

TRIBUTES TO HON. DAVID VITTER



David Vitter

U.S. SENATOR FROM LOUISIANA

TRIBUTES

IN THE CONGRESS OF  
THE UNITED STATES





David Vitter

Tributes  
Delivered in Congress

David Vitter  
United States Congressman  
1999–2005  
United States Senator  
2005–2017



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of the  
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U.S. Senator DAVID VITTER was a bold, conservative reformer who worked to solve the most significant problems facing our State and our Nation with Louisiana common sense.

Senator VITTER believed that the Federal Government was too big, too bloated, and too involved in Louisianians' daily lives, and he focused on taking practical, mainstream steps to cut spending, reduce the deficit, and put government back in its proper role.

He was a champion for Louisiana jobs that depended on oil and gas drilling, the leader of a Congressional coalition to secure our borders and stop illegal immigration, and an outspoken fighter for reforming the Army Corps of Engineers to ensure better hurricane and flood protection.

Senator VITTER fought against Washington bureaucracies that placed themselves between patients and their doctors, and against government agencies that destroyed jobs by piling burdensome regulations on small businesses. He believed that Washington needs the same commonsense approach that is found around Louisiana kitchen tables.

Senator VITTER was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1999. He was elected to his first term in the Senate in 2004, and overwhelmingly reelected in 2010.

DAVID and his wife, Wendy, have four children and live in Metairie.



# Farewell to the Senate

Monday, December 5, 2016

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on the Senate floor for the last time. I am not generally big on nostalgic reminiscences, but I would like to briefly reflect on what is clearly the greatest honor of my professional life—my 12 years in the U.S. Senate and 5½ years in the U.S. House of Representatives and the enormous honor of serving the people of Louisiana to whom I will always be so deeply indebted.

In some ways it seems like just yesterday that I was on the floor of the U.S. House being sworn in, surrounded by our very young children, except for Jack, who wasn't born yet. I said then: "I am honored, humbled, awestruck to stand before you today." I stated my simple goal: to become at ease and comfortable as I learn the ways of Congress, as I hopefully become an effective Representative and respected colleague and friend, but never to become so at ease and comfortable that I lose these feelings of honor, of humility, of awe, and, believe me, I haven't.

My very first year in the Senate was a very memorable one. That year Louisiana was struck by Hurricanes Rita and Katrina. After the initial shock of those cataclysmic events, I realized that for quite some time, my priorities as Louisiana Senator would be dominated by the desperate need to rebuild our State, including dramatically improving our hurricane and flood protection and restoring our coastline.

Katrina's devastation was hard to imagine, destroying much of southeast Louisiana and coastal Mississippi. Less than 1 month later, Hurricane Rita slammed into southwest Louisiana as another one of the most intense hurricanes in history. I immediately went to work with Senator Landrieu and the rest of our Louisiana delegation as well as my good friends Thad Cochran, Trent Lott, and others to secure the necessary disaster recovery assistance and also to make reforms to the Army Corps of Engineers to better protect our families and communities from future natural disasters.

Louisiana has continued to face and survive other major disasters, including Hurricane Gustav in August and September 2008, Hurricane Ike in September of that same year, Hurricane Isaac in 2012, the Red River flooding in northern and central Louisiana, and the 1,000-year-flood event in greater Baton Rouge and Acadiana this past August.

As if all of that weren't enough, in April 2010, the Deepwater Horizon oil rig exploded off the coast of Louisiana, killing 11 men and devastating our coastline. The disaster, followed by the horribly misguided offshore drilling moratorium President Obama put in place, caused economic and environmental chaos in Louisiana.

Once again, I immediately went to work with so many others to increase and improve safety measures and reopen the Gulf of Mexico to energy exploration and put people back to work. We introduced legislation to dedicate a majority of the BP penalties toward restoring coastal ecosystems and economies damaged by the spill. It was an uphill battle to ensure Louisiana was fairly compensated, but we did, and we achieved substantial wins, including passage of that critical RESTORE Act that I described.

During the recovery fight following each of these disasters, I found that the most effective leadership involved communicating clearly and employing solutions based on Louisiana common sense, and what always inspired me and kept me going was the unbelievable resilience, faith, and determination of my fellow Louisianans. Their strength and optimism have been oh so powerful reminders of how blessed I have been to serve them.

