

amendments, no filibusters. I thought it was novel, a great idea. So the legislation was drafted and I brought it to the Senate floor. Seven Republicans who had cosponsored the legislation wouldn't vote for it. We couldn't get 60 votes to bring it to the floor. So a number of us asked President Obama if he would do a commission and he did. It was the Bowles-Simpson Commission.

The Bowles-Simpson Commission didn't have the potential the Judd Gregg-KENT CONRAD work had, because although they would send us something here, we could amend it and filibuster it. But we didn't have to worry about that, because we couldn't get enough votes from the commissioners to do that. So that was a failure.

Then President Obama entered into negotiations with the Speaker and they had talks that went on for weeks. They failed. They had another round of talks. That failed. JOE BIDEN, our Vice President, met with the majority leader of the House of Representatives, the Republican ERIC CANTOR. CANTOR walked out of those meetings.

After all that, there was an agreement made here that we would have a supercommittee. It would work under the same terms and conditions as the program Judd Gregg and KENT CONRAD came up with. The supercommittee would have 3 members appointed by me, Senator MCCONNELL, the Speaker, and Leader PELOSI—12 in all. Then we would bring their work to the floor, with no amendments, no filibusters. About a week before they were ready—they had to report by statute—I got a letter signed by virtually every Republican Senator saying: No revenue.

So the President is not going to fall for that again. Because every time we have done this—and I just went over what has happened, and we can add to that the Gang of Six, the Gang of Eight, and other well-intentioned Senators—never, ever could they agree on revenue. So the President is not going to fall for that again. He is not going to do that again.

It is as though we are going to have a card game and they say, you show us all your cards and then we will show you ours. But when it comes time to show the cards of the person you are playing against—nope. It reminds me of the "Charlie Brown" cartoon. How many times is Charlie Brown going to try to kick that football? Because we know every time he approaches that football it will be taken away from him. He can't do it. That is what has happened here, and we are not going to fall for that again.

The American people aren't going to be under the illusion the Republicans will, sometime in the future, come up with revenue. They are either going to agree to raising the rates or we are going over the cliff. How many times do we have to go through this drill to know it is an unfair game? So President Obama is not going to fall for that again. He has been very, very clear.

I heard Leader PELOSI say on the news this morning she has hopes

Speaker BOEHNER will come around. I hope that, in fact, is the case. But to this point there hasn't been a lot of progress, and I am very disappointed.

TRIBUTES TO DEPARTING SENATORS

JOE LIEBERMAN

Mr. REID. Madam President, I want to talk this morning about JOE LIEBERMAN.

The very modest apartment, with no hot water, where JOSEPH LIEBERMAN was raised has long since been demolished, but the values he learned in that little apartment—in the flat above his grandparents' house—are still there. They are the same values of devotion and public service that have driven him not only to overcome humble beginnings but to serve the country for 24 years here in the U.S. Senate.

Two years ago, on the day he announced his retirement from the Senate, JOE LIEBERMAN described his rise from cold-water flat to Congress as follows:

My four grandparents . . . came to America seeking freedom and they found it. They came to America hoping for opportunities and they got them. But even they could not have dreamed that their grandson would end up a U.S. Senator.

JOE was always a natural-born leader. He was president of his high school graduating class. He got undergraduate and law degrees from Yale—one of the most prestigious universities in the world—where he was chairman of the Yale Daily News.

He was a civil rights activist early on as a young man. He was inspired, as many of us were, by the words of John Kennedy. JOE defeated an incumbent to win a seat in the Connecticut State Senate, where he served for 10 years, including 6 as the majority leader of the Connecticut State Legislature.

After returning to private practice for 2 years, he served as the first full-time Connecticut attorney general. It was during his years as attorney general that he met the love of his life, Hadassah. Today, they have 4 children and 12 grandchildren.

In 1988, he again took on one of the giants of politics in the State of Connecticut in a race no one thought he could win, but he did. He defeated an incumbent U.S. Senator, and for the last 24 years he has served the people of Connecticut and this country with honor and distinction.

I was pleased to have had an opportunity to support Senator LIEBERMAN's historic candidacy for Vice President in 2000. JOE was the first Jewish major party candidate for Vice President.

Senator LIEBERMAN is a devout and observant Jew. He has even written a book about the importance of keeping the Sabbath as a day of rest. I read the book. I was so impressed with that book. Our Sabbaths may be on different days, but the solemnity of the Sabbath is important to both of us. I was so impressed by that book I bought

20 of them and sent them to my friends and my family, who I thought would gain a great deal by learning from this book that JOE had written.

