

This resolution wasn't new. The House of Representatives did this in 2007 also. By the way, they also did this by voice vote then because no one wanted to be tied to something that they had to vote on without really knowing what it was all about. So they did it in 2007. I don't think the outcome of that was ever discussed, so I am going to tell the story now.

The 2007 resolution claimed that its purpose was to "encourage and facilitate the consolidation of peace and security in Ethiopia," but in reality, it focused only on the shortcomings while blatantly ignoring the unprecedented progress the country had made.

I went to Ethiopia 3 weeks after the House voted in 2007. The resolution was reported widely for weeks in the Ethiopian press as the United States sharply criticizing Ethiopians, the same as they did last week. It caused great confusion and anger with the Ethiopian people, who were emerging from Communist rule. You could argue that at the time this happened, the people were protesting the administration under Prime Minister Meles. Probably they were saying that they prefer the Communists because this is something he was responsible for changing at that time.

So they had that resolution. It was reported that it hurt them and hurt their reputation around the world, caused great confusion and anger with the Ethiopian people, who were emerging from a Communist rule and working with democracy.

I met with Prime Minister Meles on that trip, and he said that the House vote really hurt our relationship with Ethiopia. I remember exactly what he said to me. He said: Our survival depends on democratization.

He was also open and honest about the problems they had in the 2005 election. He acknowledged the riots and that better training could have prevented the deaths of some seven policemen. That is not the story we hear. We hear about hundreds of people dying, but that is simply not the case.

Prime Minister Meles also noted that they were being singled out for criticism and sanctions when Eritrea—an autocratic government that openly gave refuge to terrorists—faced no such condemnation. He stated that he felt insulted by the bill, as well he should have.

When I was visiting with Azeb, Meles's wife—by the way, Azeb and Meles fought together in the feud that took over the country from communism, in the bush. When she asked me how the United States could attack our friends in this way, I didn't have an answer for that. Remember, we are friends. Ethiopia has been a partner on the global War on Terror and has contributed troops to peacekeeping missions and supports regional security efforts.

We also met with a group of Ethiopian citizens in Addis who had returned to Ethiopia to rebuild the nation. They

had returned in the mid-2000s because it was the first time they had confidence in the government to return. They were very frustrated and disappointed by the resolution.

Today I am sure that Prime Minister Abiy and the Ethiopian people are also confused and frustrated by this resolution. I want to speak now to our friends in Ethiopia who may be feeling abandoned by the United States and questioning our partnership and friendship in such a critical part of the world.

This resolution, while offensive to you, does not change your friendship with the United States.

I want to repeat that. I want to make sure people know that the resolution, while it is offensive to you, doesn't change your friendship with the United States.

We have a long history of economic and military cooperation that will continue, and Ethiopia is only gaining momentum as a nation. This is apparent when you look at Ethiopia's economy, their military, and the U.S.-Ethiopia trade relationship that they are now building with our country. Ethiopia ranks among the fastest growing economies in the world. This is significant: Despite the recent drought, the IMF estimates that Ethiopia will have an average GDP growth rate of 7.4 percent from 2017 to 2020.

This is what I would have said yesterday, but something happened yesterday that I didn't know was going to happen. Yesterday, in the latest World Economic Outlook, the IMF announced that Ghana had lost its position as the fastest growing economy in Africa, and they lost it to Ethiopia. Ethiopia now has the fastest growth—8.5 percent. We in the United States would love to have an 8.5-percent economic growth rate.

Total U.S. direct investment, including partnerships, stands at more than \$567 million, with more than \$65 million originating solely from the United States.

The United States has a positive trade balance with Ethiopia, particularly in manufacturing, energy, and agricultural processing.

Over the past 70 years, Ethiopian Airlines has purchased more than 100 U.S.-origin aircraft.

In 2016 alone, Ethiopia utilized over \$149 million worth of U.S. agricultural products, including wheat, coffee, and oil seeds.

