

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT OMAR A. JONES

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, I rise today to remember a fallen hero, Nebraska Army National Guard Sergeant Omar A. Jones of Maywood, NE.

Sergeant Jones served as an electrician in the 623rd Engineer Company, Nebraska Army National Guard, out of Wahoo, Nebraska. Sergeant Jones died at Forward Operating Base Deh Dadi in Balkh Province, Afghanistan, on July 18, 2011.

Omar grew up in Mississippi and lived in Bogota, Colombia for many years. He graduated from high school in Colorado and chose to enter the Army instead of pursuing a college athletic scholarship. He served two tours in Iraq. One as an infantryman in the active duty Army, and one with the Nebraska Army National Guard. His love of country compelled him to seek an assignment in Afghanistan. He volunteered and even changed units and developed new skills for this opportunity.

In October 2010, he deployed to Afghanistan with the 623rd Engineering Company. It was a tough decision to deploy again because his wife Ava and two children had become the center of his life. But, it was for their freedom he chose to serve again overseas.

His commanders and fellow Soldiers recall Sergeant Jones as kind, friendly, and helpful. They say they counted on Sergeant Jones for a big smile and a willingness to listen. He loved being a soldier. A former commander put it this way:

He had the biggest heart of any soldier I knew.

His decorations and badges earned during a distinguished career over three combat tours speak to his dedication and bravery. He received the Combat Infantry Badge, Combat Action Badge, Marksmanship Qualification Badge (Expert), Driver and Mechanic Badge, Overseas Service Bar (2), Army Commendation Medal (2), Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal with Bronze Service Star, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Bronze Service Star, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" device (2), Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, and the NATO Medal.

I cannot put into words how the death of Sergeant Jones will impact the lives of those closest to him. Nebraska is honored to call him one of our own, and I know Nebraskans in Maywood and Wellfleet will provide his family with care and love during this difficult time.

Today I join the family and friends of Sergeant Jones in mourning the death of their husband, son, father, and friend. I ask that God be with all those serving in uniform, especially the brave men and women on the front lines of battle. May God bless them and

their families and bring them home to us safely.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.
The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WEBB). The Senator from Utah.

TRIBUTE TO COLLEEN MONSON BANGERTER

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I stand to address this body to honor the life of one of Utah's great citizens.

A good friend of mine is former Utah Governor Norman Bangerter, who announced on Saturday that his beloved wife of 58 years had passed away after a long-time battle with Alzheimer's disease.

Colleen Monson Bangerter, having been born in 1935, was the mother of six children, the mother also of one foster son, and in many respects was a friend to all of Utah's 3 million residents.

She served faithfully in many capacities, including as PTA president and other offices within the PTA. She also served faithfully in a variety of positions as a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

Just a few years ago, she and her husband, former Governor Bangerter, served as they presided over the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in South Africa. They worked hand in hand throughout their entire lives—in raising their children, in running Governor Bangerter's campaigns, and in running the State throughout his time as Governor, which wasn't an easy time for our State.

During Governor Bangerter's two terms in office, our State faced significant financial difficulties, faced significant flooding challenges, and the Bangerters weathered these adverse conditions well, serving as standing examples to all the citizens of Utah for what it means to rise to the challenge of adversity.

Colleen Bangerter was someone who had friends in many corners, and she also had many talents, some of which are not known by everyone, including the fact that she was the State hopscotch champion in the State of Utah in 1947. There are not many First Ladies in the United States who can claim that distinction, and she definitely did. She was also pleased to have been the recipient of the highest award that can be granted by the Boy Scouts of America, which she received just a few years ago. But of all the honors, including the honors that went along with being the First Lady of the State of Utah and serving with someone who, in my opinion, was one of the great Governors ever to serve our State, her greatest honor, her greatest prize was that of her family.

