

their amendment, with a short time agreement. They are not delaying. It is the other side which is preventing them from having a vote.

We on this side of the aisle do not wish to delay this bill. We are willing to work to get a finite list of amendments. We are willing to enter into a time agreement on amendments. We are not asking for anything out of the ordinary.

I remind my colleagues that during the 13-day period for which the Senate considered the basic bill, the 1995 welfare bill, September 7 to September 19 of 1995, the Senate conducted 43 rollcall votes on amendments. So far this year we have conducted one, and yet there is a cloture motion to try to stop debate. That is not the way to legislate. We are not asking for anything out of the ordinary. We merely ask that Senators be able to offer amendments and get votes on their amendments.

We have time agreements, we have lists, and so forth. That is what this debate is about. I urge my colleagues to uphold the rights of Senators. I urge Senators to vote to increase the minimum wage. I urge Senators to oppose cloture.

How much time does each side have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Ten seconds.

Mr. BAUCUS. I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I reiterate that we are perfectly willing to give up-or-down votes for a chance to pass this bill. I have asked unanimous consent and the other side has said no.

I have heard so much about everyone having a right to get up-or-down votes. We have had a debate on the floor of the Senate for a year and a half about up-or-down votes on Federal judges. So maybe we can exchange up-or-down votes.

I ask unanimous consent that we have an up-or-down vote on the Boxer-Kennedy amendment, followed by a vote on a McConnell relevant amendment dealing with minimum wage, in exchange for a vote on Calendar No. 169, Carolyn Kuhl, of California, to be a judge on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, and Calendar No. 455, Janice Rogers Brown to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BAUCUS. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. SANTORUM. So we understand up-or-down votes only apply to their amendments and the things they want to do, not what Republicans want to do.

We need closure and we are not getting it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, the clerk will call the roll.

The assistant journal clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

SENATOR BYRD'S 17,000TH VOTE

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I would inform my colleagues that with this vote we will witness history. Senator BYRD will have cast his 17,000th vote. No Senator in all of history will have done that. I will have more to say about that after the vote.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, pursuant to rule XXII, the clerk will report the motion to invoke cloture.

The assistant journal clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the substitute amendment to Calendar No. 305, H.R. 4, an act to reauthorize and improve the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families, improve access to quality child care, and for other purposes.

Bill Frist, Charles E. Grassley, John E. Sununu, Conrad Burns, Lamar Alexander, Peter G. Fitzgerald, Larry E. Craig, John Cornyn, Robert F. Bennett, John Ensign, Orrin G. Hatch, Mike Enzi, Mitch McConnell, Ted Stevens, Norm Coleman, James M. Inhofe, Kay Bailey Hutchison.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the pending committee substitute amendment to H.R. 4, an act to reauthorize and improve the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families, improve access to quality childcare, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I announce that the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) is necessarily absent.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) is necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) would vote "nay."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 51, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 65 Leg.]

YEAS—51

Alexander	DeWine	McCain
Allard	Dole	McConnell
Allen	Domenici	Miller
Bennett	Ensign	Nickles
Bond	Enzi	Roberts
Brownback	Fitzgerald	Santorum
Bunning	Frist	Sessions
Burns	Graham (SC)	Shelby
Campbell	Grassley	Smith
Chafee	Gregg	Snowe
Chambliss	Hagel	Specter
Cochran	Hatch	Stevens
Coleman	Hutchison	Sununu
Collins	Inhofe	Talent
Cornyn	Kyl	Thomas
Craig	Lott	Voinovich
Crapo	Lugar	Warner

NAYS—47

Akaka	Dorgan	Levin
Baucus	Durbin	Lieberman
Bayh	Edwards	Lincoln
Biden	Feingold	Mikulski
Bingaman	Feinstein	Murray
Boxer	Graham (FL)	Nelson (FL)
Breaux	Harkin	Nelson (NE)
Byrd	Hollings	Pryor
Cantwell	Inouye	Reed
Carper	Jeffords	Reid
Clinton	Johnson	Rockefeller
Conrad	Kennedy	Sarbanes
Corzine	Kohl	Schumer
Daschle	Landrieu	Stabenow
Dayton	Lautenberg	Wyden
Dodd	Leahy	

NOT VOTING—2

Kerry
Murkowski

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 51, the nays are 47. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

Mr. FRIST. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. DASCHLE. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD ON CASTING HIS 17,000TH VOTE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to remark on a truly historic moment that just took place about 15 seconds ago, a moment we all witnessed which is special in United States history in a way we will shortly lay out.

Senator ROBERT BYRD is already recognized as an American icon. In 1917, he began life as a virtual orphan. His mom passed away when he was a year old. His aunt and uncle brought him to West Virginia to raise him on their own.

Hard working, enterprising, ROBERT BYRD made the most of every single opportunity along the way and rose to become the third longest serving Member of Congress in U.S. history.

Among his many distinctions, Senator BYRD has held more leadership positions in this body, the U.S. Senate, than any other Senator in American history.

Over the course of eight consecutive terms, Senator BYRD has cast more votes than any other Senator in the

history of the Republic. Today, just a couple minutes ago, Senator BYRD cast his 17,000th vote in this Chamber. I applaud Senator BYRD for his commitment to public service. This vote is truly a milestone in his career and the history of the U.S. Senate.

