

World War II, who led the Republican side of the aisle; Senator Daniel Inouye, a personal friend to both Senator DUCKWORTH and me, who served in World War II; Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois, who served as well; Strom Thurmond, from South Carolina, a Republican; and more recently, Max Cleland, a Vietnam veteran; Bob Kerrey, John Kerry—the list goes on and on, the great people who have served our Nation in the military and then came to serve in the Senate.

One of the points she made in that speech was one of the reasons I supported her so wholeheartedly. When we face the most difficult, trying, and challenging votes in a Senate career, the vote to go to war, having the voice of TAMMY DUCKWORTH on the floor is a reminder of the real cost of war and how we should avoid it at any cost, if we can, and what we are asking our men and women in America to do if we send them off to war. She will have more credibility, will have more confidence in her judgment, than virtually any colleague on the floor of the U.S. Senate. So she is going to play a special role.

Finally, let me say, in a short period of time serving as a U.S. Senator from the State of Illinois, she has shown that she is not going to be taking it easy. She has covered our State from one end to the other, most recently during the Easter recess, with town meetings and meetings with all sorts of people across our State, leaving a positive impression of her commitment to public service.

When I saw her and her mom and her little daughter Abigail get on the plane just the other day, yesterday, to come out here, I realized it is a family commitment which includes all of her family and her husband Bryan. They are committed to this country, they are committed to our great State, and we are fortunate to have her service.

Mr. President, I congratulate my colleague.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. HOEVEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### THE ECONOMY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it is no surprise that the economy continues to be one of the top issues on the minds of Americans. The 8 years of the Obama administration were characterized by weak economic growth, a dearth of jobs and opportunities, and almost nonexistent wage growth. The Obama administration ushered in long-term economic stagnation.

The Congressional Budget Office predicts that the economy will grow at a rate of just 1.9 percent over the next 30

years—a full percentage point lower than the average growth rate over the past 50 years. We cannot resign ourselves to that. Resigning ourselves to long-term growth of 1.9 percent would mean resigning ourselves to decades of fewer jobs and opportunities, low wage growth, and a reduced standard of living. Fortunately, there are a lot of things we can do to get our economy thriving again and to spur economic growth.

A recent report from the Economic Innovation Group identified one important problem with our economy today, and that is a lack of what the EIG calls economic dynamism. Economic dynamism, as the Economic Innovation Group defines it, refers to the rate at which new businesses are born and die.

In a dynamic economy, the rate of new business creation is high and significantly outstrips the rate of business death, but that has not been the case in the United States lately. New business creation has significantly dropped over the past several years. Between 2009 and 2011, business death outstripped business birth, and while the numbers have since improved slightly, the recovery has been poor and far from historical norms.

The Economic Innovation Group notes that in 2012—which, by the way, was the economy's best year for business creation since the recession—it still “fell far short of its worst year prior to 2008.” This is deeply concerning because new businesses have historically been responsible for a substantial part of the job creation in this country, not to mention a key source of innovation. When new businesses are not being created at a strong rate, workers face a whole host of problems. “A less dynamic economy,” the Economic Innovation Group notes, “is one likely to feature fewer jobs, lower labor force participation, slack wage growth, and rising inequality—exactly what we see today.”

Restoring economic dynamism would go a long way toward boosting economic growth and providing new jobs and opportunities for American workers. One big thing we can do to achieve this is to relieve the burden of excessive government regulations. Obviously, some government regulations are important and necessary, but too many others are unnecessary and do nothing but load businesses with compliance costs and paperwork hours. The more resources businesses spend on complying with regulations, the less they have available for growth and innovation. Excessive regulations also prevent many new businesses from ever getting off the ground. Small startups simply do not have the resources to hire individuals—let alone consultants and lawyers—to do the costly work of complying with scores of government regulations.

Unfortunately, over the past 8 years, the Obama administration spent a lot of time on imposing burdensome and unnecessary regulations on American

businesses. According to the American Action Forum, the Obama administration was responsible for implementing more than 675 major regulations that cost the economy more than \$800 billion. Given those numbers, it is no surprise that the Obama economy left businesses with few resources to dedicate to growing and creating jobs or that new business creation seriously dropped off during the Obama administration.

