

He likes to boast that North Dakota is “the Saudi Arabia of wind.” Well, my folks in Iowa might dispute that claim, but we get the point. BYRON and I have both been strong advocates of building a nationwide distribution grid for wind- and solar-generated energy.

I wish to make just one more point about Senator DORGAN. I guess I can say this now since he is retiring and a political opponent won’t be able to use it against him. BYRON DORGAN is an intellectual. He has a passion for ideas and knowledge. He even writes books—actually, really good books, the kind that show up on the New York Times bestseller list. I am a great fan of his 2007 book entitled “Take This Job and Ship It: How Corporate Greed and Brain-Dead Politics Are Selling Out America.” If you want a blistering and I think dead-on account of the causes of the crash of 2008, read BYRON’s other book entitled “Reckless! How Debt, Deregulation, and Dark Money Nearly Bankrupted America.”

I consider BYRON DORGAN a great friend, a great Senator, and a great advocate for all working people in this country. He has accomplished many things in his three terms here in the Senate, but I can think of no greater accolade than to say simply that he is a good and decent and honest person with a passion for social justice and a determination to make life better for ordinary Americans.

When the 111th Congress comes to a close, of course, my friendship with BYRON will continue, but I will miss his day-to-day counsel and good humor. I join with the entire Senate family in wishing BYRON and Kim the best in the years ahead.

KIT BOND

Mr. President, with the retirement of Senator KIT BOND at the close of this Congress, the Senate will lose one of its most respected veteran Members, and a truly distinguished individual with a distinguished career in public service will come to an end. Of course, we would expect big things from a young man who graduated with honors from Princeton and first in his class at the University of Virginia Law School, and KIT BOND did not disappoint.

At age 30, he became assistant attorney general of Missouri, serving under former Senator John Danforth. At age 33, he was elected Governor of the State of Missouri, serving two terms. In 1986, he was elected to the Senate, where he has now served for nearly a quarter of a century.

Over the years, KIT BOND has been a great friend and a frequent collaborator, especially on the Appropriations Committee. For example, in 1993, when the Midwest was devastated by historic floods, Senator BOND was the senior appropriator in the minority party from the nine impacted States, and I was the senior appropriator in the majority party. We took the lead in the Senate, working together very effectively to rally Federal assistance to victims all across the stricken Midwest.

Over the years, we have worked together to improve the locks and dams along the Upper Mississippi. I can say I think we are both proud of our work in the early part of this decade, forging an agreement to authorize the modernization of five of the critical locks so that our goods can move more efficiently up and down the river. We worked very hard for about 4 years to bring together a remarkable coalition of industry and agriculture and the environmental community to make this project possible.

Senator BOND and I are members of a breed of Senators affectionately known around here as “pavers.” We both believe very strongly that it is a cardinal responsibility of the Federal Government to invest generously in a first-class national transportation infrastructure—the roads, the bridges, the locks, the dams, and so on—what we call the arteries and the veins of commerce.

Senator BOND and I have also collaborated frequently to boost the rural economy and improve the quality of life of the people who live in our rural communities. In particular, we have used funding through the Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee of Appropriations to approve housing for people of modest means, with a particular focus on rural areas. On this score, I would note Senator BOND was a “compassionate conservative” long before that term came into fashion. He cares deeply about the well-being of the less fortunate in our society, giving them both a helping hand and a hand up. In the mid-1990s, I was proud to work with Senator BOND on the first bipartisan welfare reform bill, modeled, I might say, on the very successful welfare-to-work program we had in Iowa.

Over the years, Senator BOND has recruited and retained an exceptionally talented staff.

In particular, I will cite Jon Kamarck, his outstanding lead staffer for many years on the Appropriations Committee, with whom I have had the pleasure of working on many occasions. I know Senator BOND also places great store by his long-time staffer and current chief of staff, Brian Klippenstein—who, by the way, had the good sense to marry a Democrat from the State of Iowa.

Mr. President, the Senate has been fortunate to have a Senator of KIT BOND’s high caliber and character for the last 24 years. In so many ways, he represents the very best in this body—a passion for public service, a willingness to reach across the aisle to get important things done, and an insistence on the highest ethical standards. He has always been determined to do the right thing for the people of Missouri and the entire United States.

