

When it comes to tax cuts for big corporations and the rich, deficits are no impediment, but now that these tax cuts are in place, I predict that deficits will once again morph into a dire problem, a scourge on the Nation, an excuse for Republicans to target Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

That has been the playbook since the Bush era: explode the deficit with tax cuts for the rich and powerful, then use the deficit they created as a reason to cut Social Security and Medicare.

Lo and behold, this week the majority in the House will vote on a balanced budget amendment—a way for Republicans to force cuts to Medicare and Medicaid and Social Security. It is hard to believe they can say it with a straight face, but we will hear Republican Members say this week that Washington needs to get its fiscal House in order, only a few months after they added \$1.5 trillion to the deficit by tax cuts that mainly benefited the wealthy and the powerful. It is the height of hypocrisy.

The American people deserve better than this patronizing Kabuki theater. They deserve a Congress squarely focused on helping the middle class, not the powerful, not the special interests, not those at the very top of the economic ladder. So far, this Republican Congress has shown it is not up to the job, and every day more and more Americans realize that.

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.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Claria Horn Boom, of Kentucky, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern and Western Districts of Kentucky.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to place a maile lei on the lectern during my remarks.

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

#### REMEMBERING DANIEL KAHIKINA AKAKA

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, I rise today in remembrance of Senator Daniel Kahikina Akaka. Senator Akaka, who served in the Senate for 23 years and sat at this desk, passed away on Friday morning, with his wife of nearly 70 years, Millie, and his extended family at his side.

Since his passing, people across Hawaii have shared their memories of and tributes to Senator Akaka. Each of their stories has a common thread—Senator Akaka's dedication to living with "aloha." Senator Akaka embodied the "aloha" spirit. From meeting nearly every Hawaii family who came to his office for a Capitol tour to serving as a tireless advocate for veterans, the Native Hawaiian community, and Hawaii families, Senator Akaka's care, empathy, and compassion were evident to everyone who knew him.

When I was elected to the Senate, I requested Senator Akaka's desk to be my desk. I did this because it represented continuity as Senator Akaka's successor, and the desk is a symbol to me of his years of service and the "aloha" he had for this body and the people of Hawaii.

The last time I saw Senator Akaka was at last year's American Logistics Association Hawaii conference. This gathering brings together Hawaii businesses from across the State to market their products for sale to military commissaries. Over 20 years ago, Senator Akaka worked with small businesses and the military commissary network to create this conference because he understood how much receiving a commissary contract would mean to Hawaii's businesses, especially Hawaii's small businesses.

The conference started with one small table with a few products and grew to an entire ballroom full of local products and entrepreneurs. Last year, the conference was named for Senator Akaka.

That is who Senator Akaka was. He brought people together to solve problems and create opportunities. His legislative style wasn't flashy or over the top. He put his head down and got to work, and he built relationships with colleagues to get things done.

Senator Akaka's work on behalf of our Nation's veterans also reflected his persistent, effective style. After serving in World War II, Senator Akaka went to college under the GI bill and became an educator. As chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, he was a strong advocate for expanding the GI bill for a new generation of veterans. He authored the post-9/11 GI bill, which was signed into law in 2011.

Senator Akaka also championed the cause of the Filipino veterans of World War II in Congress. These veterans fought for the United States but were denied the benefits and citizenship they were promised. Senator Akaka introduced legislation that would restore these veterans' benefits and, with his leadership, this bill passed the Senate.

Later he and Senator Inouye successfully included language in the 2009 stimulus bill that provided onetime payments for these Filipino veterans through the newly created Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Fund.

Senator Akaka also introduced bipartisan legislation to allow these veterans to reunite with their children and families in the United States. While this bill did not pass, President Obama established through executive order the Filipino World War II Veterans Parole Program in 2016 to allow the children of these veterans to reunite with their parents in the United States. Some of these veterans have been waiting for decades to reunite with their children.

Although Senator Akaka had retired, his insistence on bipartisanship helped to build broad support for President Obama's decision to issue this Executive order.

Senator Akaka was also instrumental in building support to award the Filipino Veterans of World War II the Congressional Gold Medal that passed in 2016, after years of continued effort.

Senator Akaka was also a champion for America's Native people and served as chairman of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee. As the first Native Hawaiian to serve in the U.S. Senate, Senator Akaka fought to expand funding for Native Hawaiian healthcare, education, and housing programs.

