

values and his beloved Louisiana. Taking office in 2005, he almost immediately was faced with one of the greatest crises any senator in my tenure has had to confront: Hurricane Katrina. As his State has faced Katrina's devastation and other natural disasters, Louisianans could always count on DAVID to deliver for them, no matter what. Throughout, DAVID mastered the skill of fighting as hard as anyone when the situation called for it—as he did as the top Republican on the Environment and Public Works Committee, pushing back against the overreach of the EPA—and then turning right around and making partners of those who were his most entrenched opponents—as he did by working with liberal Democrats to update the Nation's water infrastructure and pass a once-in-a-generation reform of the Nation's toxic chemical laws.

DAVID's work in the Senate has produced an impressive legacy for him and for Louisiana. As he embarks on his next chapter, I send my best wishes to him, his accomplished and lovely wife, Wendy, and his four children.

TRIBUTE TO MARK KIRK

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the junior Senator from Illinois, my good friend MARK KIRK. I know I speak for all of my colleagues in expressing gratitude of his service on behalf of our Nation. When he leaves us in January, we will miss him dearly.

Senator KIRK was born in Champaign, IL, in 1959 and attended Cornell University, where he graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree in history. He would later earn a master's degree from the London School of Economics and a law degree from the Georgetown University Law Center. His academic background in law and history prepared him for a life in public service.

Senator KIRK first came to Capitol Hill as a staffer, working for Congressman John Porter of Illinois. He quickly rose through the staff ranks to become Congressman Porter's chief of staff before leaving to take a post at the World Bank and, later, at the State Department.

While still working on Capitol Hill, MARK also pursued military service, joining the U.S. Navy Reserve in 1989 as an intelligence officer. He was an active member of the Navy Reserve for the next 24 years, retiring from the military with the rank of commander. As a Navy officer, MARK's duties took him to conflict zones across the world—from the forests of former Yugoslavia to the deserts of Iraq and the mountains of Afghanistan. For more than a decade, MARK continued military service while simultaneously working as a Congressman in the House of Representatives.

While in the House of Representatives, MARK distinguished himself as a prudent member of the Appropriations Committee and an expert on foreign

policy issues. In 2010, he was elected to the Senate and quickly set to work the following year championing infrastructure reform that was critical to his home State of Illinois. In 2012, MARK faced perhaps his most significant challenge yet when he unexpectedly suffered a stroke that nearly took his life and left the left side of his body severely impaired. Rather than be defeated, MARK channeled all of his energies in working towards recovery, spending countless hours working with physical therapists to regain his ability to walk.

What motivated MARK most during this difficult period was the desire to continue serving the people of Illinois. Thanks to MARK's unrelenting efforts and the heartfelt prayers of family and friends—including all of his colleagues in the Senate—MARK miraculously recovered and was able to return to his work in the Senate, where he has served out the remainder of his term with the utmost honor and distinction. Senator KIRK offers all of us an unparalleled example of courage amid hardship and grace amid suffering.

Through his decades of dedicated service to our Nation, both here in Congress and in the military, Senator KIRK represents the very best this Nation has to offer. His integrity, determination, and fortitude in the face of adversity embody the very pinnacle of American virtue. Today I would like to thank him for his courage, his commitment, and his sacrifice. I wish MARK and his family all the best, and I hope that he will continue his service to our Nation in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO DAN COATS

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to my friend DAN Coats. DAN has twice served the people of Indiana as Senator, first in the late 1980s and 1990s, and again for the past 6 years. DAN is a man of integrity and a leader in the fight against government waste. He will be missed.

Senator COATS was born in Jackson, MI, in 1943 and attended Wheaton College in Illinois and Indiana University School of Law. He served in the U.S. Army from 1966 to 1968, during which time he deepened his lifelong love of our country.

DAN began his career in politics in 1976 when he went to work for future Vice President Dan Quayle, who at the time was serving in the House as a Representative from Indiana. When Representative Quayle decided to run for the Senate in 1980, DAN ran for and won Quayle's House seat.

DAN served four terms in the House before being appointed to the Senate in 1989 to fill the remainder of Senator Quayle's term after Quayle was elected Vice President. DAN served in the Senate until 1999. He was a leader in tax and entitlement reform and provided unwavering support to our Armed Forces.

