

would ban abortions after 20 weeks—an extremely rare procedure that is often the result of complex and difficult medical circumstances. The bill lacks adequate exceptions for survivors of rape or incest, and it gets in the way of a woman and the judgment of her doctor, threatening to jail physicians for providing patients the care they need.

In fact, a group of medical and public health organizations have written to Congress, saying: This bill places healthcare providers in an untenable situation. When they are facing a complex, urgent medical situation they must think about an unjust law instead of about how to protect the health and safety of their patients.

This bill is a direct challenge to the precedent set in *Roe v. Wade*. We are at a moment in our country when women are speaking out and fighting for basic dignity and respect at home, in the workplace, and in their daily lives. They also deserve that respect with regard to the most deeply personal health decisions they can make.

Passing this legislation would send a message to women across the country that politicians in Washington do not believe that women have the capacity to make their own healthcare decisions—as if women don't understand or are unable to grapple with the physical, emotional, economic, and spiritual issues that are involved in deciding when or if to have a family or how to handle critical health challenges.

Rather than marginalizing women, we should be doing everything we can to include them in the bipartisan work we need to do on priorities to move our Nation forward. Divisive and partisan bills like this one undermine women and undermine our strength as a country. I was proud to join many of my colleagues in voting against this bill, and I am glad that it has failed in the Senate today.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

TRIBUTE TO MARY KAY THATCHER

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I want to take a moment this evening to congratulate one of the most effective advocates for American agriculture in our Nation's Capital.

We are often helped by those who have lots of knowledge. In the coming days, Mary Kay Thatcher will be retiring from the American Farm Bureau, where she is widely recognized as one of the most knowledgeable experts on farm policy, conservation, crop insurance, ag data, and so many other issues that affect farmers and ranchers and rural America. Mary Kay represents the best of Washington, DC. She is smart, passionate, and authentic. Again, we often need help from those who have expertise to help us make the right decisions, and she is absolutely one of those people.

A great thing about Mary Kay Thatcher is that she hasn't forgotten her rural roots. It is evidenced by her

clear convictions and steadfast support for American farmers and ranchers. Too many people come to the beltway and they forget why they are here—but not Mary Kay. Throughout her career of more than 30 years, she has never lost sight of what ought to be the mission of each of ours—to use our positions, our talents, and our abilities to help others. For Mary Kay Thatcher, her career has been all about helping America's farmers and ranchers, standing up for the food and fiber producers of our Nation. Let me tell you that she is one of the best at it.

Not only is Mary Kay one of the most articulate ag lobbyists I know, she is one of the most articulate people I know. Her ability to break down an issue and make it understandable for everyone—for Senators and our staffs, including those who don't have ag backgrounds—makes her one of the most effective advocates for agriculture. There are fewer and fewer people in the U.S. Senate and Congress who understand agriculture or who come from farming backgrounds, and that ability to connect with them is so important.

I have always appreciated the advice and counsel that Mary Kay has provided me when working on the farm bill or other pieces of ag legislation. I have also always noticed and appreciated how much time she has spent in educating staff, including those in my office. I believe a big part of Mary Kay's legacy will be the generations of young people who will be better prepared to continue the fight for American agriculture because Mary Kay has taken the time and made the effort to mentor and to teach them.

Her passion for agriculture comes naturally. She grew up on an Iowa farm and continues to own and manage that farm today, and that helps guide her work here in the Nation's Capital. She has worked at the American Farm Bureau for over 30 years, but in ag circles, it is not necessarily the number of years that people talk about but the number of farm bills. They refer to how many farm bills a person has survived. By my count, Mary Kay has been part of writing at least seven farm bills in addition to many other key pieces of ag legislation.

I know I am adding my voice to lots of others who will talk about how great of a person she is and what an advocate she is, but I do want to add my accolades because they are so well-deserved.

I thank Mary Kay Thatcher for all of her work on behalf of American agriculture, including the Kansas Farm Bureau and its members, and on behalf of all of agriculture in our State. Her efforts have benefited Kansas and improved our country. She will be missed at the American Farm Bureau, but I know she will find other ways to advocate for agriculture. I hope that for many years to come, we will remain friends and work together on behalf of American farmers and ranchers.

Congratulations and best wishes. Thank you—said with great respect and with gratitude.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

PAIN-CAPABLE UNBORN CHILD PROTECTION BILL

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, there are a lot of important things the Senate is taking up right now. Obviously, there is the issue of immigration, the budget, and disaster relief. There are a lot of pertinent issues that need to be resolved. One of those things that was in the middle of the conversation came up today. It is part of a conversation that, quite frankly, doesn't come up often in this body, but this seemed like a reasonable piece to be able to come up. It came up to the Senate to open debate on it, and it failed to get the 60 votes to support the beginning of what should be an easy conversation on a hard issue—this issue about children and life.

In 1973, when *Roe v. Wade* passed, the Supreme Court at that time determined that for children that were viable—and that is the definition they left out there—there is a governmental interest in being able to engage with those children. Well, viability in 1973 was very different than what it is now, decades later. In 1973 viable was a much older child. Now that we know a lot more, a lot more children survive. Children who are born at 22 weeks of gestation have between a 50-percent to 60-percent chance of survival now. That was not true in 1973.

