

For example, the drudge benefit stops when a senior's drug expenditures are between \$4,500 and \$5,800. During that period, after seniors have spent \$4,500 on their prescription drug costs, and before they reach \$5,800, seniors would pay 100 percent of that \$1,300 in prescription drug bills. This is a major gap in coverage.

Secondly, the copayments, the deductibles, the premiums are too high and too unpredictable. The \$35 premium often quoted is not even guaranteed in the bill. Seniors will be left to the mercy of insurance companies that will decide the premiums and the benefits that will be provided. This is not in the bill. It is up to the insurance companies.

Another very important issue relates to those who already have prescription drug coverage. There is currently not enough incentive in this plan to make sure employers do not drop existing prescription drug coverage for their retirees. This is a very important issue for the retirees in Michigan.

I will continue to fight for changes in this legislation to protect those who currently have coverage, who have worked hard their whole lives, who have retired and have been fortunate enough to have good benefits and are very concerned that they not lose them, as we work to help others who do not have coverage. It makes no sense to set up a system that might actually take away benefits currently being provided to retirees through private insurance.

Furthermore, one of the most negative parts of this bill is the fact that it does not allow seniors to get their prescription drugs through the traditional Medicare system as their first choice. Under the bill passed by the Senate, seniors must pick a private prescription drug plan or enroll in a private PPO or HMO if one is available to them.

Traditional Medicare, that seniors know and depend on, is only available if private plans are not available. Does this make sense? Only if you are a pharmaceutical company or an insurance company. I believe seniors should have many choices, including the choice to stay in the Medicare Program they know and trust.

As I have said so many times before on this Senate floor, when given a choice between traditional Medicare and a Medicare HMO, 89 percent of our American seniors and persons with disabilities have chosen traditional Medicare—89 percent.

This choice is not available to them under this bill. I believe this is a major flaw that I will continue to do everything I can to correct.

During debate on this bill, I sponsored and cosponsored and supported amendments that would have corrected all of these problems. These amendments would have stopped the benefit shutdown, reduced out-of-pocket costs, protected current retiree coverage, and provided a real comprehensive Medi-

care prescription drug benefit. Regrettably, none of these important amendments received the necessary support from my Republican colleagues to pass.

When deciding how I would cast my vote on this bill, I looked at all of these things: the positive and the negative. I evaluated whether or not this was a step forward for Michigan families, for Michigan workers, for Michigan businesses and, most importantly, for our seniors who have waited too long for help to pay for their medicine.

After many hours of thoughtful review and discussions with those affected by this legislation, I voted in favor of this bill last night, not because it was the best we can do but because it is a first step in the right direction. This direction—the direction in which we need to move—is for a real, meaningful prescription drug benefit for our seniors who have waited too long for their Government to act.

We were successful in improving this bill in some ways during this debate, but much more needs to be done. There will be other opportunities to do so, and I will take them.

This bill does not take effect until 2006. So between now and then I will be fighting hard to provide seniors with the real prescription drug benefit they need and deserve, and I will continue to help lead the fight to lower prescription drug prices for everyone.

As we know, this legislation is not finished. It must now go to a conference committee, a joint committee between the Senate and the House of Representatives, where differences between the Senate and House bills will be addressed. There are critical differences between the two bills.

The House of Representatives passed, by only one vote, a bill that truly begins to unravel Medicare. The House started down the road of privatizing the health care system of senior citizens and the disabled in our country. They voted to begin the process of turning back the clock to the days when too many seniors and families could not find or afford private insurance.

If I had been in the House of Representatives last evening, where I served for 4 years, I would have voted no. If the House bill comes before the Senate as it is currently written, I will vote no. Unlike the Senate, where we worked in a bipartisan way to develop a plan that the majority of Senators could support, the House process was very partisan and polarizing, and it resulted in an extreme plan that could not be supported by my Democratic colleagues who care deeply about strengthening and preserving Medicare for the future.