On a host of other important issues, I always sought to further two sets of political values, really modeled after my two favorite Presidents, Ronald Reagan and Teddy Roosevelt. I always strove to further the Central American tradition of limited government and individual freedom, and I was never afraid to shake things up, to demand needed reforms to ensure that leaders in Washington served the American people and not the other way around.

I have had the honor of protecting Louisiana's traditions and proud heritage while here in the Senate. Louisianans love the outdoors and want strong environmental conservation and sportsmen's policies to maintain that culture, and that certainly includes securing the rights afforded to each American by the Second Amendment, which I have fought to do.

Louisianans respect the sanctity of life, which has been one of my top priorities while serving in Congress. I have introduced many bills that end taxpayer funding of abortion and abortion mills and have proudly stood in the defense of life.

When it comes to our Nation's immigration policies, I have been an advocate for targeted reforms that fix the immigration crisis, starting with border security and enforcing the immigration laws already on the books. I fought President Obama's unconstitutional attempts to implement executive amnesty, which only encourages more immigrants to come here illegally and insults the millions of fine immigrants who do follow U.S. law.

I was also the first to introduce legislation in 2007 to end dangerous sanctuary city policies and have continued to do so each Congress since. I have also been critical of too big to fail in the banking sector and have found banking reform to be an area in which Republicans can absolutely find common ground with Democrats. That is where I found success in passing into law specific measures that restrict too-big-to-fail and tax-funded bailouts. Also during my time in Congress, I have introduced several important government reform bills so we can get back to the best traditions of our democracy, which includes electing citizen legislators, making sure they don't make themselves into a separate ruling class, and advocating for term limits so individuals don't remain in office for an eternity.

Americans of all backgrounds think Washington is on a different planet and Members of Congress just don't get it. That is why I fought to end Congress' automatic pay raises each year. I first introduced that language in 2009, and the raises have been successfully blocked each year since. Congress can be an effective representative body only when it lives under the same laws it imposes on the rest of the country, and one major way to support that is through term limits. When I was a member of the Louisiana State legislature, I was successful in establishing legislative term limits there, and I have offered the leading term limits measure for Congress here, as well as imposing it on myself.

I fought for commonsense legislation that helps all Americans have access to high-quality and affordable health care. That includes the work to dismantle Obamacare and replace it with patient-centered health care reform, which I am very hopeful the incoming Trump administration will achieve. In the meantime, I have been fighting to end Washington's ex-

emption from Obamacare, an illegal Obama administration executive order that allows Washington elites to avoid the most inconvenient, expensive aspects of the Affordable Care Act by giving themselves taxpayer subsidized health care through an exchange meant solely for small businesses. Also in the health care arena, I was able to pass into law the bipartisan Steve Gleason Act of 2015. It provided immediate relief for patients who have been denied access to life-saving and life-altering medical equipment. It was about a 2014 Medicare policy change that we had to reverse. Our bill allowed these patients to have access to medical equipment that truly empowers them, that is a true lifeline, and it changes their lives absolutely for the better.

I have also fought against large drug manufacturing lobbies to allow for reimportation of safe and approved prescription medicine from other countries, which gives patients, especially our seniors, relief from rising health care costs.

I have been honored to serve in the Senate in additional ways as well, including as a top Republican on the Environment and Public Works Committee and most recently as chair of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship. I am very proud to say that we have accomplished so many of our goals in those two roles.

We worked in a bipartisan fashion on EPW to pass several major pieces of legislation, including the Water Resources and Development Act of 2007 and the even more significant WRDA of 2014, several reauthorizations of the highway bill, the bipartisan and historic rewrite of the 40-year-old Toxic Substances Control Act, which began as conversations between Senator Frank Lautenberg and myself, a partnership which Senator Tom Udall continued after Frank's unfortunate passing.

We were also able to hold the administration accountable by conducting investigations into some outright corruption within the Obama EPA, and we advanced key transparency initiatives that shed light on government's attempts to implement policies that were not based on sound science or strategic needs.

As chair of the Small Business Committee, I have been advocating to make sure the voices and concerns of small business owners across the country are heard in Washington. We have held 23 hearings here, 18 field hearings, numerous roundtable discussions. We have heard testimony from over 175 witnesses, usually about the disastrous negative effects of Obama policies like the new waters of the United States

rule, key and disastrous effects on small businesses and job creators and their employees.

