

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO MARCA BRISTO

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor my dear friend Marca Bristo and recognize her work as a disability rights activist and the community-based disability agency, Access Living, that she founded 30 years ago in my home State of Illinois.

Access Living opened its doors in 1980 to ensure that people with disabilities had equal rights.

Three decades ago, people with disabilities faced a world of dependency. Even though Congress had enacted important legislation such as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to prevent discrimination and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1975 to expand learning opportunities for those with disabilities, people with disabilities still lacked equal rights. Social prejudice fueled discrimination against people with disabilities in housing, employment and basic public accommodations. The concepts of independent living, wheelchair accessible public transportation and quality jobs were not yet part of everyday life.

Access Living was founded to insist on independent living options and higher quality of life for people with disabilities. The agency is governed and staffed by people with disabilities and operates under a fundamental belief that people with disabilities must become a political force if they are to effect social change. Marca Bristo, Access Living's president and CEO, knows that pride and commitment to social change is the most effective way to ensure that civil rights are enforced.

This passion stems from a personal experience. A diving accident at the Pratt Boulevard Beach pier left Marca partially paralyzed in 1977. Through this tragedy, she re-imagined her capabilities to work and thrive from a wheelchair. However, the adjustment was not always easy, because cultural and even physical barriers stood in her way.

Early in Marca's disability, the city of Chicago lacked curb cuts on public streets, which made it hard for her to travel up and down city blocks in her wheelchair. This restriction prevented Marca from accomplishing basic errands such as a trip to the grocery store or a pick-up from the dry cleaners and from using public transportation to commute to work.

Marca and Access Living's vision of equality led to architectural and attitudinal changes in the city of Chicago

and throughout the country. Years of litigation led the Chicago Transit Authority to add wheelchair lifts to their mainline buses. The city has also incorporated scrolling marquees, audible street announcements and thousands of curb cuts to make transportation feasible for people with disabilities.

Beyond these physical changes, Marca has also worked tirelessly to break down cultural barriers and integrate people with disabilities into community life. Access Living's work fosters dignity, pride, and self-esteem in people with disabilities. With that in place, they can choose individualized, satisfying lives.

It turns out, I am not the only person who has been impressed by Marca's leadership and vision for change. She was appointed by President Clinton to chair the National Council on Disability. She was here, fully engaged in the fight, when Congress wrote the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. She has also served as president of the National Council on Independent Living and is currently president of the U.S. International Council on Disabilities—USICD.

But the ADA means only as much as its implementation. We have work to do eliminating discrimination in employment, public services and public accommodations in the United States. As the ADA turns 20 in this month, we recognize the law's and Access Living's work to increase the visibility of people with disabilities in our country.

We as a Nation should also look to be global leaders in this arena. Through her work with USICD, I am confident that Marca will continue to focus the energy, expertise and resources of the U.S. Government and disability community to improve the lives of people with disabilities worldwide.

Fair and equal treatment is a cornerstone of our society and political system. Access Living and Marca Bristo's dedication to ending discrimination against people with disabilities have improved the lives of families in Chicago and nationwide.

TRIBUTE TO KENTUCKY HONOR FLIGHT MEMBERS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize 35 Kentucky veterans who recently came to Washington, DC to visit the memorial they helped to inspire. A few weeks ago, this group of distinguished men and women were able to visit our Nation's Capital, some for the first time, because of the Honor Flight Program.

The Bluegrass Honor Flight chapter has brought over 600 veterans from Kentucky to Washington, DC, providing these brave patriots the opportunity to see firsthand the memorial built in their honor. The program provides transportation, lodging and food for these veterans, who otherwise may not have been able to visit the Capital or the monuments they inspired.

These brave individuals answered the call to duty by stepping up when their

Nation needed them most. The sacrifices they made were extraordinary. With unyielding commitment to our great Nation, these men and women bravely served and defended the freedom and rights that we cherish. The courage shown by America's veterans will be long appreciated and never forgotten. And after their years of service, I am proud to be able to honor them today.