Without question, when history is written, Senator BYRD will hold a prominent place as a Senate legend.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I join the majority leader and all the Members of our body in congratulating Senator BYRD on reaching this historic milestone. I thank him for his half century of service to the U.S. Congress. Seventeen thousand votes is an astonishing number. It is even more astonishing when you consider that Senator BYRD has now cast 652 more votes than the first runner-up, Senator Thurmond. He has served 2 years less than Senator Thurmond.

Here is another remarkable statistic: In the last 45 years in the Senate, ROBERT BYRD has voted on 98.72 percent of the questions put before this body. He has missed only about 1 percent of all votes cast over 45 years—the second highest percentage of all Senators who have cast 10,000 votes or more.

From July 25, 1984, through September 17, 1997—a period of more than 13 years—Senator BYRD did not miss one single vote. He cast 4,705 consecutive votes—the second highest consecutive vote total in Senate history. Of the 11,708 persons who have ever served in the U.S. Congress, only two have served longer than ROBERT C. BYRD. But what makes Senator BYRD's vote totals and voting percentages even more remarkable are some of the other achievements Senator BYRD has recorded over these last 45 years.

He is the first person ever to start and finish a law degree while serving in Congress. It took him 10 years. He graduated from American University Law School in 1963. President Kennedy was his commencement speaker.

In 1994, he fulfilled a lifelong ambition. He finally received his bachelor's degree from Marshall University *summa cum laude*—the first person in his family ever to go to college.

There are two reasons Senator BYRD has reached this historic 17,000-vote milestone. First, ROBERT C. BYRD believes, in his bones, if you have a job to do, you do it. He is a coal miner's son who has worked hard all of his life. He got his first job when he was 7, selling the Cincinnati Post. He has been a produce boy, a gas station attendant, a head butcher, and the owner of a small grocery store. He is a man who believes in earning his pay, who knows how it feels to fall asleep at night exhausted but proud for having met his responsibilities for 1 more day.

The other reason Senator BYRD has reached this milestone is because of his great love of West Virginia, of this Nation, and of the Senate.

Of course, the greatest love in Senator BYRD's life is his wife Erma. For

the last 3 years, Mrs. Byrd's delicate health, and Senator BYRD's desire to be with her as much as possible, to support her, has made it even more difficult for Senator BYRD to answer every rollcall vote. Yet he has continued to do so.

We are privileged to work with him.

On this historic occasion, we congratulate him. And we thank ROBERT and Erma BYRD for all they have given this Senate and our Nation.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

Mr. BYRD. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, 17,000 votes ago, I achieved a dream. I stood on the floor of the U.S. Senate and prepared to cast my first vote as a Senator from the Mountain State of West Virginia. Seventeen thousand votes later, I still feel much the same. It is a great honor, a great privilege to serve the people in the Senate.

Ours is a glorious country. Its people are wise. They are brave. They are hard-working and fairminded.

Once it was possible for a poor young man with no important connections, with no PR firm behind him, with no fundraising apparatus racing at full tilt, to simply go out to the people, carrying his fiddle and having a mind full of poetry, and on the strength of his energy and his convictions, to be elected to the greatest deliberative body the world has ever known.

That time is light-years away from today's reality. Too often now in America it is the size of the pocketbook that elects public officials. I regret that change. It keeps people out of public service instead of welcoming them into public service.

This Senate is the forum which exists to welcome and to protect the airing of all points of view. Both sides of the aisle need to work together to ensure that the Senate will stay true to its constitutional purpose. We swear an oath before God and man to support and defend this Constitution. Many times I have sworn that oath before God and man to support the Constitution of the United States.

I have had a good run in this wonderful institution. And like Majorian, who, when he became Emperor of the Roman Empire in 457 AD said, "I still glory in the name of Senator."

My patient and devoted wife Erma, with whom I will celebrate a 67-year-long partnership 58 days from now, the Lord willing, deserves much of the credit for that good run. I also thank my talented staff for their tireless work and dedication.

No man is an island, and I have had the good fortune to have many steadfast friends and supporters over the years. To the people of West Virginia, I owe my everlasting gratitude. They have expressed their faith in me time and time again. I am proud to be their Senator, and I hope to continue to serve for a long while.

I thank my colleagues. They have been patient. They have known my

shortcomings. I have said things from time to time that I regretted. We are all human. But my colleagues have been considerate of me, and I thank them.

Pericles, the brilliant Athenian statesman, gave mankind one of the greatest funeral orations ever made. This address was delivered in 431 BC as a memorial to the first Athenian soldier who fell in the Peloponnesian War. In this address, Pericles said:

It is greatness of soul alone that never grows old, nor is it wealth that delights in the latter stage of life as some give out, so much as honor.

And so it is honor itself that never grows old. I thank my colleagues for the honor they show today.

Finally, but most of all from Chronicles, 29th chapter, verses 11 and 12:

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.

Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, the Senator from West Virginia honors us all with that last statement he made.

Over the years I have been here, it has been my privilege to travel with the Senator from West Virginia to many events. I want to recall one for the Senate that I am sure the Senator will remember.

We were in West Virginia with the British American Parliamentary Conference. One of our guests from Britain made the mistake of saying it was too bad that their American cousins did not know anything about British history.

