

should look like. He was a handsome man. I repeat, he had this great voice, and he was very tall, stood very erect. I was always very envious of how he could stand so tall, and he has such a sense of humor that is quite remarkable. Sheila is his friend. She visits him in his home in South Carolina now, and she has helped me keep in touch with Fritz Hollings.

Then she worked for me. I was so fortunate. I was looking for someone to do my fundraising during a very difficult election I had before me. I knew who I wanted, but I didn't know that I could get her. Well, we worked things out. And it wasn't just because I offered her more money, it was because she wanted to work with me, and I am so happy that came to be.

For 14 years, she has been part of my team—and I mean part of my team. During that entire time, she has done an incredible job doing my Senate business as a candidate. Doing Senate business here as the Assistant Secretary, she has been the best.

So after having worked for the Senators I have mentioned, including me, when the time came to fill the role of Assistant Secretary of the Senate, she was a perfect candidate, and in this position she has not disappointed me once.

Everyone who has ever worked with Sheila knows she is a meticulous planner. If you want something done—an event—and done right—and I mean done right: help setting up the program, what the flowers are going to look like, what the food is going to be, what time it should start, what time it should end—and she is very, very precise on when it should start and when it should end—we learned that last night during a farewell for a number of Democratic Senators—she really spares no effort, leaves no detail unattended.

Her time here in the Secretary's office has been a smashing success. It is not easy to attend to the needs of 100 Senators—100 Senators—Democrats, Republicans, Independents, their families and staffs, but Sheila handles it with skill and with grace. That is why many call her the “Mayor of Capitol Hill,” and for good reason.

Whether she is escorting the President's daughter to the inauguration podium in her bright pink coat, or planning a ceremonial dinner in Statuary Hall, Sheila does the job exceptionally well.

Just one example, 2 years ago the Senate hosted the screening of Steven Spielberg's now legendary film, “Lincoln.” There were some real big-shots there. Spielberg, Daniel Day Lewis, the guy that wrote the script—they were all there. So there were, frankly, a lot of prima donnas there, including of course all the Senators. So it was an exceptionally difficult feat to pull off, coordinating attendance for 100 Senators who all wanted to go to see these famous people.

She was preparing a panel discussion for the cast and crew, all while fol-

lowing strict Capitol protocols as to who could go where and what we could do in the places we went. But she had a secret weapon, and that was she. She didn't know it, but that was the secret weapon. She took care of every possible problem and coordinated every single detail, even down to a makeshift concession stand in the lobby. It was a wonderful event, a marvelous event, because for the briefest moment it brought the Senate together in the spirit of unity that we haven't had in some time. It all happened because of her.

She is very devoted to her family, her mom Lois, about whom she has talked endlessly, and of course her deceased father. I was trying to help in comforting her as I could when she lost her mom Lois. I can't imagine how proud her parents would be—and are, from wherever they are, looking down on us—at the work that Sheila has done in her life. I know how proud I am of her now, as she prepares to move on to her next chapter of life, and I will do everything I can to help that chapter be a good one. I wish her the best.

I, along with the entire Senate, thank her for the steadfast diligent service she has rendered as Assistant Secretary for the last 8 years.

Sheila has a dog she loves, little Ava, and I hope she takes that little dog on a trip to have a good time. I am sure she will.

On a personal note, I wish to say publicly how much she has meant to me. She has been really a part of my family the last 15 years. As most everyone knows, my wife was involved in a really bad accident. Who was there? Sheila. Battling, as she did for 1½ years, ravaging breast cancer, who was there? I would come home after having been unable to do the things around the house. I would have a refrigerator full of food. Not junk—it was wonderful food. She did that not once, not twice, but many, many times. She is my friend—my forever friend.

She interacts with my children as if they were her siblings. She knows everything about them. So even though I will not see her at work every day, as I have for 14 or 15 years, she will always be part of my life.

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#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

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#### TRIBUTE TO SAXBY CHAMBLISS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to say a few words about my friend and colleague, Senator SAXBY CHAMBLISS.

