

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MUSEUM
COMMISSION ACT

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, last week the Senate passed the National Women's History Museum Commission Act, a bill that I authored with the dean of the Democratic women Senators, Senator MIKULSKI of Maryland. It passed finally as part of the National Defense Authorization Act.

Our legislation will create a commission to evaluate and plan the establishment of a museum dedicated to women's history right here in our Nation's Capital. I know the Presiding Officer shares my view that this is long overdue.

I am in fact pleased to have had all of the women Senators as cosponsors of this bill, and I am thankful for the support of many of our other colleagues as well. Senator MIKULSKI has been a terrific co-leader, and I thank her for her leadership.

A women's history museum is long overdue in Washington, DC. Think of it. We actually have a museum dedicated to honoring buildings. We have museums along the mall that commemorate various aspects of our history. We have the Air and Space Museum. There is a privately run Spy Museum. There is the Newseum, which honors journalism. There is a museum that honors Native Americans. Americans from all over this country can come to Washington and learn about our history and the contributions of the people who have made our Nation the greatest country in the world. Despite the plethora of museums, however, there has been no museum dedicated to the women who have helped to shape our Nation's history.

The legislation that was finally approved last week calls for a commission to fund its own costs, and it would be paid for entirely with private funds at no cost to American taxpayers.

This commission would put forth a plan for establishing a museum on women's history so that people who are coming to Washington can learn about the enormous contributions of women to our Nation's history.

Indeed, American women have made invaluable contributions to our country across such diverse fields as government, business, medicine, law, literature, sports, entertainment, the arts, and the military. A museum dedicated to women's history will help ensure that future generations understand what it is we owe to the many American women who have helped to build, sustain, and advance our society.

Such a museum will share the stories of pioneering women such as abolitionist Harriet Tubman, the founder of the Girl Scouts, Juliette Gordon Low, Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, astronaut Sally Ride, and my personal inspiration, Maine Senator Margaret Chase Smith.

I first introduced legislation to establish a museum for women's history in 2003. Early the following year, the Senate unanimously approved my bill.

Unfortunately, that legislation was not taken up by the House and died.

In 2005, the Senate again approved the legislation, but it too stalled in the House. With the passage finally of this commission bill, the effort to establish a museum for women's history in our Nation's Capital takes a positive step forward.

This bill will convene a talented, diverse, and skilled panel of historians, educators, museum administrators, and other experts with experience in women's history to make recommendations for the creation and the sustainment of such a museum.

It is important to emphasize that this museum will portray all aspects of women's contributions to our history, without partisanship or bias. The only political statement we will be making is to correct the longstanding omission of the role of women in America's history.

I also recognize and thank Chairwoman LANDRIEU and Ranking Member MURKOWSKI for their careful consideration of our bill by the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which unanimously approved it last month.

Telling the history of the contributions of American women matters, and this bill takes a long overdue first step toward recognizing and honoring those who have shaped our shared American heritage. I look forward to the day when young girls and young boys visiting Washington will be able to visit a women's history museum to learn more about the remarkable contributions of American women to our Nation.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. COLLINS. I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak as in morning business.

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

TRIBUTE TO SAXBY CHAMBLISS

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, it is a great pleasure but a bittersweet moment for me to rise on the Senate floor to pay tribute to a dear friend and an esteemed colleague, Senator SAXBY CHAMBLISS.

After 20 years in Congress—8 in the House and 12 here in the Senate—Senator CHAMBLISS retires from this phase of service to Georgia and to our Nation with a well-deserved reputation as a true statesman.

At a time when the coarsening political discourse across our Nation and here in Congress is a growing concern, Senator CHAMBLISS is a shining example of expertise and ability combined with civility and respect. He leaves Congress not only with many friends on both sides of the aisle, but also with many accomplishments to his credit.

His leadership in national security and intelligence in both Chambers has been a great asset to our Nation. From agriculture to armed services, Senator CHAMBLISS has been an informed and effective advocate for his constituents and for the American people.

The golfers here might consider the hole-in-one he famously scored in a foursome with President Obama last year to be worthy of mention. Personally, as the founder and cochair of the Senate Diabetes Caucus, I would consider his dedication to the cause of juvenile diabetes to be a true highlight.

