

developed a deep respect for NANCY'S convictions and her commitment to aiding people in lesser-developed areas of the world. As both Chair and ranking member of the Subcommittee on African Affairs, Senator KASSEBAUM has shown compassion, tempered with pragmatism, in dealing with the unique issues of war-torn, famine-ravaged sub-Saharan Africa. Her expertise on issues affecting this area of the globe is unequalled in the Senate.

Senator KASSEBAUM's expertise does not end there. She also knows the United Nations inside and out. She has dedicated much of her time to reforming the waste, fraud, and abuse that is rampant within the UN. Frankly, she spearheaded increased congressional oversight of the UN. The Kassebaum Amendment withheld 20 percent of regular budget assessments beginning in fiscal year 1987, in an effort to make UN budget voting proportional to country assessments. A host of UN accounting and budgetary assessment reforms have followed in the wake of this amendment.

Senator KASSEBAUM also is a champion of education. She has worked tirelessly to secure increased funding for student financial aid and to reorganize the Jobs Corps program. As Chair of the Labor and Human Resources Committee, Senator KASSEBAUM also must be given credit for shepherding the Republican workfare plan through Congress. Because of her steadfast determination, we finally passed real welfare reform—reform that will end the failed "free lunch" approach to welfare and will bring aid to those who need it most. She is a tough, commonsense reformer, whose tenacity and calm resolve will never be forgotten nor easily replaced.

Finally, perhaps her crowning achievement of this Congress was passage this year of commonsense health care reform. Thanks to the Senator from Kansas, working Americans need not fear the loss of their health insurance policies when they change jobs or because of a pre-existing condition. Thanks to the Senator from Kansas, the self-employed will be able to deduct a greater portion of their health insurance costs from their Federal tax liability. These represent real and positive health care reforms.

As the 104th Congress draws to a close, I wish my friend, Nancy KASSEBAUM, the very best as she embarks on new interests in her home state of Kansas and elsewhere. Her career in Washington has been distinguished. Her public service to her State and Nation are unrivaled in terms of results. Senator NANCY KASSEBAUM will be remembered as a first-class public official. I wish her all the best now and in the many years to come.

#### TRIBUTE TO SHEILA FRAHM, U.S. SENATOR FROM KANSAS

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I would like to pay tribute to my friend

and colleague, Senator SHEILA FRAHM, for her outstanding service to the people of Kansas. As a former Kansas State Senator and Lieutenant Governor, SHEILA FRAHM has served her country and State with pride.

Senator FRAHM has a long and distinguished record of public service. She served as a member of the Kansas Board of Education, a Kansas State Senator, and was Kansas' first woman Senate Majority Leader. She also was the first woman in Kansas history to be elected Lieutenant Governor. As Lieutenant Governor, SHEILA FRAHM served as a member of the Governor's Cabinet and as Secretary of Administration, running the day-to-day operations of the Kansas State government.

Mr. President, in a matter of weeks, SHEILA FRAHM's life changed drastically. She gracefully moved into the Senate seat of one of the living legends of American political history, Bob Dole. Senator FRAHM has demonstrated time and time again that she can rise to any occasion. She did so yet again here in the Senate.

As a member of the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, Senator FRAHM played a vital role in moving legislation during the final months of the 104th Congress. Senator FRAHM also came to the Senate at a time to help pass historic legislation, including workfare, health care and illegal immigration reform. In a few short months she has voted to pass the kind of legislation many of her colleagues have waited years to address. SHEILA FRAHM has earned the respect and admiration of her colleagues, her staff, and her constituents.

We will soon bid farewell to our colleague from Kansas—Senator FRAHM. My wife Harriet and I wish Senator FRAHM, her husband Kenneth, and their three daughters, the very best. I am proud to have served in the 104th Congress with Senator FRAHM. Her valuable contributions to the Senate will not be forgotten.

#### SALUTE TO GUST LARSON

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment today to pay tribute to a great South Dakotan—Gust Larson of Midland. Gust is a "salt of the Earth" individual whose feet are planted firmly in the real world. Gust is truly one of South Dakota's unsung heroes. He deserves to be recognized for his leadership in helping to preserve rail service across South Dakota. I was privileged to work with Gust Larson several years ago on this issue. My association with Gust consists of some of the most productive and enjoyable work I have done as a United States Senator for South Dakota.