SAXBY, as we all know, is the ultimate southern gentleman. He is a man of his word. He is blessed with the charm and the drawl only a Georgian could possess, and he is far too modest. He shouldn't be. He has a lot to be

proud of as he looks back at a storied career here in Congress.

We are talking about one of our Nation's top experts on intelligence and national security. We are talking about a standout champion for the men and women of our military. We are also talking about a Senator who became chair of the Agriculture Committee just 2 years into his first term. That is really quite an accomplishment. But once you get to know SAXBY, it isn't all that surprising.

Before he came to Congress, SAXBY was a smalltown ag lawyer. He still lives in a rural area—a peanut and cotton-farming region far removed from the bright lights of Atlanta. SAXBY has a feel for the issues that could only be acquired from actual on-the-ground experience. He understands the real-world impact of what we discuss here in Washington, and he cares.

On top of that, he has the disciplined work ethic of a minister's son—which makes sense, because he is one. SAXBY is usually the first guy to raise his hand when there is an assignment no one else wants. That is what we saw for him on the Gang of 6, a politically difficult and work-intensive committee if there ever was one.

But SAXBY came here to get things done—not to posture. He takes on projects with the kind of drive and courage we don't often see.

How courageous is SAXBY? Well, he accepted an invitation to go quail hunting with Vice President Cheney, and he lived to tell the tale. The senior Senator from South Carolina remembers the trip very well. He had to be persuaded by SAXBY to come. He still suspects that SAXBY's real motive was to give Cheney a second target.

It wasn't the only time SAXBY cheated death with the Vice President. Lindsey recalls a meeting in Baghdad with SAXBY, JOE BIDEN, and the Iraqi Prime Minister. Afterward, they boarded a plane and came under fire. Here is what SAXBY said: “I guess the meeting didn't go that well.”

So SAXBY is a comedian. But he is also courageous. He is also persuasive. He is really good at getting his way. It is kind of what we would expect from a former door-to-door fruitcake salesman. After hawking loaves of spiced dough, there is not much SAXBY can't sell at this point.

We know he was persuasive enough to convince Julianne to marry him. SAXBY and Julianne met at the University of Georgia. She was Sigma Chi's pledge-class sweetheart—and she soon became SAXBY's sweetheart. The Chamblisses have been inseparable ever since.

Now, just in case SAXBY ever becomes his own category on Jeopardy, here is an interesting piece of trivia. The president of the same pledge class became SAXBY's Democrat challenger in 2008. The two fraternity brothers are still friendly. Here is how this gentleman remembered SAXBY from college. He said he “looked old.”

Well, Julianne fell for him anyway, and it is a good thing she did. This former schoolteacher is better than anyone at keeping him centered, and she has even taught students who would go on to serve on SAXBY's staff. So it is really quite a partnership. SAXBY says that the most significant moment of his life is when he met Julianne.

That is really something when we consider how much he loves golf. Last year, SAXBY sank a hole in one squaring off against the leader of the free world—that is, the President of the United States. He has a signed flag to prove it.

But golf is more than just a hobby for SAXBY. It is a way to get things done. More than most people around here, he understands the value of relationships. He is good at whipping votes and picking up intel from both ends of the Capitol. He works across the aisle, and he is unafraid to stand up when something needs to be said.

That is the thing about SAXBY. He doesn't say a lot, but when he does, you know it is significant. You know there is a lot of careful thought behind it.

SAXBY is a serious legislator who approaches his role as vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee in that frame. SAXBY learns things on that committee that would keep anyone up at night. It is a grave responsibility. But SAXBY is perfectly suited to it. He has always stood proudly in defense of our Nation.

We are going to miss his sharp wit, his integrity, and his judgment.

I know SAXBY's staff is going to miss him, too. Some of them have been with him since his days in the House. Well, the Senate's loss is the Chambliss family's gain.