JOE LIEBERMAN says his faith is the basis for his strong desire to serve the State of Connecticut and our country. During his four terms representing Connecticut in the Senate, JOE LIEBERMAN played a key role in drafting and passing many different pieces of legislation, including the 1990 Clean Air Act amendments, which have literally saved lives by eliminating harmful smog, acid rain, and other toxins in our air and water. He has been chairman of the very important Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. He is a powerful voice on security issues, and he has been exemplary in working on a bipartisan basis with Senator SUSAN COLLINS, who has been the ranking member of that committee.

JOE led the charge to create the 9/11 commission and to implement its recommendations. He was a leading voice for the creation of that department, Homeland Security, which we now look to for keeping this country safe.

As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator LIEBERMAN was a strong advocate for repeal of the discriminatory don't ask, don't tell policy that unjustly forced gay and lesbian servicemembers into the closet. He fought to ensure our military is the best prepared and best equipped fighting force in the world. We have much in common. We don't always agree on policy issues, but we do 90 percent of the time. Regardless of the few differences we have, I have never, ever doubted JOE LIEBERMAN's principles or his patriotism, and I respect his independent streak as it stems from strong convictions. JOE said it best himself:

I have not always fit comfortably into conventional political boxes. Maybe you've noticed that. Democrat, Republican, liberal, conservative. Because I've always thought my first responsibility is not to serve a political party, but to serve my constituents, my state and my country. . . . Whatever the partisan or policy differences that divide us, they are much less important than the shared values and dreams that unite us.

I have watched up close. He has been a wonderful Member of the Democratic caucus. I so admire and respect him. I agree with Senator LIEBERMAN's values. He has been an asset to the Democratic caucus and our country. I am pleased to have shared the dream of serving in the Senate with such an extraordinary man and exceptional Senator. I congratulate JOE and Hadassah on their years of dedicated service because they have worked together. I wish them both happiness.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader.

THE FISCAL CLIFF

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, yesterday I came to the floor to point out something that shouldn't need repeating but does: Any agreement on

debt and deficit reduction has to include cuts on government spending.

The reason I shouldn't have to repeat this is because the President himself has been running around the country for 2 years saying any agreement has to be balanced—meaning both revenue and cuts. This was the message he ran on, and it also happens to be one that the overwhelming majority of Americans actually support, especially the part about cuts, which more than three-fourths say they support. If you heard some of the wasteful projects I detailed yesterday, you would see why.

I don't think there is a single person outside of Washington who doesn't think we waste massive amounts of money in this town and who doesn't wonder why it is so hard for us to agree to cut back. Yet now, with the election behind him, President Obama is suddenly silent on the need for spending cuts. He keeps talking about balance. That polls well, but when it comes to specific cuts he is largely silent. All of a sudden it is all tax hikes all the time. Forget balance. Just raise taxes and spend even more.

The President and his allies have taken so many things off the table, the only thing left is the varnish. The President now seems to think, after his reelection, if all he talks about is the need for tax hikes and that is all reporters write about, we will all magically forget the part about needing balance. It is a classic bait-and-switch, and we are seeing new versions of it nearly every day now.

Democrats campaigned for 2 years saying we needed to take a balanced approach to our problems. Yet now that the President has been reelected, they are walking back, and the only thing left are the taxes. What the President should be doing after his reelection is bringing people together and showing that he has the desire and the ability to lead the two parties to an agreement that is good for the economy and good for the country.

So far, at least, he has chosen a different path—a path aimed at pleasing the most partisan elements of his base. A month after his reelection and weeks before the fiscal cliff, he would still rather campaign than cooperate. We will find out this week if he has the will to change paths and get something done or just double down on the campaigning.

Look, the election is over. The President may enjoy these political rallies, but it is time to get serious. The American people are gravely concerned about the Nation's future. They are counting on us to prevent the kind of crisis that we have seen unfolding all across Europe.

Republicans have engaged in these discussions in good faith. We have agreed to make tough choices. The question is, Where is the President? Where is the President? Where is the only man in the country who can make it happen?

Well, it appears that with just a couple weeks left to resolve this crisis, he

is busy moving the goal posts. Instead of leading as he was elected to do, he is out campaigning and playing games with the Nation's future.

So my sincere plea this morning is that the President get serious; that he put the campaign behind him and lead. If he does, he will have willing partners. The first sign is seriousness—seriousness about spending cuts.

OLYMPIA SNOWE

Madam President, yesterday I began the difficult task of saying an early good-bye to now six Members of our conference who will be leaving the Senate at the end of the year. This morning I would like to say a few words about my friend and longtime colleague, Senator SNOWE.

She has devoted the last 40 years of her life to serving the people of Maine. It has been an honor to work alongside this remarkable woman for the last 18 years and to see up close her tenacity and tough-mindedness in the service of her constituents. Some have described Senator SNOWE's advocacy for Mainers as ferocious, and I think there are few better examples of that than the fight she waged on behalf of Maine after the BRAC recommendations of 2005.

