

Mr. WARNER. There you sit, Mr. BYRD, and there is not one among us who will ever be able to match you, I think, in so many ways.

Mr. BYRD. Thank you. Thank you.

Mr. WARNER. I shall always remember you as my teacher in the past, my teacher today, and my teacher so long as the good Lord keeps us here together.

Mr. BYRD. Thank you, thank you.

Mr. WARNER. I thank you, Senator. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I will be very brief. I wanted to get back in time to hear Senator BYRD speak about Senator WARNER. I knew that is what you were going to do, and I missed only the opening. I was back long enough to get the full flavor of what Senator BYRD was saying. The honor that he has just bestowed upon Senator WARNER is genuinely deserved and genuinely delivered. It comes from perhaps not just a Senate man, but the Senate man to another Senate man.

This institution we occupy for different lengths of time, but all relatively brief compared to its history, is really entrusted to all of us. I know of no two Senators sitting right across the aisle from each other in whom that trust is more genuinely felt and recognized and honored than Senator BYRD and Senator WARNER. Just to be able to get back and listen to, Senator BYRD as he spoke about Senator WARNER was a genuine treat for me.

He captured the essence of Senator WARNER. I tried to do it a few times in the last few weeks very briefly, always saying that when we bring back that conference report, which will be Senator WARNER's last conference report as chairman, that I hope there will be many Members on the Senate floor who can try to do what you did so beautifully today, Senator BYRD, which is to capture the essence of the great Senator and to express the gratitude of each of us and everybody in this body, and I know the men and women in the Armed Forces—but truly broader than that, the men and women of the United States—for the service that Senator WARNER is providing.

So I thank Senator BYRD for taking the time to do what each one of us would want to do in our own ways, and that is just simply to acknowledge our love and our respect for a truly great man, a Senate man, from the Senate man, Senator BYRD.

Mr. BYRD. Thank you.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague, CARL LEVIN. As I say, we came here to this institution together and served our entire careers on the Armed Services Committee, and we have shared back and forth the chairmanship and ranking member positions. But I do believe many of the comments that Senator BYRD made about me rest on your shoulders likewise.

He and I have developed a trust and respect. Even though we often vote and cancel one another out on some issues,

I think we have managed together to carve out a place in history for the Senate Armed Services Committee, a committee where there is the highest degree of bipartisanship, because our calling is the defense of this Nation and the welfare of the men and women of the Armed Forces and their families. And I have always felt that, and I say with a deep sense of humility that member after member on that committee has always put those obligations, those special trusts ahead of all other considerations. I thank both Senators very much.

Mr. President, I see another Senator seeking recognition, so at this point I yield the floor.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I would just like to take a moment to express some accolades to my fellow colleagues who are on the Senate floor and say that it is an honor and a pleasure to have an opportunity to serve on the Armed Services Committee under the leadership of the chairman, Senator WARNER, as well as the ranking member, Senator LEVIN. It has also been an honor for me to serve on the Appropriations Committee under the leadership of Senator BYRD, as well as the chairman, Senator COCHRAN. It is the institutional memory that they bring to the process that so many of us appreciate. It is the bipartisan approach they take to solving our legislative problems that brings some peace and understanding, I think, to this process.

I just want to take a moment before I make my official remarks honoring my Congressman from Colorado, to express to the Senators on the floor how much I appreciate their leadership and what they have done and congratulate them on a great Defense bill that we have just passed.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Colorado. I must say that he is my eldest daughter's Senator. She lives in his State with her husband and child, and therefore I have a very special affinity for the Senators from Colorado. I have known them for years.

My only regret is that the Senator once served on the Armed Services Committee, but he could not resist the temptation of joining our esteemed colleague, Senator BYRD, on the Appropriations Committee. I have seen many Senators succumb to that same temptation.

At any rate, the Senator from Colorado will always have a place on our committee should he wish to return someday. I thank the Senator.