Our seniors expect and deserve the best plan we can offer. I will continue to work with my colleagues to achieve that goal. And I hope and pray that we will be successful.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. DOLE). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

THE HONORABLE J. STROM THURMOND, FORMER U.S. SENATOR AND PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE EMERITUS FROM THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 191, which is at the desk, and I ask that the resolution be read.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 191) relative to the death of the Honorable J. Strom Thurmond, former United States Senator and President Pro Tempore Emeritus from the State of South Carolina.

S. RES. 191

Whereas the Honorable J. Strom Thurmond conducted his life in an exemplary manner, an example to all of his fellow citizens;

Whereas the Honorable J. Strom Thurmond was a devoted husband, father, and most recently, grandfather;

Whereas the Honorable J. Strom Thurmond gave a great measure of his life to public service;

Whereas, having abandoned the safety of high position, the Honorable J. Strom Thurmond served his country during World War II, fighting the greatest threat the world had thus far seen;

Whereas the Honorable J. Strom Thurmond served South Carolina in the United States Senate with devotion and distinction;

Whereas his service on behalf of South Carolina and all Americans earned him the esteem and high regard of his colleagues; and

Whereas his death has deprived his State and Nation of a most outstanding Senator: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of the Honorable J. Strom Thurmond, former Senator and President Pro Tempore Emeritus from the State of South Carolina.

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate communicate these resolutions to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy thereof to the family of the deceased.

Resolved, That when the Senate adjourns today, it stand adjourned as a further mark of respect to the memory of the Honorable J. Strom Thurmond.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. FRIST. Madam President, this resolution has been submitted by myself and on behalf of Senator DASCHLE, Senator GRAHAM, and Senator HOLLINGS in honor of the honorable and great J. Strom Thurmond.

Last night shortly after 9:45, we were notified of the death of Strom Thurmond. At that time, I pointed out that it was a century ago—a long time ago—when Mark Twain was alive and Teddy Roosevelt was still President, J. Strom

Thurmond was born in Edgefield, SC, and, thus, began a life of public service unmatched—unmatched—in the modern history of America.

Strom Thurmond served as United States Senator from December 1954, 2 years after I was born, until January of this year, nearly a half century of service in this body—this body we have the honor of participating in on a daily basis.

Though his period of service is a remarkable accomplishment in and of itself, Strom led a remarkable life even before coming to the Senate. Late last night and over the course of the morning, if one turned on a television set, they would hear anecdotes, stories about this great man, and those pre-Senate years when he was a teacher, an athletic coach, and a superintendent of education.

He studied law under his father, Judge J. William Thurmond, and became a city attorney, a county attorney, a State senator, and eventually a circuit court judge. He resigned his position as a circuit judge to volunteer to fight in World War II. This he did at the age of 39, 18 years after serving as an Army reservist and having earned a commission as a second lieutenant.

Indeed, as we all know, age never was an obstacle for Strom Thurmond. As a member of the 82nd Airborne, Strom landed a glider at Normandy on D-Day and helped secure the foothold for the Allies to liberate the European continent.

For his distinguished service, Strom was awarded five battle stars and 18 other decorations, including the Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star for Valor, the Belgian Order of the Crown, and the French Cross of War. No wonder when a speech writer once used the word “afraid,” Strom Thurmond handed the text back with the retort:

I've never been afraid of anything.

After the war, Strom returned home to South Carolina. He was elected Governor in 1946, and then ran for President of the United States as the States Rights Democratic candidate. Strom won four States and 39 electoral votes, and that tally stands as the third largest independent electoral vote in U.S. history.

Though he did not win the Presidency, Strom was determined to serve in Washington. He ran for the Senate in 1954, became the only candidate elected to Congress by a write-in vote in American history, and he was re-elected eight more times.