When the list of targeted facilities came out, Senator SNOWE mounted what has been described as a relentless months-long campaign akin to a defense at a trial. She marshaled all the data and the best arguments. When decision day finally arrived, not only were two of the three Maine facilities told to remain open, one of them was actually expanded. It is stories such as this that help explain why OLYMPIA's constituents keep sending her back to Washington by such wide margins and why so many were shocked to hear that she would be leaving at the end of the year.

As one shipyard worker in Portsmouth whose job she helped save put it:

We love her, and she loves us. [And] I can't recall ever saying that publicly about a U.S. Senator, but truly she's such a wonderful person.

As Senator SNOWE will tell you, many of her political views solidified during her modest Maine upbringing. Her parents ran a diner near Augusta. While they didn't have much, her father was adamant she receive a good education. So much so that he was dismayed to learn her kindergarten only lasted half the day. "He was convinced," she once said, "that I was getting off on the wrong foot."

It was at school that OLYMPIA first discovered her passion for politics. At St. Basil's Academy, a Greek Orthodox girls' school she attended until she was 15, she won her first election—as dorm president. She later graduated from Edward Little High School in Auburn, ME, and subsequently attended the University of Maine where, in 1969, she earned a degree in political science. It was also in college that she met Peter Snowe. Peter shared OLYMPIA's passion for politics. They married shortly after

graduation. In 1972, Peter was elected to the State legislature, while OLYMPIA went to work as a legislative staffer for Maine Congressman Bill Cohen.

The young couple seemed well on their way to building a life together, but in 1973, in the midst of a winter snowstorm, tragedy struck. Peter was killed in a car crash, and at a still young age OLYMPIA was left to build a life for herself.

What could have marked the end of her political aspirations became a new beginning instead. As OLYMPIA once put it, she resolved to "make a positive out of a terrible negative." She ran for office in the special election held to fill her late husband's seat, and she won. It was the start of a long and distinguished career in public service.

OLYMPIA was subsequently reelected to the Maine House in 1974 and elected to the Maine Senate in 1976. In 1978, when Bill Cohen, her friend and former boss, ran for the U.S. Senate, she ran for his seat in the House of Representatives and won again.

At the age of 31, she was at the time the youngest Republican woman ever elected to Congress and 1 of just 16 women in the House. OLYMPIA served eight terms in the House. She was a member of the House Budget Committee, the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and the former House Select Committee on Aging. Working with an Arizona lawyer named JON KYL and a Mississippi whip named Trent Lott, she helped turn minority Republicans into a potent legislative force, ensuring some of the biggest legislative victories of the Reagan era.

It was while serving in the House that OLYMPIA met Jock McKernan, who was a rising political star in his own right. Elected as Maine's second Congressman in 1982, Jock served alongside OLYMPIA in the House and was later elected Governor of Maine. The two were married in 1989, and they have been a great team since. As OLYMPIA puts it:

I have a wonderful partner in life. We've been able to ride the waves together.

When George Mitchell announced his retirement in 1994, OLYMPIA threw her hat into the ring and won by a landslide with 60 percent of the vote against her opponent's 36 percent and carrying every county in the State. Believe it or not, it was the smallest margin of victory she has enjoyed in three Senate races. With this victory, OLYMPIA became the only woman in history to serve in both houses of her State legislature and both Houses of Congress.

In the Senate, OLYMPIA has worked tirelessly as a member of the Finance Committee, the Armed Services Committee, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and as chair of the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

A lot of people like to focus on OLYMPIA's independent streak, but my experience is that she herself has always

cared most deeply about the people of Maine. She has gone through great efforts over the years to talk to her constituents directly. She once said:

I've made main street tours across this state a hallmark of my tenure in public office. They are like my secret poll.

It is through these tours that OLYMPIA decides which problems to fix—whether it was storm relief after the 1998 ice storm, the fight I already mentioned to keep Maine's military facilities open, or reauthorization of the Northeast Dairy Compact on behalf of Maine's dairy farmers.

Of course, this isn't to downplay OLYMPIA's penchant for independence or for joining gangs. Senator SNOWE's maternal grandparents immigrated to the United States from Sparta, which may help explain her fighting spirit. Just like the Spartan King Leonidas, she has never been afraid of a fight—even with members of her own party.

She headed the Centrist Coalition with Senator Breaux. She cochaired the Common Ground Coalition with Senator LANDRIEU. In 1999 she was one of five Republicans to vote to acquit President Clinton in both articles of impeachment. And in 2005 she joined the bipartisan Gang of 14, which helped defuse an earlier dispute about threats to change the Senate rules.

Yet what many fail to mention is that despite her vaunted independence, OLYMPIA has always been a very proud Republican. She recently said:

We believe as Republicans that the individual is more important than the state. We believe that the great days of our past can be a stepping stone to an even greater future. We believe a job is preferential to a handout and independence is better than dependence. We believe that the private sector is more productive than big government will ever be.