My colleague was the host that evening. And making a closing statement for that dinner, Senator BYRD decided to show our British cousins his wealth of knowledge about the history of Britain and proceeded to name every monarch, every spouse, every person who had a personal relationship with every monarch, and a complete history of the monarchy of Great Britain.

Needless to say, when he finished, which was quite a few minutes later, the British stood and applauded politely, and we have never heard such a comment again from our British cousins. There have been many other occasions we have had together.

I wanted to say that one of the great joys of serving in the Senate is my being able to get to know my friend from West Virginia. We have had our disagreements, but that is natural because this aisle separates us once in a while. But nothing has separated ROBERT BYRD from each Senator in the Senate. He has been the most agreeable Senator, on a personal basis, that I have known in the Senate. I think every Senator will say the same thing.

He always has a smile. He always increases that smile if we remember to ask about Erma.

Mr. President, I join in the applause, but I think the Senate itself has been honored today to witness this historic mark in his career.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wanted to say that last night I had the pleasure of going to the Smithsonian Institution and meeting members of the Baseball Hall of Fame. There were people there who were, to me—as a young boy, I wanted to be a baseball player and always listened to the game of the day. There were people there, including Gaylord Perry, Dave Winfield, Joe Morgan, Sandy Koufax, Stan Musial.

I have to say to my friend from West Virginia, as great an experience as that was for me visiting with those great athletes of yesteryear, that pales in comparison to the experiences I have had while serving with the “Babe Ruth” of the U.S. Senate.

When I was elected to this leadership job, Senator BYRD supported me. I wrote him a letter—and I am confident he remembers that like he does everything else—and I said I believed he was the Babe Ruth of the U.S. Senate. When I say that, he is a member of the hall of fame, of course, but the Babe Ruth in the Baseball Hall of Fame stands above all the rest. In the Senate, Senator ROBERT BYRD stands above all of us. I have a degree in history and I know something about it. I know we have great Senators here, but I have had the opportunity to serve with the greatest.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I rise for a moment to add my voice to those who praise Senator ROBERT C. BYRD. I think what every public servant deserves, and occasionally gets, is a recognition that his or her service is in fact profoundly appreciated. That is usually not the case. The American people are not as aware of what goes on in these Halls, or even in their own legislative halls, as they ought to be.

But I take special happiness out of this day for Senator BYRD because he has accomplished something that nobody else has with his 17,000th vote. He rose to cast his vote, as he always does. When somebody comes to greet him, argue with him, plead with him, and he is at his seat, he always rises, be that a man or a woman. He has brought, in my judgment, not only a tautness to the debates that we have in this Chamber, not always agreeing with the majority or with the minority, but he knows his mind and he knows his soul, and he knows his God. He does not deviate from that and he cares not who appreciates that or who doesn't.

In other words, Senator BYRD is a man who, over the years, through the crucible of tough experiences and steadfast devotion not only to his God but also to the great figure who is not

here today, who is so much part of his life and who brings out even in saying her name a great emotion in me, and that is his absolutely wonderful, wonderful wife Erma, honors us by his service.

I was with him earlier this morning as he was talking to schoolteachers from all over the United States who are trying to get their students to write better. It is called the “writers project,” which he has been instrumental in doing. He talked to them of public service and the need for accuracy and being fair. What he was really saying is that doing something in your life which is not only important but which you give yourself to profoundly, completely, an utter devotion to duty, is what separates the great and the near great.

I am very proud to serve with Senator BYRD. We have served together for 20 years now and have known each other for close to 40 years. Our wives are good friends; we are good friends. I sit behind him in the seat that Senator Moynihan used to occupy. I enjoy seeing people coming up to him and making their case, which talks not only of his courtesy, because he is so often on the floor, but also of his power to get things done, which then makes me say that there is no possible way to describe, from the point of view of the Senators in my State of West Virginia, what he has meant, does mean, and will mean for that State.

West Virginia is a State that has always had to struggle. We have always had to keep pushing the rock uphill, not daring to take one hand off for fear that the rock may roll back over the top of us. It takes a tough person and a moral person and a determined person to fight the battles that are needed to be won for our people in West Virginia. That comes to Senator BYRD instinctively.

I am so proud of this day because I cannot help but feel that when Senator BYRD goes to bed tonight, he will have a strong and profound sense of satisfaction—not that he needs to feel that, but that will make me feel better if he does feel that, because he serves our State and our Nation as few people have in the history of our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I join with our colleagues and just tell Senator BYRD what a mentor he has been to the newer Members of the Senate. There are moments and experiences here that one never, never will forget. I will never forget the first time, with somewhat trembling knees, I rose to give my first speech. In the course of that speech, I happened to mention it was my maiden speech in the Senate.

Of course, I was speaking to an empty Chamber, except for the Presiding Officer. All of a sudden, the doors swing open and in strides Senator BYRD. As I finished my remarks, Senator BYRD rose to his feet and said:

Will the Senator yield?

And then proceeded to give a history of the maiden speeches of the Senate. What a mark upon this junior Senator, what a pleasant memory that he is such a great mentor to all of us. We thank him.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, it is entirely appropriate for the Senate to pause for a few moments to recognize not only the record of 17,000 votes, but also the presence and continued service of a remarkable man who happens to be the senior Senator from West Virginia.

BOB BYRD is our Lou Gehrig the iron man of the Senate. For me, BOB BYRD personifies what our Founding Fathers were thinking about when they were thinking about a United States Senate. He brings the kind of qualities that the Founding Fathers believed were so important for service to the Nation.

