GEORGE said at the time, "and a wife who's a saint."

Despite the demands of work, GEORGE has always made sure not to lose sight of his first priorities. We have all seen and been touched by the special pride he has for his wife Meike and their three boys; Max, Taylor, and Chase, and their newborn daughter Madeleine.

After a couple of years of private practice, GEORGE got the call again to serve when Mel Martinez announced he was retiring from the Senate.

From the moment he got here, he was determined to do the best job he could. He wasn't going to be a placeholder or a seat warmer, as he put it. Floridians expected vigorous and principled representation, and that is exactly what they got. At the time of his appointment, GEORGE may have been the youngest sitting Member of the Senate, but that didn't stop him from rolling up his sleeves and getting to work. He made an immediate impact by inserting himself into the health care debate as an eloquent and passionate opponent of greater government intervention and an enemy of waste, fraud, and abuse. The first bill he introduced was the Prevent Health Care Fraud Act of 2009, which proposed a more aggressive approach to recovering the billions of dollars that are lost each year to health care waste, fraud, and abuse.

GEORGE has been deeply involved in efforts to raise awareness about the national debt and promoting free trade. He has been involved in Latin American and Cuban policy. And he was a leader on the gulf oilspill.

He has worked tirelessly to hold BP and the administration accountable for the cleanup and the protection of Florida's beaches. He has been an outspoken critic of the bureau-

cratic redtape that kept more skimmers from cleaning up the Florida coast. And through his relentless efforts at exposing this lax response, he was able to get dozens of skimmers sent to the Florida coast for cleanup. As GEORGE put it at the time, "We must ensure that BP does not abandon the hard-working families, businesses, and local communities devastated by the spill once the media leaves ..." After just a few months of on-the-job training as a U.S. Senator, GEORGE had found his voice in the midst of the largest environmental disaster in U.S. history.

Upon arriving in this Chamber, GEORGE has always maintained a probusiness, antitax, and antiwaste voting record, which has made him the recipient of several awards. In August of this year, GEORGE was recognized as the "Taxpayer Hero" by Citizens Against Government Waste for his work to expose and end wasteful government spending. The following month, GEORGE was honored with the "Guardian of Small Business" by the National Federation of Independent Business, as well as the "Tax Fighter Award" by the National Tax Limitation Committee.

While GEORGE's impressive tenure in this Chamber has been brief, we enjoyed getting to know him and working with him to advance the best interests of Floridians and all Americans. He has been one of our sharpest and most passionate spokesmen on some of the most important issues we face. He is smart, capable, and willing to work hard. He should be proud of his service. I know I have been proud to call him a colleague and a friend.

We thank him for his impressive service to this Chamber, the people of Florida, and the Nation. And we wish him and his young family all the best in what I hope will be many years of success and happiness ahead.

I yield the floor.

SUNDAY, *December 19, 2010*

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the junior Senator from Florida. Though Senator GEORGE LEMIEUX has only been here a short time, he has been an effective advocate for the good people of Florida. I want to wish him the best of luck.

Senator LEMIEUX was born in Fort Lauderdale, FL. He is the son of a building contractor. He grew up in Coral Springs, FL, and attended college at Emory University, earn-

ing a degree in political science. GEORGE then went on to obtain his law degree from Georgetown University.

Senator LEMIEUX' career in public service began when he went to work as deputy attorney general for the State of Florida, a position he held for 2 years. He would later serve as the Florida Governor's chief of staff, overseeing numerous State agencies.

After his time in the Governor's office, GEORGE returned to the private sector and was headed down what had to be a lucrative career path in the private sector at one of Florida's most prestigious law firms. But, he answered the call to public service once again in 2009 when Senator Mel Martinez announced his retirement and Florida was in need of a Senator.

Since being appointed to the Senate, GEORGE has served on the Armed Services Committee, the Commerce Committee, and the Special Committee on Aging. He has had a reputation for being progrowth, probusiness, and a deficit hawk. In fact, he has been one of the few people in the Senate who put their money where their mouth is and actually proposed a plan to address our fiscal problems. Frankly, I think we could use more people like that here in the Senate.

It is just a difficult fact that, here in the Senate, some are here only for short periods of time. But, every State deserves to be represented in this Chamber. Senator LEMIEUX answered the call to serve during what has been an extremely difficult time in the Senate. He has done so with dignity and an unwavering commitment to the people of Florida.

Once again, I want to offer my best wishes for GEORGE and his family in all their future endeavors.

MONDAY, *December 20, 2010*

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I would like to honor my distinguished colleague from Florida, Senator GEORGE LEMIEUX, who will be retiring from the Senate at the end of the 111th Congress.

GEORGE has humbly served the people of Florida for many years as deputy attorney general, chief of staff to the Governor, and most recently as a Member of the U.S. Senate. While his time in the Senate might have been short, his list of accomplishments is not. GEORGE has proven to be a principled leader that is unafraid to tackle the difficult issues facing our Nation. He has offered thoughtful and proactive

solutions to problems that many would rather defer to a future Congress and a future generation. The people of Florida should be proud to have been represented by a man of such dedication and character.

I am honored to know GEORGE and to have worked with him. I would like to thank him for his contributions to the Senate and wish him and his family the best in all of their future endeavors.

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