Since the new Congress began in January, Republicans in Congress and the President have been focused on repealing burdensome Obama-era regulations. So far, we have saved individuals and businesses approximately \$67 billion and freed them from 56 million hours of paperwork. Eliminating burdensome regulations will continue to be a priority for both Republicans in Congress and for the White House.

In addition to removing burdensome regulations, we need to focus on reforming our Tax Code. Our current Tax Code is strangling businesses, both large and small. Some corporations escape with paying very little in taxes, but others end up paying the highest corporate tax rate in the developed world. Meanwhile, small businesses and family farms face high tax rates, at times exceeding those paid by large corporations.

Tax reform needs to address these obstacles to growth. We need to trim our excessive corporate tax rate to make U.S. businesses competitive in the global economy, and we need to reduce taxes for small businesses so that we do not choke off these sources of growth and innovation. Measures like allowing new businesses to deduct their startup costs and expense more of their investments in machinery and equipment would spur new business creation and help small businesses thrive.

Our goal is to take up tax reform this year, and I am looking forward to that debate. Reforming our Tax Code will go a long way toward restoring dynamism to our economy and encouraging growth, job creation, and better wages.

There are other growth-boosting measures we can take as well, like removing unnecessary barriers that restrict access to capital. Both new and existing businesses rely on capital to help them innovate and expand.

The last 8 years were discouraging years for American workers, but the stagnation of the Obama years does not have to be the new normal. American workers and job creators are as dynamic and creative as ever; we just need to clear the obstacles from their paths. I look forward to working with my colleagues this year as we make putting our economy on the path to long-term health and vitality a top priority for the U.S. Senate.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN MCGUIRE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, this is one of those days I never look forward to. In my time in the Senate, I have had a lot of outstanding chiefs of staff. It is a pretty impressive group of men and women who have been in that position with me over the years—none more impressive than the person who, unfortunately, I have to say goodbye to today.

I am here today to pay tribute to Brian McGuire, the chief of staff in my personal office, who is going to be leaving after well over 10 years of service in several different capacities but over the last few years as my personal office chief of staff. He is really a uniquely gifted person. He is one of the most skilled writers I have ever encountered and, in fact, in my career, the most skilled writer I ever encountered. But in addition to that, he is good at a whole lot of other things, too, as I will subsequently describe in my remarks.

As I think back about the chiefs of staff I have fortunately been lucky enough to have, none has been better at so many different things than Brian McGuire. I always hate to see these talented people go, but we know the best way for each of us to operate is to do what is in our own best interests. Of course, he has reached the point where he has a big family. There are more lucrative alternatives out there—maybe not as much fun and not as meaningful as daily life around here but important to making sure our families are taken care of.

It is hard to know really where to begin with Brian. He came to my office in 2007. It was a critical time. I had just been elected Senate Republican leader. We were not in the majority, but I had just been elected to this position. There was a lot of pressure to get things right.

Obviously, I was setting up a new staff in the leadership office. I wanted the best I could find. When we set out to hire a speechwriter, I certainly wasn't envisioning an upstate New Yorker with a master's in philosophy and a resume that included stints at HUD and the Schenectady Daily Gazette. From HUD to the Schenectady Daily Gazette and a guy from Albany, NY—not exactly what I had envisioned, but that was Brian McGuire, and he quickly proved himself in that role. That wouldn't surprise anyone who knows Brian. He is, as I said earlier, a skilled writer. He is bright. He is talented. He is guided by faith and his family. He is also the consummate professional, going above and beyond each and every time, no matter what the challenge, and we have plenty of them. As the years went by, there would be many different challenging situations—communications challenges, policy challenges, political chal-

lenges—but whatever the issue, Brian always rose to the moment.

After the 2014 election, when I became majority leader, I asked Brian to leave speechwriting behind and become the chief of staff in my personal office. He agreed, fortunately. He took to his new opportunity to serve the people of Kentucky with similar skill and always good humor.

