

Member of Congress in our Nation's history. She reached that milestone recently, having served in Congress for 12,858 days—more than 35 years—surpassing the previous longest serving Member of Congress, the late Representative Edith Nourse Rogers.

Representative Rogers famously quipped, “The first 30 years are the hardest.” But I dare say that Senator MIKULSKI has had a somewhat different experience. As with other pathbreaking women, she has encountered sexism and discrimination. But from her first day in the House in 1977 right up to today, in her much respected role as dean of women Senators, BARBARA MIKULSKI has been a singularly formidable and forceful public servant. Pity the Representative or Senator who has made the mistake of in any way underestimating this remarkable person.

For three and a half decades in Congress, BARBARA MIKULSKI has been an outspoken and proud progressive—a tireless advocate for quality public education, access to health care, and a strong safety net for those she calls “the least of these our sisters and brothers”—including the elderly, people with disabilities, and the poor. Her passion for social and economic justice was nurtured by the nuns who taught her at Catholic school in working-class east Baltimore.

Senator MIKULSKI's legislative accomplishments are too numerous to cite here. But I am particularly grateful for the lead role that she played in early 2009 in passing the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act—the very first bill signed into law by President Obama. This law reversed an outrageous Supreme Court decision that allowed discrimination against women to go unpunished. But, as Senator MIKULSKI knows all too well, even the Lilly Ledbetter Act leaves in place an outrageous status quo where women are paid only 78 cents for every \$1 that their male counterparts are paid. That is why she and I have continued to work closely together to advance the cause of equal pay. We are the respective leads on the two Democratic equal pay bills in the Senate.

As chair of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, I want to pay special tribute to the extraordinary role she has long played on our committee.

Senator MIKULSKI's legislative skills and leadership were critically important in crafting and passing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act 2 years ago—an achievement that she calls one of the “greatest social justice initiatives” of our time. She led the team that wrote the quality title in the bill, insisting that higher quality care does not have to be higher cost care. Thanks to Senator MIKULSKI, the health care reform law includes a whole range of provisions that shift the emphasis—rewarding providers not for quantity of service but for quality of service. I would add that throughout the debate on health care reform and

during the many months the bill was being written, Senator MIKULSKI was a fierce advocate for women's health and for ending the brazen discrimination against women by health insurance companies.

On the HELP Committee, and also in her role as chair of the Appropriations subcommittee that funds the Legal Services Corporation, Senator MIKULSKI has been a great leader on another issue near and dear to my heart: legal services for the poor. She has fought hard—and it has always been an uphill struggle—to provide adequate funding so that people without resources are not barred from the courthouse door.

Of course, Senator MIKULSKI has also been one of the Senate's leading proponents of national and community service. In 2009, she was the Senate manager for the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, which retooled our national service programs for the 21st century and provided expanded opportunities for young people to gain valuable skills and experience by helping neighbors in need.

Let me share a brief anecdote that illustrates the remarkable role that Senator MIKULSKI plays in the body and the respect that she commands among her colleagues. We all remember the debate, in late February, on the Blunt amendment, which would have allowed employers to deny health insurance coverage for contraception. In my role as chair of the HELP Committee, I was invited to attend a press conference in the LBJ Room of the Capitol organized by Senator MIKULSKI to speak out against the amendment. Let me tell you, this was a remarkable event. Senator MIKULSKI spoke first, with tremendous power and passion. One by one, other Senators spoke—women who, over the decades, have been counseled and mentored by Senator MIKULSKI: Senator PATTY MURRAY of Washington, Senators BARBARA BOXER and DIANNE FEINSTEIN of California, and Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN of New Hampshire. Senator MIKULSKI's message, echoed by the other Senators, was characteristically loud and clear: Decisions about medical care should be made by a woman and her doctor, not a woman and her boss. Needless to say, Senator MIKULSKI carried the day; the amendment was defeated.

Other Senators have noted Senator MIKULSKI's many firsts, including the first woman elevated to a leadership position in the Senate. I would simply add that BARBARA MIKULSKI is also first when it comes to a Senator being true to her roots, a fierce and effective champion for her State and passionate fighter for social and economic justice. Again, I salute the Senator on reaching the historic milestone as the longest serving female Member of Congress, and I wish her many more years of distinguished service to our Nation.

RECOGNIZING GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I am very proud to extend my recognition and congratulations to the congregation and administration of the Grace Episcopal Church in Plymouth, NC, as this wonderful institution celebrates 175 years of providing spiritual guidance and community service to Washington County and the State of North Carolina.

This year marking the 175th anniversary of the founding of Grace Church, we give the citizens of Washington County as well as the State of North Carolina the opportunity to pay tribute and homage to a place of worship that has impacted many and assisted those in need of spiritual guidance.

Plymouth, NC traces its historical roots back to the 18th century and the beginnings of our Nation. It has served as a port on the Roanoke River off the Albemarle Sound for over two centuries, acting as a place of trade for much of North Carolina and the United States. By 1837, Plymouth had grown into an important port in North Carolina and with that growth came the establishment of the Grace Episcopal Church.