I would ask that my colleagues join me in honoring these Kentucky veterans:

Dewey Abrams, Charles Adams, Geneva Andress, Algernon Rowland, Jim Booher, Ralph Brewer, George Capito, Paul Chandler, Donald Cooper, Roland Davis, Miriam Dewart, Cecil Dunn, Charles Wilson, Harris Gibboney, George Hauck, Joe Hutchins, Gerald Kincaid, Robert Koegel, Anne Laing, John Fultz, William Malcolm, Edward Martin, Cecil McGee, Frank Milburn, Howell Moore, Kenneth Oster, Obie Owens, Reverend Thomas Pittman, John Krabbenhoft, Dewitt Rowland, Elmer Susemichel, Donald Thom, Roger Tyler, William Warde and Richard Zapp.

RECOGNIZING THE URSULINE SISTERS OF LOUISVILLE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to bring to my colleagues' attention the work of the Ursuline Sisters of Louisville, which will soon receive a special recognition from the Commonwealth of Kentucky for their decades of service.

The Ursuline Sisters began their ministry in Kentucky in 1858 when three Sisters from Germany, led by Mother Salesia Reitmeier, answered a call to teach at St. Martin School in Louisville. Within 2 weeks of their arrival, the Sisters were teaching 50 students and had plans to construct a convent and boarding school on the corner of Chestnut and Shelby streets in Louisville, KY. The building was completed in 1859 and became the home of the Ursuline Academy. The new boarding school for girls offered classes from elementary through high school.

Soon the Ursuline Sisters were asked to operate and staff other schools. They established Sacred Heart Academy in 1877. Within 100 years of their establishment in Kentucky, the Ursuline Sisters had staffed or were staffing 23 parochial schools in the Louisville area, as well as schools in other States. They owned and operated Ursuline College, Ursuline Academy, Sacred Heart Academy, Sacred Heart Model School and the Ursuline Speech Clinic. The original Motherhouse and Convent for the Ursuline Sisters is located near the original school in downtown Louisville that was established by those three German immigrants 152 years ago and is listed in the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places.

These Sisters serve as educators, spiritual ministers, health care professionals, and administrators. They operate programs for the poor and disenfranchised and continue to search for ways to assist others to grow personally and spiritually.

On July 25, 2010, the Ursuline Sisters' history of ministry and service will be recognized by the Commonwealth of Kentucky with the placement of a historical marker outside that original location on Chestnut Street. This marker will note the founding and mission of the Ursuline Sisters and inform people of the contributions these Sisters have made to the community.

While the true record of their good deeds will continue to be chronicled in a place not of this Earth, it is entirely appropriate for the Commonwealth to take note of the good work the Ursuline Sisters have done for my hometown. And I hope my colleagues will join me in congratulating the Ursuline Sisters for all their hard work of ministering to mind, body and spirit.

REMEMBERING SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I join with my colleagues today to express my profound and heartfelt sadness on the passing of Senator Robert C. Byrd, as the U.S. Senate, the people of West Virginia, and our entire Nation mourn the loss of a giant of public service—a distinguished, iconic legislator whose life and legacy will forever be synonymous with the greatest deliberative body the world has ever known.

Senator Byrd's counsel, wisdom, and knowledge of the Senate was unmatched and awe-inspiring. As the longest-serving Member of Congress and a former majority and minority leader of the Senate, Senator Byrd was time and again the conscience and champion of Congress and a vigorous and stalwart sentinel of the first branch of our government. Protector, steward, advocate, and guardian these descriptions only begin to convey Senator Byrd's lifelong commitment to the Senate in which he served for a record 51 years and an unprecedented nine terms.

No one fought more to ensure the preservation of the U.S. Senate and its constitutional prerogatives than Senator Byrd. No one was more masterful in comprehending and harnessing the powers of parliamentary procedure in the upper Chamber. No one was fiercer in battling against any encroachments that would dilute or diminish the role of Congress as a coequal branch of government. And no one possessed greater command of Senate history and used it to better effect than Senator Byrd, who himself authored a four-volume history of the Senate.

The same zeal with which Senator Byrd demonstrated his allegiance to the legislative branch was every bit as evident in his unshakable dedication to the U.S. Constitution itself—a pocket-

sized copy of which he carried at all times. In fact, like many of my colleagues, I will never forget as a member of the "Gang of 14," which was forged at a time when the very institution of the Senate was caught in the crosshairs of a struggle over judicial nominations, how each of us received a copy of the Constitution from Senator Byrd. With one symbolic gesture as only he could, Senator Byrd spoke volumes about the historic imperative that was ours to seize if we were to jettison the partisanship that threatened our Chamber.