She loved being a mother, loved each of her 6 children, their 30 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. We as Utahns mourn the loss of this great citizen of our State. We mourn the loss of this friend. Our thoughts and our prayers go out to former Governor Bangerter and his family.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

REMEMBERING COLLEEN MONSON BANGERTER

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, thank you for the opportunity to pay tribute today to a remarkable woman, quintessential wife and mother, and superb first lady for the State of Utah—Colleen Monson Bangerter. Sadly she passed away on the evening of Friday, July 29, 2011, from the effects of Alzheimer's disease. She was at home, the place she loved to be with her husband former Utah Governor Norman H. Bangerter.

Colleen was a wonderful human being who was always willing to serve others. She served as Utah's first lady from 1985–1993, while her husband Norman H. Bangerter was the Governor. During her years as first lady she undertook many causes close to her heart, including teenage drug use, and challenges facing women and families. She hosted a yearly drug awareness conference for teens and took First Lady Nancy Reagan's Just Say No Program to every corner of the State. Additionally she hosted an annual conference on strengthening families to address the important challenges affecting the health and well-being of families across our great State.

She stood by her husband's side as he led Utah through a very important time in our State's history. They advocated for economic development and she was a tremendous ambassador for Utah as they met with leaders throughout the Nation and even overseas encouraging new business development.

Colleen not only excelled at the initiatives she undertook for our state, she also served in many capacities as she raised her children including the PTA, and in many important positions for her church—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Colleen and Norm presided over the Johannesburg, South Africa Mission from 1996–1999. In this role she was a kind, and loving asset to the many missionaries who joined them in the work in South Africa.

Colleen and Norm raised six children and one foster son. They now have 30 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. She was the light of her family and could always be found in the middle of the fun. She enjoyed spending time at their cabin in beautiful Utah, as well as their second home in St. George. She always made people feel welcome and embraced many who crossed their paths.

Colleen Bangerter will be very missed by her wonderful husband Norm and their family. There was a special warmth and goodness about this lady and I will never forget her twinkling eyes and bright smile. She was kind to all she met, and was a partner in every sense of the word to her husband. Elaine and I love Norm and Colleen very much, and hope that Norm and his

family will find some peace and comfort in the wonderful memories they share with this remarkable woman. Her life's work touched many lives and she will be forever remembered as someone who truly cared about others, and in doing good for her family and community.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

BUDGET CONTROL ACT

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I want to speak just momentarily about the legislation that was just passed.

I, for the last 14 months traveling my State in almost every nook and cranny, have talked about the situation our country is in, talked about possible solutions, and offered legislation—the only bipartisan, bicameral legislation offered until this point—to deal with our country's deficits and debt.

I had hoped that we would figure out a way to deal with \$5 trillion to \$7 trillion worth of spending and/or savings over the next 10 years, and finally decided that \$4 trillion was the magic number. I know the markets had looked at that, the rating agencies looked at that, the people who buy our Treasuries had looked at that number. Over the course of the last few weeks, it became apparent that \$3 trillion was probably the most that was going to be achieved, and then now we have ended up with this bill that passed today, and I supported that hoping to achieve \$2.1 trillion to \$2.4 trillion in savings over the next decade.

Mr. President, obviously, like many of us in this body on both sides of the aisle who know our country is in dire straits and we have a lot of work to do, I am disappointed at the magnitude of this legislation. But I am hopeful and thankful that we have taken the first step. I think this is going to be a decade of us having to focus on our country's irresponsibility over the past many years. Both parties, no doubt, have been responsible for putting us in this situation. It is going to take both parties to move us away from where we are. But I think everyone in this body fully understands that on the present course our country's best days are behind us. I think all of us want to ensure that this country's greatness continues; that we can continue to display American exceptionalism not only here but around the world.

I look at this solely as the first step. I know we are going to have an appropriations opportunity to look at even more savings at the end of September. I know we are going to have a committee that is going to be looking at this during the months of November and December. I know we are going to have a series of opportunities for us to deal with this. Again, today was just a first step.

I learned through a lifetime of business, starting with doing very, very small projects at the age of 25 when I first went in business, that as a com-

pany, you can never go broke taking a profit. What I have learned in the Senate is you should never say no to spending cuts.

