

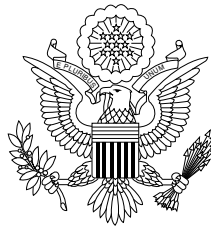
TRIBUTES TO HON. MIKE JOHANN

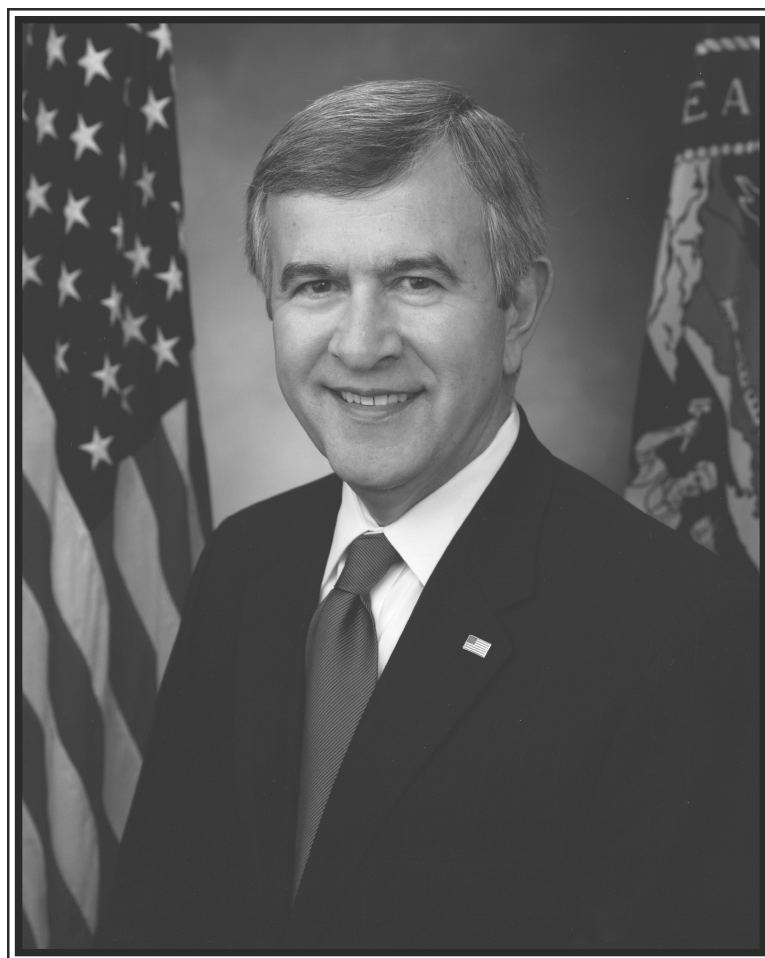
Mike Johanns

U.S. SENATOR FROM NEBRASKA

TRIBUTES

**IN THE CONGRESS OF
THE UNITED STATES**





Mike Johanns

Courtesy U.S. Senate Historical Office

**Tributes
Delivered in Congress**

Mike Johanns
United States Senator
2009–2015



*Compiled under the direction
of the
Joint Committee on Printing*

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BIOGRAPHY

On January 6, 2009, MIKE JOHANNNS was sworn in as U.S. Senator for Nebraska. He won the support of an overwhelming majority of Nebraskans by demonstrating principled leadership throughout more than 30 years of public service.

Senator JOHANNNS served on four committees in the 113th Congress: Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry; Appropriations; Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; and Veterans Affairs. In previous Congresses he served on the Committee on Environment and Public Works, the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, and the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Senator JOHANNNS established himself as a legislative leader on issues that are not only important to Nebraska but also the Nation. He introduced and championed common-sense legislation dealing with issues ranging from agriculture to veterans to small businesses.

After hearing from businesses in Nebraska about a provision in President Obama's health law that would have created a paperwork nightmare for job creators, Senator JOHANNNS began an effort that gained bipartisan momentum and the 1099 reporting mandate was repealed. On agriculture, he led the fight against harmful government regulations and continued his work on a long-term, reform-minded farm bill that focused on risk management tools. One of the first pieces of legislation to be signed into law for 2013 was the National Defense Authorization Act, which contained Senator JOHANNNS' legislation to help returning veterans find civilian employment and supplied funding to continue work on the new command facility for the Strategic Command (STRATCOM) at Offutt Air Force Base.

Before being elected to the Senate, MIKE JOHANNNS was appointed the 28th Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in January 2005. For nearly 3 years he worked to expand foreign market access for U.S. producers, promoted the growth of the renewable fuels industry, and advanced cooperative conservation. Additionally, MIKE JOHANNNS developed an indepth farm bill proposal, which became the foundation

for improvements and reforms adopted in the final 2008 farm bill.

MIKE JOHANNNS also served as Nebraska's 38th Governor from 1999 to 2005. As Governor, he promoted an agenda of tax relief, less government, building the economy, protecting families, and ensuring the health, safety, and success of Nebraska's children.

MIKE JOHANNNS served on the Lancaster County Board from 1983 to 1987, and on the Lincoln City Council from 1989 to 1991. He was elected mayor of Lincoln in 1991 and was reelected in 1995 without opposition. He successfully ran for Governor in 1998 and was reelected in 2002.

He grew up on a farm where he learned a work ethic that has been put to use serving the people of Nebraska and this country. The values he developed while growing up serve as the foundation for his commitment to public service. MIKE JOHANNNS is a graduate of St. Mary's University of Minnesota. He earned a law degree from Creighton University in Omaha and practiced law in O'Neill and Lincoln.

Senator JOHANNNS is married to Stephanie Johannns, former Lancaster County Commissioner and Nebraska State Senator. The couple has two children and five grandchildren.

Farewell to the Senate

Tuesday, December 9, 2014

Mr. JOHANNNS. I wish to start by saying I so appreciate the kind words by Senators McCain, Chambliss, and Isakson. I see there are others in the Chamber who may weigh in and offer a thought or two. I can't express how much I appreciate it.

I would like to offer a few thoughts—my farewell thoughts—today.

I rise, first, to convey a very deep and sincere appreciation to the people of a really great State, the State of Nebraska. They have entrusted me with the high privilege and the solemn responsibility of representing them in this body.

I am honored to have served as a Senator from Nebraska, and I hope and pray that I have done so in a manner that upholds the high standards that Nebraskans have rightly established for their elected office holders.

If I could turn back the clock 32 years I would do it again—from my first day as the county commissioner, throughout my service as a Lincoln City Council member, as mayor of our capital city, Lincoln, as the Governor of Nebraska, in President Bush's Cabinet, and now as a Senator. No doubt about it, if I could turn back the clock, I would just do it again.

I am so grateful for the trust placed in me and the support of so many people who have made this service possible.

Let me start with the top of the list, and that would be my family. My wife, Stephanie, has been an incredible pillar of support.

One of my best friends refers to her as "spirited." That would be an understatement. She is a true partner. She has given her whole heart to public service—both her own service as a State senator and as a county commissioner when we first met—and to mine.

I thank my children, Justin and Michaela, who are now grown up. They have their own families. We have five beautiful grandchildren. They have been a source of true joy and pride. They too have cheerfully supported me despite the

sometimes long hours and the missed birthdays—I could go on and on. It cut into that dad and grandpa time.

I offer a special word of thanks to the hundreds or thousands of volunteers whom I could never thank individually. They went out there, pounded the yard signs, walked the precincts, worked the phone banks, and they probably wrote checks when the bank account was pretty low. Their belief in me is what has been inspiring in those campaigns.

Another group of people near and dear to my heart are my current and former staff, campaign or government related. We have always called ourselves Team JOHANNNS. It is an extended family and for good reason. Their hard work, their commitment, and their professionalism enabled me to represent and serve our great State and our country.

