

KAY, if we were here Monday morning and we went to a chamber of commerce meeting, would these people look like this?

I still tell that story in Houston, TX, which they love, and, of course, I said: Oh, yeah. Which wasn't true. But I loved it. She was the best sport, and they still talk about her. They did give her a cowboy hat that was to die for.

Let me mention one other thing. I know Senator AKAKA is here, so I won't take up much more time. We teamed up on the issue of single-sex schools. The Senator from Maryland mentioned her Catholic girls school upbringing. Well, Hillary Clinton, BARBARA MIKULSKI, SUSAN COLLINS, and myself teamed up to ensure that every girl in this country has the opportunity, if their school board decides to offer it as an option, to go to a girls school. And likewise for every boy whose school board decides that it would be better for boys—in middle school especially and high school. We teamed up after about 15 years of trying, starting with Jack Danforth from Missouri. He started the effort to allow single-sex schools in our public entities in America. When I came here in 1993, we finally passed it with our coalition saying: We know this can be better for some girls and some boys. Not all.

I will say to the distinguished Acting President pro tempore that it was the Young Women's Leadership Academy in Harlem, NY, that gave us the courage to say this can be done, because they fought all the efforts to not allow it; all the lawsuits. They stood up. Hillary Clinton went to visit the Young Women's Leadership Academy, and I took Rod Paige, the Secretary of Education, right there to New York and I said: Secretary Paige, we can do this for all Americans. We can. Hillary and I and BARBARA and SUSAN said: We are going to do it. We did, and it was a great accomplishment.

I just want to end by saying that I so appreciate BARBARA MIKULSKI and JOHN CORNYN introducing the bill to name the Homemaker IRA for me. It means so much to me, because I experienced as a young single woman starting an IRA, getting married, and being told I couldn't provide any more for my own retirement security. And I knew there were so many women who, through divorce or the death of a husband, had gone in and out of the workforce or never been in the outside workforce, couldn't save for their own retirement security. When I went to BARBARA, I said: BARBARA, it is a Democratic Senate, so I will make this bill the Mikulski-Hutchison bill to get it passed. Senator MIKULSKI said: Not on your life, it will be Hutchison-Mikulski because it is your idea. And she worked just as hard as if it were the reverse. That says more about the Senator from Maryland than anything I could say. So thank you, BARBARA, for introducing the bill that would name it for me because I know it will help women long after I leave.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise today to honor my colleague, Senator KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, who will be leaving the Senate at the end of this term. Senator HUTCHISON has represented the State of Texas in the Senate since her election in 1993.

Senator HUTCHISON has deep Texas roots, with her great-great-grandfather signing Texas Declaration of Independence in 1836. Growing up in La Marque, TX, Senator HUTCHISON has represented her State as only a true Texan could. Senator HUTCHISON attended the University of Texas at Austin, graduating with bachelor of arts degree. She then went on to earn her J. D. from the University of Texas Law School in 1967. Senator HUTCHISON began her career as a political and legal reporter for KPRC in Houston.

In 1972, Senator HUTCHISON began her long career of public service by twice being elected to represent Houston in the Texas House of Representatives. In 1990, Senator HUTCHISON was elected Texas State treasurer. In 1993, Senator HUTCHISON won a special election, becoming the first and only woman to date to represent Texas in the U.S. Senate. She has continued to represent Texas for almost 20 years in the Senate, repeatedly winning her seat by overwhelming margins, including her reelection in 2000 with more votes than any statewide candidate in Texas history.

Throughout her Senate career, Senator HUTCHISON has been known as a strong leader on defense issues. In 1993, Senator HUTCHISON became the first woman to serve on the Senate Armed Services Committee since 1974. In 2003, Senator HUTCHISON introduced the legislation creating an overseas basing commission, which ensured our forces were capable of meeting the threats we face in the 21st century. Following the September 11 attacks, Senator HUTCHISON was instrumental in securing provisions to increase air cargo screening as part of the National Intelligence Reform Act.

Senator HUTCHISON has also been a champion of education during her time in the Senate. She has used her firm belief that every child is deserving of a quality education to advocate for increased investments in science, technology, and education.

Senator HUTCHISON has served the people of the State of Texas with integrity. I wish her success in whatever she chooses to do in the next chapter of her life.

