

Nation as a model of civility and selfless service. Governor Walker passed away last Saturday from causes incident to age. In her 85 years of life, she led with compassion and humility, earning the respect and admiration of everyone she served.

Governor Walker's life was one of humble service, and her modest background made her rise in politics all the more impressive. Raised in rural Utah, she developed her trademark work ethic on the family farm and spent much of her childhood milking cows, hauling hay, and harvesting sugar beets. Both as a young woman working in her family's fields and as a Governor serving the people of Utah, no task was ever below Olene—she was always willing to do whatever was necessary to get the job done and to help those in need.

As a State legislator, a Lieutenant Governor, and a Governor, Olene was steadfast in her commitment to help society's most vulnerable, especially small children. Her work in the area of health care reform precipitated the establishment of our State's Children Health Insurance Program, which helps provide medical insurance for Utah's underprivileged youth. After becoming Utah's first female Governor, she continued her advocacy for children by championing education reform.

Governor Walker's Read With a Child Early Literacy Initiative was essential to her reform efforts. This program sought to improve childhood literacy by encouraging parents to read with their kids for at least 20 minutes every day. The initiative's focus on the family speaks to a simple truth: meaningful societal change doesn't begin in the bustling chambers of Congress but in the quiet solitude of the home, through the daily interactions between parent and child. As a former homemaker and as a mother of seven, Olene understood that healthy homes lead to a healthy society. This belief influenced many of her pro-family policies as Governor.

Perhaps more than anyone I know, Governor Walker exemplified the teaching that the greatest among us is the servant of all. She often eschewed the trappings of public office and even refused to use a driver. After leaving the Governorship, Olene volunteered to serve as the primary president for her local church congregation. This humble position was a significant departure from her role as Utah's chief executive. Instead of negotiating with legislators and managing State agencies, Olene led dozens of little children in song and prayer, teaching them about the words of Christ and his early apostles. Anyone preoccupied with prestige or positions of power would surely consider this new responsibility a demotion, but Olene wasn't one of those people. She never concerned herself with titles, standing, or prominence; she cared only about serving others in whatever capacity she could.

And she served until the very end. Even after retiring from office, Olene

remained in the public sphere and continued to advocate for education reform. She was also active in ecclesiastical service and would eventually serve a 2-year mission in New York City for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She was equally engaged in academia and was instrumental in establishing the Olene S. Walker Institute of Politics and Public Service at Weber State University. In addition to hosting public forums, the institute helps students find jobs and internships in government and encourages women to become involved in politics.

Through her trailblazing example, Governor Walker leaves a legacy of leadership that is sure to inspire generations of young Americans. With her passing, we have lost not only an exemplary stateswoman but also a loving mother and a friend. I am deeply grateful for my association with Olene Walker. I consider myself lucky to have known Olene and even luckier to have served alongside her. Elaine and I send our deepest condolences to the Walker family. May God comfort them, and may He comfort all of us as we mourn the loss of an exceptional woman.

#### TRIBUTE TO ROBERT STIVERS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to recognize a good friend of mine and the Kentucky Senate president, Robert Stivers, for the honor he recently received of being named one of the country's top nine public officials of the year by Governing magazine. Senator Stivers certainly deserves this recognition, as he has led the Kentucky Senate admirably since his elevation to the president's post in 2013.

Senator Stivers has served in the Kentucky Senate since 1997. He represents the 25th District in eastern Kentucky, which includes parts of Clay, Knox, Lee, Owsley, Whitley, and Wolfe Counties. Like myself, Robert is a proud graduate of both the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville. Before becoming senate president in 2013, he served as the senate's majority floor leader from 2009 to 2012.

Senator Stivers is perfectly suited for his leadership role, as he is a man who naturally knows how to build consensus and coalitions. He remains a practicing attorney in his hometown of Manchester and is finely tuned in to the needs of his constituents. The Clay County Chamber of Commerce honored Senator Stivers with its Man of the Year award in 2000. In 2002 he received both the AARP Appreciation Award and the Kentucky River Lincoln Club Outstanding Service Award.

Senator Stivers was recognized as one of the top public officials in the country because he has led the Kentucky Senate to pass some very important measures, including a bill to address the growing scourge of heroin and prescription pain pill abuse in our

State. That is an issue I have followed closely over the years, and I can attest firsthand that Senator Stivers has been a real champion in working to find a solution.

