

the space station as they are right now with cargo, but making those spacecraft safe with the escape systems for humans. That is the dual track. Therefore, as a result, we end up with NASA exploring the heavens again. We are back in the human space business.

The great Senator from the State of Arkansas is here. He does not know I have just spoken about him. It is going to be my privilege to listen to his remarks.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I have to begin today by saying one thing, that is, to God be the glory. I will finish with that too. But first let me say a few words.

Since election night I have had many Arkansans come up to me and thank me for my service. I appreciate that. But I need to thank them for allowing me to do this for the last 12 years. It sounds like a cliché, but it is not. Serving in the Senate has been the greatest honor of my life. It truly has been. I have loved it. I have always done it with a cheerful heart. When I go back to my beloved Arkansas, I have to thank the people of Arkansas for allowing me to work for you. But I must confess I will miss waking up every morning and thinking, how can I make a difference for Arkansas and for America today? Those years were momentous in so many ways, for our country and for our world. I had a front-row seat to making history, and I hope I made a little bit of it myself.

On a personal level, those years were filled with family and friends, a remarkable staff, my Senate colleagues, and a whole series of rich, once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

The Lord has given me two wonderful children who are now in college. I know many of you all saw them for the first time when they were in elementary school. I am very proud, and their mother is very proud, of Adams and Porter Pryor. I am very excited about their future.

God has also brought an old sweetheart back into my life, Joi. She and I attended the sixth and seventh grades together. So when I say God has brought joy in my life, I mean it, literally.

Many of you know my parents. Of course, I would be nothing without them. Dave and Barbara Pryor have touched so many lives. They continue to do so.

For the last 8 years, I have lived with my brother David and Judith and Hampton Pryor in Washington, when I am here in Washington. I will always be grateful for their love and hospitality.

Scott and Diane and Devin Pryor in New York have been a great inspiration to me as well.

My staff is simply awesome. I love them all and they are all part of my

family too. There are too many to mention, but words such as talent, commitment, public service, effectiveness, all come to mind whenever their names come up. I have said this many times about my staff, and they keep telling me not to say it, but I am going to say it one last time: They do 99 percent of the work and I get 99 percent of the credit. So I want to acknowledge them for a job well done. They should all hold their heads high for the difference they have made. I ask unanimous consent that a list of their names be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Lisa Ackerman, Adrianna Alley, Ronnie Anderson, Suzanne Bartolomei, Tim Bass, Frank Bateman, Jason Bockenstedt, Patrice Bolling, Cathy Bozynski, Zac Bradley, Becca Bradley, Ruth Bradley, Rachel Brown, Sonya Bryant, LaRonda Bryles, Tamara Buchholz, Britton Burnett, Margery Buzbee, Macio Cameron, Lauren Carter, Rachel Colson, Kim Cooper, Paul Cox, Laura Culver, Emily Culver, Olivia Dedner, Shiloh Dillon, Martine Downs, Wes Duncan, Michael Fangue, William Feland, Greg Feldman, Jeff Fitch, Sherry Filippo, Bradford Foley, Derrick Freeman, Conor Frickel, Bess Ginty, Terri Glaze, Andrew Grobmyer.

Russell Hall, Beth Hallmark, Julie Hamilton, Megan Hargraves, Ruth Hargraves, Jacob Hargraves, Justin Harper, Ehren Hartz, Tonya Hass, Mary Grace Hathaway, Whitney Haynes, Brigit Helgen, Larry Henderson, Lauren Henry-Cowles, Hannah Herdinger, Carrie Hern, Tate Heuer, Gene Higginbotham, Brandon Hirsch, Emily Hoard, Sarah Holland, Greg Holyfield, Vincent Insalaco, Susie James, Mark Johnston, Louis Keller, Hank Kilgore, Caroline Kobek Pezzarossi, Shannon Lane, Stephen Lehrman, Autumn Lewis, Sam Losow, Shannon Lovejoy, Stan Luker, Scott Macconomy, Amanda Manatt-Story, Elizabeth Manney, Randy Massanelli, Eric May, Madra McAdoo, Nathan McCarroll, Lauren McClain.