I have not only been truly blessed by the privilege to serve, but I have been blessed by the privilege of meeting some very extraordinary people.

In my various roles I have been with world leaders, spiritual heads, cultural icons, Presidents, Vice Presidents, Prime Ministers, Queens, and Kings—all memorable experiences to be sure. But I will say they are not the extraordinary people I speak about today. My real inspiration comes from ordinary people whom I have observed and watched do remarkable, extraordinary things.

Each year for the past 6 years, I have had the privilege of selecting a Nebraska family to be honored as “Angels in Adoption.” Each year their stories of unconditional love show the limitless capacity of the human heart.

One family, the Welchels of Harrisburg, NE, went from two children to seven. They adopted five children, all with special needs, but their selflessness did not stop there. They created a camp where these very special kids could share life’s journeys. How powerful is that?

I have learned that heroes walk among us daily whose courage is revealed in split-second decisions, and in that split second they put the lives of others in front of their own.

Two Nebraskans did exactly that in 2012. A schoolbus had collided with a semitrailer on a rural road near a community called Blue Hill, NE. These individuals, Ron Meyer and Phil Petr, arrived on this horrific scene. They bravely ran onto that burning bus and pulled five children to safety. A witness who was there at the scene expressed absolutely no doubt those five children would have perished, as others sadly did, if not for the remarkable courage of Ron and Phil.

I have been so moved beyond words by my conversations with the parents of our fallen men and women in uniform. I would call them to offer them my condolences, and I have found their strength to be so astounding. To a person, they speak with such passion about love of country and pride in their loved one's service, despite sorrow. They honor their children with their patriotism. They honor their children with their fortitude. Their grace through incomprehensible grief inspires immeasurable gratitude. May God bless them and all of the families of the fallen.

Walking the streets of a tornado-ravaged community—and I have done that too many times as Governor and as a Senator—I saw ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

One stands out especially in my mind. I watched in amazement as Kim Neiman, the Pilger, NE, city clerk, attempted to take care of every conceivable need of every single resident following a devastating tornado that literally leveled this Nebraska community.

Her tireless advocacy, her raw determination was focused entirely on the community she loved. She had virtually no regard for her personal loss. You see, her home was destroyed, and her life was turned upside down by this tornado as well. But for Kim, community came first.

These are good people, and there are so many more like them. They inspired me, and they have motivated me to search for solutions to break through partisan rancor that too often dominates this government.

But they also fuel my optimism for the future. You see, I believe that America's strength is in the fabric of which we are woven. The threads of this fabric include both the character of our people and the wisdom recorded in our Constitution.

It is a very strong and very durable fabric that withstands the overreach of any one President and the misguided policies of any one administration.

That is why I look back, not with any regret—I would do it all over again—but with gratitude. There were victories won during my time here, and I am pleased to have lead some of those charges. But I have to admit many battles remain.

I would be dishonest if I denied some feelings of frustration about the absence of the will to address issues of paramount importance to our country, but I know that no issue is powerful enough to shred the fabric of this great Nation. Rather, these challenges are overpowered by the ordinary

people who do extraordinary things, by the character of our people, and by the wisdom of our Founders. So I reject the prophecy of hopelessness.

As the challenges we face grow more urgent—and they will—so grows the collective fortitude to address them, and I believe that is about to intensify.

On January 3, I will officially pass the baton to Senator-elect Ben Sasse, and I wish him the best. With the 114th Congress, there will be a new day in this Chamber, a new majority, and a lot of new faces. I hope they embrace the new opportunities to exemplify true statesmanship.

Although confidence in our Nation's ability to solve problems may be shaken, I still believe ordinary people can do extraordinary things—even here in Washington, DC. May God guide those efforts and may God bless this great country, the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

TRIBUTES
TO
MIKE JOHANNNS

Proceedings in the Senate

THURSDAY, *December 4, 2014*

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to a truly outstanding Senator, who will soon retire from this body after more than 30 years of public service.

Of course, I am speaking of Senator MIKE JOHANNIS. MIKE has had a remarkable career. He is the only current Member of this body—besides Senator Alexander—who has served as Senator, Governor, and Cabinet secretary.

Yet for all he has accomplished, MIKE isn't the flashiest Senator. He doesn't hold the most press conferences, he doesn't yell the loudest, and you never have to worry about him knocking you over to get to a TV camera, but in his steady and determined style, MIKE has proven himself a remarkably successful Member of this body.

That was true in his successful battles to defend Nebraska's rural communities against government overreach, it was true when he worked with the late Senator Byrd to sink a national energy tax that threatened his constituents, and it was true when he led the first successful legislative effort to revisit Obamacare, working with many Democrats to repeal the so-called 1099 provision.

MIKE has never looked for drama. He is always aiming for results. So it didn't take long for people in the Senate to recognize that MIKE was more than just another freshman in the minority. He became the guy you would turn to if you wanted to get an amendment up to 60 votes.

That is truly remarkable for a first-term Senator. It is especially remarkable when we consider that MIKE came to the Senate at a time when Republicans were in the deep minority. But then again, MIKE is a very remarkable guy: county commissioner, city councilman, mayor, Governor, Secretary of Agriculture. You name it, MIKE has done it, and that was before he even set foot in the Senate.

Some think MIKE must have a secret that allows him to assemble bipartisan coalitions on conservative issues, but I don't think it is much of a secret at all. MIKE works across

the aisle. He works in good faith, and he works hard. He doesn't care what party you are from and absolutely no one can outwork him.

MIKE makes sure of that by getting up earlier than anyone else. It is a habit he learned growing up on a farm in northern Iowa. He would get up at 5 a.m. every day and then from age 4 he would work. He would shovel muck. He would fill the hog tanks. He would even deliver piglets.

The point is, MIKE developed an appreciation for hard work and responsibility at an early age. Along with his strong Catholic faith, these are the traits that still define him today, but they don't paint the whole picture, because MIKE JOHANNNS may be an accomplished man, he may be one of the smartest and most capable public servants you will ever meet, but he is absolute putty in the hands of his wife Stephanie. She is always by his side. She is his best friend, and they complement each other perfectly.

Their idea—listen to this—of a perfect night out is a night in together. They are both Husker fans and, as MIKE put it, “Steph is almost never in a bad mood.” He said, “She jumps out of bed, and she's got a big smile on her face and she thinks this is bound to be the best day of her life.”

It is a personality perfectly suited, as one can imagine, to the campaign trail, which is a good thing because the two of them have logged tens of thousands of miles together campaigning across Nebraska, usually in matching T-shirts, sometimes in a beat-up old Corsica.

They have plenty of stories from the trail, too, but one from MIKE's run for Governor stands out particularly. This is what happened: The Johannns were driving home after a long day of marching in parades in the hot Sun. They passed a barn on the way, assuming it was a cattle sale. They figured they would drop in and press a few palms. Stephanie parked the car, MIKE opened the door, and dozens of well-dressed Nebraskan eyes fell on them.

The Johannns, in their sweaty T-shirts, hadn't dropped by a cattle sale; they had crashed a wedding. I will give them this, they made the best of it. MIKE ended up dancing with the bride, and of course he went on to win the election as well.

This is the sequel: Months later, at an inaugural ball in Lincoln, two uninvited guests showed up. It was, of course, the bride and her husband.

They had a simple message: “You crashed our wedding, Governor, and now we're crashing your inaugural.”

So the senior Senator from Arizona [Mr. McCain] may like to brag about his Hollywood cameo with Vince Vaughn, but our colleagues know the truth. Senator MIKE JOHANNIS is the original—the original—wedding crasher.

MIKE and Stephanie certainly have traveled a long and interesting road from when they first met while serving on the Lancaster County Board in the 1980s, when MIKE would draft up walking lists on an old typewriter and they would go out and campaign door to door.