In the most recent years, it became increasingly difficult for Strom to go back and forth to South Carolina, but that did not stop the people of South Carolina from coming to him, and it should not have. For decades, Strom attended every county fair, handled every constituent request, and sent a congratulatory note to every high school graduate, many of whom came to intern in his office. It has been said that almost 70 percent of South Caro-

linians have met Strom Thurmond face to face. Over the course of his long and distinguished career, Strom Thurmond was a witness to history.

As a young man, he knew people who stood in the presence of Andrew Jackson. He campaigned for the votes of men who fought in the Civil War. He and Herbert Hoover won their first elective office in the same year, 1928.

Strom more than saw history, he wrote it. He was the first major southern Democrat to switch to the Republican Party. He served for more than 17 years as President pro tempore of the Senate. As chairman of the Armed Services Committee, he ensured that our men and women of the Armed Forces had the best training, the best equipment, and the best leadership in the world.

As we all know, Strom did set the record for the oldest and longest serving Senator. He served with about one-fifth of the nearly 2,000 men and women who have been Members of the Senate since 1789. He was nearly one-half the age of the U.S. Constitution. Strom certainly faced his trials. As the Dixiecrat candidate for President in 1948, he campaigned on a platform of States rights, but in doing so he also opposed civil rights, as he did for many years as a Senator.

History will reflect that part of Strom's life. We will let history also reflect that when Strom saw that America had changed, and changed for the better, he changed, too.

A longtime friend of Senator Thurmond's, Hortense Woodson, once said of him:

Everything he's done has been done to the full. There's no halfway doings about Strom.

Indeed, Strom Thurmond will forever be a symbol of what one person can accomplish when they live life to the fullest. God bless our friend and our colleague from South Carolina, Senator Strom Thurmond.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM of South Carolina. Madam President, I compliment our majority leader for his statement. It was very eloquent and it means a lot to Senator Thurmond's family.

I know personally that Senator Thurmond had a great fondness for Senator FRIST. He told me he is a very smart man and he is a good doctor, too. If you ever need him, look him up.

I rise today in support of this resolution on behalf of myself and Senator HOLLINGS. I appreciate the majority leader and Senator DASCHLE allowing this to occur. It is offered in the spirit of Strom Thurmond's life. Something can be said about Strom Thurmond in the Senate very easily. He loved the Senate and the Senate loved him. His colleagues who have served with him so long all have personal stories of fun, good times, tough fights. He was a valuable ally and a worthy opponent, and the Senate has lost its longest serving Member. Many of us have lost a very dear friend. That goes for the Senate

family, the people who help us with the doors, the clerks, and the reporters of debates. Everyone enjoyed and appreciated Senator Thurmond.

It is important to comment on Senator Thurmond, the man. His children have lost their father. Whether one is 100 or 200, it is always difficult, no matter how long one lives, to give up their father and mother.

I have talked to two of his three children today, and I have expressed my condolences. They are doing very well but they are sad because they have lost their daddy. I have talked with his wife. We reminisced about their life together, the raising of their children, and the experiences they have had. So my prayers, along with the prayers of everyone in the Senate, go to the family. He was a good family man. If a script was written in Hollywood about his life, it would not have ended any better in this regard.

He became a first-time grandfather at the age of 100 last week. He has three children under 30. He had his first child when he was 68. He was just a phenomenal person. He has done things that most of us could not dream of doing in many ways.

I am convinced that two things drove him in his final years: That he wanted to finish out his term because he is not a quitter, and when he was elected to serve his last 6-year term he meant to serve it out. He helped me to become his successor, and I will be forever grateful. He also wanted to see his grandchild born, and God allowed him to do that. He was presented his grandson last week. They tell me it was a very magic and touching moment. A week later, he passed on.

He has suffered personal tragedy, lost a daughter in an accident. He has experienced much good and bad in his life. He has touched so many people. It is a loss to the Senate. It is a loss to his family. It is a loss to his staff.

Duke Short, who served with Senator Thurmond in Washington for so many years, was a very loyal and capable staff director. I know that Duke and his family feel the loss.