Marietta McClure, Audrey McFarland, Valerie McNeese, Rodell Mollineau, Melissa Moody, Reed Moody, Brook Mumford, Callie Neel, Eric Nelson, Wayne Palmer, Allison Pearson, Mia Petrini, Brad Phelan, Jim Pitcock, Marisa Pryor, Walter Pryor, Hayne Rainey, Candace Randle, Kris Raper, Robbie Reed, Mary Renick, Erin Ridgeway, Jenny Robertson, Kirk Robertson, Bob Russell, Paul Sanders, Amy Schlesing, Kymara Seals, Kristin Sharp, Ashley Shelton, Ashley Simmons, Jason Smedley, Haley Smoot, Kate Melcher, Lucy Speed, Brandon Spicher, Jeffrey Stein, Arthur Stokenbury, Michelle Strikowsky, Kelvin Stroud, Kelsey Stroud, Richard Swan, Frances Tate, Michael Teague, Jennifer Thompson, Courtney Van Buren, Joan Vehik, Crystal Waitekus, Brad Watt, David West, Preston Weyland, Libby Whitbeck, Deke Whitbeck, Marco White, Amanda White, Quinten Whiteside, Elizabeth Wilson, Andy York, Mary Claire York, Julie Zelnick.

Mr. PRYOR. My colleagues. What can I say about my colleagues that has not been said before? Or maybe I could say, what can I say about my colleagues that they have not said about themselves before?

You know, politics is about people; not just the people out there, but the people in here, the people the people elect. I have served with some greats and some giants. Robert C. Byrd, Ted

Kennedy, Daniel Inouye, Ted Stevens are at the top of the list. But the truth is that every single Senator I have served with is a giant.

I have served with about 175 other Senators, so there are too many to single out. But I have made lifelong friendships here. We have done a lot of good things together. This is what I will remember: all the personalities, all the times when we came together to do the right thing, and all the successes we had together.

While in the Senate, I had more than 70 initiatives signed into law. Almost all of those have been bipartisan. I ask unanimous consent to have that list printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

HIGHLIGHTS OF SENATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Opened a New Opportunity for the Forestry Industry. Allowed domestic forestry products to be recognized by USDA as biobased, leveling the playing field with imports and ensuring such products can be procured by the federal government and sold as a greener alternative to consumers, P.L. 113-179

Funded Critical Agriculture Needs as Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture. Crafted and passed \$20 billion annual spending measure that allocates funds for agriculture programs, P.L. 113-76

Ensured Veterans Could Collect Retirement Benefits without Gimmicks. Restored the full retirement pay promised to disabled veterans and their survivors, P.L. 113-76

Honored Former Senator Dale Bumpers for his Conservation Efforts. Renamed the White River National Wildlife Refuge to the Senator Dale Bumpers White River National Wildlife Refuge, P.L. 113-76

Ensured Patients Have Access to Life-saving Medical Treatment. Allowed the FDA to access industry-paid user fees that had been blocked by sequestration, P.L. 113-76

Ensured Disabled Veterans are Treated with Dignity During Airport Security. Ensured the dignity of wounded and severely disabled service members and veterans during airport security screenings, P.L. 113-27

Protected Food Safety Inspections from Sequestration. Ensured USDA food inspectors were not furloughed, protecting 500,000 industry jobs at meat, poultry, and egg production facilities, P.L. 113-6

Sought Greater Employment Opportunities for Veterans. Allowed states to accept military training as fulfilling credentials or certifications for special skills required for certain civilian jobs, P.L. 112-239

Protected Consumers from International Scams. Extended the FTC's ability to coordinate investigation efforts with foreign counterparts and obtain monetary consumer redress in cases involving Internet fraud and deception, P.L. 112-203

Expanded the Safety Mission at the National Center for Toxicological Research. Allows the FDA to focus on the health and safety implications of nanomaterials, P.L. 112-144, P.L. 112-55

Kept Fatigued Truck Drivers Off the Road with Electronic Logging Devices. Required truckers to use electronic logging devices to more accurately monitor hours on the job, P.L. 112-141

Prevented Dangerous Drivers from Driving Big Rigs with National Drug Database. Established a national database of drug testing information for commercial drivers to ensure they can't bypass the law, P.L. 112-141

Stepped Up Vehicle Safety Following Numerous Recalls. Updated safety and compliance standards, and increased resources at DOT to conduct additional research and address emerging technologies, P.L. 112-141