When history records his remarkable service to the United States Senate, they will find there has been no one—no one—in this body who has defended the Constitution of the United States more vigorously, tenaciously, and with a greater understanding, awareness, and belief in its words.

There has been no one in history that has better understood the importance of the United States Senate and its role in our great democracy. BOB BYRD understands what our Founding Fathers intended, and because of his constant and persistent efforts, this institution is finer and all of us are finer Senators.

Senator BYRD, we are grateful for your service and this country is appreciative and grateful for your defense of the Constitution and for your service to this country. I am grateful to have you as a friend.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I add my voice as well to my seatmate, if I may. I sit in this chair by choice. Senator BYRD sits in his chair by choice as well, but he makes the choice before I do. I wanted to find out where he was going to sit so I could sit next to him. I did that because I wanted to sit next to the best, to learn everything I possibly could about the ability of this institution to provide the kind of leadership I think the country expects of us.

Several thoughts come to mind. This is a day of obvious significance in the number of votes that have been cast, 17,000, but it is far more important to talk about quality than quantity. Quantity is not an insignificant achievement, but the quality of my colleague and friend's service is what I think about when the name ROBERT C. BYRD comes to my mind.

I carry with me every single day, 7 days a week, a rather threadbare copy of the United States Constitution given to me many years ago—I can't even read it well now; it is so worn out—I may need a new copy—given to me by

my seatmate, ROBERT C. BYRD. I revere it. I tell people why I carry it because it reminds me of the incredible gift given to me by the people of Connecticut to serve in this Chamber, to remind me of the importance of an oath we all made, and that is to do everything we can to preserve, protect, and defend the principles upon which this Nation was founded. ROBERT C. BYRD, in my mind, is the embodiment of that goal.

It has often been said that the man and the moment come together. I do not think it is an exaggeration at all to say to my friend from West Virginia that he would have been a great Senator at any moment. Some were right for the time. ROBERT C. BYRD, in my view, would have been right at any time. He would have been right at the founding of this country. He would have been in the leadership crafting this Constitution. He would have been right during the great conflict of civil war in this Nation. He would have been right at the great moments of international threat we faced in the 20th century. I cannot think of a single moment in this Nation's 220-plus year history where he would not have been a valuable asset to this country. Certainly today that is not any less true.

I join my colleagues in thanking the Senator from West Virginia for the privilege of serving with him. He has now had to endure two members of my family as colleagues. Senator BYRD was elected to the Senate in 1958 along with my father. He served with my father in the House. I have now had the privilege of serving with Senator BYRD for 24 years, twice the length of service of my father. That is an awful lot of time to put up with members of the Dodd family. We thank Senator BYRD for his endurance through all of that time.

There is no one I admire more, there is no one to whom I listen more closely and carefully when he speaks on any subject matter. I echo the comments of my colleague from Massachusetts. If I had to pick out any particular point of service for which I admire the Senator most, it is his unyielding defense of the Constitution. All matters come and go. We cast votes on such a variety of issues, but Senator BYRD's determination to defend and protect this document which serves as our rudder as we sail through the most difficult of waters is something that I admire beyond all else.

I join in this moment in saying: Thank you for your service, thank you for your friendship, and I look forward to many more years of sitting next to you on the floor of the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I join with my more senior colleagues in paying my respects and tribute to the great Senator from West Virginia, Mr. BYRD. It is a mark of his greatness that he has had such a powerful effect on not only the most senior of his col-

leagues who have been here the longest, but also the more junior Members of the Senate, such as myself.

When I arrived here in January 2001, just a little over 3 years ago, I was one of 12 freshman Senators from both sides of the aisle. We were given many words of encouragement from our colleagues, but basically left to find our own way or flounder along the way. It was Senator BYRD who took it upon himself to convene tutorials with the 12 of us. We convened promptly at 4 o'clock in his office, and he shared with us his perspective on the Senate.

From the four volumes he has orated and published as the history of the U.S. Senate, as well as the volume he orated from his own direct knowledge and reading about the Roman Senate, there is no one who possesses more wisdom and a broader understanding of the historical role and the responsibility of this body and this great democracy and Republic.

Those of us who had the benefit of those tutorials learned more from those sessions about how to conduct ourselves in the Chamber where he has served with such greatness than from anything else.

When the time came for us to preside, as we took the majority, I had the opportunity, through many hours, to watch and listen to Senator BYRD, particularly in the fall of 2002 when we were debating the resolution to give the President authority to make the final decision on whether to commit this Nation to war in Iraq.

Senator BYRD was heroic in standing forth and taking a stand which I supported because of the compelling wisdom of his words and the power and the eloquence to remind us that we had a constitutional responsibility in this body which we were forsaking by abdicating that responsibility to the President.

I believe Senator BYRD received over 20,000 phone calls from his fellow citizens around the country. Back in my State of Minnesota, I heard time and again from those who were so admiring of his courage and his steadfastness as I was then, too. I learned more about the U.S. Constitution during that time than I had ever learned before in my life, and I learned more about the proper role of the Senate than I possibly could have learned through years of experience, just by having the benefit of serving with and listening to and learning from Senator ROBERT BYRD.