At the very same time, we found common ground with Ranking Member Shaheen and other Democrats on the committee. During my tenure as chair, we passed 32 bipartisan bills out of the committee, which is 22 more than my predecessors did over a much longer period, and 8 of our bills have passed through the entire legislative process and have been signed into law.

These accomplishments are but a fraction of the years of hard work my staff and I have dedicated to the people of Louisiana and, indeed, the American people. I have worked hard to be a champion for them because the government should serve the taxpayer and not the other way around, and that includes by working hard to stay in touch through 398 townhall meetings, at least 5 in each parish of Louisiana, through 231 telephone townhalls, and through active, energetic casework and constituent service.

Clearly what I will treasure most about my service here is the people with whom I have been honored to serve; my colleagues, including my fellow Louisianian Senator Bill Cassidy, mentors like former Senator Rick Santorum and Senator Jeff Sessions, and most especially each of the dedicated people who have been part of Team Vitter. I have come to the Senate floor several times this year to thank key departing staff members.

That is for a very simple reason. My staff has been the key ingredient—the key—to every success we have enjoyed together in public service. Wendy and I consider them a part of the family. I truly thank my staff again for their tireless, dedicated service to Louisiana. I am so very grateful. Wendy joins me in that.

I want to specifically recognize some of our leaders: my chief of staff, Luke Bolar; my legislative director, Chris Stanley; my wonderful finance director, Courtney Guastela; our State director, Chip Layton; and committee staff director, Meredith West; our grants coordinator, Brenda Moore; my media head, John Brabender; senior infrastructure policy advisor, Charles Brittingham; my senior economic adviser, David Stokes; campaign treasurer Will Vanderbrook; and communications director, Cheyenne Klotz.

I know a few of our other former senior staff members are here or are watching, like Mac Abrams, Joel DiGrado, Bryan Zumwalt, Travis Johnson, Kathryn Eden, and Michael Wong. Last, and obviously not least, is my beloved family. My five

wonderful brothers and sisters, our children, their children, the extended family, led by the ultimate leader of Team Vitter, my wife Wendy.

I can never thank them enough, and certainly I can never ever thank Wendy enough. Through it all, Wendy has been so enormously patient and supportive and understanding, not to mention being the life of every Team Vitter party, leading the rounds of Fireball shots. She and our daughter Lise are in the gallery today. I thank them and Sophie, Airey, and Jack for decades of love and support. Lise, up there, was in my arms as a 2 year old when I was first sworn into the House of Representatives and made those previously quoted remarks: "I am honored, humbled, awe-struck to stand before you." She has changed some, but as I said at the beginning of my reflections, those feelings certainly have not.

I would like to close as I did that day in the House over 17 years ago; that is, simply by recognizing the wonderful, loving forces that have brought me here today: God, family, led by my parents up above, and my wife Wendy, staff and friends, and of course the wonderful people of Louisiana. They are here with me today. They are here with me always. I thank them from the depths of my heart.

For the last time, I yield the floor.



TRIBUTES  
TO  
DAVID VITTER



## Proceedings in the Senate

THURSDAY, *December 1, 2016*

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, after two terms in the Senate and more than two decades of public service, our friend and colleague Senator DAVID VITTER will be leaving us at the end of his term. I would like to say a few words before he does.

Our friend from Louisiana is the first Republican Senator popularly elected from his home State. It is an impressive achievement that history will long record. Senator VITTER had little opportunity to celebrate at the time. Hurricane Katrina hit just a few months after he took office. It was a catastrophic natural disaster that presented massive and immediate challenges for Louisiana.

Our colleague did not miss a beat. Back home, he and his team worked tirelessly to set up mobile offices. Here in the Senate he fought hard to bring aid to those in need. It underlined something we have all come to know about Senator VITTER: He is passionate about his home State. That has been a constant throughout his career. He simply loves Louisiana. He loves the richness of its history, loves the richness of its culture, loves the richness of its food, too—crawfish pie etouffee and several other things I can't pronounce. Senator VITTER loves it all.

He flies home just about every chance he gets. When he was younger, he turned down offers from Harvard and Yale to study law in the Pelican State. This is after he spent some time in Cambridge, MA, and Oxford, as a Rhodes scholar, by the way—pretty impressive—so perhaps it was born of a simple lesson: You're just not going to find alligator sauce piquante anywhere else.