Reduced Distracted Driving. Established a grant program for states to enact and enforce laws discouraging distracted driving, P.L. 112-141

Provided Flexibility in Pension Plan Payments. Allows certain companies to invest in growth opportunities instead of setting aside millions to cover certain pension payments, P.L. 112-141

Protected Homeowners from Buying Unnecessary Flood Insurance. Defeated a mandate that would force families and businesses behind certified levees, dams and other protection to purchase unnecessary flood insurance, P.L. 112-141

Stabilized Arkansas Funding for Rural Schools Program. Authorized USDA to allocate federal dollars for road projects in the state despite a missed deadline, P.L. 112-141

Expanded Possibilities at the U.S. Marshals Museum. Enabled the sale of coins to raise \$5 million to enhance exhibits at the U.S. Marshals Museum, P.L. 112-104

Ensured Military Families Receive Death Benefits. Provided death benefits to a family should a Reservist die at home during training, P.L. 112-81

Facilitated Camp Robinson Land Exchanges to Improve Training and Safety. Twice waived a statute to allow the National Guard to gain land more conducive for training and for an aviation support facility, P.L. 112-81, P.L. 109-13

Enabled First Responders to Help Neighboring States During a Disaster. Secured \$2 million for a program enabling first responders to help their neighbors in times of emergency, P.L. 112-74

Fixed FEMA'S Errors in Disaster Assistance Repayment Process. Used legislative privileges to stop FEMA from recouping disaster aid from an elderly couple who did nothing wrong, and granted FEMA the clear authority to waive debt in cases of FEMA error, P.L. 112-74

Leveraged Funds for Economic Development in the Delta. Increased the Delta Regional Authority's budget by nearly \$2 million, P.L. 112-74

Expanded Environmentally-Friendly Options for Military Construction Projects. Encouraged DoD to recognize all American National Standards Institute approved building ratings and certification systems, P.L. 112-74

Provided Community Access to Health Care. Provided HHS with the authority to issue a waiver and preserve funding for Arkansas Health Education Centers, P.L. 112-74, P.L. 112-10

Promoted Exports Abroad. Required the Commerce Department to develop an outreach plan to strengthen export promotion entities such as the Arkansas World Trade Center, P.L. 112-55

Expanded Science Parks. Enables the government to make loan guarantees and grants to create or expand science parks, P.L. 112-55

Protected Taxpayer Dollars from Prisoner Fraud. Required federal and state prison systems to share information on inmates with the IRS. This step allows the IRS to cross reference tax returns with the list of inmates to determine if a legitimate return is filed, before tax refunds are paid, P.L. 112-41

Expanded Environmentally-Friendly Options for Military Construction Projects. Encouraged DoD to recognize all American National Standards Institute approved building ratings and certification systems, S. Rept. 112-29

Modified Product Safety Law to Reflect Lead Limit Capabilities. Allows flexibility

for certain manufacturers and charities in complying with new lead limits, P.L. 112-28

Weeded Out Border Corruption. Required applicants for law enforcement positions within U.S. Customs and Border Protection to receive a polygraph exam before they are hired, P.L. 111-376

Spurred Innovation in Technology through Monetary Prizes. Enables federal agencies to hold competitions with monetary prizes in order to encourage innovation in research and technology, P.L. 111-358

Improved Investments to Advance U.S. Manufacturing. Required the National Science and Technology Council to identify priorities for R&D programs and address challenges in those programs, P.L. 111-358

Incorporated Entrepreneurship into STEM Activities. Requires lessons in innovation and entrepreneurship be taught as part of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education activities, P.L. 111-358

Improved Technology Access for Blind and Deaf. Ensures all Americans are able to fully utilize online devices, regardless of disability, P.L. 111-260

Prevented Excessive Financial Regulation of Non-Banks. Ensured banks and financial companies receive a higher threshold of review by the Federal Reserve, but that companies who were not part of the fiscal crisis, like Home Depot, do not have to undergo additional supervision, P.L. 111-203

Empowered Consumers to Make Informed Choices When Selecting Health Plans. Ensured consumers have an easy-to-use Internet tool to select the best plan on the health care exchange, P.L. 111-148

Retired Certain C-130Es. Retired outdated C-130Es and saved taxpayers millions of dollars in maintenance and storage costs, P.L. 111-84