I am very proud to pay tribute to him today. He has been the most influential Member of this body in my development here, and I am grateful beyond words for the privilege of serving with him.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I, too, rise to bring the attention of the Senate to a historic occasion. Those who are witnessing this debate may not realize that they are seeing a moment in

the history of the United States of America that is not likely to be repeated.

Our colleague, the distinguished and senior Senator from West Virginia, ROBERT C. BYRD, has just cast his 17,000th vote in this body. I do not rise today to bring any embarrassment to my colleague. I am honored to call him friend. I rise to congratulate and honor him, and to note the historical span of his service to our country.

On January 8, 1959, Senator BYRD cast his first vote in the Senate. Fittingly, it was a vote on Senate procedure. He has since become a master of the rules of the Senate. When Senator BYRD rises and raises a parliamentary point, a hush falls over this Chamber, respectful of the fact that this man from West Virginia knows more about the procedure and rules of the Senate than any person.

On April 27, 1990, Senator BYRD cast his 12,134th vote earning him the record for the greatest number of roll-call votes in Senate history.

On May 5, 1998, he became the first Senator in history to cast 15,000 votes.

Let us put this in historic context. When Senator BYRD cast his first vote, Senators John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson were in the Chamber with him and Richard Nixon was the Presiding Officer of the body. When he cast his first vote, Hawaii had not yet become a State and the United States had not yet launched a man into space. When he cast his first vote, a state-of-the-art computer would have taken up half the space of this Chamber and had roughly the same amount of computing power as today's Palm Pilot.

Senator BYRD has served with 11 Presidents—and I underline the word “with” because Senator BYRD makes it clear that he has never served under any President.

He brings to mind often the words of the Constitution which give equality to the branches of Government.

He has been a candidate for election. As he said, he stood before the bar of public opinion 11 different times, 8 times as a candidate for the Senate and 3 times as a candidate for the House. And he has never lost.

Senator BYRD has served in the Senate as majority leader and held more leadership positions in the Senate than any other Senator in the history of the United States. He has chaired the Senate Appropriations Committee, on which I am honored to serve, and currently serves as the panel's ranking member. He has earned his place as the unrivaled expert on Senate rules and he has become perhaps the most popular political figure in his home State of West Virginia. He was named “West Virginian of the Century” by the residents of his home State. What greater honor could they give him.

As of this Friday, Senator BYRD will have served, if my calculation is correct, 18,716 days in Congress, 51 years, 3 months, and 2 days. Of the 11,708 individuals who have served in Congress,

only 2 have served longer: Carl Hayden of Arizona for 56 years and Representative Jamie Whitten of Mississippi for 53 years.

Senator BYRD will become the longest serving Member on June 11, 2006. He has cast more rollcall votes than any other Senator in history. Strom Thurmond ranks No. 2 with 16,348 votes.

We are all privileged to have served in this body. Few Senators in the history of this institution have had such a command of both the nature and nuance of Senate debate as ROBERT C. BYRD of West Virginia, and few, if any, spanning the entire history of this body have had such a reservoir of knowledge, from Roman and Greek history to the deliberations of the Founding Fathers to hundreds, maybe even thousands, of poems which Senator BYRD has committed to memory.

Perhaps it is through his love of poetry that I have gained a deeper understanding of my colleague. President Kennedy once said:

When power leads man toward arrogance, poetry reminds him of his limitations. When power narrows the areas of man's concern, poetry reminds him of the richness and diversity of his existence. When power corrupts, poetry cleanses, for art establishes the basic human truths which must serve as the touchstone of our judgment.

That is a magnificent quote which pays tribute to a man who has integrated poetry into his entire life. But if we were to end there when it comes to procedure and poetry, we would not tell the story of this great man's service.

His is not just poetry when it comes to service in the Senate. It is also powerful prose. It is not just his eloquence but his integrity. Those of us who serve with him know that during the most recent debate on the invasion of Iraq, one voice in the Senate was heard above all others. This man, after many years of service, has not forgotten his responsibility to this Nation and the people he represents. He stood up and took controversial, difficult positions and did them with the kind of force and power which won friends for him far and wide.

I have told this story before but it bears repeating. When I went to a Catholic parish in Chicago with my wife and we had come back from communion and were kneeling down, an elderly fellow walked up to me in the midst of the Iraqi debate and leaned over and said, "Stick with Senator BYRD."

I came back to tell him that. His fans are far and wide, in Chicago, West Virginia, and across the United States of America, because time and again he spoke the truth and did it in a way that touched the hearts of Americans far and wide.

He is an inspiration to all of us who have been honored to serve with him. He brings to this body the kind of decorum, the kind of integrity, and the kind of commitment to which all of us aspire.

For all of his great and varied achievements, Senator BYRD shows his dedication and humiliation not by wielding his power like a club but by performing the most basic requirement of a Senator more times than any other Senator in history. I wish to recognize and honor the senior Senator from West Virginia for the quality as well as for the quantity of his service. It is entirely fitting that this noted lover of history today makes history himself. My commendation and congratulations to ROBERT C. BYRD of West Virginia.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise to join so many of my colleagues and friends in paying tribute to the great Senator from West Virginia. As my friend from Illinois indicated, we are praising and honoring him today not just for the number of votes he has cast but for the courage of his votes. It is one thing to cast 17,000 votes; it is another to look at the quality and the integrity behind those votes.