A lot has changed. For one thing, MIKE isn't a Democrat anymore. But much is the same too. MIKE still cares deeply about mental health issues. It is what brought him into politics in the first place. It is what he considers his crowning achievement as Governor. He still has loyal fans on staff who remember all of his efforts on the issue.

It is a rare thing, the loyalty MIKE inspires in people. This is the Senator with staffers who have been with him for many years, some since his days in local politics, and here is what they all say about MIKE JOHANNIS: Senator JOHANNIS is a man who cares—cares about his family, he cares about the people who work for him, and he cares about his constituents. That is why he has given his cell phone number out to half of Nebraska.

He has made his mistakes, of course. As mayor of Lincoln, he had to cancel Halloween one year. But that is old news. To many Nebraskans he is still Governor, to others he is simply MIKE. But whatever Nebraskans call MIKE JOHANNIS, they respect him, and I know they are going to miss him. And so are we.

At least retirement will give MIKE more time to pursue his hobbies. We hear he is a voracious window washer. He has even been known to pull out the Windex on vacation. Whatever he does, we know this is a retirement that is well earned. He has dealt with bird flu, mad cow disease, the farm bill, deficit reduction, and just about any other issue you can think of over a long and distinguished career in public service.

We all want to thank Senator JOHANNIS for his loyal and dedicated service to the Senate and to the people of Nebraska. We wish MIKE and Stephanie the best as they look forward to their next adventure together.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I want to join in the remarks of the distinguished Republican leader, but add to that that Stephanie is one of the funniest people Landra and I have ever known. She has a great sense of humor. What the Republican leader laid out is perfect, except this woman has a sense of humor that is really quite remarkable.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Will the Senator withhold his request?

Mr. REID. Yes, Mr. President.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, just a word or two to both leaders. Thank you so much for your kind words. I also want to say thank you for mentioning my wife Stephanie. This has been a remarkable partnership for a lot of years, and I could not have done what I did without her. So thank you to Senator McConnell. Mr. Leader, thank you. It has been an honor to serve in this body. I will have more to say next week in my farewell speech, but I did not want this day to go by without expressing my appreciation. Thank you.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

MONDAY, *December 8, 2014*

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, in the waning days of the 113th Congress it is a bittersweet moment as many of us are saying goodbye—although not on a permanent basis but at least in terms of our official relationships working together as Senators—to so many of our good friends and valued colleagues. Every other December we find ourselves bidding farewell to some of the most admired and respected Members of this Chamber. Today I want to say a few words about three of these esteemed Members, starting with my good friend, the senior Senator from Georgia [Mr. Chambliss]. ...

Next, I would like to turn to my colleague from Nebraska, the senior Senator MIKE JOHANNIS. Even if MIKE JOHANNIS had never been a Senator, he would have compiled an extraordinary career of public service. It started with a stint on the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners and continued with 2 years on the Lincoln City Council, followed by 8 years as mayor of Lincoln, NE.

In 1999 MIKE left the mayor's office and moved over to the Nebraska State Capitol, where he served for 6 years as Governor. He said one of his proudest gubernatorial accomplishments was enacting a mental health reform law that helped improve the lives of some of Nebraska's neediest and most vulnerable residents. That to me tells a lot about his character and sense of compassion.

Born and raised as a farmboy, MIKE was named America's 28th Secretary of Agriculture in 2005. Over the next 3 years, he held more than 50 separate forums on the farm bill—more than 50. Not surprisingly, he continued to work on agriculture-related issues when he joined the Senate. Indeed, he has been a true leader, fighting passionately to defend the rights and livelihood of farmers and ranchers everywhere—especially in Nebraska.

These are issues that are vitally important to millions of Americans, including MIKE's constituents, but they are not the kind of issues that help land you prime time appearances on cable news. Luckily for us, MIKE doesn't care about media attention, but what he does care about is doing the right thing for his State and for our country.

He understands something that many of us too quickly forget—that taxes and regulations should be forced to pass a simple cost-benefit test. That is why MIKE worked so hard to block the national energy tax known as cap and trade, and that is why he has consistently demanded that the Environmental Protection Agency and other Federal agencies demonstrate how their proposed rules would affect American jobs and American workers.

It is also why he has so aggressively pushed to abolish the IRS 1099 reporting requirement in Obamacare, which would have placed a costly new burden on America's small business owners and indirectly on the jobs that they create. MIKE did more than anyone else to help highlight the problems with this requirement and to demand its repeal. Thanks in large part to his efforts, 81 Members of this Chamber voted to abolish it back in 2011.

There is an old cliché in politics that there are two types of politicians—show horses and workhorses. MIKE has never sought the limelight, and has certainly done more than his fair share of the work. But he has done so in a very quiet and thoughtful manner. He is someone who has kept a low profile while working behind the scenes, building bipartisan consensus and being infallibly polite and gentlemanly in the process.

He is the type of Senator who is universally admired and respected by all of our colleagues. His accomplishments here in the Senate—I have just mentioned a few—have been manifold. Yet I am quite certain his proudest accomplishments are his family—his wife Stephanie, their two children, and five grandchildren. They have been generous enough to share MIKE with us for the past 6 years, and now it is time for MIKE to be with the people he cares about the most. We will miss him a whole lot, but he is moving on to perhaps the most rewarding chapter of his life.

MIKE, thanks for all you have done. Thanks for your service, your guidance, and most of all for your friendship.

TUESDAY, *December 9, 2014*

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, I come to the floor to praise the public service of and bid farewell to my friend and valued colleague from Nebraska, Senator MIKE JOHANNIS.

With my remarks, I celebrate not just MIKE's last 6 years in the Senate but also his 30-plus years in public service that will culminate with the end of this term.

At the highest levels of government in both the legislative and executive branches, MIKE's life of public service has been punctuated by great accomplishment. From the Lancaster County Board in Nebraska to the Lincoln City Council, from his service as mayor of Lincoln to his service as the 38th Governor of Nebraska, from his service as the 28th U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and throughout his tenure in the Senate, MIKE has demonstrated a commitment to those with muted voices in our political system, including small business owners, veterans, those impaired by mental illness and most certainly America's farmers and ranchers.

In the Senate, MIKE's leadership and bipartisan efforts to repeal purposeless tax reporting requirements in Obamacare, his championing new trade agreements, and his contribution to the development and final passage of a new farm bill this year all describe a strong conservative legislator committed to stimulating economic growth through reduced government spending, lower tax rates, and reduced regulatory burdens on American business.

I have appreciated MIKE's partnership on key legislation, including his joining me to cosponsor the bipartisan Congressional Accountability and Line-Item Veto Act of 2009. During the 112th Congress, we were both cosponsors of the Foreign

Earnings Reinvestment Act, a bipartisan effort to let corporations reinvest earnings kept overseas by our high corporate tax rates back into the American economy.

I was also proud to join MIKE as an original cosponsor of his bill, the Two-Year Regulatory Freeze Act of 2011, which sought to give the American economy a much needed reprieve to burdensome and confusing Federal regulations that frequently hinder economic growth. MIKE was also an original cosponsor of the Jobs Through Growth Act, and many others.

I am also grateful that he joined in helping replenish the Forest Service's aging air tanker fleet. A decade ago the Forest Service had roughly 40 large air tankers to fight wildfires that burned millions of acres of land across Western States, including Nebraska and Arizona.

Today they own eight large air tankers. Senator JOHANNIS and I saw an opportunity to transfer several excess Department of Defense aircraft to the Forest Service to temporarily address this shortage, and that has happened.

While MIKE and I have had disagreements along the way, I have always respected his knowledge and experience as a farmer, foreign trade expert, and the Nation's former Agriculture Secretary.

