

that moved me the most and causes me to say that I will miss this man and I will note his absence is that I consider what the world is like without him, and I think it is less without him. So it was considerably more as a consequence of the choice he made to be kind, the choice he made to be considerate, the choice he made to respect other people. That is a choice we all have to make. Are you going to be kind? You are not born with an attitude of kindness. You have to choose it. You have to choose to be considerate and respectful.

Again, I have been here for 10 years. I can't think of a single moment even when he was provoked that John Chafee ever said an unkind word about anybody. He would disagree. He would argue. I never heard him say an unkind word. That was a choice he made. It didn't come as a result of him being a man or a human being. It was a choice and a decision that he made. It was old school values, in my opinion.

As a consequence of that, I find myself wondering what life is going to be like without John Chafee.

I hope his wife and family understand what a big impact he made. John caused not just improvement in our laws, improvement of our country, and improvement of our world but improvement of our values.

For those of us who fall short of the mark that John Chafee laid down with his behavior, there is an ideal of a goal that he set for ourselves.

I hope as we debate and make decisions about how we are going to treat one another that we remember the way John Chafee treated us. I think if we remember that, it is likely that we will treat not just one another better but as a consequence of that treatment this will be a better place, and the country will be a better place, and the world will be a better place as well.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I rise today to join so many of my colleagues in making a few remarks about our colleague, Senator John Chafee.

As we all know, many of us have risen over the last 2 days to speak of our memories of Senator Chafee and the friendships we have developed with him over the years. Because of my short time in the Senate, my experiences with Senator Chafee are more limited, but I have had ample time to observe Senator Chafee as the good, kind, and honorable man so many of my colleagues have spoken about in the last couple of days.

I can recall when I first came to the Senate and we were organizing. I wondered what my committee assignments would be. John Chafee, knowing of the interest of Idaho in natural resource issues, came to me and said I ought to try to get on the Environment and Public Works Committee which he chaired. I said: I would love to work with you on that committee. When the appropriate opportunity to make a selection came along, I ultimately did,

make that choice and had the chance to work with Senator Chafee.

John Chafee represented what is good about American politics. Senator Chafee was a man of the highest principles and utmost integrity. The Washington Post referred to him as "a gentle but stubborn champion." That is exactly right.

I was remarking to one of our colleagues as we walked back from the Capitol Building after a matter of business earlier today that John was always friendly and helpful and was such a kind man, but he was also a firm man in championing the principles he advocated. I believe that description of him, "a gentle but stubborn champion," is a very apt way to describe him.

John Chafee was deeply committed to the issues he undertook to fight for, and, at the same time, he was always a gentleman and a statesman. Senator Chafee was instantaneously a likable person. Part of his charm was he was entirely unassuming and friendly.

Perhaps what made his demeanor more unique was he had enjoyed such an impressive career. Senator Chafee clearly worked hard to make a difference throughout his entire life. His career accomplishments were extraordinary, but then he was an extraordinary man. These things have already been said, but I want to repeat them.

He served in World War II at Guadalcanal and Korea. He was a graduate of Yale University and Harvard Law School and served in the Rhode Island House of Representatives and as Governor of Rhode Island. In 1969, he was appointed Secretary of the Navy and served in that post for 3½ years during one of the most critical times in our history.

Senator Chafee's life's work has been furthering the issues he believed would make America a better place. His commitment to the issues and his good nature are what I will miss the most.

I knew if I needed to talk with someone who would have a unique and heartfelt perspective on an issue we were debating, all I had to do was sit down at his desk, where there are now flowers, and talk to John. He would have thought through the issue carefully and whatever his position on it, he would have a good, balanced, thoughtful reason for it.

I particularly want to share some of the personal experiences I have had with him.

Being from a different part of the country—I come from the West and John comes from the Northeast—it is no secret those of us from different parts of the country often approach environmental issues and some of the natural resource issues in a different way, and that was true about John and me on some of the issues. We found a lot of common ground where we worked together, and we found those issues where we were different.

What was always remarkable to me is that he was always willing to work with me to try to understand my point

of view and to see if the issues and concerns of the people I represent in Idaho could be squared with the issues and the concerns of the people he represented in Rhode Island, and if the interests of the Nation could be brought together in a solution that found common ground, that was one of his strengths.

I note he always engaged the people in our hearings in a friendly fashion that made them feel at home and at ease. He took a direct interest in legislation and in each committee member's personal interest in legislation which was important to them.

He personally worked closely with me on legislation on which we found we could develop common ground. It is because he chose to make his life one of service that so many people today stand in honor of him. America truly lost one of our great leaders. I believe he stands as a tremendous example to all of us of the kind of difference you can make if you are willing to put your life into the service of the people of this country.

John Chafee truly did that. On behalf of all of us in America, I say thank you.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL ACT

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I rise to express my gratitude and my appreciation to the House of Representatives for an action it took last week, under the leadership of Congressman GOODLING, chairman of the House committee dealing with education. The House has now passed the Academic Achievement For All Act, or Straight A's, a concept and a crusade in which Mr. GOODLING and I have joined as sponsors in our respective Houses of Congress. It is so dramatic a reform, so dramatic an expression of understanding on the part of the majority of the Members of the House of Representatives, that those who provide educational services for our children—their teachers and principals and superintendents and elected school board members, not to mention their parents—ought to be empowered to use the money they receive from the Federal Government for that education in a way they deem best, given the circumstances of each child and of each of the 17,000 school districts in the United States.

That philosophy is very much at variance with the standard philosophy of Acts of Congress, which increasingly over the years have told our schools in detail what they must teach, how they must teach it, and how they must account for it if they are to receive a modest percentage of their budgets that Congress itself supplies to them.