DAN AKAKA

• Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, today I would like to honor the legacy and service of my colleague and dear friend, Senator DANIEL K. AKAKA.

My brother, Senator DANIEL AKAKA, has been my friend and partner in Washington for 36 years.

During that time, he has fought hard for Native Hawaiians, veterans, and the needs of Hawaii.

I am sad at the thought of the Senate without him and I am sorry I am unable to join him on the floor today.

DAN AKAKA is the spirit of Aloha.

I have always relied on his even keel and hard work to help me represent the people of Hawaii. And I have never, ever heard him utter a harsh word or do anything to harm another person.

There are few words to describe a kind man of his stature, but I assure you, Hawaii and this Nation are better because of his work.

On behalf of the people of Hawaii, thank you DANNY. There will never be another like you.●

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute and recognize the accomplishments of a colleague and dear friend who will be retiring from the U.S. Senate at the end of the term. Senator AKAKA has represented the State of Hawaii with distinction for 36 years. He has been a firm advocate for his constituents, especially for Native Hawaiians.

I have had the honor and privilege to work alongside Senator AKAKA on the Indian Affairs Committee. During this time and throughout his tenure as chairman, I have witnessed his commitment to improving the overall well-being of Native Hawaiians as well as all indigenous people. He has been a tireless advocate for their rights, and, with his leadership and bipartisan dedication, he has brought many issues they confront to the forefront. For more than a decade, Senator AKAKA has championed the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act, which establishes a process for Native Hawaiians to gain Federal recognition. He has also been the driving force in advancing the Native Hawaiian language movement. His dedication and leadership has ensured survival of the language.

As part of the greatest generation and a veteran, Senator AKAKA also used his time as chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs to champion laws to improve health care and benefits for countless veterans, servicemembers, and their families.

Known for breaking down barriers and building relationships, Senator AKAKA has served the people of Hawaii with integrity and humility. He is a true statesman, gentleman, and patriot, and our country is better for his service. He leaves a distinguished legacy and will be greatly missed by us all. I thank Senator AKAKA for his friendship and service to our Nation, and I wish him and his wife Millie all the best for the future.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Hawaii.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. AKAKA. Madam President, I rise to give my remarks and my aloha to the U.S. Senate.

Before I begin, I would like to take a moment to wish my good friend, my colleague of 36 years, my brother, DAN

INOUE, Hawaii's senior Senator, a speedy recovery and return to the Senate.

I rise today to say aloha to this institution. I have been honored to be a Member of the U.S. Senate for 22 years. It has been an incredible journey that I never imagined.

As a senior in high school going to Kamehameha School for Boys, which was noted as a military school, my life was changed forever when I saw Japanese fighter planes attacking Pearl Harbor. Like most men in my generation, I joined the war effort. My path was forever altered.

When the war ended, I believe I was suffering from PTSD. It was an act of Congress that allowed me, and the veterans of my generation, to build a successful new life. Congress passed the GI bill, and I say with certainty that I would not be standing before you today without the opportunity the GI bill gave me, not only to get an education but to have structure and a path forward—and the feeling that there was a way for me to help people. This proved to me that when Congress acts responsibly, it can build a better America.

That is why, when I was blessed with the opportunity to lead the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I dedicated myself to helping our service-members and veterans and their families, and worked with my colleagues to expand VA services and pass a new 21st-century GI bill.

So I want to take this moment to urge all of my colleagues and all of the incoming Senators and Representatives to do everything they can for our veterans and their families because we ask them to sacrifice so much for us. They put their lives on the line while their wives and husbands watch over their families. Caring for them is one of our most sacred obligations as a nation.

Not everyone on the front lines making our Nation stronger wears a uniform. In many critical fields the Federal Government struggles to compete with the private sector to recruit and retain the skilled people our Nation needs: experts in cyber security and intelligence analysis, doctors and nurses to care for our wounded warriors, and accountants to protect taxpayers during billion-dollar defense acquisitions. These are just a few examples. After I leave the Senate, it is my hope other Members will continue to focus on making the Federal Government an employer of choice. We need the best and brightest working for our Nation.

The work of the Congress will never end, but careers come to a close. Like the great men whose names are etched in this desk, I am humbled to know I have left my mark on this institution. I am proud to be the first Native Hawaiian ever to serve in the Senate, just as I am so proud to be one of the three U.S. Army World War II veterans who remain in the Senate today.