I am proud of the areas where we agree: reining in certain farm subsidy programs, advocating for free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea, and even working together to kill the proposed USDA catfish office—a little known \$15 million program inside the last farm bill that we both highlighted as wasting taxpayer money and that, from a trade perspective, was negatively impacting our cattlemen and soy farmers.

We also agree on the need to help returning veterans seeking to reenter the workforce as beginning farmers, an effort he championed in our last farm bill. I have long applauded Senator JOHANNIS for calling on Congress to pass laws to stop farm subsidies from going to millionaires while he was a sitting Secretary of Agriculture.

As much as I respect the substance of MIKE's accomplishments in public service, I have valued how he has achieved them with a quiet, purposeful dignity and, indeed, a vibrant sense of humor. He has never been opposed to bipartisan cooperation whenever it is needed to further the interests of his constituents or the greater Nation.

For these reasons, his approach to governance in legislating has earned him the respect of colleagues and constitu-

ents across the political continuum. It should also serve as an example to all of us in this body who remain behind.

In an email MIKE wrote to his friends last February announcing his decision not to seek reelection in 2014, MIKE wrote: “With everything in life, there is a time and a season.”

Well, to my friend and valued colleague, MIKE JOHANNNS, I bid fair winds and following seas in all that he and his lovely wife Stephanie do, and I thank him for his service and his friendship.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Madam President, I rise and second what my friend and colleague from Arizona said.

It has been a privilege of mine to serve in this body for 12 years—and I will be making some comments about that tomorrow—but during my early years in the Senate the Secretary of Agriculture was Secretary MIKE JOHANNNS.

Being a very active member of the Agriculture Committee and being chairman for 2 years during then-Secretary Johann’s tenure, I had the opportunity to work with MIKE on a day-to-day basis and, boy, what a pleasure it is to work with one of the finest gentlemen and public servants I have ever known. He is smart, and he is political when he needs to be political, but he has as much or more common sense as, again, any public servant I have ever known.

For the past 6 years, he has been my next door neighbor in the Russell Building, so we see a lot of each other coming and going and have the opportunity to visit on a regular basis.

As I leave at the end of this term, one of the real Members of the Senate I am going to miss is MIKE JOHANNNS. I publicly thank him for his service and thank him for his commitment. I wish him and Stephanie the best, but what I really thank him for is the great friendship he and I developed over the years.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, I join the Senator from Arizona and the Senator from Georgia—my senior Senator, Mr. Chambliss—to rise for a minute and talk about MIKE JOHANNNS.

I want to amend that. I don’t want to just talk about MIKE JOHANNNS, I want to talk about him and Stephanie Johannns.

In the South what we have is what we call a two-for. MIKE and Stephanie are a two-for. They are a great pair for America, and they are a great pair for the State of Nebraska.

As a Senator from an agricultural State, I know the value that MIKE brought to the Cabinet of the United States when he was Secretary of Agriculture.

I know from his serving the State of Nebraska when he was Governor what a great job they did. I know the past 6 years, working side by side with MIKE JOHANNNS has been a real treat. He is a gentleman, and he is a scholar. He doesn't do anything if he doesn't know what he is doing, and if he is not always right, he is almost always right because he always has Stephanie there to guide him in the right direction.

I pay tribute to a great Senator, and a great personal friend, MIKE JOHANNNS, and his lovely wife Stephanie.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I had an opportunity to address the extraordinary career of the Senator from Nebraska the other day, and he was on the floor, which was welcomed, and his staff was in the gallery. I wanted to say again, in a much shorter version, how much we all appreciate his remarkable contributions to our country, to his State, and to the Senate and wish him well in the future.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I rise today to celebrate the legacy of my dear friend, my colleague, and my fellow Nebraskan, Senator MIKE JOHANNNS.

Senator JOHANNNS has dedicated more than three decades of his life to serving the people of Nebraska and also this Nation. His career in public service began at the local level, where he was elected to the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners. He later joined the Lincoln City Council, and eventually became mayor of Nebraska's capital city where he served for two terms.

Perhaps the most infamous decision Senator JOHANNNS ever made throughout his career in public service was in his days as mayor of Lincoln. After an early season winter storm dropped more than a foot of heavy wet snow on Lincoln in late October, Mayor JOHANNNS decided to cancel Halloween. He cited power outages and hazardous downed powerlines.

As you can imagine, this news was not received well among some of those Lincolniters. To this day, constituents haven't forgotten and they still occasionally remind him of how he deprived an entire city of trick or treats on that fateful October evening. He made up for it, though, when he and

his wife Stephanie treated children who came to trick or treat at the mansion.

Fortunately, this incident didn't deal a death blow to Senator JOHANN'S political career. He went on to serve as Governor of Nebraska and was reelected to a second term.

As Governor, he focused on fiscal discipline and the responsible use of limited State tax dollars, principles he upheld here in the Senate as well. At one point, as Governor, he even vetoed an entire 2-year budget proposal because it raised taxes to expand government power.

He also championed ambitious mental health reforms that allowed patients to receive care in the stability and in the security of their own communities where they could be near their loved ones. A decade later, these reforms in Nebraska are still regarded as a major milestone in improving mental health care.

Before he was a Senator or a Governor or a mayor or a city councilman, he worked on his family's dairy farm. That is not easy work. As MIKE puts it, it is a job that builds character and humility. Growing up on a dairy farm, he would milk cows every day before school, sometimes even taking the tractor halfway to town in the winter months when the roads were so bad that the schoolbus couldn't get out to his farm.

This upbringing gave Senator JOHANN'S a great appreciation and a deep understanding for the needs of our Nation's agriculture producers, so it was no surprise when President George W. Bush selected him to lead the Department of Agriculture as its Secretary. MIKE dutifully served in this role, overseeing a new reform-oriented farm bill and opening doors to new global markets for our Nation's ag producers.

As Secretary of Agriculture, he saw first hand the challenges facing hungry nations. It was in this role that he fell in love with the people of Africa, and he has worked here in the Senate to develop food aid programs that not only feed but also empower hungry populations around the world.

Senator JOHANN'S has tirelessly worked for our State and our Nation. He brought to the Senate a unique perspective, having served virtually every level of government. His well-rounded approach to his work here reflects that rare wisdom. Many of us here have had the pleasure of working closely with him because he always makes a point to work with his colleagues regardless of party affiliation, whether it be on complex legislation or that annual Senate secret Santa tradition.

We are all familiar with the confident, peaceful demeanor he brings to the Senate, and his plain-spoken clarity will truly be missed once he leaves Congress. This is who MIKE JOHANNIS is. It is who he has always been: a quiet workhorse with a soft spot for the world's most disadvantaged, and a burning desire to help wherever he can. Friends back home who have known him since before he began his career in public service will tell you that he is the same man today he was back then—never losing sight of his goal of helping people, never getting a big head, and always putting Nebraska first.

The Senator's wife Stephanie has been by his side throughout every step of this tremendous journey, always supportive and steadfast. Anyone who knows MIKE knows he and Steph are inseparable. I am sure they are both looking forward to having more time to spend with family next year.

MIKE, you are a statesman and a model citizen. I am thankful for all the work you have done for Nebraska and for the entire Nation. You have set such a great example for your fellow Senators, and we all appreciate your dedication over these past 32 years. You have served Nebraska with dignity and integrity. Good luck. I wish you and Stephanie all the best. God bless you both.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, this is a bittersweet time for all of us. As you have heard, as we close the book on one term of Congress and look forward to the next, we are here to say goodbye to one of our esteemed colleagues who is finishing his service in the Senate. It is always tough, but it is especially hard for me with regard to Senator MIKE JOHANNIS—a guy I consider a fine Senator, also a good friend, and sort of the perfect example of the statesman. Through his impressive career as mayor, Governor, Cabinet member, and Senator, as his colleague has just said, he has displayed that.