The United States continues to provide assistance to support Ethiopia's agricultural development. Through the USDA, the 3-year, \$13 million Food for Progress Program—known as the FEED project—helps to improve yields of milk, meat, eggs, and other products by increasing the availability and quality of livestock feed.

The U.S. International Military Education and Training Program—by the way, that is called IMET—the IMET Program was put together many years ago so that when our troops go into other areas, they mingle with the troops there, and then we invite the

troops from the various countries to come into the United States and get their training here. We found out that once the training takes place in this country, we have their allegiance for the rest of the time they are there. They have been working to train future leaders here in the United States and create a rapport between the United States and the Ethiopian military. They had over 600 members from 2010 to 2015—one of our most successful IMET programs, working military to military.

Along with their own successes, Ethiopia has established itself as a world player. Ethiopia and the United States belong to a number of the same organizations, including the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. The nation is an observer to the World Trade Organization and is currently serving on the United Nations Security Council as a non-permanent member.

So I say to my colleagues in the Senate, I would like to remind you that with the passing of resolution 128, we are repeating the past. That is exactly what they did a few years ago. That doesn't mean we have to do it again in the future. Ethiopia is a key friend, and Prime Minister Abiy—just keep in mind, here is a guy who is the highest educated Prime Minister we think in the entire history of the entire continent of Africa. He deserves a chance for a strong start.

I will continue to fight for that strong friendship in Congress, and I urge the United States to give them the chance they have rightly earned. Clearly, resolution 128 does not reflect America's relationship with Ethiopia, one of our most valued allies in all of Africa.

"Are you listening?" I asked my brother. Prime Minister Abiy, America is with you. America is with you.

I yield the floor.

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

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

#### REMEMBERING BARBARA BUSH

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, tonight I want to talk about the passing of an extraordinary woman—a woman who captured the hearts of Americans across every spectrum.

Barbara Bush was one of the most popular people in America—and for good reason. One of only two women in the history of our country to be both the First Lady of the United States and also the mother of a President, she consistently used those platforms that, as she would say, God graced her with, for good causes.

There are many stories, but one I would like to recount was shortly after President Bush's election. She went to an AIDS hospice here in Washington, DC. This was a time when the AIDS epidemic was a huge crisis. Frankly, there was a stigma attached to it and a lot of nervousness about the disease.

Barbara Bush picked up a baby with AIDS and cradled that baby. She hugged and kissed kids with AIDS. The message was very clear: There should be no stigma. We have nothing to fear. It is time for us to embrace these people. Her quote that day was everlasting: "There is a need for compassion." She spoke to the heart.

She also used the platform she had to empower people through literacy. This was one of her great causes. She believed the world would be a much better place if everyone could read, write, and comprehend, and the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy continues to do amazing work. She has touched the lives of so many—so many young people, so many adults—and brought them into a new world through literacy.

She accomplished a lot more through her distinguished life. She was dignified, straightforward, witty, and well-intentioned. She had a habit of speaking her mind freely, and sometimes that got her in a little bit of trouble, but, frankly, when she did that, almost all of us nodded our heads in agreement.

Interestingly, her Secret Service code name was "Tranquility." For anyone who knew her personally, that might have seemed to be an odd code name. Probably she chose that code name herself, by the way. She wasn't always tranquil. In fact, she was sometimes feisty—famously so.

One story that I think shows some of her feistiness was when she was having dinner one night with the President of the United States—43, who happened to be her son—and in front of many others, including staff, she commented critically on his table manners, which, of course, she loved, and so did he.

The night before she left us, that feistiness was on display when Barbara Bush, instead of asking for pain medication, asked for a glass of bourbon and, with a smile, took a sip.

I think the name "Tranquility" was also fitting for her. It was fitting for her because she was a calming influence. She made things more tranquil. I saw that firsthand at the White House, where she made life easier for everybody.

I had the pleasure of first getting to know her when I was doing volunteer advanced work for her husband, then-Vice President Bush. I traveled overseas with them, traveled around the country some with them, and got to see the calming influence she had on everyone around her.