So I join with my colleagues in saying thank you to Senator BYRD. I was proud to join with Senator BYRD as he spoke out on the Iraq resolution and what our role in the Senate should be and is.

I went home, as did my colleagues, and over and over again people asked me did I know Senator BYRD; did I work with Senator BYRD; listen to what he is saying because he is speaking for all of us.

I also thank Senator BYRD for helping me as one of the 12 Members who came in 2000. When we were in the majority, we had the opportunity to preside over the Senate, and I am very grateful for all I learned about the Senate, about the process, about the importance of being dutiful in our responsibilities, and also about the important role we play in governing our country. I will forever be grateful to Senator BYRD for the lessons that I have learned and continue to learn.

One of the most wonderful images I have of being in the Senate actually occurred during orientation when I was first elected and coming here in December of 2000. I had the opportunity to invite my son to join me in the Old Senate Chamber where we heard from Senator BYRD, some wonderful, eloquent words and stories from the early days in the Senate. It was captivating. It was inspirational. It was motivating. It was a wonderful opportunity for me to share with my son, the new venture I was undertaking and the responsibilities I was undertaking as a Senator from Michigan.

I thank the great Senator from West Virginia for his friendship, for his courage, for his role in the Senate in helping us to understand our responsibilities and our duties to the country.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I join with many colleagues who came to the Senate Chamber today to express ap-

preciation and recognition of Senator ROBERT BYRD as today he cast his 17,000th vote representing the people of West Virginia.

I can hardly think of what more to say other than he has truly been an exemplary Member of this body and a pillar of this institution, someone we all respect. I only hope our votes can be cast as conscientiously as his have been all these many years. I join my colleagues in congratulating him today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALEXANDER). The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I want to say a few words about our distinguished and beloved colleague, Senator BYRD, whose friendship I have treasured for many years—more than 20 years now. I seek and listen to what he says, to be aware of the knowledge he possesses about so many things, and the memories he carries.

When I first arrived here, I met Senator ROBERT C. BYRD and extended my wishes that we would have a chance to serve together—this is 20 years ago; and 20 years is a long time, except when it is compared to more than 40 years—and that he would continue to provide the kind of leadership and inspiration that he has for all of us for all these years.

We wish him well. We want to see him continue to provide the example he has shown all of us, with his dignity and intelligence and knowledge and awareness of the rules that govern this body of ours—as fractious as they have become in recent years. We always want to pay attention when Senator BYRD issues a view of the process that is developing, about where we ought to be, about the courtesies we should extend to one another.

I will never forget Senator BYRD, with his rage at one of the Senators who was addressing the President by his first name, saying: Where is he? Where is Bill? Why isn't Bill here? Senator BYRD stood up, with all his stature in front of him, saying: How dare you. How dare you call our President Bill. In all the years I have served with Republican Presidents, never, never would I dream of calling the President Ronald or George or otherwise.

With that little reminder, he brought us all back to a reasonable state of dignity and comity that we need to be reminded about on many occasions.

Very few have the knowledge stored in our being that Senator ROBERT C. BYRD has.

Again, when I first arrived in the Senate, I had not been in Government before, so it was all very complicated and perplexing. But I wanted to spend some time with Senator BYRD, and he was courteous and he did it. We sat in his office, talking about the background of our society and our country. He talked about the English Kings from the period somewhere maybe about the time of William the Conqueror, the 11th century, and he talked

about how long each succeeding monarch served, the year that person took the office, and the year they left the office, what caused them to leave the office, who died, how they died, by assassination or otherwise, from the 11th century on up to contemporary times. You will hear Senator BYRD often quote from the early days of Roman and Greek civilization. It is remarkable.

I come out of the computer business. I think I can safely say that I have never met a computer the equal of ROBERT C. BYRD, to have the depth of knowledge that he has and to be able to call upon it at so many times.

I will bet that in the 17,000 votes ROBERT C. BYRD cast, he knows more about the votes he cast almost than any Senator who has been here just for 100 votes or 200 votes. He understood every one of them. He never cast a vote without thought.

Each of us has had the experience, I am sure, of disagreeing, perhaps, with one another, even with a distinguished leader such as Senator ROBERT C. BYRD, and have him disagree with knowledge and with experience and say: This is why I think you are wrong. You are my friend, FRANK, but I disagree with you on this, and I am going to vote the other way.

It was always with respect and friendship that these exchanges took place.

So we mark a historical moment. No one before has ever cast that many votes. As a matter of fact, very few have cast a number of votes that come anywhere close to the 17,000 mark. This is a record, as I think has been said by others, that will stand probably forever. It took ROBERT C. BYRD some eight terms to acquire the voting record that he has. When you know that person and you see the devotion and loyalty he brings to his family—he and his wife will celebrate their 67th anniversary, I believe. That is quite a tribute in a period like we now see in our country when the institution of marriage is not what it used to be. So we wish Mrs. Byrd, Erma Byrd, a return to better health—we know she has been having some difficult times these last few years—and for them to share many more good years together and for ROBERT C. BYRD to stand here as our example of what can be, as an example for children across this country.

If they read the history of ROBERT C. BYRD, they will see his growth from a poverty stricken, uneducated, simple family, to go on as he did to reach the level of responsibility, of importance that he achieved, and the contributions he made to country in so many ways, reminding us about our responsibility to avoid conflict wherever we can do it, but always sticking up for his State and constituents who sent him here.