Streamlined DoD Research Requirements. Eliminated a duplicative report to Congress on DoD development programs to allow the Pentagon to spend more time on research and less time on paperwork, P.L. 111-84

Blocked Unreasonable Regulation to End Pocketknife Sales. Prevented Customs and Border Patrol from banning certain pocket knives, bringing relief to consumers and the 20,000 employees that could have been impacted, P.L. 111-83

Preserved President Clinton's Birthplace for Future Generations. Designated the former president's home as a National Historic Site and unit of the National Park System, P.L. 111-11

Helped Parents Protect Children from Inappropriate Content on the Internet. Required the FCC to fulfill its obligation to continuously review and implement blocking technology as it is developed, P.L. 110-452

Fixed Housing Contract Problems for Military Families. Requires DoD to investigate and prevent base housing problems, P.L. 110-417

Fought for Fairness for Military Pilots. Directed the Air Force and Navy to review pilot assignments to non-flying duties, and the effect of these assignments have on these officers' eligibility for flight pay, P.L. 110-417

Ensured Farmers Access to Ammonium Nitrate Fertilizer. Required DHS to ensure that any person who produces or sells ammonium nitrate (AN) registers their facility and maintains records of sales. Buyers are checked against a terrorist screening database, which keeps AN out of the wrong hands without placing an undue burden on farmers, P.L. 110-329

Protected Consumers from Toxic Toys and Other Dangerous Products. Overhauled the Consumer Product Safety Commission and established strong product safety safeguards that cut fatalities in half and dramatically reduced toy-related recalls, P.L. 110-314

Fought for Fairness in the Tax Code for Military Families. Enabled men and women

in uniform to collect combat pay and other tax benefits, such as the Child Tax Credit and the Earned Income Tax Credit, P.L. 110-245, P.L. 108-311

Provided Relief to Military Families Affected by Landlord Foreclosures. Allowed the military to move household goods for members of the Armed Forces who are forced to relocate when the housing they are renting goes into foreclosure, P.L. 110-289

Advanced Investment in Cellulosic Biofuel. Required USDA to conduct a nationwide analysis of where the greatest potential for development of cellulosic biofuel exists, P.L. 110-234

Updated Regulations for Private-Public Partnerships Following Disrupted Rice Exports. Improves quality control standards for university and private sector research, P.L. 110-234

Ensured Soldiers Receive Fair Time for Rest and Recuperation. Offered additional leave for troops serving extended tours, P.L. 110-181

Kept the Do Not Call List Free. Permanently kept the Do Not Call program free, simple and effective, P.L. 110-188

Improved Medical Care for Wounded Warriors. Increased personnel and resources available to treat wounded warriors, with an emphasis on training health care workers on identifying and treating PTSD and TBI, P.L. 110-181

Made Swimming Pools Safer for Children. Requires drain covers to meet anti-entrapment safety standards, P.L. 110-140

Improved Fuel Economy Standards. Negotiated an agreement that overcame 30 years of deadlock on fuel economy standards, P.L. 110-140

Maintained Training for First Responders. Secured funding for the Domestic Preparedness Equipment Technical Assistance Program, a nationwide training program for first responders, P.L. 110-53, P.L. 109-295

Tapped an Arkansas Center to Head Rural Transportation Security Research. Designated the Mack-Blackwell Rural Transportation Center at the University of Arkansas as a "National Center of Excellence for Transportation Security," P.L. 110-53

Expanded Online Education Opportunities for Minorities. Established a pilot program for Historically Black Colleges and Universities to develop online courses, P.L. 110-16

Improved Energy Efficiency in Military Housing. Directed DoD to consider products that meet Energy Star specifications in order to reduce the military's energy bill, P.L. 109-364

Cracked Down on Foreign Truck Drivers Entering the U.S. Illegally. Directed DOT and DHS to comply with measures that eliminate fraud in the Commercial Drivers License process and verify citizenship, P.L. 109-347

Put the FEMA Mobile Homes to Good Use. Ensured that mobile homes purchased by FEMA in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina went to serve the public good, P.L. 109-295

Removed Unnecessary Obstacles for a Local Manufacturing Company. Eliminated a 4.5 percent tariff on Crotonaldehyde for Eastman Chemical Corporation, P.L. 109-280