Dr. Abernathy in South Carolina has been with Strom Thurmond since the 1940s when he worked with him as Governor. Dr. Abernathy is a legend in his own right.

There are so many people who have worked for Senator Thurmond throughout the years, and I know they feel this loss. Senator Thurmond has had enough interns to probably fill up a football stadium. His first group of interns are now on Social Security.

He was elected in 1954. I was born in 1955. All I have known in my life is Senator Thurmond, and for 36 years Senator Thurmond and Senator HOLLINGS served together. Both of them are distinctive gentlemen, bigger than life. A lot of us who have associated with Senator Thurmond feel his loss.

South Carolina has lost her favorite son. Much has been said and will be said of Senator Thurmond's legacy.

The majority leader, Senator FRIST, went over his life very well, and it is just an amazing story to tell: Being a superintendent of education in the 1920s; getting elected for the first time in 1928; being a judge in South Carolina at the start of World War II, deciding to give up that job which would have exempted him from service, being in his early forties; joined the 82nd Airborne, landing in a glider. The pilot of the glider was killed when it landed. His men were wounded. He led them out and secured the objective.

When the war in Europe was over, he volunteered to go to Japan and he fought until they quit. He was just an unbelievable person who embraced life.

People ask me: How did he make it so long? He just had a passion. He had a passion for everything he did—his family, his constituents. His legacy in South Carolina is quite simple for every South Carolinian—black, white, rich, poor, no matter whether you are from upstate, middle, low State—I am sure every State has different regions and different dialects but the one thing we had in common: If we had a problem, we knew who to call. We knew to pick up the phone and call Senator Thurmond because if he could help you, he would.

The average, everyday South Carolinian, from the company owner to the janitor, believed that Senator Thurmond was on their side. And when they called, they received a call back. When they wrote a letter, they received a letter back. The reason I know that is people tell me everywhere I go.

One guy told me Senator Thurmond used to cut his grass. These stories abound. Some of them have been embellished, I am sure, but the only way that he could have lasted this long in politics, doing as many things as he has done, taking on the issues that he has taken on, is that at the end of the day people saw that he had a servant's heart.

Part of his legacy is the 1948 campaign, and it needs to be mentioned. Senator FRIST mentioned it. That was a tough time in our country. He ran as a States rights candidate with a lot of passion for the limited role of the Federal Government. He won on the platform that divided the races. That was a dark time in South Carolina. That was a dark time in our Nation.

Senator Thurmond made a choice later in life. He could have done almost anything he wanted. But as the 1950s came to a close and the 1960s came about and people started insisting their Government treat them better, Senator Thurmond made a choice. Instead of hanging on to the rhetoric of the past and the politics of the past, he embraced the future.

Here is what he does not get much credit for. Instead of going with the flow, which some people want to ascribe to him, he in a subtle way led a change. He could have been a barrier to change, but he made it easy for people in South Carolina, politicians on the

Democratic and Republican sides, to embrace change because when Strom came out for something, it made it easier for you to come out for something because it gave you cover. When Strom Thurmond appointed the first African-American judge in the history of South Carolina to the Federal bench, it made it easier for the people in the statehouse to give appointments to African Americans. That is what we do not need to lose.

When he embraced traditional Black colleges and started giving them the same recognition and funding as every other university in South Carolina, it made it easier for the legislature to improve the quality of life for everybody. At the end of his life, in 2001, he was awarded lifetime recognition from the Urban League in South Carolina, that is designed to build racial harmony, for his lifetime of service to traditionally African-American colleges.

That needs to be mentioned as much as the 1948 campaign. He will be held accountable in history for that part of his life. History should know that in many subtle ways, in many bold ways, he allowed my State to move forward, and everybody in my State is better off for it.