I think I hold a voting record also. I think I am the only Senator on the books that ever, as a freshman, cast almost 7,000 votes. That, I think, is fairly remarkable. You have to discount the

first 18 years I was here, but a freshman with 7,000 votes, it doesn't compare to Senator BYRD's record, no matter what.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I rise today to salute my senior colleague, Senator ROBERT C. BYRD of West Virginia. Today, the Senator passed a milestone that has never been passed before, and may never be passed again: he cast his 17,000th vote on the Senate floor. It's an amazing achievement. No other sitting Senator has cast more than 15,000 votes. Senator Thurmond, who is no longer with us, cast the next highest total of 16,348 votes.

Mr. President, Senator BYRD has had a long and distinguished career in the United States Senate. He was first elected to this body in 1958. Only Senator Thurmond served longer, but Senator BYRD may soon pass that record, too—he's only got two more years to go. He became the Democratic Leader in 1977, holding that position for six consecutive 2-year terms, three terms as majority leader, and three as minority leader. He also served as President pro tempore—third in line in the order of succession to the Presidency, after the Vice President and the Speaker of the House—from 1989 to 1995 and 2001 to 2003.

The Senator from West Virginia is also a master historian. His four-volume, 3,000 page history of the U.S. Senate has been called "the most ambitious study of the U.S. Senate in all of our history." He is a passionate advocate for understanding our history, not only among Senators, but for the entire country. In 2000, the Senator's efforts led to the creation of the Teaching American History Grant Program—commonly referred to as the Byrd grants—to encourage better teaching of American history in our schools. I was fortunate to follow his lead with a bill I introduced last year, the American History and Civics Education Act, which Senator BYRD co-sponsored. The Senate passed it unanimously last year, 91 to 0. I hope the House will act on it soon. I'm sure one reason the Senate was prepared to support such a bill is that we have all learned the value of our history from one of history's great teachers: Senator ROBERT C. BYRD.

I salute my colleague, the senior Senator from West Virginia, and wish him well as he sets a new record with each succeeding vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRAMHAM of South Carolina). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I join my colleagues today in congratulating my friend and colleague, my neighbor from West Virginia, for his great accomplishment today but, more importantly, for his great service in the Senate.

When I first came to the Senate, I did what many of my colleagues have done, and that is I paid a visit to my colleague from West Virginia. I went into his historic office. He was kind enough

to give me the books he has written about the Senate and was kind enough to autograph his books. Those books will always be a great treasure for me to keep.

But they have not just been something that has been in my bookcase; they are something I can pull down to then read the history of the Senate. What wonderful books they are, what wonderful references, what wonderful stories they tell about the Senate. That is so because my colleague is not only a great Senator, he is a great historian. We are reminded of that many times when he comes to the Senate floor. Not only does he have a great institutional memory from his many years of the Senate, but because of his reading not only about the United States and the U.S. Senate, but because of his great love of history, he can put what we do in the United States in its historical perspective.

As the new Members of the Senate, we take turns presiding over the Senate. One of the great benefits of doing that is to sit in the Presiding Officer's chair, as my colleague is doing now, and we have the opportunity to listen to our colleagues. I have had the opportunity, many times, to listen to Senator BYRD.

I can remember many times listening to his speeches. Sometimes it was his great annual speech on Mother's Day, sometimes a speech on the U.S. Constitution, or a speech on whatever legislation is in front of us, or about the history of the Roman Senate or, as my colleague from Illinois has said, a speech about a pending resolution. It didn't matter what it was, it was always something for us to think about, always something for us to ponder and meditate on.

Senator BYRD, thank you for your service and thank you for causing us to think. Whether we agree with you or not on every matter, you always make us think. That is the job of the Senate. As you referred a moment ago to this great deliberative body, you make sure that we are that, you make sure we continue to be that great deliberative body. I thank you for that.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, will the Senator yield quite briefly?

Mr. DEWINE. Certainly, I yield.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I take a moment to thank my colleagues who have spoken. They have been so gracious. I shall never, never forget the beautiful words, the lovely phrases they have uttered here today. They have made this a very beautiful day. I know that my wife Erma has listened from home.

I thank each and all of these wonderful, wonderful friends. That is what they are, they are friends. I shall never forget them. I shall not name them. The RECORD already has done that.

I yield the floor and thank my friend from Ohio for his graciousness in yielding.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. DEWINE. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. DEWINE pertaining to the introduction of S. 2270 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GRAHAM of South Carolina). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant journal clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EVERYONE ACT—Continued

NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last week I took the floor of the Senate to note the decision which has been made by National Public Radio concerning the host of Morning Edition with Bob Edwards. It was announced in the Washington Post that National Public Radio management had decided after some 24 years to relieve Mr. EDWARDS of his responsibility as host of the morning show. There was not much given by way of explanation, and it was clear from comments by Bob Edwards that it wasn't his decision.

It has been interesting since I took the floor and noted my disappointment over that decision the response which I received from my colleagues in Congress. It turns out Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle feel as I do—that this decision by National Public Radio is the wrong decision; that Bob Edwards, who has been not only a host of this program but the most successful morning voice in America, is being moved away from this assignment in a situation and in a circumstance that is almost impossible to understand.