Mr. ALLARD. I thank the Chairman. I still recognize him as "Mr. Chairman." He has connections to Colorado. I want to share with him my connection I have with Virginia. I have an ancestor who fought in the Revolutionary War who came right out of Bedford, VA. We have deep roots in Virginia. It is always a pleasure for me to get to

know your State. I venture to say I have probably spent a lot more time in his State than he realizes, just getting to know it because of my family roots there.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I know the community of Bedford. It is a very historic community.

Mr. ALLARD. It is.

Mr. WARNER. They are very proud of the fact that they erected a magnificent memorial to the men and women of the Armed Forces who served in World War II, and particularly on D-day. The President of the United States came down to speak at the time of the dedication. The sons of Bedford are well known.

As a matter of fact, as a footnote to history, in World War II, of all the communities across this great Nation that lost so many men and women—as you know, over a half million casualties in World War II—Bedford, per capita, on D-day lost more than any other community in America of its sons who fell on those beaches in that historic battle, June 6, 1944.

Mr. ALLARD. That is worth noting. I thank him again for his gracious hospitality and the help he has extended to me in trying to serve the people of Colorado in the debate on this very important bill.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

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

HONORING BARBARA HAWKINS: A PILLAR OF JOURNALISM

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, when I was a boy growing up in Mercer County, WV, I made it a point to read the Bluefield Daily Telegraph. That was more than a few years ago, but I have not stopped reading the Bluefield newspaper. It is a strong instrument of information and education in the southern coalfields of West Virginia.

That paper has been fortunate to publish the insights and analysis of many fine reporters. One of the best is Barbara Hawkins, who has announced her retirement after three decades of service. She is not only one of the best reporters from the Bluefield paper; she also is one of the best reporters to walk the hills of West Virginia.

Local news media represent a community's window on the school board, city council, and county commission, the State legislature, and the Congress. The local media, more than any other resource, educate people about the issues that directly affect their lives. Barbara Hawkins knows, better than most, how vital a reporter's job is. She understands that newspapers are an instrument to inform the public about

the issues and events that affect their daily lives.

Through her work, Barbara Hawkins served as a teacher and a counselor, a defender of right and a pursuer of wrong, an advocate, a champion, and a friend to all in southern West Virginia.

Now, after three decades of service, Barbara has decided to retire from daily reporting. But, as much as we would expect, she is not giving up the art of writing and informing. Her columns and special projects will continue, allowing all of us to learn from her insights and her experiences.

Most of Barbara's work at the newspaper was in the public eye. But, more than anything else, Barbara's strength came from her deep devotion to her family. We have all walked the terrible journey with her after her daughter, Pam, was taken from this world, a victim of domestic violence more than 20 years ago. Barbara has never been shy about that loss nor about her efforts to prevent that shattering experience from touching other families. But what is not in the headlines is Barbara's incredible commitment to her daughter, Kimberleigh, her granddaughter, Pami, and all of the members of her family. While her work at the paper may be a great love of Barbara's, it pales in comparison to her love of family. Barbara's family is her source of strength and inspiration, now and always.

On a personal level, I will miss reading Barbara's daily reporting. I made a habit of looking for her byline. She has always shown a keen insight into not only southern West Virginia but also statewide and national issues. Her instincts, her institutional knowledge, and her commentary have always caused me, like so many others, to stop and think and to consider alternate approaches. Her commitment to the greater good in society is something for each of us to emulate.

I have often said that as long as there is a forum in which questions can be asked by men and women who do not stand in awe of a chief executive and one can speak as long as one's feet will allow one to stand, the liberties of the American people will be secure. That forum is this Senate. But the same can be said of the news media—the newspapers, radio stations, television stations, and other outlets that provide information that is important to the lives of all Americans. Freedom of the press is a key of this Republic. Without it, the American people can be led to disaster without so much as a whisper. Their freedoms can be trampled; their rights can be subverted.

Barbara Hawkins defended that freedom. She exercised it every single day. And all of us are better for her work.

I thank Barbara for her many years of service to the people of West Virginia and wish her well in the challenges that certainly are ahead of her in her life's journey.

