

the Commonwealth of Kentucky and wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO DAVID YEPSEN

● Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to a native son of Iowa as he prepares to leave the nest he has diligently feathered for more than three decades. A journalist who has earned his keep for 34 years at the Des Moines Register, David Yepsen honed his skills as a fair and balanced reporter upon whom his readers grew to depend to separate the wheat from the chaff.

With a few strokes of the keyboard, David Yepsen cut through layers of political posturing to identify stalemates at the statehouse or expose stonewalling from Terrace Hill. A non-sense newspaperman, David built a reputation for his astute understanding of Iowa politics and policymaking on the local, State, and Federal levels of government. From local boards of education to county seats of government, statehouse politics, and the Presidential campaign trail, David Yepsen knew how to boil down an issue and size up a candidate's prospects.

Like most Iowans, pomp and circumstance isn't his style. The genius of his political commentary is his ability to cut off grandstanding and get down to brass tacks. If the political leadership got bogged down in partisan gridlock, David would simply explain to voters in his next column how their elected representatives were baling political hay on the public's dime instead of ironing out the looming State budget deficit.

A shrewd journalist, David Yepsen understood how to cultivate contacts and build a reputation built on trust and truth. Cut from the gold standard cloth of journalism, David exercised independence and discovered that loyalty, like representative government, is a two-way street. No doubt the mutual agreement or lively disagreement with his subjects, readers, and publishers made his job all the more satisfying.

Although schooled decades before the Internet, blogs, and other tools delivered news to our laptops and cell phones, this seasoned reporter embraced the 24-hours news cycle. His profession bears the responsibility and privileges granted by the freedom of the press in American society. He upheld his end of the bargain by holding officeholders, public officials, and candidates accountable to the people. But he didn't fall victim to the "gotcha" style of ambush journalism that adds to public cynicism about the media and politics.

Instead, David fell back on his commitment to fairness and evenhandedness. That is the legacy David Yepsen will leave behind as he pursues the next chapter in his professional career. Next month, he will hang up his press credentials to assume lead-

ership of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale.

As I mentioned earlier, David Yepsen for more than 30 years has earned his paycheck and served the public as a reporter and political columnist at the Des Moines Register. For more than three decades, he immersed himself whole hog into politics, issues, and campaigns that have colored Iowa's landscape from the Missouri to the Mississippi Rivers. David earned a scholarly grasp of public policy that will prepare him well for his new position. Hot-button issues in recent times have included regulating hog lots; legalizing gambling; preparing for natural disasters and flood control; consolidating government from the courthouse to the schoolhouse; harmonizing Iowa's production agriculture heritage with sustainable stewardship of our natural resources; investing in renewable energy; bringing 21st century technology to rural areas; developing tourism, parks, and trails; balancing needs of an aging society; addressing Iowa's "brain drain", handling immigration; and juggling interests of labor and business or rural and urban. Instead of treating these issues as lightning rods that polarize people, David took the opportunity to challenge Iowans, whether newcomers or old-timers, to find common ground that would make our State an even better place to work, raise a family, enjoy a vacation, earn a world-class education, and retire.

David could slice through the debate with a lucid and logical reminder about just why it matters to taxpayers if the gas tax is raised during a recession or why Iowa lawmakers should seize the opportunity to take bold steps to restore and improve crumbling infrastructure projects. He provoked Iowans to think outside the box, choosing flattery or insult when necessary.

David faced the relentless scrutiny of his readers and also enjoyed many personal and professional rewards. Iowa's David Yepsen was often called upon by national news organizations for his respected analysis of Presidential politics. His departure leaves behind a big set of footprints in the fields of Iowa journalism and politics. I will really miss seeing "what Yepsen had to say in the Register" but wish him all the best.●

REMEMBERING CHAD MECHEL'S

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I wish to pay honor to Deputy Sheriff Chad Mechels of Madison, SD, who was killed in the line of duty on Sunday, March 15, 2009, at the age of 32. He is survived by his wife Jamie Mechels and two children, Avery, age 7, and Thomas, age 3.

Chad dedicated his life to a career in law enforcement. He graduated from the South Dakota Law Enforcement Academy in 2005. After graduation, Chad worked with several law enforce-

ment agencies including the Lake County and Kingsbury County Sheriff's Departments. He was currently serving with the Turner County Sheriff's Department when his life was tragically taken.

The sacrifice made by this brave officer is something we should always remember. Everyday heroes, like Chad, are those who keep us all safe. We should all be thankful to our community law enforcement officers who respond to protect the safety of others while sometimes jeopardizing their own.

Deputy Sheriff Chad Mechels paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty, and for that we owe him a debt that can never be repaid. Let us honor Chad and so many other heroes that have made this country great.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 1:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 383. An act to amend the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (division A of Public Law 110-343) to provide the Special Inspector General with additional authorities and responsibilities, and for other purposes.

S. 520. An act to designate the United States courthouse under construction at 327 South Church Street, Rockford, Illinois, as the "Stanley J. Roszkowski United States Courthouse".