After Senator COATS retired from the Senate, President George W. Bush ap-

pointed him Ambassador to Germany, where he developed a close working relationship with future Chancellor Angela Merkel and oversaw construction of a new embassy near the Brandenburg Gate.

But DAN soon felt the pull of the Senate again and decided to return to this body in 2010, winning election to his old seat. Over the past 6 years, Senator COATS has again been a leader in tax and entitlement reform and has become well known for his "Waste of the Week" speeches, in which he comes to the floor to highlight particularly egregious examples of government waste and abuse.

Senator COATS has served the people of Indiana well. He has served our country well. He has led the fight against wasteful spending and helped keep our government accountable. I wish him, his wife, Marsha, and their family the very best.

TRIBUTE TO KELLY AYOTTE

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, in the U.S. Senate, seniority is the typical route to influence. As Senators serve longer, they typically acquire more powerful positions, more knowledge of how to work the levers of power, and more sway over their colleagues. Over the course of my time in the Senate, I have had the privilege to serve with 352 other Senators. While in my experience the longest serving ones on average do indeed tend to make the greatest impact, I have always been most impressed by the rare colleague that leaves an indelible mark after only a relatively short time in this body. KELLY AYOTTE is such a standout.

KELLY came to this body well prepared to make a difference. As New Hampshire's first—and, so far, only—female attorney general, she left her mark across a wide swath of law and policy, from prosecuting the infamous Dartmouth College murderers to successfully defending New Hampshire's parental consent law before the U.S. Supreme Court.

As soon as she arrived here in 2011, the Senator from New Hampshire began to make her mark. Within a short period of time, publications like the New York Times and Politico began consistently referring to her as a rising star, and in 2012, her name perennially surfaced as a contender for the Republican Vice Presidential nomination.

How did KELLY gain such recognition so quickly? The answer is simple: through good old-fashioned hard work. From her first day in the Senate, she hit the ground running. The wife of an Air Force combat veteran, she joined the Armed Services Committee and poured her heart and soul into its work. It took little time for her to become one of the most powerful voices on the committee. On issues as wide ranging as protecting our servicemembers from sexual assault to keeping

dangerous terrorists detained at Guantanamo, she made a real difference, enhancing our national security and advocating for our men and women in uniform.

While defense and security policy has proven her signature issue, KELLY's influence extends across the board. From creating jobs to protecting our environment, she has proven an enormously effective advocate for families in New Hampshire and across America, willing to work across the aisle and buck her own party to do what she thinks is right for her State and the Nation. Her work to combat the opioid crisis merits particular praise. Both New Hampshire and Utah have been particularly hard hit by the rise in this dangerous trend of substance abuse, which has wreaked havoc in the lives of so many. KELLY made it her mission to do everything in her power to confront this challenge, resulting in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. This landmark legislation will make a real difference in the lives of so many in New Hampshire and across the Nation, and it will go down as one of the crown jewels of her legacy here in the Senate.

While I am deeply saddened that KELLY will no longer be with us here in the Senate come January, I am comforted by the fact that her best years of service to her State and Nation lie ahead. After some well-deserved rest with her family, it is my sincerest hope that she will continue her public service. In whatever capacity she chooses to serve, she will always have a devoted supporter in me.

WRDA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I would like to highlight several provisions I worked to secure in the water resources bill that will be a great benefit to Kentucky and to my constituents. Included in the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act is a provision I have worked on with Paducah Mayor Gayle Kaler, Paducah city manager Jeff Pederson, and Paducah city engineer Rick Murphy that will advance a critical and comprehensive flood wall infrastructure project to better protect residents and businesses in Paducah from flooding.

The bill also includes an important provision that directs the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to transfer certain inoperable lock and dam infrastructure along the Green and Barren Rivers in Kentucky to State and local entities. My Green and Barren Rivers provision will allow communities to remove certain aging infrastructure in an effort to enhance river-based recreation and tourism. This language also allows the Rochester Dam Regional Water Commission to take control of the Rochester Dam—a critical water source for citizens and employers in six counties—so the dam can be repaired and better maintained. In this effort, I would like to thank David Phemister

and Mike Hensley with the Kentucky Nature Conservancy, as well as members and supporters of the Rochester Dam Regional Water Commission, including Butler County Judge Executive David Fields, Walt Beasley with the Ohio County Water District, Damon Talley, and Gary Larimore with the Kentucky Rural Water Association.