I know SAXBY is looking forward to spending more time with Julianne. I know he can't wait to trade the title of Senator for a new one—Big Daddy. It is what his grandkids call him. He can't wait to see more of them. They are the reason he works so hard here—to build a better future for them, for the next generation.

SAXBY will have plenty of stories to share when he leaves, such as when he hit that hole in one, when he threw out the first pitch for the Braves, and when he made the cover of Peanut Patriot Magazine.

So SAXBY has obviously had a long and interesting career. He deserves some time to focus on his family. We thank him for his dedication to this body and to the people he represents, and we send him every wish for a retirement filled with joy and happiness.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

#### PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the message to accompany H.R. 3979, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 3979, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Pending:

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill.

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Reid amendment No. 3984 (to the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3985 (to amendment No. 3984), of a perfecting nature.

Reid motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on Armed Services, with instructions, Reid amendment No. 3986, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3987 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 3986), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 3988 (to amendment No. 3987), of a perfecting nature.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join with Senator INHOFE, the ranking Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee, to bring to the floor H.R. 3979. This is the agreement between the Armed Services Committees of the Senate and House on the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015. The House of Representatives passed the bill last week by a vote of 300 to 119. If we succeed in the Senate, it will mark the 53rd year in a row that we have enacted this bill that is so essential to the defense of our Nation and to our men and women in uniform and their families.

I thank all the members of the staff of the Senate Armed Services Committee, especially our subcommittee chairs for the hard work they have done to get us to the finish line on this bill. I thank Senator INHOFE for his close partnership. Before this Congress I had been fortunate to serve with a series of Republican chairmen and ranking members, including JOHN MCCAIN, John Warner, and Strom Thurmond. They understood and appreciated the traditions of our committee and the importance of the legislation we enact every year for our men and women in uniform. That is what this is all about. JIM INHOFE, our ranking Republican in this Congress, has upheld that tradition of bipartisanship and dedication to enacting this important legislation through particularly challenging circumstances.

Our bill includes hundreds of important provisions to authorize the activities of the Department of Defense and to provide for the well-being of our men and women in uniform and their families. The bill will enable the military services to continue paying special pay and bonuses needed for recruitment and retention of key personnel. It strengthens survivor benefits for disabled children of servicemembers and retirees. It includes provisions addressing the employment of military spouses, job placement for veterans, and military child custody disputes. It addresses military hazing, military suicide, post-traumatic stress disorder, and mental health problems in the military. It provides continuing impact to support military families and local school districts.

The bill includes 20 provisions to continue to build on the progress we are starting to make in addressing the scourge of sexual assault in the military. Key provisions will eliminate the so-called good soldier defense, give victims a voice in whether their case is prosecuted in military or civilian courts, give victims the right to challenge court-martial rulings that violate their rights at the court of criminal appeals, and would strengthen the psychotherapist-patient privilege. Last week we received the welcome news that the number of incidents of unwanted sexual contact in the military is down and that more incidents are being reported so victims can receive the care and assistance they need and perpetrators can be brought to justice. With the enactment of the legislation before us and the commitment of military leaders, we hope to build on these trends.

The bill provides continued funding and authorities for ongoing operations in Afghanistan and for our forces conducting operations against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria called ISIS.

As requested by the administration, it authorizes the Department of Defense to train and equip vetted members of the moderate Syrian opposition and to train and equip national and local forces who are actively fighting ISIS in Iraq. It establishes a counterterrorism partnership fund that provides the administration new flexibility in addressing emerging terrorist threats around the world. In addition, the bill extends the Afghanistan Special Immigrant Visa Program, providing for 4,000 new visas, and addresses a legal glitch that precluded members of the ruling parties in Kurdistan from receiving visas under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

The authority provided in this bill to train and equip local forces in Iraq and Syria to take on ISIS is particularly important because our military leaders and intelligence experts have uniformly told us airstrikes alone will not be sufficient to defeat ISIS. American air power has changed the momentum on the ground somewhat and given moderates in the region an opportunity