

humble way he grew up inspired him to help others who faced similar hardships his family had faced. He carried that perspective with him from Searchlight, NV, to the halls of the Capitol, where he became a champion for causes meant to improve the lives of all Americans.

HARRY is a fighter. That has been said by so many of his friends and colleagues over the years, and it is truer of him than almost anyone I have ever worked with. That title, of course, has more than one meaning for HARRY. His years of amateur boxing taught him strategy and relentless willpower in the face of his opponents. His years in the Senate have been no different. He has had to fight for historical legislation in an increasingly vitriolic political climate, things like the Affordable Care Act and the stimulus bill, legislation that gave millions of Americans hope for their futures.

HARRY has also been a very powerful ally for me and my fellow Floridians, specifically in the fight to protect the State's fragile environment. He has always been right there with me in pushing for Everglades funding and vigorously defended our coastline from drilling proposals that threatened Florida's economy and unique environment.

His leadership has been a source of guidance and great strength for me during my time in the Senate. I am honored to have served with him and wish him and his family well in his retirement.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the many accomplishments of my friend, Senator HARRY REID, my colleague from Nevada, during his storied career in the U.S. Senate.

Growing up in a modest household without an indoor bathroom, hot water, or a telephone, HARRY learned the values of family, faith, and education. HARRY understood that it is the most vulnerable in society that need the strongest champions, someone to fight for them.

HARRY's service to the people of Nevada began long before he came to Congress. After attending law school at George Washington University, Leader REID returned home and served as Henderson's City Attorney. At the age of 28, he was elected to the Nevada State Assembly. Two years later, Leader REID became the youngest Lieutenant Governor in Nevada history. HARRY experienced political losses early in his career, but he never let that hold him back. After 5 years as chairman of the Nevada Gaming Commission, HARRY won election to the U.S. House in 1982. He served two terms before winning his first U.S. Senate race in 1986.

HARRY's stint as an amateur boxer taught him to never back down from a fight, no matter how big. Throughout his Senate career, the people of Nevada have been able to count on HARRY to fight for them.

He has spearheaded investments in clean energy, established Nevada's first national park, Great Basin National

Park, and led passage of the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill of Rights.

As majority leader, he shepherded landmark legislation through the Senate—The Affordable Care Act, Wall Street Reform, the Recovery Act, and many more. Despite the powerful interests lining up to defeat these efforts, HARRY didn't back down. He worked hard and got things done. As a result, millions of Americans have health care.

We have fought our way back from the Great Recession of 2008. Consumers now have more protection against powerful companies. It is fair to say, HARRY's leadership has improved our country and our families' lives.

Today I want to focus on a few issues where I was particularly proud to have worked with him. Leader REID has been a longtime champion for the Filipino World War II Veterans. This group of over 260,000 Filipino veterans answered President Roosevelt's call during World War II and fought heroically under the U.S. flag. Unfortunately, they have had to endure another fight over the course of seven decades—the fight for the recognition and benefits they were promised. Leader REID has been at the forefront of this fight. He has helped secure compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs. We have worked together to reunify the remaining veterans with their children. And just last week, the House passed and sent the President my legislation awarding Filipino World War II veterans the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor Congress can bestow. Leader REID was instrumental in getting this bill through the Senate, and I deeply appreciate his support.

Nevada is home to a vibrant Filipino-American community. Leader REID is deeply familiar with the experiences and struggles of Filipino veterans and their families. He worked with Hawaii's late Senator Dan Inouye to create the Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Fund within the VA in 2009. The fund's creation was a significant step forward in recognizing the dedicated service and sacrifice of these veterans. I was proud to have Leader REID join me in our successful effort to secure appropriations language prohibiting any attempts to direct these funds to other programs.

This past May, the Obama administration finalized a parole program that would allow family members of Filipino World War II veterans to come to the United States to be reunited with their aging parents and siblings. These veterans had already waited decades to be reunited with their children in the Philippines.

Speaking at my press conference announcing the program, HARRY honored the veterans' sacrifice saying, "in those islands where MacArthur left, the Filipinos were left there with some of our troops and they fought valiantly and were not recognized."

Finally, I want to highlight Leader REID's work on immigration. In 2009,

while campaigning in Nevada, a young woman named Astrid Silva slipped a note to HARRY. Astrid was brought to the United States when she was 4 years old. Unable to work legally, Astrid babysat to earn money. She excelled at school but feared deportation if she applied to college. In the following years, Astrid and HARRY corresponded, and he learned of the hopes, dreams, and struggles of the DREAMers.