From a personal point, when I was in the House, I was the first Republican to be elected from my Third Congressional District in 120 years. One reason I was able to win when everybody behind me was beaten for 120 years was, Senator Thurmond, for the first time in his political career, embraced a campaign very directly—because he had been smart enough not to get involved in political races and try to represent everybody. He took to me, and I am the beneficiary of that. He said: I will come and campaign for you, Lindsey. I said: Great. And I turned to my staff and said: What do you do with a 92-year-old man? I was worried we would wear him out and we could not utilize his services. I was worried about him at age 92. Three days he campaigned for me. When he left, I said: Thank God he is gone. He wore me out.

He had a passion I had never seen. I picked him up at the airport on day 1, in an airplane flown by his personal pilot who was 75 years old, a single-engine plane. We went to a parade in September. It is hot in South Carolina in September. We went from one end of town to the other shaking hands. We went to the funeral home because he remembered the guy who owned the funeral home always gave him apples. He walked in unannounced because the Senator wanted apples, and he got the apples. He campaigned all day. We had a fundraiser that night. We went to a football game that night. He made a speech at half time. We went to a rodeo that started at 9 o'clock at night, and he got up in the middle of the ring on a barrel and gave a speech. He wanted to see the third shift change at the textile plant. I said: I am too tired, and I went home. That went on for 3 days.

When he left, I asked him to sign a fundraising letter for me. We were all

worn out. He looked at the letter and he said you misspelled your own name and you are in the Third District, not the Second District.

At 92 years of age, he had a passion and he helped me. I stand appreciative. When I ran for the Senate, he endorsed me in a primary. I can tell you, I would not be his successor if he had not come out and said: LINDSEY GRAHAM is the right guy to follow me. That will stick with me forever.

What have I learned from Senator Thurmond? If you are willing to change, you can serve your State and Nation well. If you care about people, they will take care of you. Let it be said that God gave to this Nation, my State, South Carolina, a public servant, a man of great character and heart, and that we miss him, but we thank God that he gave us J. Strom Thurmond.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. BENNETT. Madam President, I enjoyed hearing my colleague from South Carolina tell his stories about Strom Thurmond. I rise to join the tribute to the memory of Strom Thurmond that is, very appropriately, the day after his death.

Most of the time when someone dies, we gather in great sorrow and we mourn his passing and we think about what might have been. In Strom's case, there is no reason to think about what might have been. He did it all. There was nothing left undone. There was nothing left to accomplish.

This should not be a time of mourning or sorrow but a time of celebration. So I rise to celebrate the life of Strom Thurmond. The best way to do that, I think, is to tell Strom Thurmond stories. All of us are full of Strom Thurmond stories.

I remember D-Day, when the big celebration occurred on the anniversary of D-Day and Strom Thurmond was not there. ARLEN SPECTER, who was there, greeted him in the Senate and said: Strom, it was a marvelous, marvelous celebration, and you should have been there. And his response was: I was there when it counted. It put us in our place.

My father had the experience of working with Strom Thurmond. My father was elected in 1950, and, as has been noted, Strom Thurmond was elected in 1954. They became instant friends, not just political friends. There were occasions when they disagreed politically, but they became personal friends.

When Strom married, my mother—old enough to be Strom's wife's mother—kind of took Nancy under her wing and they became friends. The Thurmonds and the Bennetts remained close for a long, long time, to the point when my children started getting married, my parents said: You have to send Strom Thurmond an announcement. And we did and thought we had taken care of our social obligation. Then we

get a phone call from Strom Thurmond's office: We got this announcement, and we don't mean to be prying, but who are you? Well, we are the children of Wallace Bennett. There was a pause. Then the person on the end of the line said: And who's Wallace Bennett?

But Strom knew who Wallace Bennett was, and when I came to the Senate, Strom greeted me very warmly and called me Wallace. It took a little while for him to figure out that I was not my father. And that was a compliment to me because I was very proud of my father and the service he performed in the Senate, and I took the opportunity to touch base with Strom.