These days, you would be forgiven for thinking Brian had spent his formative years in Albany, KY, rather than Albany, NY. He is an adaptable guy. He led my office in pressing the Commonwealth's priorities on issues as diverse as industrial hemp, clean coal technology, and the fight against heroin and opioid abuse. So we can see the versatility, from a skilled writer from New York, of all places, to an effective advocate for Kentucky and Kentucky's interests.

Brian will be ably succeeded by another impressive individual, Phil Maxson, a Kentucky native who I know will continue Brian's legacy of service to Kentucky and who will serve with similar distinction.

Brian McGuire probably never imagined he would find himself here. Like me, he grew up dreaming of a career in the Major Leagues. As he put it, though, you can either hit the fastball or you can't. And since neither of us could, we ended up here. But Brian is more than just another power hitter; he, like his idol growing up, the Mets' Keith Hernandez, is an all-star. Brian is an indispensable utility player who can play every position, and I am not sure what I would have done without him. He is also one of the most interesting guys you will meet. Brian has a great sense of humor and a rather infamous reputation for spot-on impressions. He is probably the only one around here who holds Keith Hernandez and Aristotle in similar reverence and can reference each with similar ease.

At his core, though, Brian is incredibly grounded. He is all about the things that really matter—his Catholic faith, his two beautiful children, Stella and Max, and his wonderful wife Ashley. Ashley, I am happy to say, is due with their third child next month—just in time for Mother's Day. So Brian has a lot to look forward to as he climbs the next mountain. I hope he takes some time to look back and reflect on all he has accomplished here in his time with us.

Let me say again that Brian McGuire, on so many different occasions, has made me look so much better than I am. I could never thank him enough for the enormous contribution he made not only to my career but to Kentucky and to the Nation. So it won't surprise my colleagues to know I am going to miss Brian McGuire a lot.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the nomination of Rod J. Rosenstein to be the Deputy At-

torney General of the United States at the Justice Department. Rod has served the people of Maryland extraordinarily well since 2005 as the U.S. attorney for the District of Maryland. I am pleased to support his nomination, and I hope the Senate will confirm him in very short order.

I might point out that he received a favorable recommendation from the Judiciary Committee by a lopsided vote of 19-to-1.

Rod Rosenstein is the total package. He has committed his life to public service. Rod graduated from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania with a B.S. in economics, summa cum laude, in 1986. He earned his J.D. degree from Harvard Law School in 1989, where he was the editor of the Harvard Law Review. He then served as a law clerk to Judge Douglas H. Ginsburg of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. After finishing his clerkship in 1990, he became a trial attorney in the Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice. He has remained at the Justice Department for his entire career.

Mr. Rosenstein has devoted his life to public service. In Maryland, Rod was appointed in 2005 by President Bush and then held over by President Obama, with the strong support of his two home State Senators, which include myself and the senior Senator at that time, Senator Barbara Mikulski. Rod has now become the longest serving U.S. attorney in the country today.

I really want to underscore that point. I know my colleagues know the prerogatives we have when we come into office and there is an opening at the U.S. attorney's office because of an election of a President from your own party where the previous U.S. attorney was appointed by the other party. In this case, it was a Republican who appointed Mr. Rosenstein. President Obama came into office, and the senior Senator and junior Senator had the opportunity to replace that U.S. attorney, which has been the tradition in the Senate. Senator Mikulski and I had no hesitation when asking Mr. Rosenstein to remain on as the U.S. attorney in Maryland. We did that because we knew how valuable he was for law enforcement in our State.

As U.S. attorney for the District of Maryland, Rod has garnered broad bipartisan support from the State and local law enforcement officials across our great State as he has tackled problems of crime, terrorism, drug trafficking, gun and gang violence, civil rights enforcement, environmental crimes, intellectual property fraud, and corruption. I just mentioned a couple of those.

I sat down with the U.S. attorney to talk about gang violence in our State because I had been to Central America and I saw the exporting of gang violence from Central America to Maryland. The U.S. attorney, Mr. Rosenstein, and I had a chance to talk about