So while these spending cuts are not of the magnitude that I would like to have seen, I think this is a very good first step and is something that we can all build upon. I look forward to working with people on both sides of the aisle to ensure that this is just the first step and that our country continues to have the discipline, the fortitude, the courage, and the will to make the tough decisions that all of us know we are going to need to make over the course of the next many years.

That is what we owe these young pages who are getting ready to leave after service to this country over the last month; that is what we owe future generations; that is what we owe Americans; and, candidly, that is what we owe the world as citizens of this world; that is, for us to be disciplined and to know that we have to live within our means and to know the best thing we can possibly do as a country at this moment in time is to show we have that courage and that will.

Mr. President, I thank you for the time to speak on this topic. I know all of us leave here and go home to recess. I know many of us will be talking about the vast amount of work that needs to be done as it relates to making sure we rein in this out-of-control spending that has been taking place for many years. I look forward to that. I look forward to talking to citizens back in Tennessee, and I look forward to coming back in September and dealing with folks on both sides of the aisle to make sure we put that thought into action.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I want to thank the Senator from Tennessee, Mr. CORKER, for what he just said. I want to affirm the extraordinary amount of effort he has made to not only inform this Senate body of the crisis that we face financially, but also to come forward with some very constructive solutions on how to deal with this crisis.

I know he is disappointed that we were not able to reach a better solution than the one voted on today. I know he struggled to decide what was the best course to follow moving forward. In the end, he decided to support the bill as a first step; but, as he said, this is the first step of what probably will be a decade-long challenge facing all of us to successfully address this deep hole of debt we have dug for ourselves as a nation.

I rise today to speak, sharing all those concerns, certainly believing that our work has just started and there is much more to do. But also as someone who decided to vote against the bill that we just had before us. I have not taken this vote lightly.

For the past 1½ years, as a candidate I traveled the State of Indiana, to just

about every town and city in the State, talking to thousands and thousands of Hoosiers on a day-after-day basis hearing what they had to say. If, frankly, I could categorize their thoughts into one statement, it would be a deep concern about the future of our country and a deep desire to have their elected representatives go to Washington and do everything they can to address this situation.

I have spent the last 7 months in the Senate hearing from hundreds, if not thousands, of Hoosiers who have written, called, visited, and talked with me back at home. Nothing has changed except the urgency of these concerns, and the deep worries that they have expressed have simply grown.

We saw, in 2010, Americans across the country express their desire for Congress to get hold of our fiscal situation; that the era of spending, of promising beyond our means, was over, and that we had to take major steps to reverse that. That is why I decided to return to the Senate, to come back to work to help repair our country's economic future. I came back to work on the things that many consider politically toxic: entitlement reform, tax reform, passing a balanced budget amendment to make sure that we would never end up in this situation again; that if there was a legacy that we could pass on to our children, if there was something that we could do for the future of our country, something that we could do for our children and grandchildren, and everyone's children and grandchildren, it would be to never have them have to go through what we are going through now because we had taken fiscal responsibility, passing a balanced budget amendment that would, as we are sworn in, require each of us to come here and put our left hand on the Bible and our right hand in the air, to repeat the oath to honor the Constitution, and that Constitution would attain a balanced budget amendment as a requirement.

So before taking this vote, I pondered for days and nights about the many Hoosiers who had put their faith and confidence in me and sent me back to the Senate to do everything I could to accomplish this goal. Some of those Hoosiers had tears in their eyes, worried about the future for themselves and for their children. Some had fingers in my chest, saying: Don't let me down. Don't go and settle for too little. Do everything you can. That is what I have tried to do.

After giving it consideration, I decided not to support this bill because I could not come to grips with having to come back and tell Hoosiers that this is the best we could do.

I do wish to recognize the work and leadership, the strategy and the efforts of our minority leader, Senator McCONNELL, and whip, Senator KYL, those in leadership and others—JOHN BOEHNER and ERIC CANTOR in the House and the people who represented Republicans at the White House.