I first met Senator JOHANNIS when he was Secretary JOHANNIS. He was Secretary of Agriculture in the George W. Bush Cabinet, and that meant we got to spend a lot of time together. I was the U.S. Trade Representative, and I truly believe I have traveled around the world more with MIKE than I have with my family. We went all over, from Asia to Europe to South America and Africa. We fought for farmers and ranchers. Our ideal was that we could expand exports,

and we were able to do that and make some progress with his hard work.

We went to farflung corners of the world, such as Burkina Faso, to deal with cotton issues important to U.S. farmers. We spent countless—and I mean countless—hours on something called the green room negotiating sessions, trying to reach a deal in the Doha round of talks with the World Trade Organization.

I remember one time MIKE and I had the opportunity to brief reporters as we were going across Africa. We were racing across the Sahara Desert to make our way to an airport. Because the airport had no lights, the pilots insisted we get there while there was still light so they could see where they were landing.

He taught me a lot, not just about arcane agricultural issues, such as what is a green box or an amber box subsidy in agriculture—fun issues such as that—but he also taught me a lot about negotiating and about how, as we said earlier, to be a statesman.

We had some tough negotiating sessions, but MIKE was always a proud and relentless representative and champion for the interests of our great country and the interests of the farmers and ranchers he knew so well. He always did his job on the global stage with honor and with dignity. If there has ever been a more forceful advocate for American farmers, whether it was there or here in the Senate, I don't know who it is.

In 2007, he told me he was going to leave the administration and go home to Nebraska, and that he was considering running for the Senate. I never thought I would be able to serve with him, because I didn't know I was going to follow him, but I knew when he told me that, he would be in the Senate and that he would put in the same level of dedication to this body as he had as Secretary of Agriculture, and that has been true.

He is not flashy. His colleague from Nebraska has just called him a workhorse. I hope he takes that as a compliment. I would. He has never sought out the cameras or, for that matter, sought out recognition for his good work. He just does the right thing. A true statesman.

So, MIKE JOHANNES, we are going to miss you. We are going to miss Stephanie. And we wish you Godspeed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, the first time I met MIKE JOHANNNS was in Hutchison, KS. Hutchison, KS, is where we have the State fair every year. I was somebody then. I was the chairman of the sometimes powerful House Committee on Agriculture, and I had made a pitch to get the Secretary of Agriculture to actually come to the fair, thinking that MIKE JOHANNNS would be a far better speaker than myself and maybe I could avoid some trouble. So I had the Secretary come and I made the promise that every farmer who wanted to ask the Secretary of Agriculture a question would have that opportunity. I hadn't bothered to tell MIKE about it, but when he arrived on the scene, he nodded his head and said, "Fine." He had this yellow tablet under his arm, and with ample staff, some who used to work for me, but that is beside the point.

So cutting things short, all the activities in the State fair he attended, and he dutifully went around to every exhibit, and we finally ended up in the amphitheater and there must have been 150 to 175 farmers all lined up waiting to speak to or to question the Secretary of Agriculture. I thought to myself: Oh, my gosh, what have I done? The Secretary is coming in—I didn't know MIKE that well at that particular time—and what have I gotten him into?

But MIKE didn't seem to be bothered at all. He was absolutely comfortable, unflappable. He had the microphone and he sat down at a table, put down the yellow tablet and said, "Yes, sir, and what is your first question and what is your name?" The individual would give his name and the question, and MIKE would write down the question. He said, "Thank you very much for that. It will receive all of our attention. Next."

He went through the whole 125 or 150 and never answered a question, but he wrote it down. Every farmer who came up later to me said, "You know, the Secretary wrote down my question." They were tremendously impressed, as opposed to me. Silly me, I would have tried to answer their questions, and we would have been there 2 or 3 hours, Lord knows how long. So I asked MIKE, "How do you get by with that?" He said, "Well, it saves a lot of time and you never get in trouble by what you don't say," which always sort of stuck with me and what a class act he was.

County commissioner, mayor of Lincoln, Governor, Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Senator. I suppose if I floated a balloon for you to be President that you might—no, Stephanie wouldn't buy it and you wouldn't either. But that would

be the logical next step, MIKE, and I think we certainly could and probably will do a lot worse. But at any rate, since I brought up Stephanie, Franki and I extend our very best wishes and love.

I do have somewhat of a minor discomfort, it isn't a quarrel—I would never quarrel with Stephanie—but some degree of discomfort.

We have to have meetings around here a lot, and some of us stay for the whole thing. We would always look around for MIKE. He would be around for the fireworks and then he would leave and he would always go home—because he had a home very close on Capitol Hill—to be with Stephanie.

She is absolutely wonderful. She has the best smile ever. You cannot be unhappy or in a bad mood ever when you see Stephanie.

So I would come to work in the Hart Building or here in the Capitol and I would happen to run into Stephanie and she would always come up with that big smile on her face and say, "Hi, Pat. How are things going?"

What are you going to do? I mean, I am trying to be the curmudgeon of the Senate, but Grassley keeps edging me out. So here I would be in sort of a bad or a grumpy mood and she would flash that smile, and I would say, "Just fine." Then I would be feeling pretty good and I would go into the office. They would say, "What is wrong? You have a smile on your face." I would say, "I've been Stephanized." I am truly going to miss that.

I remember the time we were sitting probably right about here in the back. We had just concluded the farm bill for the first time, and then it took us 400 days to get the rest of it. MIKE is an expert on agriculture program policy. Ask anybody else if they would like to talk about agriculture program policy and you would get a high glaze after about 8 seconds—but not MICHAEL. MIKE knows agriculture farm program policy. We call it farm program policy in Nebraska and Kansas, but he knows an awful lot about it.

I asked him, "How many people do you think in this body, in this Senate, absolutely understand farm program policy?" He retorted, "How many people want to understand agriculture program policy?" We decided there were about 5 in the Senate and maybe about 10 in the House—which shows you why we have a tough time getting the farm bill done.

I relied on his advice and counsel when I was the ranking member. I am so sorry—I regret—should I have the privilege of becoming chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee,

I would look forward to a dynamic duo with regard to what we could accomplish. But Senator JOHANNNS is like Shane: Come back, Shane. Come back, MIKE. But Shane rode away, and the Senator is going to ride back to Nebraska. I give him that, and I give him all of the success he can possibly have.

Six years is all this man has served. Some people have been here a lot longer. I have. You can accomplish a lot in 6 years. People say: What can you do in 6 years?

No. 1, you can work on legislation and you can know what you are talking about and you can earn people's respect and you can be smart about it. I don't mean smart smart. I mean just smart, so that what you say and when you say it, people pay attention. That is precisely the kind of person MIKE is. You can have all the integrity in the world and you can do exactly what he says when he talks about the people of Nebraska.

The people of Kansas are very similar to the people of Nebraska. My only complaint with the people of Nebraska is they chose to go play in the Big Ten and are finding it a little more difficult than running the track meets they used to run against Kansas State and KU. But if you want to go to the Big Ten and do that, why that is your business—but we have the same kind of roots.

I have always said there are no self-made men or women in public office. It is our friends and the people we represent who make us what we are, and Senator JOHANNNS has spoken so eloquently to that.

MICHAEL, I was trying to think of a tag I could label you with that might be noteworthy of everything you stand for. Others will do better than I and others have already said that. I simply come up by saying that you are an uncommon man with a very common touch, and I am going to miss you—and everybody in the conference is going to miss you and I suspect everybody in the Senate is going to miss you for the way you have conducted yourself and the job you have done for Nebraska.

We wish you all the best and we love you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. Manchin). The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, when Senator MIKE JOHANNNS stated in February of last year that he had decided not to seek a second term in the Senate, he did so in a way that revealed so much about his character. There was no dramatic press conference, there were no weeks of rumors,

there were no guessing games. Instead, there was just a simple and brief press release.

