

Americans are looking for Republicans to address the problems we face, but Republicans cannot solve them alone. The problems are too big, too demanding for one party, and we will never succeed in solving them if we retreat to our corners until another election comes around. If our predecessors had done that, they would have never solved anything at all, and this institution would have lost its relevance a long time ago. But they didn't, and neither can we.

The men who established this place have left us the right tools for the job. It is my hope that in the weeks and months ahead, we will use them to renew the promise that inspired them and that continues to inspire Americans even in difficult times. That promise is the American dream. It is what unites everyone in this Chamber. Preserving it must be our common task.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business and that there be 30 minutes for tributes regarding Senator MIKULSKI's milestone; that upon conclusion of MIKULSKI-related remarks, there be 45 minutes for Senator HARKIN; that upon the conclusion of Senator HARKIN's remarks, the Republican leader or his designee control the next 35 minutes; further, that following that time controlled by the Republican leader, Senators be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

COMMENDING SENATOR MIKULSKI

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to make some remarks regarding my dear friend and seatmate on the Appropriations Committee and a member of my Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee.

I join with the entire Senate family in saluting my good friend, the distinguished senior Senator from Maryland, on becoming the longest serving woman in the history of the Senate. This is truly a remarkable milestone.

I note that Cal Ripken, the former star of Senator MIKULSKI's hometown

Baltimore Orioles, became known as the "Iron Man" for going 16 consecutive years without missing a game. Now perhaps Senator MIKULSKI has earned the title of "Iron Woman" for going 24 consecutive years in this body without ever deviating from her role as a fierce advocate for Marylanders and for working people across our country.

I hasten to add that the measure of a Senator is not how many years he or she serves in the body but what he or she accomplishes during those years. That is where Senator MIKULSKI has truly distinguished herself over the last quarter of a century.

I especially salute her activism and leadership on the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, formerly chaired, of course, by Senator Kennedy and which I am now privileged to chair. She has been a leading champion of Pell grants and for expanding access to higher education for students of modest means. Of course, as has been stated, she has been the Senate's leading voice on women's health issues, fighting to ensure women are included in clinical trials and medical research at the National Institutes of Health, and securing access to breast and cervical cancer screenings for women without health insurance.

Senator MIKULSKI took the lead in writing the sections of the new health reform law that focus on improving the quality of care. At every turn in the drafting of that historic legislation, she fought to ensure that the unique health needs of women were fully recognized and accommodated.

As chair of the Subcommittee on Retirement and Aging, Senator MIKULSKI has been an outspoken advocate for seniors, focusing especially on combating elder abuse and neglect. I know she is especially proud of authoring the Spousal Anti-Impoverishment Act, which keeps seniors from going bankrupt while paying for a spouse's nursing home care. I might also add, no one has been a more fierce supporter and defender of the right for people to have an attorney through the legal aid system in America. She has fought very hard to make sure we strengthened the National Legal Services Corporation and to make sure it receives adequate funding so people who have no money aren't barred from the courthouse door.

We admire the work of BARBARA MIKULSKI not as a female Senator per se but as one of 100 Senators. On this day we also recognize that she was the first woman elected to the Senate whose husband or father did not serve in high office. We salute her as the proud dean among Senate women who has gone to extraordinary lengths for so many years to mentor and guide newly elected women Senators of both parties.

I join my colleagues in congratulating Senator MIKULSKI as our longest serving female Senator and wishing her many more years of accomplishment and service in the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to add my voice to those of my colleagues as we commemorate an extraordinary milestone for a remarkable woman. Today, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI becomes the longest serving woman Senator.

For anyone who has had the privilege of working with or for Senator MIKULSKI, this milestone comes as no surprise. She is a devoted public servant and a dogged advocate for her constituents. She has spent the vast majority of her life in public service as a social worker, as a member of the Baltimore City Council, then as a Member of the House of Representatives, and finally as a Senator. With each step, her constituency got larger and she worked even harder to fight for the people of Maryland.

Senator MIKULSKI is no stranger to celebrating firsts or milestones. She was the first Democratic woman to be elected to the Senate in her own right without succeeding a spouse or a father. She was also the first woman to serve on the Senate Appropriations Committee.

It is also worth reflecting on how far we have come in the 24 years since Senator MIKULSKI was first elected. She was one of only two women in the Senate in 1987. In the next Senate, as in the last Senate, we are now up to 17 female Senators, meaning that they can no longer call us "Sweet 16."

As the dean of women Senators, Senator MIKULSKI has always been ready to help women who are thinking about running for the Senate and then help newly arrived women Senators when they get here. Her wise counsel is absolutely invaluable. Senator MIKULSKI has always reached across the aisle to bring women Senators together. As she puts it: "Women in the Senate understand issues not just on the macro level, but on the macaroni and cheese level."

Two years ago around this time, I went to the Senate floor with several of my women colleagues to speak about the importance of passing the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. Senator MIKULSKI had championed the bill for years. I remember Senator MIKULSKI bringing us all together and I will always remember her words. She would say:

To the women of America: Suit up, square your shoulders, put your lipstick on. We're ready for a revolution.

Senator MIKULSKI has always been a master of words and quips. She did it again, and we passed that bill.

On that issue, as on so many others, the cause that Senator MIKULSKI championed was victorious due in large part to her tremendous work ethic and her devoted advocacy.