In 1993, President Clinton signed into law Senator Akaka's apology resolution, which acknowledged the Federal Government's role in the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893. The resolution's unanimous passage marked the 100th anniversary of the overthrow and was a watershed moment for Native Hawaiians. It served as the first official admission by the United States of the role it played in the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

Senator Akaka later worked on the Hawaiian Home Lands Recovery Act. This law required the United States to make the Hawaiian homelands whole by ensuring a repayment of lost use of lands originally set aside by Congress but which were nevertheless transferred to or otherwise acquired by the Federal Government.

The apology resolution and the Lands Recovery Act provided the foundation for Senator Akaka's namesake legislation—the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act, often referred to as the Akaka bill, to establish a process to secure Federal recognition for Native Hawaiians to achieve parity with the Alaska Natives and American Indians.

When I served in the House of Representatives, I introduced the House companion to the Akaka bill and testified about the importance of passing this legislation in both the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate. Senator Akaka reintroduced the Akaka bill for more than 10 years, but it did not pass before he retired.

A former longtime Akaka staff member reflected on the Senator's commitment to the Native Hawaiian community. She said:

Senator Akaka worked tirelessly to address the longstanding issues resulting from the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii. He felt strongly that there needed to be a process to bring all parties to the table because without such a process these issues remained festering sources of emotional pain that would stand in the way of Hawaii being able to move forward as a state and for Native Hawaiians to move forward as indigenous peoples.

Building on his work, in 2016, the Department of the Interior adopted rules creating a process that could reestablish a government-to-government relationship between the United States and Native Hawaiians. While the Native Hawaiian community has differences on the issue of Federal recognition, everyone can agree that Senator Akaka pushed for the passage of the Akaka bill because he wanted equity and justice for Native Hawaiian people.

Senator Akaka's advocacy for our country's Native people could best be summarized in his own words during his farewell address to the Senate, where he said:

The United States is a great country. One of the things that makes us so great is that though we have made mistakes, we change, we correct them, we right past wrongs. It is our responsibility as a nation to do right by America's native people, those who exercised sovereignty on lands that later became part of the United States. While we can never change the past, we have the power to change the future.

Many people also may not know that Senator Akaka was just as committed to protecting Hawaii's land and water resources as he was to improving the lives of Hawaii's people. In 1992, Senator Akaka successfully passed his Tropical Forest Recovery Act into law, which served as a basis for Federal conservation efforts that protect Hawaii's plants and forests.

As with so many of his initiatives, the Senator was much ahead of his time. This act provided a vision and blueprint for tomorrow's conservation ethic, one that stressed the integration of ecology, livelihoods, and culture; in short, an ethic that emphasized sacred relationship between people and place, community and sustainably managed resources.

Senator Akaka also leaves behind a demonstrated commitment to bipartisanship. He was widely known for his faithful attendance at the Senate Prayer Breakfast every week. Colleagues who attend that breakfast regularly asked me about how he and Millie were doing.

During his farewell speech, Senator Akaka said:

In Congress and in our nation, we are truly all together, in the same canoe. If we paddle together in unison, we can travel great distances. If the two sides of the canoe paddle in opposite directions, we will only go in circles.

Senator Akaka is deeply missed by all the people in Hawaii, and I dare say

he will be deeply missed by his colleagues in both the U.S. House and the Senate. The maile lei is here to signify his devotion and commitment to the people of Hawaii.

I yield the floor to my colleague Senator BRIAN SCHATZ.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, I thank Senator HIRONO for her poignant remarks, and I want to offer my condolences to the family.

Senator Daniel Kahikina Akaka died on Friday at the age of 93, leaving behind a legacy of integrity, kindness, and service to Hawaii and to the Nation.

In Washington, Senator Akaka was an ambassador of "aloha." He showed people kindness, respect, and hospitality rarely seen in this town. He didn't just represent Hawaii's interests in the Congress; he showed the world what Hawaii represents; in the words of President Kennedy, "all that we are and all that we hope to be."

He started that service as a welder in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He fought in World War II in the Pacific arena, traveling to places like Tinian and Saipan. When World War II ended, he took advantage of the GI bill to attend the University of Hawaii to become a teacher—an occupation he never fully left behind.

Senator Akaka served for 36 years in Congress—14 years in the House and 22 in the U.S. Senate. He was loved by colleagues in both parties because he was kind to everyone. In fact, he never said a bad word about anyone, not even in private. The foundation for his kindness came from his faith, which he learned from his mother Annie.

He was a faithful attendee of the weekly Senate Prayer Breakfast, where he would lead Members singing hymns. He always began with the history of each song—a tradition he passed on to our own Chaplain, Chaplain Black, who continues it today.

Danny Akaka was also very humble. There were times he didn't get credit for the work he did here because he didn't care about the credit. He cared about the work, about making a difference for people, especially those whom he represented.