For me, it has been a great honor to be his friend and colleague for the last 24 years. Our friendship, of course, will continue. And I wish KIT and Linda the very best in the years ahead.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at the conclusion of my remarks, Senator HARKIN be recognized again, followed by Senator CARPER, and then Senator BROWN.

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

COMMENDING CONGRESSMAN PATRICK J. KENNEDY

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I rise to make a few brief remarks in honor of Congressman PATRICK JOSEPH KENNEDY of Rhode Island.

With PATRICK’s departure from the House of Representatives to seek new challenges and enjoy some well-earned time out of the political spotlight, my home State of Rhode Island is losing a champion for working families and our country is losing a public servant who did as much as anyone else to care for and lift those in the shadows of life.

It is a moment to thank PATRICK for his many contributions to the lives of Rhode Islanders over his 16 years of service in the House but also a moment to reflect on his unique place in the political history of our country.

After all, the 112th Congress will be the first in more than half a century in which no member of the Kennedy family is serving in either the House or the Senate.

In Rhode Island, a State that he adopted, and that adopted him/he first entered public service at the young age of 21, winning his congressional seat a few short years later in 1994, one of only four GOP seats Democrats won in that election.

Over the years, PATRICK continually faced capable and well-funded opponents, but his constituents had come to recognize and welcome his humble dedication to their lives, re-electing him seven times. He was my younger, but senior, colleague on our delegation.

The arena of politics is combative—all the more so when your last name is Kennedy—but PATRICK persevered, and he persevered despite his own health and addiction challenges.

And instead of running from those challenges, instead of hiding from those challenges, PATRICK had the courage and wisdom to realize that the problem he was experiencing was a problem shared by millions of families in America. Instead of hiding from public scrutiny, he stood tall—not only on his own behalf, but also on behalf of Americans who needed a champion to bring their struggles to the forefront of the national agenda.

With that, PATRICK’s campaign for mental health parity took fire, resulting in passage of the landmark Mental Health Parity Act of 2008, an achievement Speaker NANCY PELOSI described as “the legislative feat of the century.”

In that fine cause, PATRICK had the chance to work with a towering champion of civil rights, the lion of the Senate, his father.

Peer to peer, man to man, they hashed out the final bill in conference. The father, with his easy, booming laugh and affectionate camaraderie; the son, with his fierce but quiet determination.

Thus did PATRICK help lift up millions of Americans. Thus did he earn a place alongside his father—a man he called his hero, his inspiration. Thus did he emerge as a champion for so many who needed one so badly. Thus did he uphold the best traditions of the family and the Nation he loved.

PATRICK has proudly carried on his family's spirit of service and their fight for social justice. And to be sure, he has always been proud to be Teddy's son. "From the countless lives he lifted," PATRICK said, "to the American promise he helped shape, My father taught me that politics at its very core/was about serving others."

In the service of others, PATRICK too brought to the rough and tumble of politics/traits that made him unique, and he left behind accomplishments that allow him to stand on his own as one of the great legislators of our time.

Indeed, of all the descendants of President Kennedy, and of Bobby Kennedy, and of our own late colleague Ted Kennedy, it was PATRICK who last held public office, PATRICK who longest held public office, PATRICK who youngest held political office, and PATRICK who most successfully used public office to further the family's mission of lifting up every American.

PATRICK's success as a Member of Congress came not easily, not from the charm charisma so characteristic in his family but rather from simple hard work, unshakeable integrity, and his formidable determination to win what others had sought.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote in "The Ladder of St. Augustine":

The heights by great men reached and kept,

Were not achieved by sudden flight,

But they, while their companions slept,

Were toiling upward in the night.

The story of PATRICK KENNEDY is not a story of glamorous sudden flight to glory. It is a tale of long and silent toil, upward, and in the night, in the shadow of his own challenges.

The best part of this story is that PATRICK's work is not yet finished. Neither his father nor his uncles got to experience life after public service. But, stepping away from the Congress at the age of 43, PATRICK's road stretches ahead for many more miles.

I know that PATRICK will continue to look for ways to give back to the State that gave him a chance to serve and the Nation that gave his family a chance to thrive. And he will always enjoy the gratitude of Rhode Islanders whom he has served so well and Americans whose burdens he has helped to relieve. And I will always be proud to consider him a legislative inspiration, a political ally, and a beloved friend.