Nor are you likely to find many Saints fans, certainly none as enthusiastic as our colleague. You will find Senator VITTER glued to a television every football Sunday. If the Senate is in session, he will watch between votes in the Cloakroom behind me. He has been a diehard fan of the Black and Gold for as long as he can remember. It was not

as though he had much choice, of course, growing up in the Big Easy, but he has stuck by his team through thick and thin—often thin. It is what made the Saints’ eventual Super Bowl win in 2010 that much sweeter. He called it a dream come true.

This tenacity and determination carries over to his political career as well. Whatever the issue, Senator VITTER’s staff says he is always looking for solutions that can improve the lives of Louisianans. They say he is always ready to roll up his sleeves and stay the course on legislation that will do just that.

Senator VITTER has worked hard to protect his constituents from the effects of hurricanes and floods before they occur and to rebuild when they do. He has taken the lead on important initiatives to reform the Army Corps of Engineers and improve our Nation’s waterways.

Most recently, he helped to pass the first significant reform of the Toxic Substances Control Act in nearly four decades. Senator VITTER was a critical player throughout, working across the aisle with our late colleague Senator Lautenberg and then Senator Udall to steer this much needed legislation to passage and eventually law.

Senator VITTER says he believes his most important job is to keep an open-door policy for constituents who need help. I know he would tell you that, although it may not be the most publicized part of the job, he considers it the most fulfilling.

He still remembers the woman in desperate need of a liver transplant. With the help of his office, she got it. He still remembers the veteran who needed an operation to save his leg and his life. With the help of Team Vitter, he received that too.

Senator VITTER will never forget the countless families in need of assistance following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the oilspill, and recent flooding. He has seen first hand the life-changing, even life-saving impacts constituent casework can have. It is what inspired him to compile these powerful stories and best practices into a constituent service guidebook that will help guide his successor from day one.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without a great staff, and Senator VITTER has built a strong team that is as committed to the people of Louisiana as he is. It is tight knit. It is loyal. It is a group of men and women who know they have a boss who takes genuine interest in their

success, who trusts their judgment, and who is always eager for their input.

Senator VITTER awards a Reform Trophy each week to the staffer with the best new policy idea. He truly believes in a heavy dose of competition. That includes when his son Jack is in town. Staffers can expect to be enlisted in an entirely different competition then; it is called Office Olympics. Team Vitter knows to bring their A game when Jack is around. They also know to bring their sense of humor. It turns out Jack is a bit of a prankster. I hear you don't want Jack laying hands on a Post-it note or a roll of aluminum foil when he is in the office, but lifelong memories are often made when he does just that.

It is these relationships and it is this capacity to make a difference for the people of Louisiana through constituent service and the legislative process that I am sure our colleague will miss most when he leaves the Senate.

Senator VITTER may be retiring from his post in this Chamber, but we know he will continue to look for ways to serve the State he loves so much. Today we join with his team and his family in recognizing his many years of service. I know each of us is looking forward to seeing what else our colleague is able to achieve on behalf of Louisiana in the years to come.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, if the majority leader will yield for one moment, I want to thank the majority leader for his very kind words. Serving in the Senate for two terms has been the highest honor of my professional career. I have enjoyed it so much and have been honored by the relationship with all of my colleagues, certainly including the majority leader. I will have a few more reflections next Monday, but I sincerely thank him and also congratulate him for getting the Senate, particularly in the past 2 years, back to working order and some of its best practices. Not as a Member but as a cheerleader on the outside, I will be very much looking forward to even greater successes this coming Congress.

Mr. McCONNELL. I thank my colleague.

MONDAY, *December 5, 2016*

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I have the honor to recognize and thank my colleague and friend, the Honorable Sen-

ator DAVID VITTER, for his 25 years of service to Louisiana. Our State has been fortunate to have him as its voice and advocate in this Chamber for the past 12 years.

On a personal note, when I arrived at the Senate, DAVID worked with me, sharing with me some of the privileges that normally he, as a senior Senator, could have kept all to himself. With great graciousness, he worked with me and said, “Listen, this is how I think the process should be set up. I would like you to have some of this privilege as well.” I will do the same with whoever replaces DAVID. He has set a pattern that, again, by his graciousness and magnanimity, deserves repetition.

