

one of the great men that I have had the honor of serving with in the U.S. Senate, Paul E. Tsongas of Massachusetts.

Paul Tsongas and I arrived in this body at the same time almost exactly 18 years ago in 1979. By that time Paul had already distinguished himself in 4 years of service in the House of Representatives, including legislation creating the first urban national historical park in his beloved hometown of Lowell. This became the catalyst for a remarkable renaissance in that historical New England mill town.

He arrived as the first Peace Corps veteran ever elected to the Senate. He valued highly his opportunity to serve in Ethiopia and spoke frequently of those 2 years as the formative years of his desire for public service. As a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee he was a voice for human rights around the world, but particularly on the African continent. In his 1981 book, "The Road From Here," Paul wrote, "[Human rights] are rooted in our culture and history, and we should champion them. Third World people need to have us honor this principle because if we don't, no one effectively will. And ultimately it is the moral and economic strength of America that will count, not just our military might."

Paul accomplished a great deal in a short time in the Senate, including the passage of the Alaska Lands Act of 1980 which more than doubled the size of the national park system and which President Carter called the most important conservation legislation of the century.

However, he will be remembered best for his years after the Senate. He retired from the Senate in 1984 after learning that he had cancer, pledging to devote more time to his family. In the book, "Heading Home", about his decision to leave the Senate, he wrote: "On their deathbed, no one ever said, 'I wish I had spent more time with my business.'"

He overcame cancer undergoing a then-experimental medical procedure, and went on to become a Presidential candidate in 1992, and a founder of the Concord Coalition, a bipartisan organization which has become a credible and widely-respected grassroots voice for fiscal responsibility in government.

As the family and friends of Paul Tsongas mourn his death and celebrate his life, Barbara and I will have Niki and Paul's three daughters Ashley, Katina, and Molly in our thoughts and prayers.

Mr. President, a member of my staff, Rich Arenberg, who served Paul Tsongas for more than 10 years as a staff member and friend wrote a few personal words which are most apt:

Paul Tsongas was an uncommon man. He honored America with the purity of his honesty and candor. There was no private Paul Tsongas, no public Paul Tsongas. He gave totally and completely of himself. He said exactly what he believed. In an age of partisan

vitriol, he spoke softly and without animus. Although his voice was cool, his beliefs were passionately and tenaciously held. He believed that rational people of good will could solve any problem, bridge any difference, and lead by the force of reason. Paul Tsongas loved his family more than anything on earth and he loved his country deeply. He saw little distinction between the two because he believed the greatest gift we can give to our children is a strong future for America.

THE INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT CLINTON

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, yesterday, in a moving ceremony, we witnessed the swearing in of President Bill Clinton and Vice President AL GORE for their second term. The inaugural ceremony is significant not only to the history of our Nation, but for the message it sends to the rest of the world about our democracy.

The ceremony required a tremendous amount of planning by many, many people. The extensive preparations included construction of the platform, ticket distribution, coordination of security measures, organization of the ceremony, planning the luncheon in Statuary Hall and countless other tasks.

Leading this team of dedicated people was the distinguished Senator from Virginia, Senator JOHN WARNER. As chairman of the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies, he had the monumental task of making the arrangements for this historic occasion. He performed his responsibilities with great efficiency and with outstanding attention to every detail. As master of ceremonies, he skillfully orchestrated the entire program. I, along with my colleagues, would like to thank Senator WARNER and congratulate him on a job well done.

In addition, I would like to applaud the distinguished Senator from Kentucky, Senator WENDELL FORD. His contribution of hard work and past experience as Chairman of the committee was evident in the success of this endeavor. I wish to express my gratitude to Senator FORD for his hard work.

I would also like to thank and congratulate the other members of the Joint Inaugural Committee for such a successful ceremony. Those members were Majority Leader LOTT, Speaker GINGRICH, Representative ARMEY, and Minority Leader GEPHARDT. In addition, the members of the committee were ably assisted by the officers and employees of the Senate and House of Representatives, as well as by personnel from the executive branch. The success of the ceremony demonstrated tremendous cooperation between both parties, as well as both Houses of Congress and the executive branch.