Senator Byrd's reverence for history stemmed of course from the premium he placed on education, and as much as anyone who ever occupied a seat in the Senate, Senator Byrd exemplified the American story of the self-made individual. During his remarkable trajectory from humble beginnings in the southern coalfields of West Virginia, Senator Byrd was an ardent believer in learning not only as the great equalizer in American life, but as a catalyst for personal and professional success. A self-educated man, Senator Byrd's knowledge of Shakespeare, the Holy Bible, and the pillars of thought from Ancient Greece and Rome formed the basis of an eloquence and service that will reverberate not only in the hallowed Halls of Congress, but also throughout his beloved home State—which he served so passionately—for generations to come.

Indeed, his roots in West Virginia were ever-present and the indispensible lifeblood that spurred him to political and legislative heights that were the capstone of his landmark tenure in public service. Indisputably, he never forgot where he came from, and in fact, always remembered he stood on the shoulders of every West Virginian who sent him back to the U.S. Senate term after term. And as much as Senator Byrd revered Congress, the Constitution, and his fellow West Virginians, nowhere was his devotion greater than with his beloved Erma, his wife of nearly 69 years, and they now are finally together in their eternal resting place.

As a Senator from Maine, it is only fitting that I pay tribute to Senator Byrd by citing the opening lines by the immortal American poet and Son of Maine, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, that I so often heard him quote from memory on the Senate floor . . . "Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State! Sail on, O Union, strong and great! Humanity with all its fears, /With all the hopes of future years . . ." Our Ship of State sails better for Senator Byrd's having lived, served, and led. But today, our Ship of State sails at a slower pace as we pause to pay our respects and mourn the loss of a man whose like we will never see again. The Senate will not be the same without the Senator from West Virginia, Robert C. Byrd.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to my friend

and dear colleague, Senator Robert C. Byrd, who left us on Monday, June 28, 2010 at the age of 92. Senator Byrd was the longest serving member of the Senate. It is noteworthy that he was sworn in as a U.S. Senator on January 3, 1959, the same day Alaska was admitted as the 49th State.

How does one do justice to a life as full, as human, as authentic, as uniquely American as that of Senator Byrd's in just a few minutes? Born in poverty, a self-described foster son of an impoverished coal miner, a product of a two-room schoolhouse, he went on to walk with kings, to meet with prime ministers, and to debate with Presidents. Only in America could one come so far from so little. His is a textbook case of American exceptionalism.

Robert C. Byrd was a man of principle who was unwavering in his priorities. The Lord came first, his family second, and then the business of West Virginia and Nation. Senator Byrd was remarkable in that he could juggle all of these obligations with apparent ease.

He was a man who carried the Constitution in his breast pocket, closest to his heart. A fierce protector of the prerogatives of the Senate, he frequently recalled that the Congress is mentioned in the Constitution before the Executive. He once remarked, "I am not the President's man. I am a Senate man."

So many of our colleagues take delight in this quote from *The Almanac of American Politics* and it bears repeating. The Almanac described Senator Byrd as the one among us who "may come closest to the kind of senator the Founding Fathers had in mind than any other."

On the occasion of his 90th birthday, Senator Ted Stevens referred to Senator Byrd as a "symbol of the Senate," adding that, "No man has taught the Senate more than Robert C. Byrd."

Senator Byrd made it his personal responsibility to educate new Senators in the history and traditions of the Senate and to mentor us along. He made a real difference in my orientation to the Senate. His statesmanship was an inspiration to me. It was an inspiration to all of us.

As contentious as our debates may seem, as partisan as we often seem to the American public, the Senate prefers to regard itself as a family. Yes, a family that fights, but a family nonetheless.

Senator Stevens once observed, "As part of the Senate family, Senator Byrd is not only a gentleman, he has been a person who has reached out to us in personal times as well."

I came to know that well after I injured my leg in a skiing accident last year. For a period of time I had to navigate the Senate floor in a wheelchair. The Senate floor is not exactly wheelchair friendly, but Senator Byrd had adapted to the challenge. One day, as we were going to the floor to vote, our wheelchairs met and we reached