The United States is a great country. One of the things that makes us so great is that though we have made mis-

takes, we change, we correct them, we right past wrongs. It is our responsibility as a nation to do right by America's native people, those who exercised sovereignty on lands that later became part of the United States. While we can never change the past, we have the power to change the future.

Throughout my career I have worked to ensure that my colleagues understand the Federal relationship with native peoples and its origins in the Constitution. The U.S. policy of supporting self-determination and self-governance for indigenous peoples leads to native self-sufficiency, resulting in our continued ability to be productive and to contribute to the well-being of our families, our communities, and our great Nation. That is why I worked to secure parity in Federal policy for my people—the Native Hawaiians.

The United States has recognized hundreds of Alaska Native and American Indian communities. It is long past time for the Native Hawaiian people to have the same rights, same privileges, and same opportunities as every other federally recognized native people.

For more than 12 years now, I have worked with the Native Hawaiian community and many others to develop the Native Hawaiian Reauthorization Act, which has the strong support of Hawaii's Legislature and Governor as the best path forward toward reconciliation.

My bill has encountered many challenges, but it is pono—it is right—and it is long overdue. Although I will not be the bill's sponsor in the 113th Congress, it will forever bear my highest aspirations and heartfelt commitment to the Native Hawaiian people, the State of Hawaii, and the United States of America.

I know I am just one in a long line working to ensure that our language, our culture, and our people continue to thrive for generations to come. I believe Hawaii has so much to teach the world and this institution. In Congress and in our Nation, we are truly all together, in the same canoe. If we paddle together in unison, we can travel great distances. If the two sides of the canoe paddle in opposite directions, we will only go in circles.

I urge my colleagues to take this traditional Hawaiian symbol to heart and put the American people first—by working together.

I want to say mahalo nui loa—thank you very much—to my incredible staff. After 36 years there are far too many individuals to name, so I will just thank all of my current and former staff members in my Senate and House offices and on my committees, including Indian Affairs, Veterans' Affairs, and the Subcommittees on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia.

I want to thank the hundreds of employees who work for the Architect of the Capitol and the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Without the hard work they do every day, we could not do what we do in the Senate. Mahalo. Thank you to the floor and leadership staff as well.

I also want to thank Senate Chaplain Barry Black, who has provided me so much guidance and strength and has done more to bring the two sides of the Chamber together and find common ground than just about anyone. I want to thank our colleagues who join together every week for the Prayer Breakfast and Bible study as well. All of these have helped to shape me and the things I do here.

There is no one I owe more to than my lovely wife of 65 years, Millie. She is literally there for me whenever I need her. Nearly every day that I have served in the Senate for the past 22 years, Millie has come to the office with me. She helps me greet constituents, she makes me lunch, she keeps me focused, and she makes sure I know what is happening back home. She means the world to me. Every honor I have received belongs to her and to my family, my children, my grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. This speech is their farewell speech too. So mahalo, Millie and my ohana, my family.

In life there are seasons. While leaving Congress is bittersweet, I am looking forward to spending more time with our five children and getting to know our 15 great-grandchildren, and—can you believe this—we are expecting our 16th great-grandchild next year, and I will be home to see it.

I am looking forward to speaking with students and mentoring up and coming leaders and visiting places in Hawaii that I have worked for over my career. My goal was to bring the spirit of aloha to our Nation's Capital in everything I do. In Hawaii, we look out for one another, we work together, and we treat each other with respect. I hope I succeeded in sharing a little bit of Hawaii with all of you.

As I come to the end of 22 years in this Chamber, and a total of 36 years serving in Congress, I offer my profound gratitude and humble thanks to the people of Hawaii for giving me the opportunity to serve them for so many years. It truly was an experience of a lifetime. All I ever wanted was to be able to help people, and you gave me that opportunity. So mahalo nui loa. Thank you very much.

In Hawaii, when we part, we don't say goodbye. Instead, we say a hui hou, which means until we meet again.

Although I am retiring, I see this as the start of a new chapter, a new season. And I am blessed to have made friendships and partnerships that will last forever.

God bless Hawaii, and God bless the United States of America with the spirit of aloha. A hui hou.

Madam President, I yield the floor.
The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Indiana.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. LUGAR. Madam President, I rise today to address my colleagues on a