Plymouth was one of the ports targeted for blockade by Union forces during the Civil War and in that time it is believed that only 11 buildings survived the war, 1 of them being the Grace Episcopal Church.

Grace Episcopal Church has provided the town of Plymouth and the surrounding areas in Washington County spiritual guidance and leadership for the last 175 years. This institution has been a beacon of light and hope to many people in the region and the world.

Grace Episcopal Church has provided many charitable services and events for citizens in need, for example one guild at the church is comprised of a group of knitters and other handcrafters that make goods for distribution to those in need locally and abroad. Grace Episcopal Church has also been an active partner in the Washington County Habitat for Humanity projects, providing financial donations in addition to donating office space for the organization.

I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the Grace Episcopal Church in Plymouth, NC for the countless acts of charity and good will this institution has provided and will continue to provide eastern North Carolina. May their work be recognized and forever appreciated by the citizens of North Carolina as well as this Congress.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO PATRICK DOYLE

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Patrick Doyle, an intern in my Rapid City, SD, office for all of the

hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past few months.

Patrick is a graduate of Stevens High School in Rapid City, SD. Currently, he is attending the University of South Dakota, where he is majoring in political science and history. He is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Patrick for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

NOTIFICATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S INTENT TO ADD THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN (SOUTH SUDAN) TO THE LIST OF BENEFICIARY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES UNDER THE GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES (GSP) PROGRAM—PM 44

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 502(f)(1)(A) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "1974 Act") (19 U.S.C. 2462(f)(1)(A)), I am notifying the Congress of my intent to add the Republic of South Sudan (South Sudan) to the list of beneficiary developing countries under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program. South Sudan became an independent nation on July 9, 2011. After considering the criteria set forth in section 502(c) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2462(c)), I have determined that South Sudan should be designated as a GSP beneficiary developing country.

In addition, in accordance with section 502(f)(1)(B) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2462(f)(1)(B)), I am providing notification of my intent to add South Sudan to the list of least-developed beneficiary countries under the GSP program. After considering the criteria set forth in section 502(c) of the 1974 Act, I have determined that it is appropriate to extend least-developed beneficiary developing country benefits to South Sudan.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 26, 2012.

NOTIFICATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S INTENT TO SUSPEND DESIGNATION OF ARGENTINA AS A BENEFICIARY DEVELOPING COUNTRY UNDER THE GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES (GSP) PROGRAM—PM 45

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 502(f)(2) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the

"1974 Act") (19 U.S.C. 2462(f)(2)), I am providing notification of my intent to suspend designation of Argentina as a beneficiary developing country under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program. Section 502(b)(2)(E) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2462(b)(2)(E)) provides that the President shall not designate any country a beneficiary developing country under the GSP if such country fails to act in good faith in enforcing arbitral awards in favor of U.S.-owned companies. Section 502(d)(2) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2462(d)(2)) provides that, after complying with the requirements of section 502(f)(2) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2462(f)(2)), the President shall withdraw or suspend the designation of any country as a beneficiary developing country if, after such designation, the President determines that as the result of changed circumstances such country would be barred from designation as a beneficiary developing country under section 502(b)(2) of the 1974 Act.

Pursuant to section 502(d) of the 1974 Act, having considered the factors set forth in section 502(b)(2)(E), I have determined that it is appropriate to suspend Argentina's designation as a beneficiary developing country under the GSP program because it has not acted in good faith in enforcing arbitral awards in favor of U.S.-owned companies.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 26, 2012.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2230. A bill to reduce the deficit by imposing a minimum effective tax rate for high-income taxpayers.

S. 2231. A bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act, to advance the ability of credit unions to promote small business growth and economic development opportunities, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5. An act to improve patient access to health care services and provide improved medical care by reducing the excessive burden the liability system places on the health care delivery system.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2237. A bill to provide a temporary income tax credit for increased payroll and extend bonus depreciation for an additional year, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. LEE, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KIRK, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. COONS):

S. 2233. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to stimulate inter-

national tourism to the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. LIEBERMAN, and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. 2234. A bill to prevent human trafficking in government contracting; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. NELSON of Nebraska:

S. 2235. A bill to prohibit the establishment by air carriers and airport operators of expedited lines at airport screening checkpoints for specific categories of passengers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. BURR):

S. 2236. A bill to provide for the expedited development and evaluation of drugs designated as breakthrough drugs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. REID:

S. 2237. A bill to provide a temporary income tax credit for increased payroll and extend bonus depreciation for an additional year, and for other purposes; read the first time.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. LUGAR, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. PRYOR, and Mr. UDALL of Colorado):

S. Res. 406. A resolution commending the achievements and recognizing the importance of the Alliance to Save Energy on the 35th anniversary of the incorporation of the Alliance; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 418

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 418, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the World War II members of the Civil Air Patrol.

S. 550

At the request of Mr. LIEBERMAN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 550, a bill to improve the provision of assistance to fire departments, and for other purposes.

S. 641

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 641, a bill to provide 100,000,000 people with first-time access to safe drinking water and sanitation on a sustainable basis within six years by improving the capacity of the United States Government to fully implement the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act of 2005.

S. 722

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 722, a bill to strengthen and protect Medicare hospice programs.