Kept Local Manufacturer Globally Competitive. Eliminated a 4.5% tariff on LCD display panels in order to reduce production costs for Sanyo, P.L. 109-280

Funded the Completion of the Little Rock Central High School Museum and Visitors Center. Secured more than \$5 million to complete the Center, P.L. 109-146, P.L. 109-54

Identified Gasoline Price Gouging. Requires the FTC to determine if and where gasoline price gouging occurs in the supply chain, P.L. 109-108

Prioritized Cleburne County for Water Infrastructure Assistance. Encouraged the Agriculture Secretary to prioritize Cleburne

County, Arkansas for Rural Utilities Service water and waste water loans and grants, P.L. 109-97

Improved Medical Care to Soldiers. Increased funding for mobile medical shelter prototypes, and later urged FEMA to use up to \$10 million to acquire a mobile medical system for evaluation, P.L. 109-90, P.L. 108-287

Prevented Moving Companies from Holding Goods Hostage. Requires movers to release goods if a customer pays the estimate, P.L. 109-59

Promoted the Commercialization of Biodiesel and Hythane. Requires DOE, in conjunction with universities throughout the country, to prepare reports that would evaluate how to best deploy biodiesel and hythane and create an infrastructure to support their potential, P.L. 109-58

Protected Soybean Industry. Directed the USDA to initiate a stronger response to combat Asian Soybean Rust, which resulted in a \$1.2 million for the effort, P.L. 109-13

Established Tracking System for Wounded Service Members. Ensures families receive timely information when loved ones are wounded, P.L. 108-375

Mr. PRYOR. I do not do very many press conferences, as you all know, and I have always been first in line to work with any and all of my colleagues to try to get things done. The Senate is a special place. On a personal level, we talk about the Senate family. It is a family. When people mention the Senate to me, I think of other Senators, of course, and I think of legislation, but usually the first thing that comes to mind is the people who work here: the Parliamentarians, the clerks, the door-men, the Capitol Police. I am appreciative of the other Senators' staffs and the committee staffs, and even to my House colleagues—most of them, anyway. No, even to my House colleagues.

But I have always been mindful of the people who really make this place run: the janitorial staff, the folks in the restaurants, the maintenance guys, the painters, the carpenters, the tech people. The list goes on and on. All of them contribute to make the Senate what it is. We work here together. We go through life and budget cuts and changing political winds together. There is a bond we all feel because we all have been in the Senate together.

Please give me just a few moments of your time to make this next point. As great an institution as the Senate is, the Senate is broken. The American people know it. In fact, this is an area where the American people are way ahead of Washington. The people around our Nation look at Washington and they shake their heads. We sometimes cannot see the forest for the trees because we get bogged down in personalities or perceived wrongs or whatever the case may be.

This is not a Barack Obama problem, this is not a George Bush problem. In fact, all recent Presidents have gone through periods of deep unpopularity. This is an "all of us" problem. The political environment today grinds the trust and confidence out of our system. Let me tell you, that is not good for anybody.

The Republicans have a great opportunity in 2015 and 2016. They convinced the voters they are the party that can govern. Now it is time for them to turn off the rhetoric and turn on the governing. In the Senate, if the new Republican majority will run the Senate the way they have said it should be run, then this is a very good start. If we can replay the tape over the last 2 years, we will hear Republican Senators time and again clamor for an open amendment process and for regular order. They were caustic when the Democratic majority changed the rules—a change, by the way which I did not support. So let's change the rules back to what they were. Let's govern the way we know we ought to.

Democrats—this is an important message—Democrats should help the Republicans govern. The rules are not the problem around here. We are the problem, all 100 of us. Hyperpartisanship has gotten the best of us. When things get too partisan, good judgment and common sense go out the window. The biggest and most serious problem facing our Nation today is the dysfunction in our political system within Washington. America has incredible potential, but we cannot reach it unless Washington starts to work again for all of us. If we are to continue to be the greatest Nation on Earth, we must work together. That is, after all, the American way. That is our history. This country was created, this country was forged. The great melting pot is just that, a melting pot. *E pluribus unum* actually means something: Out of many, one. We have many differing viewpoints, many philosophies, many backgrounds, many priorities. So we have the pluribus part down pat. That is not the problem. No, the challenge comes with the *unum*.

