

AKAKA, were to protect the water in Honolulu.

After the war, DAN attended the University of Hawaii, using the original GI bill. Years later, he would receive his master's degree from the University of Hawaii as well as his bachelor's degree. Senator AKAKA believes he would never have become a U.S. Senator if not for the GI benefits he received through his service in the military. That is why, as a member and past chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, he has worked to make important improvements to the 21st Century GI Bill. Today's GI bill is modeled, after the work done by JIM WEBB, after the educational opportunity program that DAN took advantage of when he was a young boy.

Senator AKAKA was chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee from 2007 to 2010, as thousands and thousands of Iraqi and Afghanistan veterans were coming home from combat. As Democrats collectively worked to bring our troops home from Iraq, DAN AKAKA labored with the Veterans' Administration to meet the needs and challenges of a new generation of veterans. The 21st Century GI Bill ensures those veterans get the educational opportunities they deserve.

DAN so valued his own education that he went on to serve his community as a teacher after he graduated from college. He became a principal, worked for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and the Hawaii Office of Economic Opportunity. He served 14 years in the House of Representatives before he was appointed to the Senate in 1990. He won election to the Senate later that year.

As chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee, DAN has been a strong voice and tireless advocate for Native Americans. He has taught us all about history—the history of Hawaii and its native communities, as well as the issues facing indigenous Hawaiians today.

Senator AKAKA is a descendent of native Hawaiians. He is 75 percent Hawaiian and he has Hawaiians on both sides of his family. He is very proud of his heritage. DAN was the first Native Hawaiian in the Senate.

He is also a deeply religious man who comes from a strong faith tradition. His devout mother taught her children a custom of charity. His mother was really a soft touch. Anyone coming by with a sad story, she would invite them in. Sometimes her hospitality only allowed her—because she had nothing else—to give them something to drink. His family was very poor when he was young. But DAN was able to work through this. Even if his mother had spent the grocery money for the month, strangers were always welcome at her table.

A friend of DAN's brother came to Hawaii from Chicago for a very brief period of time, and his mother took him in. He never left. He basically was raised in the Akaka home. A boy

named Anthony from Chicago, as I indicated, came to visit DAN's brother and he never left. Anthony became such a part of that family that, before he died, he wanted to make sure he was buried in Hawaii. He wanted to be buried with DAN's siblings and family in Hawaii. And he was.

Senator AKAKA served as choir director of the Hawaii Christian mother church, where his brother was minister. His brother was minister there for some 17 years. Senator AKAKA is still a member of that church.

He is blessed with a wonderful family as well as a rewarding career. He and his wife Millie have 5 children, 15 grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren.

Senator AKAKA has served his constituents well and with distinction. He has served not only his constituents and the State of Hawaii but our country with distinction. He has enjoyed a long and productive career and his presence in the Senate will be missed.

I offer congratulations to Senator AKAKA on his dedicated military and public service and wish him and Millie happiness in their retirement.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

THE FISCAL CLIFF

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, with the fiscal cliff fast approaching, I feel the need to point out something this morning that is perfectly obvious to most Americans but which Democrats in Washington still don't seem to grasp. I am referring to the fact that any solution to our spending and debt problem has to involve cuts to out-of-control Washington spending.

I know that might sound obvious to most people, but for all the President's talk about the need for a balanced approach, the truth is he and his Democratic allies simply refuse to be pinned down on any spending cuts. Americans overwhelmingly support some level of cuts to government spending as part of a plan to cut the Federal deficit. Yet the President will not commit to it. He refuses to lead on the issue. The President seems to think if all he talks about is taxes, and that is all reporters write about, somehow the rest of us will magically forget that government spending is completely out of control and that he himself has been insistent on balance.

A couple of weeks ago we saw his plan. After four straight trillion-dollar deficits and 2 years of running around calling for a balanced approach to bring those deficits under control, we saw his idea of balance—a \$1.6 trillion tax hike, new and totally unprecedented power to raise the Federal debt limit at his whim, and a \$50 billion stimulus for infrastructure; in other words, even more spending.