As a new Senator, I was fortunate to have him as a resource for advice and knowledge that comes from time and experience in this body. There are some things that happen here that you have to kind of have experience to follow. DAVID had both the experience, the sharpness, and the insight to recognize.

I again look forward to sharing what he has taught me with whoever takes his place. I will note, as DAVID did, he helped lead our State through some of our worst times. From Hurricane Katrina in 2005 to the great flood of 2016, all of the way in between, DAVID has worked hard to make sure Louisiana and the people of Louisiana have what they need to recover.

The hallmark of Senator VITTER’s tenure is that he has always cared deeply about our State, constantly looking for what he could do that would benefit our State, not just in the short term but doing that which is consistent with his principles to help Louisiana and the United States thrive in the long term.

He has been on the side of that family whose father goes for 2 weeks, works on an oil rig in the middle of the Gulf of Mexico, working hard so his family has a better future. DAVID has been on the side of that mom juggling two jobs to earn enough to make sure her children’s needs are met.

A recent example—again for the short-term and long-term perspective DAVID handled so well—he stayed persistent for years working across the aisle, first with Senator Frank Lautenberg, then Senator Udall, to pass the much needed reform of the Toxic Substances Control Act, the first reform of its kind in 40 years.

This reform protects both the workers—those people on that rig, perhaps, at least the people who would be processing the products of that rig—but also gives the manufac-

turers of Louisiana and across the country the certainty they need to expand their businesses and create more jobs.

On a lighter note, DAVID is a great Saints fan. We in Louisiana kind of liked the fact that when the slogan “Who Dat” came up spontaneously, and people started to put it on their shirts and the NFL was going to go to court to stop this from happening, DAVID wrote a letter to Roger Goddell. The letter started off by saying: “Who Dat.” So speaking truth to power on behalf of the “Who Dat Nation” is one credit of his.

Similarly, DAVID was tweeting before our President-elect made it perhaps as high profile. I remember during the 2013 Super Bowl in New Orleans—and again the context of this is, the Saints had just been punished—of course Saints fans think unfairly—by Roger Goddell. So during the 2013 Super Bowl in New Orleans, when the power went out, DAVID’s tweet, without missing a beat said: “Like most Saints fans, I am immediately assuming Roger Goddell is the chief suspect for the power outage.” The quick-witted quip cut to the emotion of the “Who Dat Nation.”

As the 114th Congress comes to a close, the Senate will be losing an important Member. DAVID brings a sound, strategic mind to this Chamber that will be missed. I wish him, Wendy, their children, Lise, Sophie, Airey, and Jack, the best of luck in their journey forward. On behalf of all Louisiana, I say thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Louisiana for his very kind remarks. More important, I want to thank him for years of great partnership, great work on behalf of Louisiana. I know he will make an outstanding senior Senator. Thank you.

I yield the floor.

THURSDAY, *December 8, 2016*

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I want to take an opportunity to salute and thank and commend my colleagues who are departing. . . .

We also have other colleagues departing: Senator Ayotte from New Hampshire; Senator Boxer of California, Senator Coats of Indiana; as I mentioned, Senator Kirk of Illinois; Senator Mikulski of Maryland; Senator Reid of Nevada; and

Senator VITTER of Louisiana. Each has brought passion in their work to best serve their constituents, and the institution of the Senate and the Nation are better for this service. I am better for knowing them, working with them, and having the opportunity to share with them, and I want to thank them for their service. Let me mention a few words with respect to all of these distinguished Senators. . . .

Mr. President, DAVID VITTER and I served together on the Armed Services Committee, and we continue to serve together on the Banking Committee. As a senior member of the Environment and Public Works Committee, he has been very critical in ensuring that we continue our commitment to infrastructure. Infrastructure is a word now that is getting a lot of attention. Years ago, DAVID was interested in that, not only interested but instrumental in making sure we did our best to keep up with infrastructure so that we could have a productive America, so that people could enjoy the benefits, and so that we could be competitive in a global economy.

He has done a great deal. One area where we also shared an interest is his Home Owner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, which became law in 2014. This was critical not just to Louisiana but to every coastal State, including Rhode Island. His energy, his commitment, and his dedication made it a success. I want to thank him for that, and I wish him well as he goes forward. . . .