Then, the very next day it was back to work for Senator JOHANNNS, traveling throughout the State of Nebraska for a series of townhall meetings with the people he is honored to serve.

Nine months later, in October 2013, his character again shone through. The Federal Government was shut down due to a massive failure to govern responsibly. It was stifling our economy and causing great harm to the trust the American people deserve to have in their government.

As a key member of our Common Sense Coalition, Senator JOHANNNS worked effectively and quietly to restore government operations and to restore citizen trust in government. Again, no dramatics, no search for the limelight, just solid results, just effective leadership.

Quiet, effective leadership guided by common sense has been the hallmark throughout the Senator's 32 years in public service. From Lancaster County commissioner and mayor of Lincoln to Governor of Nebraska and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, he has been well informed, thoughtful, and untiring.

The old farm country saying that sowing is easy, reaping is hard, perfectly describes his record of accomplishment and his determination to see any task to its completion. Most of all, the Senator from Nebraska always does what he thinks is in the best interests of our country and of the people he so proudly represents.

In an interview shortly before he announced that he would be leaving the Senate, Senator JOHANNNS said he hoped he would be remembered as "a guy who was good to work with."

Working with Senator MIKE JOHANNNS has been more than just good. It has been an honor and a privilege and I wish him and Stephanie all the best.

Thank you for your service.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I rise to also express my appreciation for Senator MIKE JOHANNNS and for his wife Stephanie.

I first met MIKE shortly after I was elected Governor of my State. At that time MIKE was serving as Governor of Nebraska. Right away when I went and visited with MIKE I could tell this was somebody who was not only somebody we

could count on but who had the right motivation in public service, had great ideas, and was somebody I could look to as a mentor, and I have ever since.

From his experience at the local level as commissioner, then as mayor, then as Governor, then as Secretary of Agriculture, and then as a Senator, MIKE has been somebody all of us have counted on and somebody whose advice we have sought when we wrestled with tough decisions.

So I just want to add my voice as well to the others who have expressed our appreciation for Senator MIKE JOHANNIS and for Stephanie and to say how much we are going to miss him. We are going to miss him not only on a personal level—because he is a great guy and a great friend and somebody we can count on—but we are going to miss his advice, his counsel, his participation in this process on behalf of the American people.

I think MIKE epitomizes the kind of approach we need to have in this body to get work done—to listen, to think carefully, and to remember always that we work for the American people, and he has a long and distinguished career doing that.

He is somebody who will be truly missed, and I think he is somebody who exemplifies the very best of this body and of public service on behalf of our great Nation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, our colleagues know the Presiding Officer is a recovering Governor, I am a recovering Governor, MIKE JOHANNIS is a recovering Governor. So we are sort of a support group for one another, men and women who used to be somebody special. I am kidding because I think we still are.

The Senator was talking about MICHAEL, and I had the privilege of knowing him and his wife for a number of years. We were Governors together, and my wife Martha and his wife Stephanie were First Ladies together and define what the standards should be for First Lady or First Man, if you will, if you have a female Governor.

I will never forget when I first met him. I was talking about Stephanie and how we know each other and so forth, and he told me this great story about—I think they were county commissioners together. It was Lancaster County.

I might be mistaken, I think he used to be in those days maybe a Democrat, and a long time ago I was a young Republican for Barry Goldwater, when I was a 17-year-old Re-

publican freshman student at Ohio State, and later found out Hillary Clinton was a Goldwater “Golden Girl” at the Republican Convention in 1964.

In any event, I just want to say one of the reasons he is so thoughtful, and I hope maybe the reason I am fairly thoughtful, is because we have the ability to work across the aisle and to see and appreciate the views of other people.

The story about how he and Stephanie, when they were on county council together, they met, started liking each other, started dating, fell in love and later got married—they even had lunch together every day they were on county council, and every day he was Governor they continued to have lunch together and here, too, for many days. That is a love, the kind you just don’t see. You just don’t see that very much.

I just want to say: You are such an inspiration to the rest of us, you and your wife, the way you cherish each other and hold together and support each other and stand by each other. It is just a real source of inspiration.

There is an old saying: It doesn’t matter who gets credit for something when you get a lot more done. You define that, a guy who doesn’t need headlines, a lot of attention. I hope the rest of us are that way, but you define that for us.

We love working with you. We are going to miss you. We wish you the best and wish you Godspeed. As we say in the Navy, fair winds. God bless you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I am here to talk about the Intelligence Committee report, but before the Senator leaves the floor, I just want to tell my colleague from Nebraska how much I appreciate his service. I note for the body that in the effort to build a bipartisan coalition for major tax reform, MIKE JOHANNNS was the Senator whose counsel we all thought we needed, and I thank him.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I would like to take a few minutes to salute my colleagues who are departing the Senate at the end of this year with the conclusion of the 113th Congress: Mark Begich of Alaska, Saxby Chambliss of Georgia, Tom Coburn of Oklahoma, Kay Hagan of North Carolina, Tom Harkin of Iowa, MIKE JOHANNNS of Nebraska, Tim Johnson of South Dakota, Mary Landrieu of Louisiana, Carl Levin of Michigan, Mark Pryor of Arkansas, Jay Rockefeller of West Virginia, Mark Udall of Colorado, and John Walsh of Montana.

They have all worked hard, ceaselessly giving their energy and considerable time and service to their constituents, to their home States and to our country. I want to thank them for their service and for their kindness to me over many years in so many cases. In particular, I want to say a few words about these colleagues. . . .

I have been proud to work with MIKE JOHANNNS, an extraordinary Senator and an extraordinary gentleman, on a number of issues. We were particularly happy—both of us—when the HAVEN Act was incorporated into the pending version of the National Defense Authorization Act. This legislation will allow disabled and low-income veterans the ability to finance improvements to their homes so they are safer and more accessible. We also worked together on healthy housing efforts and to reduce lead hazards. This is consistent with so many things he has done, particularly with respect to veterans. Again, I wish him the best as he goes forward. . . .

Along with all of my other colleagues who are leaving us at the conclusion of the 113th Congress, let me thank them for their service, their dedication to improving the lives of Americans, and on a very personal level for their friendship. I wish them all well.

WEDNESDAY, *December 10, 2014*

Mr. REED. . . . Before I conclude with my remarks regarding the traditional defense programs, I want to touch on two other aspects of the legislation, one in particular with respect to the defense act. I am pleased that it includes the HAVEN Act. This is bipartisan legislation that I introduced with Senator JOHANNNS to help more veterans with critical repairs and modifications for their homes so they are safer and more accessible.

This program is directed at our disabled and low-income veterans. They find themselves out of the service, they have benefits, but they have needs to fix their homes and this program will help them do that. It establishes a competitive pilot program allowing nonprofit organizations throughout the country to apply for grants administrated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to help make key improvements to the houses of veterans with disabilities, or low-income veterans.

It is fitting we take this step to give back to those who have made a personal sacrifice for our Nation, and I am particularly delighted I was able to work with Senator JOHANNNS. As I noted in my remarks yesterday, he is retiring, but his decency, integrity, intelligence, and commitment to his constituents and also to the men and women of the Armed Forces will be missed here. ...

Mr. DURBIN. I have some tributes here for my colleagues who are retiring, leaving the Senate. It is a lengthy list of tributes. ...

I want to say a word about three others on the other side of the aisle who are retiring: Saxby Chambliss of Georgia, Tom Coburn of Oklahoma, and MIKE JOHANNNS of Nebraska. I got to know them when I gathered with one of these gangs, as they call them around here, to talk about deficit reduction. We spent more time together trying to explore the Federal budget in ways to reduce our deficit in a thoughtful manner so that we really got to know one another and respect one another.