Many of my colleagues have come to me and asked, What can we do? Can we go after the appropriations of NPR? I don't recommend that at all. I think National Public Radio is such an important institution more than any single individual that we should do this in a positive and constructive fashion.

What I encourage my colleagues to do is to remember that National Public Radio is, in fact, public radio; that all of us who enjoy it so much, who rely on it so much, and who contribute to it from our own individual finances, have a responsibility if we disagree with this decision by the management. I have encouraged my friends and those who feel as I do to get onto their Internet and e-mail, and to e-mail NPR.org, to do it immediately and let them know that their decision to remove Bob Edwards at the end of this month of April is the wrong decision. I have done it myself.

I have received a reply from Mr. Kernis which, frankly, I find very trou-

bling. When asked why they think this man who has become such an institution in America should be removed, the response is nothing short of gobbledygook. They talk about bringing someone who has depth and experience. But who else would you turn to rather than Bob Edwards?

I would like to make part of the RECORD at the end of my statement a series of columns and editorials from across the United States from those who enjoy Bob Edwards in the morning and can't imagine public radio without him. Some of these, starting with the Chicago Tribune, were published recently as the news reached that city of the decision by National Public Radio.

As they said in this editorial in the Chicago Tribune, people do not understand why this decision was made. Here is what they concluded in the Tribune editorial about Bob Edwards:

In contrast to their audience, though, NPR executives seem to have forgotten about the public part of their title. In commercial broadcasting, a beloved host who had presided over huge ratings gains would almost never be nudged aside. Public broadcasting is valuable precisely because it is relatively free from such worldly concerns. But it is also, effectively, a public trust, and for the public to continue to trust it, this institution needs to do a better job of explaining its momentous decisions. This is not the only newspaper, by far.

In the St. Louis area, Linda Ellerbee, known to many of us because of her news reporting and posting of programs wrote: "Time and Age: NPR Tossing Out Bob Edwards." Linda Ellerbee should know. She was moved away from a television network position because they thought for a woman she was too old. She says:

But we're not aging the way our parents did. We're reinventing the process. Besides, there are a lot of us out here.

The point she made in her article about Bob Edwards is at his advanced age of 56—which I still consider very young—he speaks not only to people of my generation but so many older and younger. If it is the marketing belief of NPR they need to have a new, fresh voice, they are missing the big picture.

For 24 years every morning when my clock radio goes on, I hear Bob Edwards. I know whether times are bad, dangerous, or peaceful. I can count on him. I have done it this morning. I have done it so many mornings. I cannot imagine "Morning Edition" without him.

There is also a comment from the Washington Post, Richard Cohen. He tells about the same experience.

Now the news from NPR is that Edwards will soon be gone.

He talked about the fact he may just decide to start listening to Mozart on disk, rather than turning on "Morning Edition." He says:

NPR Executive Vice President Ken Stern told the Washington Post that the firing of Edwards was part of a "natural evolution," that had "to do with the changing needs of our listeners." What "natural evolution"? What does that mean? And what is "changing needs"?

Mr. Cohen goes on to say to the Washington Post:

Listen, Ken, my needs haven't changed. I still want news in the morning. I still want smart features. I do not want interviews with airheaded celebrities a la Matt and Katie or, worse, interviews with the latest humorless person Donald Trump has just fired from "The Apprentice."

He concludes:

But the firing-cum-transfer of Edwards (he may become a senior correspondent) is nonetheless disquieting. Maybe my fear is misplaced and maybe the end of the Edwards era will turn out not to be a bad thing. Still, it will be jarring to wake up in the morning with a stranger.

He closes by saying:

Goodbye, Bob. Get some sleep. You've earned it.

Mr. Cohen may have given up, but I haven't. I still believe the people across America should be contacting National Public Radio, npr.org. Send them your e-mail that Bob Edwards, "Morning Edition" is important to you. As a Senator, as a citizen, he is important to me.

The San Diego Union-Tribune in an editorial entitled "NPR Show Is a Big Hit, So It Must Need Fixing?" by Robert Laurence:

This story makes no sense.

As such, it's the kind of story that can only happen in the topsy-turvy Orwellian world of public broadcasting.

It's this: The host of a hugely successful morning radio show, a show where ratings have done nothing but climb for years, a man whose skill as an interviewer is unexcelled in the world of broadcasting, whose very voice helps millions of Americans get their day grounded, is being evicted from a seat in the studio.

Mr. Laurence goes on to say:

That's Bob Edwards, since November 1979 the host of National Public Radio's "Morning Edition . . ."

He goes on to talk about the explanations from NPR management, explanations he and I both find wanting. And Scripps Howard, Bill Maxwell and the St. Petersburg Times, entitled "A Morning Voice That Will Be Missed:"

All good things must come to an end.

And so it is with the ouster of Bob Edwards . . .

To say that Edwards is the end of an era is an understatement.

He continues:

Thanks in large part to "Morning Edition," when I report to the St. Petersburg Times editorial board each morning at 9:30, I know what's going on in the Nation and the rest of the world.

Millions of us would say the same thing.

Columbus Dispatch, Tim Feran: "Shame On NPR For Axing Edwards Before Big Date."

The big date, of course, is the 25th anniversary on the air. I agree with Mr. Feran.

The Cleveland Plain Dealer: "Not a Good Way To Start The Day," a title from Connie Schultz, a columnist. She writes:

The man I've been waking up with is leaving me.