Later, when I was in the counsel's office at the White House, I got to see

how she made everybody feel more comfortable—including me, as a young White House staffer—encouraging me, knowing people, saying hello to them, talking to them, ensuring that the morale was good.

Tranquility. It was helpful then, and it was helpful through her life, as she was there as the rock, as the adult.

My wife Jane and I had recently become married. We had a child when I worked at the White House. Barbara Bush couldn't have been more gracious. She was a dear friend ever since. In fact, a few years later, when I first ran for public office—I ran for the U.S. House of Representatives in Cincinnati, OH, the Second Congressional District of Ohio—she came to campaign for me. This was early in 1993. Recall that, in 1992, George H.W. Bush—41—had lost his reelection.

We did a political event in Cincinnati. I took her to Skyline Chili, which is a famous place in my hometown and all around Southwest Ohio. Although Skyline Chili and Cincinnati chili is an acquired taste, she at least acted like she really enjoyed it. She wore the bib, and people loved it. Maybe most importantly for me, while she was there, she cut a radio ad for me. In that radio ad, she said: "I always enjoy having Skyline Chili with ROB PORTMAN when I'm in Cincinnati." She said some other things that were kind. Frankly, as I look back on that race—there were 10 people in the primary. My name identification was about 6 percent, half of whom thought I was somebody else with a similar name. I think that radio ad played a huge role in my first election, my ability to be here today and to serve the people of Ohio. Barbara Bush was an important reason I won.

In that election, by the way, I had stuck with George H.W. Bush, who had just lost his reelection, when others were being critical, because I had so much respect for him and so much respect for her. Frankly, I think her popularity was an important reason I was able to win.

In recent years, I made a habit of making a pilgrimage to Maine every summer to see them, sometimes going to Houston during the winter as well, but going to Maine has been a wonderful way to connect with them. I have gone with my daughter. I have gone with my wife Jane a few times. I sit with them. President Bush loves to give advice still, and I love to get it.

Barbara Bush loved the political gossip, and we loved to talk about people and things and what was going on in Washington. She was curious, engaged, sharp, and up to speed.

She loved George H.W. Bush so deeply. She sometimes called him "FLFW," former leader of the free world. Again, her wit was on display everywhere she was.

I remember being with them last summer on the porch. She always in-

sisted on eating lunch outside. The waves were coming in on the Maine coast and the Sun was reflecting on the waves. Family was always around. That is when she was happiest.

I will certainly miss those moments we shared, the encouragement, and the very candid advice that she was never hesitant to offer, but as we mourn the loss of this authentic and admired American, we should all find comfort in remembering the way she lived and the incredible legacy she leaves.

She never ran for political office herself, but in a way she represented all of us, and I think she represented the best in all of us. I think that is one reason she was so popular. She showed us how to handle the spotlight and responsibility with grace, with dignity, and with the incredible way that she, again, was able to bring tranquility wherever she was.

No wife, no mother, no grandmother was more devoted to her family. She had unconditional love for her children, including the 43rd President of the United States, with whom she had a great relationship. Her true partnership with George H.W. Bush, in service to the country, all the way from the time he was an 18-year-old Navy pilot through his career as President and after is an inspiration, that unconditional love and that partnership—an inspiration certainly to me and to Jane as a role model but an inspiration to all of us as Americans.

I know I speak for all of my colleagues in the United States Senate as we pay tribute to her and also send our condolences to the entire Bush family.

Barbara Bush is now in a better place. I can imagine her smiling, surrounded by family, including her beloved daughter, Robin, whom she lost as a child. She is on a coast somewhere, dignified, witty, and feisty, all at once, and she is earning that code name "Tranquility."

I yield the floor.

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#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, and pursuant to the provisions of S. Res. 474, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m., Thursday, April 19, and does so as a further mark of respect for the late John Melcher, former Senator from Montana.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:35 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 19, 2018, at 10 a.m.

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#### CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate April 18, 2018:

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CARLOS G. MUNIZ, OF FLORIDA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.