Senator Stivers also led the senate to pass a measure providing funding for a new cancer research center at the University of Kentucky. This new facility will prove to be of immeasurable benefit to the people of Kentucky and also helps establish the University of Kentucky as one of the region's top research universities, which will attract more talent and funding to the Commonwealth.

I would ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Kentucky Senate President Robert Stivers on this honor, and I thank him for his service to the people of our State. Those of us in Kentucky who have watched him at work have known for a long time that he is a talented and energetic legislator. And he is a great public servant on behalf of the people of Kentucky.

The Lexington Herald-Leader recently published an article detailing Senator Stivers' recognition by Governing magazine. I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Lexington Herald-Leader, Nov. 17, 2015]

MAGAZINE NAMES KENTUCKY SENATE PRESIDENT ROBERT STIVERS A TOP PUBLIC OFFICIAL IN NATION

(By Jack Brammer)

FRANKFORT—Kentucky Senate President Robert Stivers has been named one of the country's nine public officials of the year by Governing magazine.

Stivers, R-Manchester, was nominated for the award by the magazine's editors. The magazine has honored individual state and local government officials for their accomplishments every year since 1994.

The publication commends Stivers for his bipartisan work since assuming the role of Senate president in 2013.

Landmark legislation that has passed during Stivers' presidency include bills to address abuse of prescription drugs and heroin, and providing funding for a new cancer research center at the University of Kentucky.

"It is an honor to receive this award on behalf of our work in the legislature," Stivers said in a statement. "We are fortunate to have so many dedicated servants in the Kentucky General Assembly who were willing to put aside politics and do what was best for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. While there is still plenty of work to be done, I am very thankful to my colleagues and staff for their work on significant pieces of legislation. It has been a great year."

Stivers was appointed this year as the incoming chairman of the Southern Legislative Conference, which is to hold its annual meeting in Lexington in 2016. Stivers also will be chairman of the Council on State Governments in 2018.

Stivers will travel to Washington, D.C., next month to receive the award. He represents the 25th District, which encompasses Clay, Knox, Lee, Owsley, Whitley and Wolfe counties.

RECOGNIZING THE LAS VEGAS  
LATIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the 40th anniversary of the Las Vegas Latin Chamber of Commerce.

Since its inception, the Latin Chamber of Commerce has been a champion for the Hispanic business community in Nevada. In working to fulfill its mission of promoting the success of its members and the more than 18,000 Hispanic-owned small businesses in the Silver State, the chamber is driving growth in Nevada and enriching the U.S. economy. By cultivating positive business, cultural, and educational relationships and expanding opportunities for Latino businessowners, the Latin Chamber of Commerce has ensured the success of hundreds of new businesses and transformed the very fabric of southern Nevada.

The Latin Chamber of Commerce was founded nearly four decades ago by a handful of determined individuals who were seeking the resources and support necessary to realize their personal and professional goals. Under the leadership of Arturo Cambeiro, the organization's first president, the chamber developed the foundation needed to become a leading advocate for Hispanic-owned businesses and Latino entrepreneurs. Today, the Latin Chamber of Commerce has grown to include more than 1,500 members throughout the Silver State, making it one of the largest organizations of its kind in the country. I applaud the Latin Chamber of Commerce for its 40th anniversary of dedicated service to the Hispanic community. The chamber's work is truly appreciated and admired.

I also commend the leadership of the Latin Chamber of Commerce, particularly Mr. Otto Merida and Ms. Victoria Napoles-Earl. Their tireless commitment to the Latino business community has played a critical role in the growth and success of the chamber. For the last 40 years, Mr. Merida has dedicated his work to developing and expanding the presence of the Latin Chamber of Commerce in southern Nevada. He has worked hard to fulfill the Chamber's mission and led the organization with the highest standards, currently serving as the organization's chief executive officer. Ms. Napoles-Earl joined the chamber in 1987 and recently announced her retirement after 30 years of service. I would like to congratulate her on her upcoming retirement and career accomplishments. From starting as the chamber's office manager to becoming its senior vice president, Ms. Napoles-Earl has dedicated her career to investing in Latino-owned businesses. During their distinguished careers, Mr. Merida and Ms. Napoles-Earl have successfully secured millions of dollars in funding for Latino businessowners, including grants, loans, and contracts. On behalf of the chamber and the thousands of Hispanic-owned businesses in Nevada, Mr. Merida and Ms. Napoles-Earl have

effectively advocated for policies that help Latino entrepreneurs start and expand their business.