So when it came to offering his idea of a balanced approach, the President was vague about cuts but very specific in his request for more government spending—something no reasonable person had publicly contemplated previously. It raises the question: Do Democrats even believe their own rhetoric on spending? Or, contrary to the clear wishes of the majority of Americans, do they just want more tax revenue to fund a government without any limits—any limits whatsoever—which keeps getting bigger and bigger with every passing year?

Think about it. The Federal Government spent \$1.8 trillion in 2001, and last year—10 years later—\$3.6 trillion. These are nominal dollars, I realize, but by any measure the size of government has grown well beyond its means. Government spending is completely and totally out of control and we need to start acting like it.

Yesterday the Government Accountability Office revealed that government workers and private contractors are doing the same exact work on Medicaid claims, leading to billions in waste. Meanwhile, Senator COBURN has shown all of us some of the ridiculous things taxpayers are paying for with their tax dollars—some of the things that caused us to spend a trillion dollars more than we take in every single year.

Last year he put out a report showing how we could save more than \$100 billion—about one-tenth of the annual deficit—by eliminating duplicative and overlapping government programs. We have 94 Federal initiatives aimed at encouraging green building through 11 different Federal agencies. We have 14 programs with the sole purpose of reducing diesel emissions.

A few weeks ago Senator COBURN issued a study that showed taxpayers are funding Moroccan pottery classes, promoting shampoo and other beauty products for cats and dogs, and a video game that allows them to relive prom night.

Taxpayers also just spent \$325,000 on a robotic squirrel named Robo-Squirrel. The President just sent us a 73-page report detailing how \$60 billion in Sandy funds would be spent. Don't you think he could put together a list of spending cuts that would at least include Robo Squirrel?

We are still waiting. Why? Because for Democrats apparently every dollar in Federal spending is sacred; once secured, it can't be cut. That is why we have trillion-dollar deficits. The truth is, until the President gets specific about cuts, nobody should trust Democrats to put a dime in new revenue toward real deficit reduction or to stop their shakedown of the taxpayers at the top 2 percent. As one liberal lawmaker put it last week, that's just the beginning.

When it comes to deficit deals, the taxpayers need to trust but verify. On cuts, that means specifics.

RICHARD LUGAR

Mr. President, as we enter the final weeks of the 112th Congress, one of the toughest tasks for me is saying good-bye to colleagues who will not be with us at the start of the next Congress.

I would like to kick it off this morning by spending just a few minutes bragging on my longtime friend and neighbor to the north, Senator DICK LUGAR.

Let me start by saying I am grateful to have served alongside this good man and to have had a front-row seat for much of his illustrious career.

To give an idea of the kind of career DICK LUGAR has had, consider this: He was an Eagle Scout, first in his class in high school, first in his class in college, a Rhodes Scholar, Naval intelligence briefer, corporate turnaround artist, and big-city mayor. That was all by the age of 35. He has excelled at everything he has ever done. Most incredibly, he has done it with perfectly smooth elbows. Walk into any office on Capitol Hill and you would not find a single person who would say a bad word about DICK LUGAR. He has earned the respect and admiration of everyone who ever crossed his path. I assure you, in the world of politics, that is nothing short of a miracle. Now DICK has decided to press his luck. He is moving into the only line of work where rivalries are even more vicious than in politics—he is becoming a college professor.

DICK and I go all the way back to my first Senate race in 1984. He was the head of the NRSC at the time. He took a chance on me, and I have always been grateful. He has been a friend ever since.

A lot of Hoosiers cross the Ohio River every day to work in Kentucky, but it is not often a Hoosier Senator crosses it to help a Kentuckian making his first bid for the Senate. Since we are from neighboring States, our work in the Senate has often overlapped over the years. I truly lucked out. DICK has always been helpful and cooperative and a perfect gentleman.

With his six terms in the Senate, Senator LUGAR is the longest serving Member of Congress in Indiana history. He ranks 10th on the list of Senators who have cast the most rollcall votes.

As the longtime chair or ranking member on the Foreign Relations Committee, he has become one of America's most respected voices on matters pertaining to foreign policy. Indeed, Senator LUGAR commands the highest respect not only from his peers in the Senate but around the world, for his deep knowledge of foreign policy, national security, agriculture, and trade.