There is a world of difference in our political values and philosophies, but each of them in their own way made a positive contribution toward making this a stronger nation. ...

Finally, here is a suggestion for when you have watched all of the "shouting head" political TV talk shows you can take: Listen to Senator MIKE JOHANNNS. MIKE's quiet, reasonable approach was a real asset not only to the Gang of Eight negotiations, but to the entire Senate. We will miss his calm demeanor and his good-faith efforts to find smart, fair solutions to tough challenges.

None of them is running for reelection so I can't hurt them politically by saying that I regard each of these Senators as friends. They showed political courage when partisanship would have been easier.

I wish them the best in all their future endeavors.

Mr. COONS. ... As I close, I would also like to thank those of our colleagues who will be leaving the Senate after the New Year.

It is an incredible privilege to work in this Chamber and to represent the people. Every day I am awed by the dedication and talent of many of my colleagues, public servants who come to work to fight for their States and their government.

To those who are ending their service in the Senate, know that I value your friendship and partnership. It has been an

honor to work with you, and I thank you for all you have done for our Nation.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I rise to thank my friend Saxby Chambliss. Senator Coburn spoke about leadership. We are very much going to miss Senator Coburn, Senator JOHANNIS, and Senator Chambliss in this body. . . .

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, in the new Congress we will welcome 12 new Republican Senators, and that is wonderful. They are great people. They are excited. They are enthusiastic. I think they are going to do wonderful things. We are going to lose 3 of our Republican colleagues. I am thinking, maybe that is about the right ratio; it is about 4 to 1.

But these are three individuals who are unbelievable in what they have been able to do in the relationships they built, the friendships, and the work they have done on behalf of the American people. So I am looking at that statistic and I am thinking: Wow, these are three great people who have done the work of many, and I think they have laid the foundation in many ways for us to get to a majority: Senator JOHANNIS, Senator Coburn, and Senator Chambliss. I think they have done a lot of that work required for us to get to majority.

We have heard about the great Senator from Georgia. But I think the things I am going to talk about for a minute in regard to Saxby Chambliss apply to the two individuals sitting here with him. They are cut from the same cloth: Senator Coburn, Senator JOHANNIS, true public servants. People who ran for the right reason; people who serve for the right reason. I think we could ask anybody in this body on either side of the aisle, and they would tell us that these three individuals served for the right reasons, and served the American people to the very best of their ability—not just the people of their State, but the American people. They will be remembered long after they are gone. They will be remembered because of the great, wonderful people they are, for the relationships they have built, and for that service. So I echo Senator Ayotte's comments.

Senator Coburn touched on it, too. One of the first people I looked to as a mentor when I came here 4 years ago was Saxby Chambliss. Now, that doesn't seem intuitively like something I would do—I am from North Dakota, he is from Georgia. MIKE JOHANNIS has been a mentor of mine since Governor days, so for more than a decade. But one of the first people I looked to as a mentor was Saxby Chambliss,

and I don't even know why. It was one of those things that immediately you like the guy. But as you listened to him a little bit, you respected the guy. You thought: This guy has something to say. He knows what he is doing. But then, it is that relationship thing—that thing where he goes out of his way to work with you, to help you, to understand what you are trying to do in a friendly way, with great humor, and he does it naturally. It is just who he is. It is automatic. I think Senator Isakson really put his finger on it: It is just the way he is. You are naturally drawn to him. . . .

When we talk about Saxby Chambliss, Tom Coburn, MIKE JOHANNNS, it doesn't get any better than that. We will miss them a lot.

I wish all three of them Godspeed, and may God bless you in your next career.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, as the current session of Congress comes to a close it is our tradition to take a moment to express our appreciation for the faithful service of those of our colleagues who will be returning home at the end of the year. We appreciate their hard work and great service on behalf of their home States and our Nation. We will miss them and the thoughtful suggestions and good ideas they have brought to our deliberations on the issues before us.

The word "service" brings to mind one of our retiring colleagues, MIKE JOHANNNS. MIKE has followed a path that has brought him from his service as the mayor of Lincoln, to his post as the Governor of Nebraska, on to serve in the President's Cabinet as Secretary of Agriculture and then on to the floor of the U.S. Senate. He has made important contributions at each post and now, as he has decided with the support and guidance of his family, "it is time to close this chapter in his life."

As a former mayor myself I have a great deal of regard for MIKE and his commitment to the people that he has served for many years. He has a great understanding of his home State of Nebraska and the workings of its State and local government. He understands the challenges that face his home State in the present, and the hopes and dreams of the people of Nebraska for the future.

It did not take long to discover that MIKE is a workhorse, not a show horse. He is not someone to land on a weekend talk show every week talking about what needs to be done—he would rather be in committee or on the floor every day doing it. In everything he did MIKE always brought along an abundance of Nebraska common sense. He used that special

gift of his and his varied background as a starting point for finding common ground and a workable solution on a number of issues that would be acceptable to all.

During his service in the Senate it has been good to have a neighbor to work with who understands agriculture and our rural way of life. He has been a great help in making the case clear to the Congress about the difference between living on a farm and living in a big city or town.

That is why I will not be the only one who will miss him. Our rural communities in the West will miss his ability to understand the problems of rural America and what should be done to address them.

MIKE has also been one to focus on the money side of each issue that came to the Senate. He knows how important it is for us to get a handle on our Nation's finances to ensure that our children and grandchildren will not have to clean up the financial mess we are going to leave them if we are not careful. MIKE has said that our failure to act will cause our financial problems to appear sooner than we might think.

I am sorry to see MIKE go when there is so much to be done that could use his understanding of the issues and his experience, as can be seen by the impact he has had on the local, State, and national level.

Still we know where to find him whenever we could use some of his Nebraska-rooted common sense. Thanks, MIKE, for your service to the State of Nebraska and to our Nation. You can be proud of what you helped to accomplish and the seeds you planted that will lead to more accomplishments in the years to come.

Thanks for your leadership and thanks for your friendship, too. Diana joins in sending our best wishes to you and our appreciation for all you have done. Please keep in touch with us. We will always be pleased to hear from you.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I wish to honor my colleague from Nebraska, Senator MIKE JOHANNIS, who is retiring from the Senate at the end of this year. Senator JOHANNIS has been a friend since I started in the Senate, and I appreciate his willingness to work with me toward our shared goals. He is one of only two current Senators to have served as a Governor and Cabinet secretary, providing him with a tremendous amount of wisdom on how to get things done. It is his incredible knowledge and strong Midwestern work ethic that I admire most about him.

For more than 30 years, Senator JOHANNNS has been a strong voice for the people of Nebraska. His first act in public service was in 1983 as a county board member in Lancaster County. He later went on to serve as both councilman and mayor of Lincoln. He would eventually become Governor of Nebraska and Secretary of Agriculture under President George W. Bush. Senator JOHANNNS set no limits to his potential; readily serving in any capacity he could to make our great Nation a better place.

Senator JOHANNNS and I serve together on the Agriculture Committee and I greatly admired the thoughtfulness and expertise he brought to the negotiations on the farm bill. His knowledge as a former Agriculture Secretary was unmatched and ensured many improvements were made throughout the debate. Senator JOHANNNS never forgot about our farmers and always kept his eye on providing them with the best possible outcome he could.

We also had the privilege of working together on the Banking and Housing Committee. He and I worked together with a bipartisan group of committee members to draft and advance legislation reforming the housing finance system to protect the American taxpayer from another bailout and to guarantee that another housing crisis does not happen again. Once again, his voice on behalf of rural America during these talks was critical and something that I greatly appreciated.

Senator JOHANNNS has never been about taking credit or seeking the spotlight. He maintained a strong, hard work ethic throughout his time in the Senate and was one who was willing to cross the aisle to get things done. The American people expect that of their representatives, and Senator JOHANNNS met those expectations on behalf of Nebraska.