I offer my appreciation to everyone who contributed countless hours to the 1997 inauguration ceremony, particularly to the chairman, Senator WARNER, and the ranking member, Senator FORD. Thanks to the efforts of all in-

volved, the ceremony will be a memorable event for our Nation.

KENTUCKY DOMINICAN SISTERS 175TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, I am proud to stand before you and my colleagues today to recognize the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Kentucky Dominican Sisters. They are the oldest group of Dominican Sisters in the United States and I am pleased they chose to put down roots in Kentucky.

It was a time in our Commonwealth's history when the rural communities were sometimes forgotten. But nine pioneers took it upon themselves to help meet the needs of those in rural Kentucky. They made a commitment to the community to serve through service, prayers, and study—a commitment which has lasted 175 years. It was this group of women who laid the foundation for the Kentucky Dominican Sisters of today.

The Sisters responded to the needs of their time. They nursed soldiers in Kentucky during the Civil War and established hospitals for residents who previously traveled miles for emergency care. As the times have changed so have the needs of citizens of Kentucky. But the Sisters are still answering those in distress. My regret today is that I can only highlight some of their recent work including working with persons living with AIDS, assisting refugees to resettle and advocating for food, shelters and health care for not only the people of Kentucky, but for those throughout our great United States.

On April 4, 1997, Sisters from around the United States will gather at their Motherhouse in Springfield, KY, for a weekend of celebration. Mr. President, I ask you and my distinguished colleagues to join me in honoring the Kentucky Dominican Sisters for 175 years of service.

HONORING BILL WEBER, ST. CHARLES CHAMBER OF COM- MERCE 1996 CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the St. Charles Chamber of Commerce 1996 Citizen of the Year, William H. Weber. On January 24, 1996, Bill Weber will gather with friends, family, and colleagues to celebrate his distinguished contributions to his community.

Bill is a lifelong resident of Missouri and St. Charles. His volunteer career has touched innumerable organizations with his leadership, commitment, and unselfish hard work. Bill has been the driving force behind such significant projects as fund raising to build both the St. Peters Rec-Plex and the YMCA of St. Charles County. After a volcano destroyed the city of Armero, Colombia, South America, he worked tirelessly to build a YMCA facility to provide basic needs and housing for the children of that disaster.

Closer to home, he has served on the boards of directors for Boys and Girls Town of Missouri, the Regional Commerce and Growth Association, St. Louis Sports Commission, St. Charles Public Schools, St. Charles Police and Fire Board, Crimestoppers, Mid America Theater, St. Charles County Horse Racing Commission, Daniel Boone District Chairman, Boy Scouts of America and the Eagle Board of Review, YMCA and United Services Blue Ribbon Committee.

He received the Boy Scouts' highest honor, the Silver Beaver Award in 1989, Channel 5's [KSDK] Volunteer Board of Governors Jefferson Award in 1993, the YMCA's highest leadership award and Youth in Need honored him as its first recipient of their Youth Leadership Award. For this lifetime of service, I rise today to recognize and salute William H. Weber, St. Charles Chamber of Commerce 1996 Citizen of the Year. His volunteer work has been a shining example to me as well as all Missourians.

HONORING THE POTTERS ON THEIR 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, families are the cornerstone of America. The data is undeniable: Individuals from strong families contribute to the society. In an era when nearly half of all couples married today will see their union dissolve into divorce, I believe it is both instructive and important to honor those who have taken the commitment of "till death us do part" seriously, demonstrating successfully the timeless principles of love, honor, and fidelity. These characteristics make our country strong.

For these important reasons, I rise today to honor Donna and Ralph Potter of Kansas City, MO, who on Sunday, January 5, 1997, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. My wife, Janet, and I look forward to the day we can celebrate a similar milestone. Donna and Ralph's commitment to the principles and values of their marriage deserves to be saluted and recognized.

LOUIS J. AMABILI

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, today I would like to say something about a hero. The distinguished historian Stephen E. Ambrose says that we need to teach our children about heroes. It is by understanding the contributions of great men and women that our youth set standards of achievement for themselves. Common heroes provide a sense of unity and inspire us to aim a little higher than we did the day before.