I have been very fortunate. I have had the privilege to serve with these ladies and gentlemen, and I want to thank them for their service.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to briefly recognize the service of retiring Senator DAVID VITTER. Senator VITTER has served the people of Louisiana in Congress since 1999, through the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, across three different administrations, and through countless debates. As he retires from the Congress after nearly two decades of service to Louisiana, I wish him, his wife, Wendy, their four children and his entire family all the best in the next chapter.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I know it is always difficult to come to the floor and talk about the departure of our good friends and valued colleagues. The word I have heard mentioned the most this week is “bittersweet”—people looking forward to the next chapter of their lives but regretting the fact that good friends and valued colleagues are moving on



to the next chapter of their lives. Every other December, we find ourselves bidding farewell to some of our most admired and respected Members. Today I wish to speak briefly about four of them, starting with our good friend from New Hampshire, Senator Ayotte. . . .

Mr. President, I would also like to say a few words about the senior Senator from Louisiana, DAVID VITTER. Back in the 113th Congress, in 2013, I began my tenure as the Republican whip, and at the same time I invited Senator VITTER to serve the conference as a deputy whip. One thing we always know about DAVID VITTER, whether you are a colleague, a staffer, or a constituent, is that no matter what, he is going to have thought carefully about the issue in ways that perhaps surprise many of us, and when he has something to say about an issue, it is always something worth listening to. I can't say that about all of us, but certainly Senator VITTER adds to the value of our deliberations every time he speaks.

Of course, nothing is closer to his heart than the people of Louisiana, and what he has done diligently and faithfully here is serve the people of his State. I have had the pleasure of working with him on issues we share in common, like coastal protection issues that affect both of our States with our gulf coast.

Senator VITTER was sworn into office the same year Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans. As a matter of fact, for a time, he and his family literally lived outside the Houston area because of the devastation wrought by that terrible hurricane—a storm that FEMA called the “single most catastrophic natural disaster in U.S. history.” Katrina did billions of dollars' worth of damage, killed almost 2,000 people, left thousands without a roof over their heads, and cut the population of New Orleans in half. About 100,000 of those, I am told, made permanent residence in Texas, having had their homes destroyed.

I know Senator VITTER took this devastation as a personal challenge. He hit the ground running. When the people of Louisiana needed him most, he worked at every level of government to bring them together and get the help they needed. Of course, just a few years after Katrina, Hurricane Ike pummeled its way through the gulf coast of Mexico before making landfall on the Texas coast. So I have had a number of opportunities to work with Senator VITTER not only on recovery efforts for our States but to make sure our commu-

nities along the coast stand ready to help each other and particularly as we prepare for future storms.

I wish him and his wife Wendy and their entire family well as they look to more adventures and more opportunities to serve. I have no doubt he will continue to take his passion for helping the people of Louisiana with him wherever the future may lead. . . .

Let me close by saying thank you again to our friends Senator Kirk, Senator VITTER, Senator Coats, and Senator Ayotte for the indelible mark and contributions they made to the Senate and my sincere appreciation for how they have faithfully served our country. I am grateful for their friendship and wish them and their families well as they tackle new ventures ahead.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, each year at the end of the Congress, it has been a tradition for the Senate to pause for a moment to express our appreciation for the service of those Members who will be retiring. One of those who will be leaving this year is DAVID VITTER.

DAVID will be a loss for my party's membership in the next Congress because he was a hard worker and we could always count on him for his support of our conservative positions. Simply put, he made the most of the terms he served and made an important difference on a number of issues.

Over the years, DAVID would study each bill in committee and on the floor carefully to determine how those who would fall under its provisions would be affected. He had a good sense of what needed to be strengthened or tweaked to make legislation more effective and less costly. The people of Louisiana and the Nation have had a friend in him, and they greatly appreciated how well he looked out for them.

One issue that drew DAVID's and my attention was Obamacare. We both had a lot of concerns about how it would work and whether or not it would provide the kind of care its supporters promised. That is one of the reasons why I hate to see him leave. We have a lot of work to do on health care, and DAVID would have been someone who could help with the heavy lifting.

DAVID also chaired the Small Business Committee in this Congress and was able to put forward some ideas to preserve jobs and businesses. I have been proud to work with him in that effort.

In short, Senator VITTER has had a remarkable career and has done his best to serve the people of his State and champion the issues that were of importance to them.

Now DAVID has decided to end his Senate career and take on some new challenges. I have no doubt that his skills and his background will lead him down a new path to help the people of Louisiana. I wish him well and look forward to seeing what he will do.