When it comes to a balanced budget—a top priority for the party—Senator SNOWE has been a true leader. She has been a long-time supporter of a balanced budget amendment. As far back as 1993, when she was still serving in the House, she was one of four initial sponsors of the legislation that would have mandated a balanced budget. One of her first acts as a Senator was to deliver a speech before a Senate committee in support of a balanced budget amendment.

OLYMPIA's many accomplishments have attracted broad notice outside of Washington. In 2004 *Forbes* named her "one of 100 most powerful women in the world," rating her even more influential than J.K. Rowling or Oprah. In 2006 *Time* named her one of the "ten best senators," noting that she is "in the center of every policy debate in Washington."

I do not think anything compares with the honor that was bestowed on Senator SNOWE by the townspeople of Bethel, ME, who, in 1999, created the "Olympia SnowWoman," a 122-foot tall snowman that still ranks as the tallest snowman—or woman—ever built. It required 13 million pounds of snow, took more than 1 month to build, wore a 100-

foot-long scarf, had two entire 27-foot evergreen trees for arms, and required 16 pairs of skis for eyelashes.

"It's just my luck," Senator SNOWE said of the monument, "I'd have a world record breaking monument named after me, and it will be gone by summer."

OLYMPIA, you have had a truly remarkable career. We thank you for your service to this Chamber and most especially to the people of the great State of Maine. We wish you all the best in the next phase of your life and, as you think of what to put in your memoir, I would only ask one thing: Please, go easy on us.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 2 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the first hour equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half.

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Madam President, I commend the minority leader for his nice tribute to Senator SNOWE.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Massachusetts.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Madam President, I rise to give my closing floor speech for this session of the Senate.

From the date of my swearing in on February 4, 2010, until the last day I serve in this great Chamber, which is 1 month shy of 3 years serving, I still say and believe that, aside from my marriage to my wife Gail of 26 years and the birth of my two children, Ayla and Arianna, serving in the greatest deliberative body for the Commonwealth of the Massachusetts, in the people's seat, has been the greatest honor I ever had in my life. I thank the people of Massachusetts for that opportunity. To think that someone such as myself, whose parents were married and divorced 4 times each, who lived in 17 houses by the time he was 18 and was subjected to various forms of abuse growing up, still has the honor to serve in one of the greatest deliberative bodies, as I said, in the world is something I will not soon forget.

To the young people sitting here and who may be watching, take it from me that in this country, even when it seems that you are fighting against all odds, anything is possible for you. There are no obstacles that cannot be overcome so do not give up and always follow your dreams.

As I have said before, people have no business in politics unless they respect the judgment of the voters. If you run for office, you have to be able to take victory or defeat in a gracious manner. I do respect the judgment of the voters. I accept their decision in this election with the same attitude and sense of appreciation I held when I arrived in this Chamber almost 3 years ago.

When I was sworn in, I was the 1,914th Senator accepting the oath of office by signing the book right up at the clerk's table. There were many Senators who served before me and there will be many Senators who serve after my service is over. That my name is listed amongst them is very humbling.

To all the people of Massachusetts, I greatly appreciate the confidence you placed in me for the past 3 years in allowing me to represent them in the Senate. To my colleagues, I thank them for the courtesy and friendship they afforded me during my time here. When I arrived, I promised I would read the bills, see how they affected Massachusetts, see how they affected our country, our debt and our deficit and I would vote in an independent manner based on the merits of that issue rather than political partisan politics. I am proud I did keep that promise to be independent. I am proud my voting record has identified me as the second most bipartisan Senator in the Senate, as referenced by Congressional Quarterly, and that I was named as the least partisan Senator in the Senate by *Washingtonian* magazine.

It was that independent and bipartisan approach that provided me with an opportunity to stand with the President at the White House on three separate occasions in the past 2 years to see bills I had either sponsored or played a key role in securing their passage signed into law. I was honored to work with my colleagues—many who are here today and many who are listening—on both sides of the aisle on legislation that was signed into law to move our country forward, including the STOCK Act to ban insider trading by Members of Congress—I know the Presiding Officer played a key role in that as well—the hire a hero veterans bill to help our veterans who are fighting for jobs actually have opportunities to be hired by employers who are looking for those heroes; the crowdfunding legislation which will help young entrepreneurs get access to new capital and create jobs, something I hope the SEC will immediately come up with a rule on so these people can start creating jobs and raising money; legislation to reform Wall Street, where I was the deciding vote to strengthen our country's financial system; legislation to eliminate an onerous 3-percent withholding tax; eliminating a stealth tax that would have affected government contractors—that is also gone; legislation to ensure our fallen heroes receive the dignity and respect they deserve at the Arlington National Cemetery, that