He was deeply convinced that the government could improve people's lives because he had seen that in his own life as a beneficiary of the GI bill. He would become the Senator who modernized that bill, bringing it into the 21st century. He always fought hard for veterans—for their benefits and their recognition, no matter the color of their skin or their country of origin. When someone once challenged him on the cost of benefits for veterans, he answered by saying: "The price has already been paid, many times over, by the service of the brave men and women who wore our nation's uniform."

Senator Akaka never forgot the costs of war on our country, and he did ev-

erything he could to make sure his colleagues didn't either. He voted against the Iraq war and advocated for peace and nuclear nonproliferation throughout his career.

He was unrelenting when it came to the causes that were most important to him. As the only Native Hawaiian to ever serve in the U.S. Senate, he never stopped working to see Native Hawaiians recognized in a government-to-government relationship with the United States.

In his years on the Indian Affairs Committee, including as the chairman, he successfully sponsored the apology resolution, which recognized that the overthrow of the Queen—the only monarch in the United States—was illegal and facilitated by agents of our own Federal Government.

This was the theme of Senator Akaka's career—to advocate for people who did not have power and for people who were vulnerable. He was a champion for the Federal Government employees who, to this day, continue to be a punching bag for some. He sponsored the 2012 Whistleblower Protection Act, which ensures that Federal workers cannot be retaliated against if they report waste, fraud, and abuse. That was just one of the many things he did to make the Federal Government a better employer.

Senator Akaka also fought for consumers. He helped people who were trying to get out of credit card debt. He made sure investors had an advocate at the Securities and Exchange Commission, and he protected people who sent remittances around the world so they aren't swindled out of their hard-earned money.

Every morning he would begin his day by meeting visitors from Hawaii. Those connections to his constituents—to home—drove his work and kept him focused on helping Hawaii.

Much of his work was possible because of the bipartisanship relationships he built with other Senators. Some of his best friends in the body—Senators INHOFE, COCHRAN, and BARRASSO—were people with whom he did not agree very often. Every Member of this body—those who knew Senator Akaka and those who didn't—can learn from his legacy—a legacy of quiet leadership, of treating others the way you want to be treated, and focusing on the things that matter to the people we are here to represent.

I want to end with a few words from Chaplain Black. This is what he had to say about Senator Akaka:

There's something called ethical congruence—it refers to when your actions back up your rhetoric. And most of us struggle with that, because it's very easy to say something but much more difficult to live it. There's a verse in Scripture that says, we are living letters, so our lives should be something that people should be able to read. Francis of Assisi said: preach the gospel everywhere you go; when necessary, use words. Senator Akaka preached the gospel everywhere he went, and very rarely had to use words. That's the kind of ethical congruence that he had.

The U.S. Senate and our country would be better off if there were more leaders like Danny. He fought for the vulnerable, promoted peace, and looked for common ground. Most of all, he embodied the “aloha” spirit and showed us all what it means to have a pure heart and be a true public servant.

Our thoughts are with the family of Senator Akaka today, with Millie, his children, his grandchildren, his great-grandchildren, and his staff. He will be remembered and greatly missed.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### REMEMBERING ZELL MILLER

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, on the 23rd day of March, 2018, just a little over 2 weeks ago, Zell Bryan Miller of the State of Georgia—former Member of this body, former Governor of the State of Georgia, former State senator in the State of Georgia, former chairman of the Democratic Party in the State of Georgia—who contributed immensely to his State, passed away at his beloved home in Young Harris, GA, in Towns County.

I am here to pay tribute to Zell and his life and his contributions to our country, both for a purposeful reason, as far as a fellow Member, but also for a very personal reason for me, because he is an individual I met through politics, became one of my best friends through politics, and probably had more influence personally on my life than anybody else I know in public service.

As I said, Zell died in Young Harris, GA, the home of Young Harris College. Zell Miller was, first of all, a teacher and a writer. He wrote over 10 books. He taught. He was educated at the University of Georgia. He taught at Young Harris College. He always taught throughout his career. Even as Governor and Lieutenant Governor, he was an instructor and a teacher. He was professorial, but he was tough as nails. There was only one way to do it and that was the Zell way, he used to say, and he knew how to get it done.

He was for four terms the Lieutenant Governor of Georgia. He then ran for Governor in 1990. I happened to be his opponent in 1990, and I will get to that in just a minute. He won that election. It was pretty close. It has gotten a lot closer since then. Pretty soon, when I have grandchildren, I am going to tell them all I won. So far, that is not the case. But he won, and he was elected twice to be Governor of Georgia.