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 730. An act to strengthen efforts in the Department of Homeland Security to develop nuclear forensics capabilities to permit attribution of the source of nuclear material, and for other purposes.

H.R. 918. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 300 East 3rd Street in Jamestown, New York, as the "Stan Lundine Post Office Building".

H.R. 1148. An act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a program in the maritime environment for the mobile biometric identification of suspected individuals, including terrorists, to enhance border security.

H.R. 1218. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located

at 112 South 5th Street in Saint Charles, Missouri, as the "Lance Corporal Drew W. Weaver Post Office Building".

H.R. 1617. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for a privacy official within each component of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 55. Concurrent resolution recognizing the 30th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act.

H. Con. Res. 77. Concurrent resolution recognizing and honoring the signing by President Abraham Lincoln of the legislation authorizing the establishment of collegiate programs at Gallaudet University.

The message also announced that the House agreed to the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 146) entitled "An Act to establish a battlefield acquisition grant program for the acquisition and protection of nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, and for other purposes.

At 3:31 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1404. An act to authorize a supplemental funding source for catastrophic emergency wildland fire suppression activities on Department of the Interior and National Forest System lands, to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to develop a cohesive wildland fire management strategy, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 730. An act to strengthen efforts in the Department of Homeland Security to develop nuclear forensics capabilities to permit attribution of the source of nuclear material, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 918. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 300 East 3rd Street in Jamestown, New York, as the "Stan Lundine Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1148. An act to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a program in the maritime environment for the mobile biometric identification of suspected individuals, including terrorists, to enhance border security; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 1218. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 112 South 5th Street in Saint Charles, Missouri, as the "Lance Corporal Drew W. Weaver Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1404. An act to authorize a supplemental funding source for catastrophic emergency wildland fire suppression activities on Department of the Interior and National Forest System lands, to require the

Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to develop a cohesive wildland fire management strategy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1617. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for a privacy official within each component of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

The following concurrent resolution was read, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 55. Concurrent resolution recognizing the 30th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1137. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to obligations and unobligated balances of funds provided for Federal-aid highway and safety construction programs during fiscal year 2006; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1138. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to obligations and unobligated balances of funds provided for Federal-aid highway and safety construction programs during fiscal year 2007; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1139. A communication from the Attorney of the Office of Assistant General Counsel for Legislation and Regulatory Law, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Weatherization Assistance Program for Low-Income Persons" (RIN1904-AB84) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 26, 2009; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1140. A communication from the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment: Fourth Report to Congress"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1141. A communication from the Chair and Vice Chair, National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Paving Our Way: A New Framework for Transportation Finance"; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1142. A communication from the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, the amendments to the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure that have been adopted by the Supreme Court of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1143. A communication from the Acting Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Annual Report of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention for 2008; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1144. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, two reports entitled "2008 Annual Report of the Director of the Administrative

Office of the U.S. Courts" and "2008 Judicial Business of the United States Courts"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1145. A communication from the Director of Regulations Management, Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Post-9/11 GI Bill" (RIN2900-AN10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 26, 2009; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-15. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Missouri urging the United States Congress to reject the Freedom of Choice Act; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

RESOLUTION

Whereas, the 111th United States Congress is considering the Freedom of Choice Act, which purports to classify abortion as a "fundamental right", equal in stature to the right of free speech and the right to vote—rights that, unlike abortion, are specifically enumerated in the United States Constitution; and

Whereas, the federal Freedom of Choice Act would invalidate any "statute, ordinance, regulation, administrative order, decision, policy, practice, or other action" of any federal, state, or local government or governmental office, or any person acting under governmental authority that would "deny or interfere with a woman's right to choose" abortion, or that would "discriminate against the exercise of the right . . . in the regulation or provision of benefits, facilities, services, or information"; and

Whereas, the federal Freedom of Choice Act would nullify any federal or state law "enacted, adopted, or implemented before, on, or after the date of its enactment" and would effectively prevent the State of Missouri from enacting similar protective measures in the future; and

Whereas, the federal Freedom of Choice Act would invalidate more than 550 federal and state abortion-related laws, laws supported by the majority of the American people; and

Whereas, the federal Freedom of Choice Act would specifically invalidate the following commonsense protective laws properly enacted by the State of Missouri:

- (1) A parental consent law for minors seeking an abortion;
- (2) A prohibition on government funding or use of public facilities for abortions;
- (3) Health and safety regulation for abortion facilities;
- (4) A twenty-four-hour waiting period and informed consent law that provides an opportunity to consider the gravity of a decision to abort a child;
- (5) A partial birth abortion ban (Infant's Protection Act);
- (6) A requirement that only physicians can perform or induce abortions and that such physicians maintain medical malpractice insurance;
- (7) Conscience protections for doctors and hospitals not wanting to perform or induce abortions;
- (8) A prohibition on performing or inducing abortions in order to use fetal organs or tissue for transplantation or experimentation;
- (9) Licensing of most abortion clinics as ambulatory surgical centers to ensure basic health and safety of patients;
- (10) Alternatives to abortion programs to encourage and support women who do not want abortions; and