PATRICK, thank you. And I wish you all the best in this new beginning.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

TRIBUTES TO RETIRING SENATORS

RUSS FEINGOLD

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, with the close of the 111th Congress, the Senate will lose to retirement Senator RUSS FEINGOLD of Wisconsin—a proud progressive, a fearless reformer, and a genuine maverick in the very best sense of that much-abused term.

During his three terms in this body, Senator FEINGOLD has been a worthy successor to another great progressive reformer from Wisconsin, Senator Robert "Fighting Bob" LaFollette, whose desk I am proud to occupy, here on the Senate floor—and whose portrait is displayed prominently in Senator FEINGOLD's office.

Like Senator LaFollette, RUSS FEINGOLD knows that it is not enough to be on the side of the angels. It is not enough to have our hearts in the right place. Progressivism, by its very nature, is a fight against entrenched corporate interests, entrenched economic privilege, and entrenched political power. If we are going to succeed against these forces, we have to know how to fight, and we have to be willing to fight. And, as our colleagues here in the Senate know very well, Senator FEINGOLD is equally skilled at building bridges across the aisle and tenaciously carrying the fight to those who oppose progressive change.

Most famously, we witnessed these talents during Senator FEINGOLD's relentless campaign to pass the landmark 2002 Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act, better known as the McCain-Feingold law. Senator FEINGOLD and his legislative partner, Senator JOHN MCCAIN, championed this legislation for nearly 2 years, overcoming stiff resistance from both parties, as well as from powerful interests outside the Senate. They faced countless obstacles but refused to give up. They won.

Again, in 2007, in the wake of the Abramoff scandals, Senator FEINGOLD played the key role in pushing through the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act, a tough ethics and lobbying reform bill, which included stringent disclosure requirements and a crack-down on abusive practices by lobbyists.

As chair of the Judiciary Committee's Constitution subcommittee, Senator FEINGOLD cast the Senate's lone vote against the USA PATRIOT Act.

For nearly two decades in this body, Senator FEINGOLD has been an outspoken champion of working Americans—fighting for safer workplaces, the right to organize, stronger public schools, better access to higher education and health care. He has always stood up for Wisconsin's family farmers and rural communities.

Senator FEINGOLD has accomplished important and even historic things

during his tenure as U.S. Senator. But, in my book, the highest accolade is simply that RUSS FEINGOLD is a good and decent person, with a passion for fairness, social justice, and honest government.

For me, it has been a great honor to be his friend and colleague for the last 18 years. Our friendship, of course, will continue—as will RUSS FEINGOLD's fight for the progressive causes we both believe in.

Our great friend Paul Wellstone used to say that "the future belongs to those with passion." By that definition, RUSS FEINGOLD has a wonderful future ahead of him. I join with the entire Senate family in wishing him the very best in the years ahead.

ROBERT BENNETT

Mr. President, in these closing days of the 111th Congress, the Senate will be saying farewell to one of our most seasoned and accomplished Members, respected on both sides of the aisle, Senator ROBERT BENNETT of Utah.

Certainly, no one in this body doubts Senator BENNETT's staunch conservative values and principles, especially on fiscal and regulatory issues. But, throughout his 18 years in this body, Senator BENNETT has been a consensus builder, willing to reach across the aisle in order to get important things done for the people of Utah and of the entire United States. Clearly, this thoughtfulness has caused him to lose favor with the more extreme wing of his party, for which he paid a price during the primary election this year. I know I am not alone in mourning the loss of one of the Senate's most thoughtful conservatives.

For example, he partnered with Senator RON WYDEN of Oregon in advocating a legislation to provide universal health insurance coverage.

And in response to the financial crisis of 2008, as a senior member of the Senate banking committee, he supported the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act. Senator BENNETT was widely criticized by those on the right, as was I for the same vote by critics on the left. But he can take great pride in it, because facts are facts: the Troubled Assets Relief Program prevented a total meltdown of our financial system. And almost the entire \$700 billion taxpayer investment has been—or soon will be—paid back to the Treasury. In fact, just this week, the Treasury booked a \$12 billion profit on its previous \$45 billion TARP investment in Citigroup.

I have been proud to call BOB BENNETT my friend for the last 18 years, and I count myself fortunate to have served with him on the Appropriations Committee. He is a gentleman, a bridge-builder, a person of rock-solid character and integrity.

I join with the entire Senate family in wishing Bob and Joyce the very best in the years ahead.

BLANCHE LINCOLN

Mr. President, in these closing days of the 111th Congress, the Senate will