GUN VIOLENCE IN CHICAGO

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, more than 4,100 people have been shot this year in Chicago. And there have been over 700 homicides in the city this year, the vast majority of them due to gun violence. This is unconscionable. The American Medical Association has declared that gun violence is a public health crisis in our nation. And it is.

Every day in America, around 300 men, women, and children are shot. And every day about 90 of those shooting victims die. Gun violence touches nearly every community in America. But no community has suffered more than Chicago.

The stories of Chicago's shooting victims are heartbreaking. Here is one of them.

On November 18, Javon Wilson, the 15-year-old grandson of my friend Congressman DANNY DAVIS was shot and killed in a dispute over a pair of basketball shoes. It is hard to imagine a more senseless and tragic killing. Congressman DAVIS said of his grandson, "He was a typical 15-year-old. He liked basketball. If you listened to him he was a basketball star, but he liked basketball and music." Congressman DAVIS went on to say that Javon's grades had improved in school and that "his father had just told me about how proud of him that he was because he was catching on and realizing that all his life was in front of him." The two suspects charged with Javon's murder are a 16-year-old boy and a 17-year-old girl. It was a dispute between kids that turned into a deadly tragedy because of easy access to guns.

My heart goes out to Congressman DAVIS and his family. But thoughts and prayers are not enough when it comes to reducing this epidemic of gun violence. We have had too many funerals, too many families who now have to face an empty seat at the dinner table or walk past an empty bedroom, too many children who suffer the physical trauma of gunshot wounds or the mental trauma of witnessing a shooting. We have had too many of our fellow Americans getting shot while they are sitting on their porches or walking on their sidewalks.

So many of these shootings could have been prevented. But there are loopholes in our gun laws that make it too easy for dangerous people to get their hands on guns. It is absurd that we have not closed the loopholes in our background check system—a step that 90 percent of Americans support. And we have had enough of the gun traffickers and straw purchasers who are

able to buy guns out of State and sell them out of the trunks of their cars in Chicago.

At Javon's funeral, Congressman DAVIS said this: "Not only Javon, but thousands and perhaps millions of other young people cannot exist on a regular, daily basis without the fear of not making it through the day. Somehow, with all the technology that we have, with all the know-how, all the things that we as a nation have been able to do, somehow or another we have not had the will to stop the flow of guns through inner cities."

Well, we have a new President-Elect who said during his campaign that he was concerned about the shootings in cities like Chicago. If President-Elect Trump really wants to help Chicago, he can work to stop the flood of guns coming in to the city from States with weak background check laws. He could work with the Vice President-Elect, the governor of Indiana, to stop letting people buy guns without background checks at gun shows in Northwest Indiana. Hundreds of crimes in Chicago are being committed with guns that are brought into the city from Indiana.

America has had enough of politicians who are too scared of the gun lobby to stand up and fix our laws so we can keep guns out of the wrong hands.

We also need to address the crisis of poverty that affects many of our Nation's most violent neighborhoods. We need to provide our young men and women in these neighborhoods with economic opportunity and a path to a brighter future. This is going to require a sustained commitment of resources and investment at every level of government. But it is an investment that will pay off. It will save lives and avoid the devastating costs of violence to our communities.

I will do all I can to make sure that the Federal Government does its part to help create growth and economic opportunity in our most depressed neighborhoods. But as we head into a year when the White House and Congress will be controlled by the Republican Party, it will require cooperation from the other side of the aisle. It is a moral imperative, and it is an investment worth making.

I am angry about the shootings that injure and kill so many people in our Nation. I will not be silent about the need for action and reform. But I am also hopeful. Even in the neighborhoods of Chicago where the violence has been the worst, everywhere you look you will find determination and resilience. You will find mothers and fathers and teachers and faith leaders and many others who are going the extra mile to bring their children up safely and to provide them with love, faith, and hope for their future. They aren't going to quit. And neither can we.

There is a lot of work we need to do to address the public health crisis of gun violence. But we owe it to the