In a 2013 interview hours before the Senate passed comprehensive immigration reform, HARRY said, "This is why I did this . . . because of some things she said."

Later, when speaking on the floor before the vote, HARRY said, "I appreciate every one of those letters she sent me, because each was a reminder of what is at stake in this debate." A testament to HARRY's character, even while serving in one of the most powerful roles in Washington, HARRY never forgot who he was fighting for.

Aloha, HARRY. As we say in Hawaii, a hui hou, "until we meet again."

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA BOXER

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about my longtime friend and colleague BARBARA BOXER, who is retiring from this body along with me this year.

Senator BOXER will be remembered as an inspiration to young women across our country. Her career is a textbook of how to get involved in public service. Starting at the local level, she came out of the antiwar movement and got involved in the environmental movement and local causes. Taking lessons from grassroots organizing, she ran for the Marin County Board of Supervisors. She lost that first race, but she didn't give up. She ran again and won and became the first female chair.

Eventually, she made her way to the U.S. House of Representatives. Along the way, she heard a lot of "no," but always turned it into a "yes." She never quit, never lost faith in herself, and never stopped trying.

When it looked like the accusations of Anita Hill would be swept under the rug, I spoke out in the Senate against it, but I was only one female voice. BARBARA BOXER came to my aid. Even though she was in the House, she led a troop of fierce House women running up the steps to the Senate to face down the Judiciary Committee and demand they shed light on the accusations of sexual harassment. BARBARA had the crack team of ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, Pat Schroeder, LOUISE SLAUGHTER, NITA LOWEY, Jolene Unsoeld, and Patsy Mink to back her up. They marshalled the press and marched right up these steps. They knocked on the door and were going to be turned away because they weren't Senators. But they pointed to that group of photographers and said, "We are going to tell them that you turned us away, what do you think will happen then? So they were let in and made their case. Those Senators couldn't face the calculation and

fury of BARBARA BOXER and the House women, and those hearings were convened. The Anita Hill hearings made an indelible mark on this country.

It really woke America up as to what was going on in the workplaces around the country for women and how little representation women really got in Congress. Watching that all-male Judiciary Committee tear into Professor Hill for daring to accuse her boss of sexual harassment, the women of America took action and elected BARBARA BOXER, DIANNE FEINSTEIN, Carol Mosely Braun, and PATTY MURRAY to the U.S. Senate.

I was thrilled when BARBARA came to me thinking about running for the Senate. I told her it was the perfect time: she can do more in the Senate and be heard in the Senate. I said would be worth the fight to get her here with me, even if just to have someone I could see eye-to-eye with on a daily basis.

BARBARA even started an exercise program in the House when we were there together. She showed up in colorful leotards, and Geraldine Ferraro came looking like a photo op for Vanity Fair, and Olympia Snowe wore this gorgeous outfit. I show up, chunky yet funky, and the instructor is yelling, "Go for the burn! Put your hands on your waist and bend, bend, bend!" And I turned to BARBARA and said, "If I had a waist, I wouldn't be here." Well, those exercise classes may not have lasted long for me, but her energy just couldn't be beat.

Her zip and zest is pure California sunshine, and Californians have more sunshine in their spirit because of her work. Her energy has brought light to California and light to the sometimes dreary Capitol hallways.

I am going to miss my good friend and irreplaceable political partner. Democrats have had a lot of tough fights over the last 25 years, and the two BARBARAS have always been there, side by side. We voted against the war in Iraq, both believing it was a mistake. We were in the minority, but both of us still believe it was one of the best votes we have ever taken as Senators. We stood up for what we believed in and what we thought was right—which is exactly what our constituents sent us here to do.

BARBARA BOXER has been there for our children, leading the way for after school programs and making sure they are kept safe. She has fought against wasteful spending in the Pentagon—the \$400 hammer and the \$7,000 coffee pot. She has defended women's right to choose and protected women against domestic violence. She has held the feet of polluters to the fire as the champion of clean air, clean water, and our natural resources. It is too hard to pinpoint just one thing the Senate will miss about her: her political prowess, her dedication and determination, her undying loyalty and friendship. All of those and more will be missed.