In order to pass Straight A's through the House of Representatives, Mr. GOODLING and his supporters had to scale it back to a 10-State experiment.

Even at that level, I believe it will be a dramatic reform, not simply because it provides this trust in our local educators and parents and school board

members, but because it carries with it a requirement for accountability that is a real bottom line requirement; that is to say, in order to take advantage of Straight A's, a State must have a system of determining, through some type of examination or a test, whether or not it is actually improving the educational achievement of the children under its care. It is only results that count in Straight A's and not how you fill out the forms or what the auditors say you have done with the money.

I believe we in the Senate will take up Straight A's in that form, or in some similar form, sometime during the winter or very early spring of the year 2000 when we deal with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. But I am delighted that we have made such progress already in the House of Representatives.

Simply to ratify some of my remarks, I want to share with my colleagues comments that we have received from across the country about this dramatic change in Federal education policy:

I am pleased to offer my support to the Academic Achievement for All Act. This proposal, if enacted into law, would serve to complement the Commonwealth of Virginia's nationally-acclaimed national education reforms.

Governor James Gilmore of Virginia.

A new relationship between the states and Washington, as reflected in Straight A's, can refocus federal policies and funds on increasing student achievement.

Governor Jeb Bush of Florida.

Straight A's would allow us to use federal funds to implement our goals while assuring taxpayers that every dollar spent on education is a dollar spent to boost children's learning.

Governor John Engler of Michigan.

I'm not a Democrat or a Republican. I'm a superintendent. And what GORTON is trying to do would be the best for our kids.

Superintendent Joseph Olchefske, Seattle public schools.

The Straight A's Act will allow those closest to the action to make decisions about education in their own local school district.

Robert Warnecke, Washington State Retired Teachers Association.

Senator GORTON's Straight A's proposals is well-conceived with great flexibility for states and districts. It would help to focus federal resources where they are most needed.

Janet Barry, Issaquah Superintendent and 1996 National Superintendent of the Year.

I look forward to the debate in the Senate on these changes with particular delight because the House of Representatives' majority has already said that this is the direction in which we ought to lead the country.

(The remarks of Mr. CRAPO pertaining to the introduction of S. 1795 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. CRAPO. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 761

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I would like to propound a unanimous consent request.

I ask unanimous consent that the majority leader, after consultation with the Democratic leader, may proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 243, S. 761, under the following limitations:

That there be 1 hour for debate equally divided in the usual form, and the only amendment in order to the bill be a manager's substitute amendment to be offered by Senators ABRAHAM, WYDEN, and LOTT.

I further ask unanimous consent that following the use or yielding back of time and the disposition of the substitute amendment, the committee substitute be agreed to, as amended, the bill be read a third time, and the Senate proceed to a vote on passage of S. 761 with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, there are a number of people on this side of the aisle who reluctantly have asked that we object to this matter with the caveat that it is very clear that there should be something worked out on this in the near future. We hope that will be the case. In the meantime, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I appreciate the perspective offered by the Senator from Nevada.

I want to acknowledge, while he is still on the floor, the continuing interest that I have in trying to work to a resolution on this issue because I think it is one, as is evidenced by the bipartisan nature of both the original bill and the proposed substitute, where there are, in fact, Members on both sides of the aisle who have an interest in proceeding in this area. So I hope we will be able to reach some kind of an agreement soon.

I have a little bit more I want to say about the legislation before we adjourn, but I thank the Senator from Nevada for his expression of a continuing interest to work together.

THE MILLENNIUM DIGITAL COMMERCE ACT

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, we originally introduced this legislation, which is entitled "The Millennium Digital Commerce Act" on March 25. I introduced it with Senators WYDEN, MCCAIN, and BURNS.

The Senate Commerce Committee held a hearing on the legislation May 27. Subsequently, the legislation passed unanimously by the Senate Commerce Committee on June 23.

President Clinton's administration indicated a statement of support. That was issued on August 4.

I think that sequence of events suggest that there is a strong degree of support for this type of legislation.

The same week the President expressed his support, we attempted to pass the bill in the Senate by unanimous consent. That was just before the August recess.

Concerns were raised by two Members of the Senate about the possible impact of this bill on consumer protection.

Since that time, we have worked to try to incorporate some of the changes and some of those considerations into the legislation to address consumer protection concerns while still providing the tremendous benefit of electronic signatures to the public which was intended by the legislation. I believe the substitute which we would propose to offer does just that.

As was the case with the legislation which passed the Senate Commerce Committee, the substitute will promote electronic commerce by providing a consistent framework for electronic signatures in transactions across all 50 States.

That framework is simply a guarantee of legal standing in each of those States. Such a guarantee will provide the certainty which today is lacking and will encourage the development and the use of electronic signature technology by both businesses and consumers.

The legislation addresses the concerns raised by the use of electronic records and electronic transactions. It will allow people to secure loans on line for the purchase of a car, home repair, or even a new mortgage by giving both companies and consumers the legal certainty they need.

However, the bill now includes safeguards to guarantee that electronic records will be provided in a form that accurately reflects the original transaction and which can be reproduced later. These safeguards are taken directly from the completed version of the Electronic Transactions Act, the ETA.

This legislation also recognizes that there are some areas of State law which should not be preempted. These are specifically spelled out and excluded in this bill. They include but are not limited to wills, codicils, matters of family law, and documents of title.

As almost anyone in this country knows who has paid the slightest degree of attention to developments in the areas of sales, or economy, or the markets, or watches their television and follows the commercials to the slightest degree, we are entering an age in which electronic commerce is rapidly serving as a substitute for traditional means of commercial activity.