From my perspective, I see the ultimate question as a question of loyalty. Who are we loyal to? I just mentioned that we have many different viewpoints, philosophies, and agendas. But if we have different loyalties, then we are a divided nation. That will only lead to bad things. When each of us takes our oath of office, we swear allegiance to the Constitution, not a party, nor a President, nor an interest group. We do not swear allegiance to those who pay for our campaigns or to a certain agenda. We need to hash out our differences in the Senate in committee and on the floor, then hash them out with the House, but at the end of the day, produce legislation. That is the essence of the legislative branch. We also must exert our authority as article I, the first branch of government.

We have checks and balances. We cannot provide the check or the balance if we are not functioning. Making this place function is part of our oath of office. One thing we should all remember: The Senate is bigger than we are. We do not have to look farther than our own desks to see that. Look inside your desk and you see the names

written in the drawer. In my desk I see Senator Gronna, elected in 1911 from North Dakota. Names such as Everett Dirksen and George Mitchell, David Pryor, Joe Lieberman and CARL LEVIN—these men molded history. These are Senators who shaped world events. These Senators were good stewards of what our Founding Fathers created for us. We should be too, each and every one of us.

The Father of our Country had a lot to say about partisanship. In his Farewell Address, he warns us of the "continual mischiefs" and "ill-founded jealousies" caused by parties. We should take heed. It is the greatest mistake of our time to allow these prophesied mischiefs and jealousies to divide us and damage the American political character.

Abraham Lincoln once famously said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." That is so true. His voice is echoing down through the halls of history to us. If we are divided, we cannot stand. We will not stand a chance in the future. Let Lincoln's words be a clarion call to all Members of Congress. That includes all Senators.

Look at what is happening to us. The Congress is getting more liberal and more conservative. Look at the wild swings in regulations that have occurred from President Clinton to President Bush to President Obama. No wonder we are seeing a sluggish economic recovery.

Washington is creating uncertainty and instability. The private sector cannot make investments or take risks with confidence. It should be the opposite. The Federal Government should be fostering economic growth. This country needs Washington to function. That starts in this Chamber.

One thing I like to say in meetings is this: "Don't just bring me the problem, bring me the solution." So I have identified a big problem here this afternoon. It is fair for you to ask about the solution. Regardless of your political philosophy, bipartisanship is the answer. Let's take off the red jersey and take off the blue jersey and let us all put on the red, white, and blue jersey. Our Nation's challenges, large and small, require us to get on the same team; that is team USA.

Remember, I mentioned Abraham Lincoln saying that, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." Well, he was actually quoting an itinerant Jewish rabbi who said that about 2,000 years ago. Jesus was right then and He is right now. A house divided against itself cannot stand. Good government is good politics. Although there are short-term gains to be had by political division, the long-term consequences are bad for the country. It is time for the giants of the Senate to emerge. Jesus has offered us some advice. Probably the best practical advice of wisdom He left us here in the Congress is called the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. If we applied that around here, about

three-quarters of our problems would vanish. Poof.

Is that impossible? Not at all. Most of us claim to have a Judeo-Christian faith, so why not apply what we know to be true? The first step in this process is another one of Jesus's admonitions—forgive one another.

I know each Senator, from time to time, feels betrayed, let down, slighted, or somehow wronged. We need to forgive one another and let the healing begin.

I am not trying to combine religion and politics, but I think most everyone in the world agrees that Jesus is one of the greatest moral teachers of all time. He has a lot to say about how we should treat one another.

There are and there will be 100 Senators. Healing the Senate and getting it to function as it did for two centuries is up to each individual Senator. That means doing the right thing but also persuading others to do the right thing. It is not about us, it is about our country, our children, and our grandchildren. It is about being good stewards.

In closing, let me say I loved my time with you. I will always remember you with fondness and I will always be cheering for you. I expect great things from you because I know you are capable of doing great things. God bless the Senate and the work we do, and God bless the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

Mr. NELSON. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are.

Ms. COLLINS. I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to proceed for not longer than 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTES TO MARK PRYOR

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to give a tribute to Senator PRYOR, whose remarks we have just heard.

Through nearly a quarter of a century of dedicated public service, Senator MARK PRYOR has established a strong reputation as the voice of reason.