As we end this session of Congress and our careers in the Senate, I wish

BARBARA and her husband, Stewart, many happy days ahead as they start writing this new chapter in their lives. Even if we are on opposite sides of the country, I know I will always have a friend in California.

TRIBUTE TO MARK KIRK

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, on January 3, 2013, Senator MARK KIRK climbed the 45 steps to the U.S. Capitol, triumphantly returning to work after a year of intensive recovery from a stroke. To the cheers of colleagues and friends, he called it one of the greatest moments of his life.

It was a moment of courage and determination that defined a life dedicated to serving the people of Illinois and of our Nation. From his service in the Navy Reserve as an intelligence officer, to the World Bank, the State Department, the House International Relations Committee, and five terms representing the 10th Congressional District of Illinois, Senator KIRK brought to this chamber a wealth of experience, wisdom, and commitment.

I had the pleasure of working alongside Senator KIRK on the Appropriations, Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, and Aging Committees. His approach to legislating has been in the highest traditions of the Senate: Informed, passionate, and always civil. He looked at the issues before the Senate not through the lens of a political partisan, but rather through the lens of a pragmatic problem solver and consensus builder.

Senator KIRK has been a valued ally on many fronts. We introduced the REGROW Act to accelerate the development of new therapies for patients living with such diseases as Alzheimer's disease and diabetes and to achieve breakthroughs in stroke recovery. I was proud to be named with him to serve on the Women's and Family Global Health Task Force so that the United States will continue to be a leader in preventing maternal and childhood deaths from treatable causes. We joined together on vital legislation to keep firearms out of the hands of terrorists and in addressing our Nation's opioid addiction crisis. He has always had a deep commitment to good government and was a strong voice for accountability through independent, effective inspectors general.

As chairman and former ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, Senator KIRK has worked tirelessly on behalf of the men and women who serve our country. Following in the tradition of Illinois Senator Everett Dirksen, who helped pass the Civil Rights Act a half-century ago, Senator KIRK has been a leader in ensuring the rights of America's LGBT community.

The past election brought disappointment, but it also revealed character. Senator KIRK ran a vigorous but honorable campaign and never compromised

his principles. When the decision went against him, he conceded graciously, reminding Americans that what unites us is far stronger than what divides us.

It has been an honor to serve with Senator KIRK in the U.S. Senate. It has been a joy to develop our friendship, one I will cherish always. I wish him all the best in the years to come, and I know that he will meet any challenges that lie ahead with the strength and fortitude he brought to those 45 steps of the U.S. Capitol.

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA MIKULSKI

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, today I wish to honor my friend, colleague, and mentor from Maryland, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, who is retiring at the end of this year. BARBARA has an impressively long and distinguished career in public service, representing her home State of Maryland in Congress for nearly 40 years.

Since I came to the Senate in 2013, it has been a pleasure to serve alongside titans like Senator MIKULSKI. As a matter of fact, my first official Senate office was tucked in-between hers and then-Senator Rockefeller's on the fifth floor of Hart. As neighbors we formed a friendly bond, and I oftentimes would stop by to chat with her or sometimes just Mrs. O'Malley, who runs a tight ship. On occasion, Senator Rockefeller and I would overstay our welcome, and Mrs. O'Malley would kick us out and send us back to our offices. For those of you who don't know, Mrs. O'Malley has played a critical role in Senator MIKULSKI's office for nearly 30 years and has helped instill the values of hard work and dedication to a generation of Hill staffers.

As the longest serving woman in Congress, Senator MIKULSKI has inspired a generation of women to pursue careers in public service and run for higher office. As dean of the women Senators, BARBARA worked to mentor new women Senators on how to be effective legislators and build coalitions across party lines to advance landmark legislation. The bipartisan women's group has met regularly under her leadership, helping bridge partisan divides that so often plague this Chamber by getting Senators to know each other on a personal level over her homemade Maryland crabcakes.

One cannot mention Senator MIKULSKI without also mentioning her fierce advocacy and determination to make Maryland and our country a better place to live, work, and raise a family. One of the first bills I cosponsored when I came to the Senate was the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, VAWA, which BARBARA played a critical role in originally passing. Since its passage in 1994, VAWA has been effective in responding to domestic violence. Additionally, she has worked tirelessly in the fight to close the pay gap for women, who currently earn about three-quarters of what men