From that, I thought: This man in his nineties is not all that sharp. He confuses me. He does not have all of this as straight as he might. Then I had a couple of experiences that set me straight. We had an issue with the State of Utah that was all wrapped up in the Armed Services Committee. It was quite a complicated issue. Someone said to me: Explain that to JOHN WARNER because JOHN WARNER is second ranking to Strom and is handling all of the detailed kind of things. You go talk to JOHN WARNER. He said: You will be talking to somebody who I know can handle the problem.

So I went to Senator WARNER and I started outlining the details of this situation to him. He cut me off. He said: You are going to have to talk to the chairman.

I, having had this image of this old man, thought, I don't really want to have to talk to the chairman. And, as delicately as I could, I said to JOHN: Can't we work this through and kind of handle it? He said no. He said: That is a serious enough issue, I don't dare handle that. You are going to have to talk to the chairman.

Just then, Senator Thurmond walked through the doors. So, gathering up my courage as a freshman Senator, I walked over to him and said: Senator Thurmond, I would like to visit with you about—and I no sooner got the title of the issue out of my mouth, than he said: It's all taken care of. And he kept walking. I followed him along, sure that he had not understood what I was talking about. This was a complicated kind of issue, and he had oversimplified it and assumed that it had been taken care of.

So I started to intrude again with some of the details. He was very respectful and wasn't patronizing. But he said: I know; I understand; all taken care of.

Well, thus dismissed, I went back to my staff and said: I think we have a problem here. Senator WARNER won't handle it, and he insists that Senator Thurmond has to handle it, and Senator Thurmond just said it has all been taken care of.

We contacted the Armed Services Committee staff, and they said: Oh, yes, that has all been dealt with. Senator Thurmond stepped in, he under-

stood the issue, he made his decisions, he took care of it, and it is all taken care of.

So I decided, well, I had better not underestimate this man, in spite of his age.

Then I had the experience while I was on the campaign plane with Senator Dole in the 1996 election when we were flying around the eastern States on the day of the South Carolina primaries. The word came in that Senator Dole was winning the South Carolina primary. We had some exit polls that looked pretty good. We decided to change our itinerary and fly to South Carolina so that Senator Dole could be there to receive the plaudits and applause and the excitement of winning the South Carolina primary. So we did. Of course, this had been a long day. We didn't leave South Carolina to come back to Washington on the campaign plane until after the returns were in and all of the celebrations had been held.

Senator Dole, very appropriately, went up into the front part of the plane to take a nap as we were flying back. Senator Thurmond had hitched a ride back to Washington on the campaign plane. That left Senator Thurmond and me and one or two others sitting around the table just behind the front part of the plane chatting.

It was now midnight, way past my bedtime, and here we were having political discussions on a campaign plane in the middle of the Presidential campaign—the kind of thing that political junkies like me love to do. It was a great discussion. But the interesting thing about it was that Strom Thurmond not only understood the discussion and participated in the discussion, but he led the discussion. He was instructing us about political lore. He was telling tales out of his past, which is what old people often do. But he was also analyzing things for the future and had a firm hand on everything. I thought I was talking to a man at least 20 and maybe 30 years younger than his chronological age. I understood: OK, this man still has all of his faculties, mental as well as physical.

We landed at Dulles Airport well after 1 o'clock in the morning. Everybody was dragging except Strom, who strode off to his car in fine style. I remember what he said on that occasion about how you live a long time. He said you eat right, you exercise regularly, and you keep a positive outlook. He did all of those things, although I am not quite sure about the eating right part because there were times when I caught Strom eating some things that I am not sure a dietician would recommend.

The time came for him to run for reelection. I couldn't believe at 94 he was going to run for reelection. Ninety-four is the time you retire. Being a skeptic, I had a hard time believing the people of South Carolina would vote for a 94-year-old man. So I sidled up to one of his top staffers as we were getting

ready for that campaign. I said: Can Strom Thurmond really win one more time in South Carolina? Is this going to be close? He said: No, it is not going to be close at all. Strom is going to win going away.