From an Arkansas legislator and attorney general to a U.S. Senator, Senator PRYOR has always put the people first. To me, he has been an admired colleague, a great collaborator, and a treasured friend. Working with Senator PRYOR during his service in the Senate, I know that he acquired his voice of reason the old-fashioned way: He is such a good listener.

All of us are pretty good talkers, or we wouldn't be here, but Senator PRYOR has the distinction of being a good listener. Whether debating colleagues on the Senate floor or interacting with his guests on his Pryor-Side Chats back home, he has consistently demonstrated that he is one of those special individuals who can disagree without ever being disagreeable. He always sticks to his principles, yet he respects the principles of those with whom he disagrees. He is well informed but always open to new information.

It has been a particular pleasure to work with Senator PRYOR on the homeland security committee for many years and on the Committee on Appropriations. His work ethic, his attention to detail, his willingness, once again, to listen to alternative views have been great assets in addressing the challenges we face in our country.

He has been a diligent fiscal watchdog for the Nation's taxpayers. To me, Senator PRYOR's approach to public service is best defined by the crucial role he played in ending the government shutdown in the fall of 2013 and as a member of the Gang of 14 in 2005. In each case he worked closely with me and with other Members to end a crisis and to achieve a responsible, common-sense solution. In each case he listened and he led.

As a charter member of our Common Sense Coalition last year, Senator PRYOR stepped forward to restore both government operations and help to restore some modicum of citizen confidence in our Senate, in our government.

These certainly were not the only times that Senator PRYOR's bipartisan approach and concern for the well-being of Americans had been evident. In 2007, after a large number of recalls following injuries and deaths that caused parents throughout America to be concerned about the safety of their children's toys—especially those manufactured overseas—he once again stepped forward to lead. After an extensive investigation in the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, Senator PRYOR worked with those of us on the Republican side on a bill to strengthen the Consumer Product Safety Commission so that we can now better detect and counter threats to our children's health before these threats even reach the store shelves, and eventually homes, schools, and daycare centers.

From restoring trust in government to protecting our children, Senator PRYOR has proven over and over again that bipartisanship works. It is so significant that his message to us today is that the dysfunction and hyperpartisanship that have characterized the Senate cannot stand.

That is a wonderful parting message, and it is typical of Senator PRYOR that rather than talking about all of his accomplishments, he instead is beseeching the Senate to work together in the interests of all Americans—whether we

are Democrats, Republicans, Independents, Greens, or not affiliated with any party at all.

The 2014 election did not produce the result Senator PRYOR had hoped for, but it did reveal another aspect of his extraordinary character. His message to the people of Arkansas and to the new Senator-elect on election night was genuine and it was gracious. To the people of Arkansas, he simply expressed his sincere gratitude for the opportunity to serve. But may these words, spoken that evening to us in the Chamber, which he echoed today, be his legacy. He said that night:

The biggest and most serious problem we are facing in this Nation today is the dysfunction of our political system in Washington. We have incredible potential, but we won't reach it unless Washington starts to work again for all of us.

MARK PRYOR has been an extraordinary individual who always did what he believed was right. He has contributed enormously to our country and served his State well.

I commend him for his service and I thank him for his commitment, his integrity, and, most of us all, for his friendship.

Thank you, MARK.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the great Cesar Chavez once said: "If you really want to make a friend, go to someone's house and eat with him . . . the people who give you their food give you their heart."

That is true. Sometimes they give you more than that. Sometimes they give you an adventure in eating that you will never forget.

That is what happened to me when, in January, I was invited by MARK PRYOR to be his guest at a legendary Arkansas political event. I am talking about the historic, well-known, annual Gillett, AR, coon supper.

Never heard of the Gillett coon supper in Arkansas? It is to Arkansas what TOM HARKIN's steak fry is to Iowa, only it is nonpartisan, it draws about 1,200, and unfortunately they don't serve steak.

Coon is raccoon served in large buckets. Folks just reach inside and pull out a chunk of coon, as they say in Gillett.

I was there that night with MARK PRYOR. I wanted to make sure I had my best manners as a visiting guest. I was certainly appreciative of the invitation to a packed room with the Governor and every walking politician in Arkansas. Bill Clinton had been there over and over again in his terms as Governor. He never missed that supper, and we weren't about to miss it that evening.

I watched as they put these bowls of coon and other meats on the table, and I noticed something interesting. All of the visitors like myself had bowls of coon put in front of them. All the folks