I first met Gust in the early 1980's when the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad [C&NW] filed for abandonment of the only east-west rail line across South Dakota. Gust owned the local grain elevator in Midland, a small

town in the middle of western South Dakota with less than 300 residents. When the C&NW announced its abandonment plans, Midland and other communities along the rail line were devastated, as were all the farmers and ranchers who depended on the railroad to ship their grain to market.

The prospects for blocking the abandonment looked bleak at the time. Back then, rail consolidation was the norm throughout the Nation. All across the country, one rail line after another was being abandoned. Thus, given the climate of the times, few people held out much hope when the C&NW announced its intent to abandon the 164-mile line from Rapid City to Fort Pierre. Some people even said there was no point in fighting the abandonment because the railroads always got their way with the Interstate Commerce Commission [ICC].

Gust Larson was not one of those people. Gust is a fighter, and he was not about to give up his and his fellow South Dakotans only rail link to the outside world without a fight. Gust knew the rail line would certainly be abandoned if nothing was done. He could not stand by and lose the only rail link to the grain market terminals to the east and down south to the Gulf of Mexico. Loss of this line would result in higher costs for western South Dakota grain producers in shipping their grain to market.

I shared Gust's concerns. The so-called political experts at the time advised me to keep a low profile. They urged me not to get involved. Fighting the abandonment was seen as a lost cause. Well, I grew up believing that lost causes sometimes were the ones worth fighting for. And, like Gust, I would not stand idly by and let the C&NW abandon this important line. So, ignoring the advice of the naysayers, I joined Gust Larson's lost cause to save the rail line.

A shippers group called the Western South Dakota Railway Users Association was formed, and Gust agreed to serve as chairman. Some scoffed and said we were tilting at windmills in challenging a huge corporation like C&NW with all its financial resources and attorneys. Skeptics pointed out that the C&NW had filed several other abandonment petitions across the country, and all of them had been approved by the ICC. Why would our line be any different?

Despite these tremendous odds, we decided to take on the railroad. Gust and his fellow rail users held countless telephone conversations and meetings with my office to formulate strategy and develop a plan of action.

Frankly, I suspect that C&NW corporate officials who handled abandonment petitions on a regular basis didn't take Gust Larson and his small band of rail users very seriously. After all, the C&NW was successful in other abandonment requests, and all certainly involved the usual protests from people like Gust Larson. Well, the C&NW attorneys and executives were in for a

surprise. They had never encountered someone like Gust Larson before.

I requested that the ICC send an administrative law judge to hold a formal field hearing in South Dakota. At the ICC hearing in Philip in September of 1983, Gust Larson and others emphasized to ICC Administrative Law Judge Edward McGrail the importance of preserving this important rail line. Much to the surprise of the naysayers and the C&NW, Judge McGrail issued a ruling against the railroad's abandonment request.

As expected, the C&NW appealed Judge McGrail's decision to the ICC. After intensive efforts, we convinced the Commission to let stand the judge's decision. Although Gust and the rest of us were very pleased by the Commission's action, we knew the battle was not over. We knew the C&NW could come back and file a new abandonment request, which would mean the battle would start all over again.

If the C&NW truly was not interested in operating the line, it could refuse to perform much-needed maintenance work on the line. This would lead to a gradual deterioration of the line's condition and ultimately a degradation of service. The only real solution was to find someone interested in operating the rail line. This obviously was no easy task.

We made a full-court press to identify potential buyers. After countless meetings and phone calls, we were able to convince a group of investors who were willing to take their chances on the future of this line. The Dakota, Minnesota, and Eastern Railroad [DM&E] was formed and an agreement was worked out with the C&NW to purchase the C&NW east-west rail line across the entire state of South Dakota and into Minnesota. Since its inception, the D&ME has invested millions of dollars in maintenance and track repair and has demonstrated its commitment to improving rail service for South Dakota shippers.

Today, many people may not realize how close western South Dakota came to losing its rail service to the east. Had Gust not stepped up to the plate to lead the local shippers group, who knows what might have happened?

Gust Larson is the pride of South Dakota. His effort to save the rail line is reminiscent of the legendary stories of tough, rugged fighters who turned a vast prairie into a state of enormous promise and opportunity. Generations from now, Gust Larson's story also will be legendary. He has made a lasting contribution to his community, his State and his country. It was one of the great privileges of my life to work with Gust. It is an honor to know Gust Larson. It is an even greater honor to call him my friend. I salute him. Thanks to the help of Gust Larson, the rumble of trains can still be felt and heard across western South Dakota.