DAVID, Diana joins me in sending our best wishes and our appreciation for your service, as well as that of your family. Together with Wendy, you were able to make a difference that will last for a long time in the Senate and in Louisiana. It is good to know you won't be far away and we can get in touch with you whenever we need your advice.

FRIDAY, *December 9, 2016*

Mr. McCONNELL. . . . It goes without saying that keeping the Capitol running is a vast undertaking. It requires a passion for service, round-the-clock work, and great sacrifice by everyone employed. The legislative process simply wouldn't be possible without the dedicated work of so many. On behalf of the Senate, I would like to acknowledge their efforts and say thank you to the following:

To my leadership team for their wise counsel; to our committee chairs and ranking members for so much great work over the past 2 years; to the many colleagues in both parties for working so hard to make this Senate a success; and, to those we are saying farewell to—Senators Coats, Boxer, Mikulski, Reid, VITTER, Kirk, and Ayotte—for your service to our country, I say thank you. . . .

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the senior Senator from Louisiana, my friend DAVID VITTER. Over more than a decade, I have had the privilege to get to know DAVID as a colleague and a friend. When he retires in January, he will be greatly missed.

DAVID is a New Orleans man, born and raised. In his younger years, he achieved impressive academic feats, graduating from Harvard and earning a Rhodes scholarship to study at Oxford. As he is fond of telling, after his time in England, he applied to three law schools—Harvard, Yale, and Tulane—and chose to attend the best of the three: Tulane.

Just a few years later, he won a seat in the Louisiana House of Representatives. There, he earned a reputation as an ethics crusader—a reputation that has stuck with him

throughout his career. Many observers credit him in no small part with the transformation of his home State's politics—once famously dominated by colorful but ethically questionable characters—and he should be rightfully pleased at the fruits his efforts bore for the State he loves. In Washington, his work to strengthen ethics laws at the Federal level may not have always made him the most popular among his colleagues, but they reflect the same spirit of reform and willingness to stand up for what he believes in that have been the hallmarks of DAVID's career.

On the legislative front, DAVID has been a champion for his conservative values and his beloved Louisiana. Taking office in 2005, he almost immediately was faced with one of the greatest crises any Senator in my tenure has had to confront: Hurricane Katrina. As his State has faced Katrina's devastation and other natural disasters, Louisianans could always count on DAVID to deliver for them, no matter what. Throughout, DAVID mastered the skill of fighting as hard as anyone when the situation called for it—as he did as the top Republican on the Environment and Public Works Committee, pushing back against the overreach of the EPA—and then turning right around and making partners of those who were his most entrenched opponents—as he did by working with liberal Democrats to update the Nation's water infrastructure and pass a once-in-a-generation reform of the Nation's toxic chemical laws.

DAVID's work in the Senate has produced an impressive legacy for him and for Louisiana. As he embarks on his next chapter, I send my best wishes to him, his accomplished and lovely wife, Wendy, and his four children.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, much of the time here in the Senate, we are engaged in pretty fierce partisan battles. I would like to take a break from that for a moment and talk about the four Republican Senators who will not be back when the 115th Congress convenes next month. While we may have different political philosophies and policy prescriptions, I respect and admire each of them, and I will miss working with all of them. . . .

Mr. President, Senator VITTER is probably one of the most conservative Senators and yet has a long record of bipartisan accomplishments on behalf of his home State and the Nation. I have enjoyed serving on the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee, which he has chaired for the past 2 years. During that time, the committee has reported nearly 30 bills, 8 of which have been signed into law so far. One of

those bills, Senator VITTER's Recovery Improvements for Small Entities After Disaster Act—the RISE After Disaster Act—will help small businesses recover from disasters more rapidly. Considering that small businesses are major employers and the linchpins of their communities, helping them to recover is crucial.

Senator VITTER is a Louisiana native, born in New Orleans. He was an excellent student and went on to earn his A.B. from Harvard. He attended Oxford University as a Rhodes scholar, earning a B.A., and then he earned his law degree from Tulane. He was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives in 1992; in 1999, he won a special election to succeed then-Representative Bob Livingston to represent the State's First Congressional District. He was reelected in 2000 and 2002 with more than 80 percent of the vote in each instance. In 2004, he won the Senate seat being vacated by John Breaux. That election was historic; he became the first Republican in Louisiana to be popularly elected as a U.S. Senator. The State's last Republican Senator, William Pitt Kellogg, was chosen by the State's legislature in 1876, back before the 17th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was adopted. Senator VITTER was reelected in 2010 with 57 percent of the vote.