As Governor of Georgia, he embraced education as a major issue. As I said, he was a teacher and was all about teaching. He did something that no-

body had ever done and in numbers that were very impressive. He created what is known as the HOPE Scholarship, funded by the Georgia Lottery. A lot of lotteries have been passed and a lot of liquor referendums have been passed by promising people that the money was going to go to education, but it never really did. In Georgia, the way it was done is that it came out of the debates that he and I had in our race for Governor. We finally passed a constitutional amendment to allow legal gambling in Georgia and then passed the HOPE Scholarship, which was where the money went. We tied up all the money made from the lottery separately for three things: college scholarships for eligible Georgia students, 4-year-old voluntary prekindergarten for Georgia pre-Ks to the age of 4, and technology and innovation and wiring and infrastructure in our public schools.

The election was in 1990. He was elected in 1990 as the Governor of Georgia. He served two terms, but by the end of the decade, the lottery had passed. Since its passage, 1.8 million Georgia children have gotten their college education—1.8 million—and 1.6 million Georgia 4-year-olds have gone to prekindergarten voluntarily. Georgia's public schools are wired. They are on the internet. We deliver content through distance learning. It is at the leading edge of technology in public education of any State in the country.

Now, politicians can take credit for a lot of things, but I don't know of anybody who can take credit for 1.8 million college degrees, 1.4 million prekindergarten programs, wiring schools for the information technology of the 21st century, and doing it all based on a personal effort and commitment to see to it that the more we are educated, the better the State will be.

I said that Zell was an author. He was an author and a marine. He served in the Marine Corps from 1953 to 1956. He wrote a number of books about the Marine Corps. He wrote a number of articles about the Marine Corps. He wrote one book called “Corps Values.” The values he learned in the Marine Corps he used throughout his life in education, as Governor, as a father, and as a family man.

Zell's wife is Shirley Miller. Shirley is a wonderful lady, and I got to be with her a little bit 2 weeks ago during the services. Zell and Shirley are Georgia's forever first family, not just because they were Governor and first lady together and Lieutenant Governor and first lady together but also because Shirley was a partner with Zell. She wasn't just his wife. Shirley worked tirelessly for Zell and for the State of Georgia, and to this day, she works tirelessly for our State. During Zell's more difficult years—over the last few years having the difficulties he had healthwise—Shirley was there to be with Zell every single day.

Zell Miller came to the Congress of the United States in a very unique

way. Paul Coverdell, who had the seat that I hold today, died. Paul was a Republican. He was in his second term as a Republican. Roy Barnes was the Governor of Georgia, a Democrat, and when Paul Coverdell died, Roy Barnes called Zell up, who was then the immediate past Governor, and said: Zell, I need you to go to Washington and serve for me because the body is getting pretty close politically up there. We need to make sure a Democrat is in that place to replace Paul.

I wasn't involved in the conversation because I was hoping they were going to call me up, which I will get to in a minute. They didn't, but they did later. But they hadn't done it at that time. Roy said to Paul: You just have to do it for me, Governor Miller. You have to make sure that Georgia stays Democratic.

Zell went on public television and said: I want to accept this appointment to the U.S. Senate to fill this seat, but I am going to vote like Paul Coverdell.

He knew how important Paul's service had been in the State. He knew the conservative movement had taken the State and was moving in that direction. Zell was a man of conscience and principle who recognized the importance of the U.S. Senate seat, but, more importantly, he recognized the wishes of the voters. He told Roy Barnes, he told me, and he told everybody in the State: I am going to take it, but I will vote like Paul Coverdell.

When that 4 years was up of finishing that term of Paul Coverdell, Zell Miller decided not to run again. I was in the U.S. House at that time, and he ran a press conference here in Washington to say: I will not seek reelection. That was in 2003.

I got on the phone, called my wife, and said: I am going to go see Zell. If he is not going to run, I am going to run for that seat. That would be a good way to end my career and make a contribution to my State.

I called Zell, and I said: Governor, can I come to see you this weekend in Young Harris.

He said: Yes, come on.

So I got in my pickup truck, which is a good way to drive in North Georgia, where a pickup truck is a standard operating vehicle. It was kind of a snowflake morning in North Georgia and the North Georgia mountains in Young Harris. I sat down with Zell at the fireplace, with Woodrow and Gus, the two dogs, talking about politics. Finally, I got around to the subject of saying: Well, Zell, the reason I am here is that you announced that you are not going to run for reelection. I want to know if you have any issue with my running to replace you.

He said: Put your shoes on, son. You can win that seat. Let me know what I can do to help you.

I have never forgotten the encouragement, never forgotten what he said, and never forgotten the challenge I felt I had to thank the guy who had beaten me for Governor in 1990—to make a