#### TRIBUTE TO RETIRING SENATORS

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, when the 105th Congress meets for the first time early next year, this Chamber will have many new faces. This is partly because 13 of us, including myself, will leave this body to pursue other goals and ambitions. I rise today to pay a special tribute to those of my colleagues who will retire from the U.S. Senate at the end of this term.

Mr. President, it has been my pleasure to work with my distinguished colleague from New Jersey, Senator BILL BRADLEY, since 1978. We arrived together, and together we depart.

Senator BRADLEY's respect for the opinions of his colleagues and thoughtful demeanor have made him one of the true gentlemen of the Senate. I have enjoyed working with him on the Committee on Finance and the Special Committee on Aging. He has been a leader on tax reform, environmental protection, and violence prevention.

Senator BRADLEY established himself as a progressive leader in tax reform by proposing the Fair Tax Act in 1982. That later became the Tax Reform Act of 1986. This act closed most of the loopholes that had created unfair and unbalanced tax burdens on the people of the United States. This legislation also reduced Federal taxes on many low-income Americans.

BILL has taken a personal interest in the protection of the environment over the years. He passed legislation to protect the shores of not only New Jersey but of the entire country through his support of the Shore Protection Act of 1996 and has fought to protect millions of acres of virgin land from mining and development.

His determination to create jobs and to expand the police force in those areas have made Senator BRADLEY a leader in finding solutions to the violence that has become an everyday part of life in many communities.

The Senate is losing a great Member in Senator BILL BRADLEY. I wish him and his family the best in the future.

I also want to pay tribute today to Senator HANK BROWN. I have had the honor of serving with the Senator from Colorado on the Government Affairs Committee. In addition, he has been a leader in the fight for a balanced budget.

While he chose to serve only one term in the Senate, HANK had spent 10 years in the House of Representatives. I served in the House and know how difficult the schedule can be, splitting time between Washington and my home district, leaving little time to see family and friends. Yet, while a Member of Congress, he earned a masters of law degree from George Washington University. Hank is always looking for new things to learn and new ways to grow as an individual. I am sure that, after he moves back home, Hank will find many new experiences from which to learn whatever he chooses to do. He has served the people of Colorado well and will be missed.

Senator BILL COHEN and I came to the Senate in 1978 and I have greatly enjoyed working with him over the years. In addition to being an effective Senator and a true champion for his State of Maine, Senator COHEN also found the time to author eight books.

I have served with BILL COHEN on the Governmental Affairs Committee and he has been a reliable ally in the struggle to reform our government's procurement practices. Too many people think that our work is done here in the Congress when we pass appropriations bills. Senator COHEN is among a small group of Senators who realizes that the oversight process is just as important as approving the money.

Mr. President, the Senate will certainly miss the insights and energy of Senator BILL COHEN.

Mr. President, the senior Senator from Nebraska, JAMES EXON, is another of my colleagues who has decided not to seek another term in the U.S. Senate. I know that Senator EXON's retirement will cast a shadow over the great State of Nebraska and this body.

Senator EXON's friendship has been extremely important to me during my time as a member of the Senate. I will miss him as we continue with the next phase of our lives. We have been friends for 20 years, dating back to the days when we served our respective States as Governor. JAMES EXON was one of a group of Senators who dropped by a gathering of folks from Arkansas last week. I was honored that he took the time out of his schedule to attend the gathering.

I appreciated Senator EXON's help on many pieces of legislation, including his strong support for my work to keep pharmaceutical drug prices down. He was also an original cosponsor of the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, and worked with me to make the Internal Revenue Service more accountable for its actions. I am grateful for his help and support throughout the years.

Mr. President, it has been an honor and a privilege to serve alongside Senator EXON here in this great body. We came to the Senate as dear friends, and I hope to continue the friendship in the future. Barbara and I have enjoyed our time spent with JAMES and Pat Exon, and we wish them the best in the future.

Mr. President, one of this country's true statesmen, Senator MARK HATFIELD of Oregon, has been a Member of this body since 1966. I am truly grateful to have had the opportunity to serve with this great man.

Senator HATFIELD's dedication to his State and Nation can be seen by his mere length of service. For the past 30 years, MARK HATFIELD has worked hard to improve living conditions for the people of Oregon and the United States. Senator HATFIELD has always been an ardent proponent of peace as he has continually worked to end armed conflict. It was Senator HATFIELD who offered an amendment with then Senator McGovern to end the Vietnam War.