Senator VITTER has had a productive career as a legislator. On June 22, 2016, President Obama signed into law the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act, which amends the Toxic Substances Control Act, TSCA, the Nation's primary chemicals management law. Senator VITTER was the lead Republican sponsor of this measure, working first with our beloved former colleague, Senator Lautenberg, and then with Senator Udall. The new law, which received bipartisan support in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate, will make it easier for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, to review the safety of chemicals already on the market and the new ones being developed, and it provides a stable source of funding for EPA to meet the law's requirements, a huge step forward with respect to chemical safety.

Senator VITTER has been instrumental in developing and passing important public works bills, including the current Water Resources Development Act, WRDA, reauthorization. While he has been an architect of our Nation's infrastructure policies, he has also been sensitive to the concerns of his home State. Thanks to his involvement in the past several surface transportation bills, Louisiana is no longer a "donor"

State with respect to the highway trust fund; the State receives \$1.06 in spending for every \$1 it sends to Washington in gasoline taxes. Senator VITTER was stalwart when one of the Nation's worst natural disasters—Hurricane Katrina—devastated Louisiana and the rest of the gulf coast in 2005 and again in the wake of the BP Deepwater Horizon oilspill in 2010. He coauthored the RESTORE Act, which directs 80 percent of the Clean Water Act fines levied against BP—\$5.5 billion—to the States whose fisheries, shorelines, and economies were decimated by the spill.

Senator VITTER has numerous other legislative accomplishments. To mention just a few, he authored the Steve Gleason Act, which helps people afflicted with diseases such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, by making it easier for them to acquire speech-generating devices. He reformed the Federal Reserve Board by putting in place the requirement that at least one sitting board member must have community banking experience. He successfully elevated Barksdale Air Force Base's Global Strike Command to four-star general status.

I mentioned a moment ago that Senator VITTER is a conservative. He and I have vast differences of opinion on many issues. But that is OK; that is the nature of the Senate. The genius of our system of government is that it allows—and encourages—people with different points of view to come together and agree on legislation that moves our country forward, and that is something Senator VITTER has been able to do over his career. I send my best wishes to Senator VITTER, his wife, Wendy, and their children Sophie, Lise, Airey, and Jack.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, as this eventful 114th Congress draws to a close, today I wish to honor a number of our colleagues who will be ending their service in the Senate. I was a newcomer to the Senate at the beginning of this Congress and the only Democrat in the freshman Senate class of 2014. I am eternally grateful for the guidance and wisdom of my fellow Senators, particularly those with decades of experience fighting for the American people. Constituents, colleagues, and historians will recount their accomplishments for years to come, but I will take a few minutes now to convey some brief words of praise and gratitude. . . .

Mr. President, in a Congress where bipartisanship is all too rare, I have been honored to work with many Republican colleagues on commonsense, bipartisan solutions. Senator DAVID VITTER has served as chairman of the Senate Small

Business Committee, of which I am a member, and has been a consummate partner on issues affecting Michigan's small businesses. On the Small Business Committee, we have been able to pass significant legislation to ensure that small businesses have the resources they need to compete, expand, and give back to their communities. We extended the SBA 7(a) Federal loan program to provide thousands of small businesses with financing at no cost to American taxpayers. Together, we introduced legislation that will provide patent education to small businesses. We also introduced legislation that will help small businesses plan for and protect against cybersecurity attacks. I am glad to have colleagues like Senator VITTER who believe that no issue is too small when it comes to supporting job creation and economic growth. . . .

It has been a privilege to work with such talented and committed colleagues. I wish them all the best in this next chapter of their lives and thank them for their work. Thank you.

#### ORDER FOR PRINTING OF SENATE DOCUMENTS

Mr. BOOZMAN. 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 114th Congress, and an additional Senate document a compilation of materials from the Congressional Record in tribute to the President of the Senate, Joe Biden, and that Members have until Tuesday, December 20, to submit such tributes.

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

#### ORDER FOR PRINTING

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that any tributes submitted by December 20, 2016, as authorized by the order of December 10, 2016, be printed in the January 3, 2017, Congressional Record of the 114th Congress.

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

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