I have also had the great pleasure of serving with Senator CHAMBLISS both on the Intelligence Committee, where he is the vice chairman, and previously on the Senate Armed Services Committee. I saw firsthand his extraordinary grasp of complicated issues that are so critical to the security of our Nation. I also witnessed how he would listen carefully to the views of others, whether on the Republican side of the aisle or from the Democratic Members on both committees.

But if there is one shining moment that stands out for me, it would be Senator CHAMBLISS's leadership in the Gang of 6 during the 2011 debt ceiling crisis. At a time when it was far easier to stand back, point fingers, and fix blame, Senator CHAMBLISS, along with Senator MARK WARNER, led the way in producing a framework to provide a bipartisan, comprehensive, and balanced way to put our Nation on a stable fiscal path. The fact that our national debt has grown from \$16 trillion to \$18 trillion since then makes it all the more imperative that we continue the effort, with the leadership that was shown by Senator CHAMBLISS and that he so courageously helped to start.

The fact that this dedicated and wise leader cited Washington gridlock and partisan posturing as the driving force in his decision to retire from the Senate should give us all cause to reflect.

Senator SAXBY CHAMBLISS has always been a voice of reason. No matter how bitter the debate, he has always engaged in thoughtful discussions that result in solutions. As he returns to private life, his advice will continue to be sought after and I hope heeded. His knowledge and insight will still be valued, and the example of decency and civility he has set should guide us all. I know his beloved wife, his children, and his grandchildren will be happy to have more of Senator CHAMBLISS's time, but for those of us who have been privileged to serve with him in the Senate, his decision to retire is a great loss.

The people of Georgia, the people of America, and those of us who have been privileged to serve as SAXBY CHAMBLISS's colleagues are grateful for his service. I wish him all the best in the years to come, both on and off the golf course.

Thank you, Madam President.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TRIBUTES TO DEPARTING SENATORS

MARY LANDRIEU

Mr. REID. Madam President, a noted author and analyst of human behavior, Stephen Covey, said, "Strength lies in differences, not in similarities."

For the last 18 years, Senate Democrats were stronger because of Senator MARY LANDRIEU. Her ability to shun political labels—instead of just going the route with Democrats and Republicans and Independents, she went her route. She made the United States a better place. She made the Senate a better place.

She had good training for being a consensus builder and somebody who liked compromise. I had the good fortune to serve in the Senate with other Louisiana Senators. I served with Bennett Johnston for many years on the Appropriations Committee. He was chairman of the Energy and Water Subcommittee on Appropriations. He was a good legislator. Not only did he help Louisiana a lot, he helped the country. And then there was John Breaux. He and I came to the Senate together. He was the dealmaker. He could put a deal together when no one thought one could be put together. So MARY LANDRIEU has had good Louisiana genes with those two men, and that is one of the reasons she has been as effective as she has been.

As I indicated, MARY came to the Senate with no partisan agenda. She was not interested in representing just liberals or just conservatives. She worked to represent all of Louisiana, which meant that sometimes she and I were not on the same side of an issue, and other times we were on the same side of an issue, but one thing was always certain: She was always on Louisiana's side.

The Landrieu family's political legacy runs long and deep in the State of Louisiana. She is the oldest of nine children. She is the daughter of Moon Landrieu, and her brother Mitch Landrieu is the mayor of New Orleans. Moon was a former mayor of New Orleans from 1970 to 1978, and was Jimmy Carter's Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

A number of years ago, I toured New Orleans because she asked me to, as a member of the Appropriations Committee. I said, OK, I will go, but I have to see those pumps—p-u-m-p-s. I watched this show on national public broadcasting, and they talked about these old pumps that had been there since 1900 that still worked every day pumping the water.

New Orleans is below sea level and those pumps have to work 24 hours a day. I went to see those old, old pumps. They were so clean. That place was spotlessly clean using those very old pumps.

I toured Lake Pontchartrain. I learned so much about it. Most all of the highways in New Orleans were built using the seashells from that lake. Thousands and thousands of tons of shells have come out of that lake. They recently stopped doing that, after so many years, because they thought it would be damaging to the environment. But over the last 50, 60, 100 years, thousands and thousands of tons of shells came out of that lake. We all heard about Lake Pontchartrain during that huge storm that hit.