This week in Delaware, an outstanding man is being recognized for his more than 50 years of service to community, State, and Nation. His name is Louis J. Amabili. He's a loving husband, a devoted father, an attentive grandfather, and fearless firefighter. He's a man who, for half a century, has risked his life to protect the lives and property of others.

Louis is my friend, and I am honored to count him among my friends. He is a member of the Hockessin Fire Company and the founding Director of the Delaware State Fire School. For 32 years, he served as director of that school, leading it to its current pre-eminent position as one of the leading fire training facilities in the United States.

During his tenure, the Delaware State Fire School not only built its facility in Dover, but established training centers in Sussex and New Castle Counties, providing fire training centers within 30 minutes of every fire company in Delaware.

In additions to these many successes, Louis Amabili also served as president of the New Castle Volunteers Firemen's Association, the Delaware Volunteer Firemen's Association, and the International Association of Fire Service Instructors. Richard Nixon appointed him to the Fire Prevention and Control Commission, and Delaware Governor Pete DuPont recognized him with the "Order of the First State."

Mr. President, Louis Amabili is one of the most well-recognized fire service leaders in America. He served on the Board of Directors of the National Fire Protection Association, and chaired the Fire Officers Professional Qualifications Standards Committee for more than a decade.

Louis was a member of the International Fire Service Training Association and received their highest honor for his role in fire service training. He chaired the Joint Council of National Fire Service Organizations and helped establish the National Fire Service Professional Qualifications System.

He serves as a member of the board of directors of the Congressional Fire Services Institute—which I have the honor of co-chairing—and he has received that institute's highest honor, the CFSI Fire Service Person of the Year Award.

On this occasion, as Louis Amabili retires from a distinguished career, it is my privilege to recognize his years of selfless service, the lives he has touched, the lives he has taught, and the lives he has saved. I want to express my gratitude to his wonderful wife, Carmen, to his son Louis Jr., and to his daughter, Janice, and I want the record to show without question that we do, indeed, still live in a time of heroes. Quite often these valiant men and women live right next door.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, children's health care coverage needs to be a priority in this Congress. We need to be committed to providing access to affordable coverage and care to all working families in America. We also need to provide coverage for uninsured pregnant women, in order to ensure that children get a healthy start in life. All children should have access

to services that provide for their basic health care needs such as immunization, preventive services, acute care, and dental care services, regardless of whether they live in rural or urban areas.

Employers are rapidly cutting health care coverage for children of their employees. When a family earning \$16,000 each year is required to pay over 10 percent and sometimes as much as one-third of their income to purchase health insurance for their children, they are forced to make very difficult choices. They must choose between providing their children with basic needs such as food and shelter, and paying for health insurance.

Health care coverage for children is an investment in the future. Children with undiagnosed or untreated health problems may have difficulty learning in school. A child with poor vision that has not been diagnosed or treated may be unable to see the blackboard. A child who is in pain from preventable tooth decay may not be able to eat an adequate diet, and the pain may make it difficult for the child to concentrate. A child with asthma who has poor access to care may spend many hours in an emergency department and many days in the hospital for treatment of problems that could have been prevented. This occurs at a significant cost not only in terms of dollars, but also in terms of lost opportunities to attend school, and loss of work time and income for the child's parents. These situations can be prevented with adequate health care coverage and access for children.

Children in rural areas are especially vulnerable, as there are fewer services available in these areas, and some needed services are located at significant distances from their homes. In addition, these children often live in homes where their parents work for small employers, who are unable to offer dependent coverage at a low cost.

Several States have demonstrated the cost savings available by providing assistance to working families. My home State, Minnesota, operates its own program that helps families buy private health insurance. Ninety-thousand people are covered, including 50,000 children. Over the years, more than 41,000 families have used MinnesotaCare to leave or stay off welfare, saving the taxpayers \$26 million per year.

It is essential that we address this issue and provide low- and middle-income families with the option to purchase affordable private insurance coverage for their children. These families must be provided with the means to purchase this coverage in a timely manner, so that they do not have to delay the purchase of coverage for their children.

We need to build on successful private, State, and Federal efforts to help working families afford to provide health coverage for their children. Providing coverage for children through