I will miss having him as my colleague in the Senate, but I also know that his wife and family will enjoy the free time they will have with him. I wish him happiness and success in the next chapter of his life.

ORDER FOR PRINTING OF SENATE DOCUMENT

Mr. BENNET. I ask unanimous consent that the tributes to retiring Senators be printed as a Senate document and that Senators be permitted to submit tributes until December 23, 2014.

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

FRIDAY, *December 12, 2014*

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I will now speak very briefly about my retiring colleagues and then turn it over to the Senator from Florida. I promise I will be brief.

Everybody will face retirement, voluntarily or involuntarily. There will be a last vote to cast and a last speech to make. Only God knows when that day comes because we are all just one car wreck away from ending our careers.

To the retiring Members, I have had the pleasure of serving with you, and I know you all. You did what you thought was best for our country and your State, and what more could anyone ask? My good friend Mark Pryor, who tried to find common ground at a time when it is hard to find. Mary Landrieu, who would drill under the Capitol if she thought it would help American energy independence. We have good friends on the other side, and I will miss you, and I wish you well. But I would like very briefly to speak about four. . . .

MIKE JOHANNNS—he introduced me to Bono. I said, “Who is Bono?” I don’t follow that music that much, but I actually did know Bono.

MIKE introduced me to Africa. He was the Secretary of Agriculture for the Bush administration, and he had a passion for the developing world, particularly Africa. Through MIKE I got to know The One Foundation and the Gates Foundation. Through MIKE and Stephanie I have been to Africa many times, and you represent the best in our country. You are absolutely wonderful people. You will be missed. My way to repay you is to stay involved in the developing world. . . .

To all of you, Godspeed. I wish you nothing but the best.

I am fortunate enough to go into my third term. To my colleagues, as we go into the next Congress, let’s try to do better. I know we can. If we do, all boats will rise.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I honor my colleague and friend MIKE JOHANNNS. For many years, Senator JOHANNNS has worked tirelessly for the people of Nebraska, first at the local level, then at the State level as Governor, and most recently as senior Senator from Nebraska. MIKE is a kind and thoughtful man, and I have been grateful to serve with him these past 6 years.

Senator JOHANNNS was born and raised in Osage, IA, where he grew up working on his family's farm. After high school, he attended Saint Mary's University of Minnesota and Creighton University School of Law. Following law school MIKE clerked on the Nebraska Supreme Court and then practiced law in Lincoln, NE, where he was a founding partner at Nelson, Johanns, Morris, Holdeman, and Titus.

In 1983, Senator JOHANNNS was elected to the Lancaster County Board. Five years later he won election to the Lincoln City Council, and then, 3 years after that, became mayor of Lincoln. MIKE followed his success in local politics with success in State politics. In 1998, he won his first term as Governor of Nebraska, and was reelected by a landslide 4 years later.

Senator JOHANNNS entered national politics in 2004 when President George W. Bush asked him to serve as Secretary of Agriculture. Four years later he won election to the U.S. Senate from Nebraska, where he has served with distinction ever since.

When he retires later this month, Senator JOHANNNS will have spent more than 25 years as a public servant. I commend him for his service to the State of Nebraska and to the people of this Nation.

Although his tenure in the Senate was brief, Senator JOHANNNS wasted no time. His previous experience as Secretary of Agriculture proved indispensable as a member of the Senate Committee on Agriculture. To this committee, he brought expertise on farming issues unrivaled by other freshman Senators. He also served actively on the Banking Committee and was a member of the Senate's Gang of Eight during budget negotiations in 2011. Throughout his service, Senator JOHANNNS always had the best interests of the Nation at heart.

Madam President, Senator JOHANNNS is a good man who has served his country well. His retirement is well deserved. I wish him, his wife Stephanie, and their children the best going forward.

MONDAY, *December 15, 2014*

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, it is not uncommon for Senators to leave this Chamber to serve in Cabinet positions. Senator MIKE JOHANNNS, however, brought that executive branch experience with him when he was elected by the peo-

ple of Nebraska to represent them in the Senate. A former mayor, Governor, and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Senator JOHANNNS has served at every level of government.

While we have often supported competing proposals, we have found important and meaningful places to work together. Senator JOHANNNS joined me in coauthoring legislation to improve the Food for Peace Program, helping to feed an additional 200,000 people in dire need. Serving on the Agriculture Committee together, we are both committed to farming, family farming, and supporting our Nation's agriculture sectors and the people and communities that are part and parcel of farming and food production in America. Senator JOHANNNS has also been an important advocate for veterans, working on programs to help returning soldiers find civilian employment.

I wish Senator JOHANNNS, his wife Stephanie, and their family the very best in this next chapter of their lives.

TUESDAY, December 16, 2014

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, as we wind down the final days of the 113th Congress, it is a good time both to reflect on the past and to look toward the future. I have been very moved as I listened to the farewell speeches of our departing Senators, and I wish I had time to pay tribute to each one of them. They have all been wonderful colleagues, and I enjoyed working with and getting to know every one of them. I wish them all the very best in all their future endeavors. They will most certainly be missed. . . .

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, over three decades as a public servant, my friend and colleague Senator MIKE JOHANNNS of Nebraska has proven time and time again that politicians can be deeply principled while still recognizing the need to find common ground on the complex and difficult choices we must make as a nation. I believe this is a lesson that all former Governors carry with them after holding executive office, and Senator JOHANNNS and I were often able to reach an understanding on that basis.

Before coming to the Senate in 2009, MIKE JOHANNNS had already built a distinguished record of public service as a county board member, city council member, mayor, and two-term Governor of Nebraska. Senator JOHANNNS also served for 3 years in the White House Cabinet as Secretary of Agri-

culture to President George W. Bush. While leading the Department of Agriculture, Senator JOHANNNS helped U.S. agriculture producers find new markets overseas, promoted expanded use of renewable fuels, and encouraged conservation of agricultural lands. Having played a key role in developing the farm bill passed by Congress in 2008, then-Secretary JOHANNNS decided to return to legislating full time and successfully ran to represent Nebraska in the Senate.

Senator JOHANNNS' time in Congress is best characterized by his low-key approach to the most high-profile and consequential issues of the day. He was one of the bipartisan Gang of Eight Senators who tackled the challenge of crafting a comprehensive Federal deficit reduction plan in 2011, and in 2013 we worked together on a bipartisan deal to reopen the Federal Government and avoid a default on our national debt. I was also very proud to work with Senator JOHANNNS on legislation to address the unacceptable trends in military sexual assault. Senator JOHANNNS always brought the work ethic he developed growing up on a Nebraska farm to our business in the Senate, and for that and many other reasons I very much enjoyed working with him.

Senator JOHANNNS has given many years to public service, earning him the right to seek a bit of a break from the spotlight, and I wish him all the best in his retirement.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I wish to celebrate and thank the 13 outgoing Senators who have worked tirelessly to represent their home States in the Senate: Senator Mark Begich, Senator Saxby Chambliss, Senator Tom Coburn, Senator Kay Hagan, Senator Tom Harkin, Senator MIKE JOHANNNS, Senator Tim Johnson, Senator Mary Landrieu, Senator Carl Levin, Senator Mark Pryor, Senator Jay Rockefeller, Senator Mark Udall, and Senator John Walsh.

I have worked side by side with these men and women for years—some for decades—and witnessed first hand their extraordinary commitment to public service and to the people they so proudly represent.

Even when we didn't see eye to eye on every issue, I always deeply respected and admired their service to our Nation and their dedication to fight for what they believe in.

It has been a privilege to serve alongside each and every one of these extraordinary colleagues. I will miss their leadership and their friendship, and I wish them all the best as they embark on the next chapter.

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