By the way, I remembered when the Republicans had taken control of the Senate in 1994 and we were having our discussions about platforms. One of the issues that was raised by one of the freshman Senators newly elected was term limits and how we needed to be for term limits. We were debating back and forth. Strom was sitting there not talking. Suddenly, he spoke up, and he said: I am for term limits. We all kind of giggled a little. He said: But if they are not enacted, I am going to run again.

Here he was running again—94 years old. And I was being told by his staff that Strom would win overwhelmingly. I said: Look, we all love him. We all love the history. But 94 years old? He said: Let me tell you a story.

This is my favorite Strom Thurmond story.

He said: I was Strom's AA, and I got a phone call from a woman in South Carolina who said to me: I need the Senator's help. Here is the situation. My fiance and I got married just before he shipped out in the Navy for a 6-month cruise in the Mediterranean. We knew we would not like the separation, but we decided, for a variety of reasons, that we should get married now rather than wait until after he got back. He has just called me and said he has been given leave. He has 2 weeks of leave right now in the middle of this 6-month tour, except that he cannot leave the theater in case something should arise that would require him to be back on the ship within 24 hours. He has to stay in or around the Mediterranean area where his ship is. So he said catch an airplane, come over here, we can have a 2-week honeymoon in the Mediterranean and I can still be available for the military situation, if it should arise.

She said: I went down to get my passport and I was told it takes 2 weeks to get a passport. By the time I get a passport to fly over to be with my husband, his leave will be up and he will have to get back on the ship. Can the Senator help me get a passport any faster than 2 weeks?

Well, said the staffer, I will find out. He called the woman in South Carolina who was handling passports and introduced himself and said: I am calling on behalf of Senator Thurmond to see what we can do about getting this woman's passport a little faster. The passport lady said: It takes 2 weeks. Well, Senator Thurmond would really be grateful. She said: I don't care what Senator Thurmond wants. It takes 2 weeks. I don't care who you are, and I don't care who he is. Passports take 2 weeks.

Well, he said, I have to tell you that under these circumstances, I am now going to have to call Senator Thurmond. When there is a situation I can't

handle myself, I have to involve him. Those are my instructions. She said: Call him. Tell him anything you want. He can call me. I don't care. Passports take 2 weeks.

So he said: Well, I am not threatening you. I am just telling you. I have to call Senator Thurmond.

So he hung up talking to the passport lady, and he picked up the phone and called Senator Thurmond. Now, it seems Senator Thurmond was in Germany, and it was in the middle of the night in Germany, but his instructions were that he was to call Senator Thurmond in any such situation. So he woke Senator Thurmond up, in the middle of the night in Germany, and started to explain this situation.

He did not get half way through the explanation I have given here when Senator Thurmond said: What is her name?

He said: Well, her name is—and he started to describe the wife of the marine who was sent out with the Navy.

Senator Thurmond said: No, no, no, not her name, the passport lady's name.

So he gave Senator Thurmond the passport lady's name.

Senator Thurmond said: Thank you very much—and hung up.

Ten minutes later the staffer said: I got a phone call from the passport lady. She exploded over the phone and said: He called George Shultz. The Secretary of State now knows my name.

Senator Thurmond called George Shultz and he said: George, you've been a marine. This is their honeymoon. Can't you get this lady to give the woman a passport?

She got her passport. She got to the Mediterranean. She had her honeymoon.

The staffer said to me: Senator, South Carolina is full of stories like that. South Carolina is full of people like that. Strom Thurmond will win, big time. No matter how old he is, no matter what his situation, that is the kind of service Strom Thurmond has rendered as a Senator.

One of our colleagues was in the Senate doctor's office, as we go in there from time to time, and he noticed Strom coming out of the doctor's office with a very worried look on his face. We were all very concerned about Strom and his health in his later years. So the colleague said to the doctor: What's the matter with Strom?