To a lot of liberals, he is a walking contradiction: a Republican intellectual. He has always worn that reputation lightly. Anyone who has ever been on a CODEL with DICK has seen his method. He stuffs his carry-on to the point of bursting with memos, newspapers, magazines, journals, reports, survey data, you name it. Apparently,

Trent Lott sat next to him on the plane once and was horrified at the way he tore out the pages and scribbled notes on them. We all know Trent would never be so indelicate.

Senator LUGAR has always had a global view. It started during his days as a Rhodes Scholar and an intelligence briefer in the Navy and he brought that global view back to Indiana. After the untimely death of his dad, DICK and his brother took over the family business and reinvented it from a struggling domestic operation to a global leader in the manufacture of baking machinery.

He went from success to success, moving from a seat on the Indianapolis school board into the mayor's office, and then, in 1996, on to the Senate. What a Senate career it has been.

For my part, I think Senator LUGAR's achievement in passing the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threats Reduction Program in 1991 was a great achievement, not just for himself but for the entire world.

The Nunn-Lugar program provides assistance to former Soviet states such as Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus in helping them dismantle and destroy their nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, in order to prevent them from coming under the control of terrorists.

As of 2011, Nunn-Lugar has deactivated over 7,600 strategic warheads, 791 intercontinental ballistic missiles, 669 submarine-launched ballistic missiles, 32 nuclear submarines, and 194 nuclear test tunnels. It has neutralized 1,395 metric tons of chemical weapons, and it has certified that the countries of the Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus—which once held the third, fourth, and eighth largest nuclear arsenals in the world, respectively—are now nuclear-free. What an incredible legacy.

After the September 11 attacks, Senator LUGAR called for and helped pass the expansion of the Nunn-Lugar approach, resulting in the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, which aims to prevent chemical and biological weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists. He has been a leader in Congress on the issue of ensuring food safety and supply internationally for years.

It is the mark of a leader that he thinks not only of his own moment in time but of the future of his community and of his fellow man, here and around the world. I think it is safe to say few Senators embody that spirit as fully as Senator LUGAR. That is not just my opinion. For his work to make the world a safer place, Senator LUGAR has been justly nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Senator LUGAR was first elected to the Senate in 1976 and has served for six terms. He is beloved in his home State of Indiana and in bordering Kentucky too. There is not only a lot of admiration but a lot of affection for this giant of the Senate just south of Hoosier territory.

Senator LUGAR has put his extraordinary talent to the service of this institution and his fellow countrymen, and I have no doubt he will be remembered as one of the best.

Senator LUGAR would probably tell us his greatest achievement was marrying Char. They have been married now for more than 50 years. They are proud of their four sons and their 13 grandchildren, and they can be proud of the great teamwork they have had together over the years, from their time as co-presidents of their senior class at Denison University. Char and the boys were involved in all his campaigns. The Senate family is sad to see them go as well.

Senator, you are a treasure to the Senate and a model of the public servant. We are sorry to see you go, and I am sorry to lose your wise counsel. I know that whatever you turn to next, you will be a great success, and I look forward to hearing all about it. Thank you for your tremendous service to this body, to the State of Indiana, and to the Nation.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes, the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half.

The Senator from Illinois.

RICHARD LUGAR

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me first echo the comments of the Republican leader, Senator MCCONNELL, about our colleague and friend, Senator DICK LUGAR of Indiana.

It has been my good fortune now for some 16 years to serve in the Senate with Senator DICK LUGAR and to come to know him and his wife Char and, more importantly, to come to know their work together on behalf of Indiana and the United States. DICK LUGAR is truly a giant in the Senate. We are going to miss him. There aren't many with the vision of DICK LUGAR.

There is something about standing in the middle of this country, Adlai Stevenson II once noted, with the flatlands all around you that gives you a perspective on the world a little different. DICK LUGAR's perspective on the world has been so insightful and so important for decades.

His work with Senator Nunn in dealing with the proliferation of nuclear weaponry and the dissolution of the Soviet Union was truly historic and