Senator MIKULSKI, today we salute you for suiting up and squaring your shoulders for 24 years and counting, and we look forward to so many more.

I see my great colleague Senator STABENOW from the State of Michigan is here.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I am so pleased to be here today. I appreciate the words of the great Senator from Minnesota. I am very pleased to rise with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to pay tribute to somebody who is much more than a colleague—someone who is also a mentor and a great friend, the Senator from Maryland, BARBARA MIKULSKI.

Today, as we all know, she became the longest serving woman Member of the Senate in the history of our Nation. I have a 3-year-old granddaughter Lilly who will be able to read now in the history books about not only her grandmother but the woman who holds this record, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, and all she has done and all she means to each of us, particularly as a role model for my granddaughter and other young children, other young women who will be coming after all of us.

She is here today because she is bold and fearless and determined, as we all know. In 1986, when she first ran for the Senate, she looked for inspiration from her own great-grandmother who came to the United States from Poland with no money and no job. But her great-grandmother knew the importance of hard work and she built a life for her family here, a new beginning, and in so doing opened the door for future generations. I know today she is looking down from a special place with tremendous pride.

When Senator MIKULSKI won that election, becoming the first Democratic woman to win a Senate seat in her own right, she carried on her great-grandmother's legacy—opening doors for future generations of women to follow in her footsteps. Thanks to that, there are more women serving in the Senate today than have ever served in the entire history of our great country. When Senator MIKULSKI was elected in 1986, from the moment she arrived in this august body, she has been a tireless champion of working families in Maryland and across the country. I am proud to have partnered with her on so many important efforts to make sure we are building things in America again and supporting the people who have built the great middle class of this country by their hard work.

She grew up working in her parents' grocery store and understands the struggles of working families who want nothing more than to create a better life for their children and their grandchildren.

She got her start in politics fighting to save the Fells Point neighborhood in Baltimore, stopping a proposed highway that would have divided a neighborhood and destroyed that community. Today, because of Senator MIKULSKI, Fells Point is a thriving residen-

tial and commercial community. She has continued from that day, every day, fighting for neighborhoods and families and standing for the men and women who work hard every day to make a better life for themselves and their families.

When BARBARA first arrived in the Senate, she was one of only two women Senators, as we know. Before then, women were appointed to the worst committees, were locked out of the "old boys' club" and didn't have much of a voice. But she changed all that.

She got appointed to the powerful Appropriations Committee—the first Democratic woman to do so, giving the women of America a voice, for the first time, on how we set our priorities for the investments of our country. More importantly, she learned how to build coalitions, to work with colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and get things done for the people who sent her here to work for them.

Today, as dean of the women Senators, BARBARA continues that leadership. Thanks to her, the women of the Senate get together—both Democrats and Republicans—for fellowship and friendship on a regular basis. Now, following in her footsteps, there are woman Members on every single committee in the Senate. That is important to the operation of our country's business.

Her example shows us all the importance of hard work, determination, and courage.

I congratulate my friend, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, today on her great accomplishment and, most importantly, on a distinguished record of public service on behalf of the people of Maryland and our country. I thank her for all she has done for me personally and for all the other women in the Senate—the ones who have already followed in her footsteps and the many who are still to come.

This is an exciting day for the history books—as some of us like to say, it is another step in "herstory"—BARBARA's story—which is a special one for our country.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry: Under the unanimous consent agreement, there was a period of 30 minutes for tributes to Senator MIKULSKI. Is there any of that time remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Time has been consumed.

Mr. HARKIN. If I am not mistaken, under the unanimous consent agreement, I was deemed to have 45 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

FILIBUSTER RULE

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I have a resolution for myself, Senator DURBIN, Senator MIKULSKI, and Senator SHAHEEN, which I send to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 8) amending the Standing Rules of the Senate to provide for cloture to be invoked with less than three-fifths majority after additional debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I had a good discussion with the Senator from Iowa. This is a longstanding proposal of his. He has thoughtfully considered it. Even though I admire him, I do not admire the proposal.

What we would like to do is let the Senator from Iowa make his proposal. I will listen, and when he has made the proposal, I will ask him to yield me a few minutes and we may have a little discussion back and forth on the merits of the proposal. With that in mind, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the resolution will go over under the rules.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I am sorry my good friend from Tennessee had to object, but I understand. We are going to engage for some time now on the Senate floor in a discussion on the filibuster, something that has been around a long time but which, in the last several years, few years—I would not say "several"—in the last 20, 30 years, has gotten to the point where it has paralyzed the Senate and has paralyzed the country.

I intend to make some remarks for a while. I appreciate my friend from Tennessee and also my friend from Kansas who is here. I hope we can engage in a nice colloquy and a discussion about this in a back-and-forth way. I look forward to doing that. I do wish to take some time to at least lay out my case, as I did 15 years ago—I am sorry, 16 years ago. On January 4, 1995, I submitted this same resolution. I was a member of the minority party in the Senate for the first time in 8 years. When I first came to the Senate, the Republicans were in charge and then the Democrats got in charge and then the Republicans got in charge and then the Democrats got in charge and then the Republicans got in charge and then the Democrats got in charge. Since I have been here, since 1985, five times the Senate has changed hands.

I note that at the beginning of that Congress in 1995, the Republicans outnumbered Democrats 53 to 47, the same majority-minority ratio that exists today, just on the other side. Even though I was opposed to the then-majority party's agenda, I submitted the