The doctor said, appropriately: I cannot discuss the medical condition of one patient with another patient, so I can't say anything to you. He said: However, I don't think it would be violating medical ethics to tell you that Strom is a little worried about the fact that he can no longer do one-arm push-ups.

This was a man of legend. Eat right, exercise, keep a positive attitude, always be available for your constituents, even when it is the middle of the night in Germany, and never worry about who you may call or upset as long as you are working on behalf of a

constituent. This was Strom Thurmond.

We have all kinds of stories. These are my favorite ones. I offer them as part of the celebration of an extraordinary life, a life fully lived, of someone about whom we need not say: Well, we worry about what might have been. In his case, there was nothing left over that might have been because he did it all.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CORNYN). The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM of South Carolina. Mr. President, I thank Senator BENNETT from Utah for that remembrance. It was just exactly what needed to be said. I say to the Senator, I know he loved you and your father dearly. On behalf of the people of South Carolina, I thank you very much for what you just said.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 191) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

Mr. GRAHAM of South Carolina. 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. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

LEGISLATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, most of our colleagues are departing, and we will shortly, in just a bit, for a recess which, as all of us know, is a time for visiting with our constituents, visiting around the country with people who give us the opportunity to serve in the Senate and interact with them in a way that we can ask questions. How are we doing? You elected us to fulfill a vision that you have had and which we are doing our best to lead with. So it gives us an opportunity to really sit back and assess how we are doing as public servants, as Senators representing our own States.

As I look back over the last week, it has truly been an exciting week for America. After years of discussion, after years of debate, we passed a bill this morning, in the middle of the night, late last night after midnight, that we know, once we work through conference, and once it is signed by the President of the United States, will strengthen Medicare, will improve Medicare, will modernize Medicare in a way that we simply never have since the origin of Medicare in the mid-1960s.

We know from this legislation that we developed in a bipartisan way, that

for the first time in this program and, indeed, in the history of the country, seniors, through the Medicare Program, will have access to prescription drugs. They will have for the first time the option to choose health care coverage that best suits their individual needs. It is all voluntary. They don't have to take advantage of any of these new options that they will have. Their health care coverage will be responsive not only to them, the way this program is designed, but to the constant advances in health care delivery and new medicines and new technology that we know characterize health care today but will even more so characterize health care in the years to come. It will be able to capture those lifesaving innovations of modern medicine.

Best of all—I keep mentioning it—I am very pleased with the way this bill came to the Senate floor, was debated, and in committee prior to that because it really was a bipartisan effort. Many times, especially when the American people look at the way we operate here, they say: That extreme partisanship and that rhetoric going back and forth; how in the world does any business get done?

This particular legislation, probably as complicated as any legislation that would be on this floor—and clearly it is big; this is the largest single expansion of an entitlement program in the last 30 years—was carried out in a way that debate took place in a civil fashion and people came together, not always agreeing, as we saw last night and early this morning, on every single issue, but we tackled the issues head on, something our seniors deserve, something the American people expect. And we delivered a bill that reflects the needs and priorities of both sides of the aisle.

Not everybody is perfectly happy with it. We know it is not perfect. But it is as good as can be generated from this body at this point in time.

That is sort of the last week, the last couple weeks. Over the last 6 months, as leadership in the Senate, we have tried to lead this body in a way that is very much mission focused, that is very much building on relationships, centered on different relationships on both sides of the aisle in a way that values are important—the values of civility and trust, and with a real action orientation, looking for solutions to problems, not just talking about them, not just legislating for legislation's sake but actually delivering where problems are identified.

So if you look at being mission focused and relationship centered and values based and action oriented, that is what you set out to do. Then it provides a good opportunity, now as we go into this recess about 6 months into the year, to see what sort of job we are delivering for the American people.

Again, I mentioned the bill last night because I think it fits all four of those