In addition to their roles at the Latin Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Merida and Ms. Napoles are active members in the community and have held various leadership positions at the State and local levels. Mr. Merida has worked for the State of Nevada's Department of Education, served as chair of the Las Vegas Housing Authority, and was appointed to the Nevada Commission on Economic Development. Ms. Napoles-Earl has served as a commissioner for the Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs and on the board of directors of Dignity Health's St. Rose Dominican Hospitals. I have had the honor and privilege of working closely with Mr. Merida and Ms. Napoles-Earl throughout my time in Congress, and I can say without reservation that the Hispanic business community in Nevada is fortunate to have them working on its behalf. You will be hard pressed to find more effective advocates.

As the Latin Chamber of Commerce begins its next chapter, I wish them continued success for years to come and thank them for supporting the economic growth and development of Latino entrepreneurs for 40 years and counting.

## RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, this week, Planned Parenthood of Northern New England marked its 50th anniversary with a well-attended gathering in South Burlington, VT. The event came less than a week after the deadly tragedy at a Planned Parenthood center in Colorado. The weight of that tragedy, more than 2,500 miles away from Vermont, was evident as those in the crowd bowed their heads in a moment of silence as the names of victims were read. But this South Burlington gathering also illustrated the depth of support for an organization that plays a critical role in health care for women of all ages throughout Vermont, throughout New England, and throughout our country.

The Planned Parenthood Association of Vermont began in 1965 when a small but active band of women gathered at the Unitarian Church in Burlington. Within the next 3 years, Maine and New Hampshire also established family planning centers, and by the mid-1980s, Planned Parenthood of Northern New England was formed.

In 2014 alone, Planned Parenthood centers around Vermont provided vital primary and preventive services to over 16,000 patients. In a rural State like Vermont, the need for health care providers in remote areas is acute. More than 90 percent of Vermont's Planned Parenthood centers are located in rural or medically underserved areas. Many Vermonters describe

Planned Parenthood as their primary source of health care. In just one example, without the services that Planned Parenthood provides, thousands of low-income women in Vermont would lose their ability to have regular cancer screenings that could save their lives.

Over five decades, Planned Parenthood has weathered many challenges that include ensuring the safety of its own health care providers. In the aftermath of 9/11, more than 500 anthrax threat letters were sent to Planned Parenthood locations and other reproductive health care providers; yet it seems unimaginable that we are here in December 2015, in the U.S. Senate, once again debating whether to defund an organization that does so much to ensure the health and well-being of women across the country.

In August I spoke in opposition to this misguided, distortion-filled, partisan effort. I said at the time that the issue was unfortunately all too familiar. With the critical issues that face us today, why are we spending our time and energy on this ideologically driven effort to bar funding for women's health centers? I am saddened that we are even talking about this provision today, not even 1 week since a gunman stormed that Planned Parenthood in Colorado and caused such carnage. This is shameful, and it is cynical. It is time for the mean-spirited assault on women's health care to end.

I was heartened by the supporters, both women and men, who turned out to mark the 50th anniversary of Planned Parenthood of Northern New England this week in South Burlington. They included the next generation of young women who have been "passed the torch" to stand up for their rights to health care and reproductive freedom. They are committed to making sure Planned Parenthood will be around for another 50 years—and they give me hope. Let us not turn our backs on them by turning back the clock.

## SUPPORTING THE COFFEE FARMERS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, like many Senators, I have followed the appalling situation facing citizens of the Eastern Congo, where armed groups have fought for years over control of minerals and territory, pillaging, raping, and killing civilians in the process.

The innocent people who struggle to survive in the midst of this violence and destruction rely on subsistence agriculture, as well as raising crops for export; yet their own government makes it doubly difficult.

For decades, coffee was an important agricultural export from Eastern Congo. But after years of armed conflict, official coffee exports have reportedly decreased by over 80 percent from peak levels 30 years ago. The majority of this coffee is produced by