Also, as part of the tour of New Orleans, you had to go to her home, that little home where nine children were raised. It is really a beautiful little home—but nine children, wow. Her mom and dad were there. That was the first time I had been able to meet the famous Moon Landrieu.

When we came there, unannounced, he was making peanut brittle, and I got some peanut brittle. On occasion, that good man has sent me some of his homemade peanut brittle. So I think the world of MARY and her family.

She was very quick to follow in her father's footsteps. At the age of 23, she was elected to the State legislature, making her the youngest woman to have ever been elected to that body.

After 8 years in the legislature, she became the State treasurer for 8 years. In 1996, she was elected to the Senate, becoming the first woman in Louisiana ever elected to a full Senate term.

Since coming to the Senate, MARY has chaired the Senate committee on small business, and she was really good there. She is now the chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, the same full committee her predecessor Bennett Johnson chaired.

On the committee on small business, she reduced heavy Federal regulations and created tax relief for small businesses. As chair of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, MARY LANDRIEU fought for Louisiana's industry and jobs. Even before she became chair of that committee, she did something that was impossible. People had been trying to do something like this in Louisiana for 50, 60 years, 70 years, 80 years, but she did it—she was able to get New Orleans and the whole State of Louisiana and the gulf coast some financial benefit from the offshore drilling. She did that. That is a legacy she will always have.

She always had Louisiana's interests at heart, and the people of Louisiana have been all the better because of it. For example, in the aftermath of Katrina, she stood up to the Bush administration and demanded more disaster relief for the people in Louisiana. The New York Times called her "the national spokeswoman for victims of the hurricane."

As her time in the Senate comes to an end, all Louisianians will miss having MARY in their corner. I wish MARY LANDRIEU and her husband Frank and their children Connor—who was re-

cently married—and Mary Shannon the very best.

I remember when MARY brought that little baby Mary Shannon to the Senate. She was a tiny little baby. Now this beautiful child has grown to be an expert horsewoman. She is one of those people who rides horses all the time. She has entered her horses in different contests and has done very well.

I have known Connor since he was a little boy. He is married, and they have a little baby named Maddox, and MARY is so proud of her grandchild. Her husband Frank is a wonderful human being. I think so very much of him. I hope we will continue seeing them. Very often MARY will bring her family to my office. She takes them out on the balcony that overlooks the Mall.

MARY has touched my heart for a number of things, but the one thing she has done, which has been unsurpassed, is her caring for children who have no parents—adoptions. She led the Senate in adoptions. Her two children were adopted. Connor and Mary Shannon were adopted. She is so involved in that program, and I know she will continue to be involved.

Here on the Senate floor we will all miss MARY, her voice of reason and moderation. I consider her to be a good friend, and I appreciate all she has done for me, the people of Louisiana, and our country.

JOHN WALSH

Mr. REID. Madam President, there is only one combat veteran of the Iraq war in the Senate, and that is GEN JOHN WALSH—Senator JOHN WALSH.

In 2004 General WALSH led the deployment of several hundred National Guard men from Montana to Iraq. He did the same thing a year later. It was a very difficult time for Americans in Iraq. General WALSH's men were in some of the heaviest battles. Many of them were wounded, and a number of them gave the ultimate sacrifice.

He led the largest deployment of Montana soldiers and airmen since World War II. For his service, JOHN was awarded the Bronze Star, the Legion of Merit Award, and the Combat Infantry Badge. JOHN came to the Senate a hero, and he will leave the Senate a hero.

He treated his time in the Senate like his time in the Army—he volunteered for the most difficult assignments here in the Senate. For example, Saturday night it was late—we thought we may have to be in here all night—and he volunteered to be here all night, not having to be relieved. He agreed to be here all night. He said: That is what I am here for.

He served the people of Montana admirably in the Senate. I thank him for his service over the past year.

I thank his family—his wife Janet, his sons Michael and Taylor, and granddaughter Kennedy—for their sacrifice in supporting his work here in Washington, DC.

I wish him the very best. He was the lieutenant governor of Montana, a job I held in the past, and we talked about that.