NEVADA'S STATE HEALTH INSURANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to commend Marilyn Wills, the director of Nevada's State Health Insurance Assistance Program, for her efforts during the implementation of the Medicare drug program in my State. I would like to recognize Marilyn for not only her service to Nevada's Medicare beneficiaries, but also for her dedication to her profession and her contributions to the community.

As most of us have surely heard from beneficiaries, the enrollment period for the new drug program was a time of great stress, confusion, and frustration. As seniors, people with disabilities, and their loved ones tried to understand the complicated new drug benefit, decide whether to sign up, and then find the best drug plan to join, many found themselves overwhelmed. And with the May 15 enrollment deadline looming, it became increasingly clear that the public needed better information and better help using that information.

I commend Nevada's State Health Insurance Assistance Program, or SHIP, for heeding this call in my State. Hundreds of SHIP volunteers gave their time and energy to counsel their fellow Nevadans about the new Medicare drug benefit, as well as other components of Medicare, supplemental health insurance, and long-term care. As more Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and friends turned to Nevada SHIP for one-on-one counseling and assistance, SHIP volunteers were eventually responding to over 1,000 phone calls every month. Nevada SHIP also made arrangements for homebound seniors and held outreach events for the community at large. During one 3-day event alone, over 500 Nevadans with Medicare received help from SHIP volunteers. The work of Nevada's SHIP volunteers is truly a testament to the value of public service.

As the director of Nevada's SHIP, Marilyn Wills was at the center of its operations. In that role, she was charged with a wide range of responsibilities, including overseeing the outreach events, giving educational presentations to the public, and training new volunteers. Moreover, Marilyn and the SHIP volunteers had to carry out their work in an environment that is continually evolving with new, uncertain, or changing program rules and details. The manner with which Marilyn carried out her responsibilities has earned her high praise from her colleagues, as well.

In one of many glowing stories about Marilyn that has reached my desk, one says, "Marilyn worked tirelessly to ensure that all the community groups working on Part D outreach were aware of every event and that this was an inclusive effort. She believes in maximizing efforts to reach the entire community, but her passion focuses on every individual beneficiary and how to

help each person get the help they need." The observer continues to write, "She made sure her volunteers knew this was about people helping people. It was important to her that the volunteers and staff feel good about what they were doing, and always see how they were truly helping people that needed the information, or just the human contact to help them be comfortable in understanding all the options."

The challenge was to inform the citizens of the State of Nevada about the new Medicare drug benefit and to guide them through the enrollment process. It is my pleasure to recognize Marilyn Wills and the Nevada SHIP volunteers for their success in tackling this challenge. They are a credit to all of us working toward the success of the new Medicare drug benefit in Nevada.

RECOGNITION OF GARRETT HALL AND CHRIS SHEA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to commend Garrett Hall and Chris Shea, fellow Nevadans who deserve praise for their efforts during the implementation of the new Medicare Part D drug benefit in Nevada.

As most of us have surely heard, the enrollment period was a time of great stress, confusion, and frustration for nearly everyone involved. As seniors, people with disabilities, and their loved ones tried to understand the complicated new drug benefit, decide whether to sign up, and then find the best drug plan to join, many found themselves overwhelmed. Emerging from those reports were also stories about pharmacists who struggled with the numerous implementation problems.

Garrett and Chris, who operate PAX Rx in Reno, NV, are fine examples of pharmacists across the country who did their best to assist those seeking their help and advice. However, Garrett and Chris did more than simply rise to the occasion. By all accounts, they went above and beyond the minimum bar set for them.

For one particularly vulnerable group, the Medicare-Medicaid dual eligible beneficiaries, Garrett and Chris came to the rescue countless times to ensure that they did not fall through the bureaucratic cracks. As many of us know, newspapers widely reported the numerous implementation problems that threatened to keep these dual-eligible beneficiaries from receiving their vitally important medications. Garrett and Chris know that there are real lives behind these facts and statistics because their PAX Rx pharmacy repeatedly intervened on behalf of affected customers. At no cost to such beneficiaries, they provided the needed medications, either by mail or hand delivery.

These two Nevadans' contributions extended beyond the scope of their pharmacy practice. Garrett and Chris also attended townhall meetings and