The rest of the world has caught up with this technology, and their governments have acknowledged of this issue that a child who has 10 fingers and 10 toes and a beating heart—they suck their thumb in the womb, they yawn, they stretch, they move—is a child.

I understand there is wide argument about a child that is at 8 weeks of gestation, whom I believe is a child, but others look at it and say: It doesn't look like a child yet. But a child at 20, 22, 24 weeks of gestation even looks like a child when you look at the child in the ultrasound. It is hard to disagree, especially when children are born at that age prematurely and they survive, and many of us know kids that were born at 22 weeks. The bill that came up today on the Senate floor, which had bipartisan support and had a majority of support but not 60 Senators' support to be able to discuss this, was a very simple, straightforward bill. It asked just one question: Will we as Americans continue to allow elective abortions when the child is viable?

The Supreme Court said in 1973 that the government has a right to be able to step in and protect a viable child. There is no question that they are at that age of viability. There is no question, at that age of 20 weeks, that science shows us they experience pain in the womb, and that if surgery happens for a child in utero like that, that child is actually given anesthetic to be

able to calm their pain during that surgery because they have a developed nervous system and because they have a beating heart. This body refused to even take up the issue and debate it.

There is no question that I am very passionate about the issue of life and about children, and that we should as a culture protect children. But this one confuses me—for this body, more than any other issue. There are only seven nations in the world that allow elective abortions after 20 weeks. There are only four nations in the world that allow elective abortions after 24 weeks. We are in that elite club. We are in the elite club with three other nations that allow elective abortions that late—Vietnam, North Korea, and China—the worst human rights violators in the world. There sits the United States in that very elite club.

Why are we there? Because we can't even discuss the possibility that a child is a child, and anyone who has ever seen an ultrasound at 24 weeks cannot deny that is a child, and if that child was delivered prematurely, they would survive and grow and develop into a person. The only difference between that child at 20 weeks and an adult now is time.

This issue will continue to come up, and it should because we as a culture should promote a culture of life and of honoring people—people at their most vulnerable moment. There is no more vulnerable a moment than that for that child. We have to get out of this club of elective abortions and the only group that allows it—North Korea, China, and Vietnam. When will we wake up to the fact that the entire rest of the world—all of Europe, all of Africa, all of Central America, all of South America, every one of those countries—sees that plain? A child is a child, and we need to be able to guard its life.

So I am sad that today in a bipartisan vote with more than 50 votes to be able to get into it and pass it, we didn't have enough people even to want to discuss it and to be able to bring up the bill. We will bring it up again for the sake of those children and their futures. We will bring it up again, and we will keep bringing up the facts of the argument, not the emotion but the facts of the argument, and we will win people over.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 497.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Gregory E. Maggs, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United

States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces for the term of fifteen years to expire on the date prescribed by law.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. LANKFORD. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Maggs nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO EARL SMITH

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the legacy and heroic service of Mr. Earl Smith. An Alabama native and unsung American hero, Smith's willingness to put himself in harm's way saved an untold number of lives.

More than 50 years ago, as a young officer in the U.S. Air Force, Smith was the on-call explosive ordnance disposal, EOD, technician at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro, NC. Nothing out of the ordinary had occurred throughout his shift on the evening of January 23, 1961, when the 24-year-old Smith received an alarming phone call. He was informed that two Mark 39 hydrogen bombs had broken loose from a B-52 bomber and landed in a field just outside of Goldsboro. He was told the general location of the bombs, but other details were unknown.

Upon arriving to the crash site, Smith and other EOD technicians found that one bomb had crashed at such a speed that it was buried underground, but the other was visible and appeared to be intact. Although the protocol was to alert the Atomic Energy Commission before inspecting the bomb, Smith's instinct was to act quickly. Dr. Ralph Lapp, a physicist involved in developing America's first nuclear bombs as part of the Manhattan Project, stated in his review of the Goldsboro incident that "one simple, dynamo-technology low voltage switch

stood between the United States and a major catastrophe."

Smith graduated from the U.S. Navy's EOD school just 9 months prior to the incident. However, his training, combined with his immense bravery, allowed him and other EOD technicians to successfully disarm the bomb over several days of harrowing work. Experts estimate that, if detonated, the bombs were powerful enough to destroy everything within an 8.5 mile radius. When asked in a recent interview why the bomb did not go off, Smith replied, "the Lord Jesus Christ only knows."

Such incidents prove that the security we enjoy every day as Americans is because of courageous individuals like Earl Smith. Smith's willingness to risk his life, along with his ability to maintain the secrecy of this formerly classified event for half a century, serve as distinct and sobering reminders that there are American men and women serving tirelessly throughout the world to maintain the way of life we hold dear.

It is my honor to offer my sincere appreciation and gratitude to Earl Smith and the countless others like him who diligently, and often thanklessly, work to provide safety and security to all Americans. I hope that my colleagues in the Senate will join me in thanking them for their selfless service to this Nation.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO PATTI MEALS

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Patti Meals on her retirement from CARE Chest of Sierra Nevada. For 26 years, Patti made an indelible impact on the people of northern Nevada as executive director of CARE Chest.

From serving 334 Nevadans in 1990, when the CARE Chest first opened, to more than 13,000 in 2017, Ms. Meals has helped provide over 139,000 services and distribute 220,000 pieces of medical equipment and supplies in her career.

With Ms. Meals' dedication and passion, CARE Chest of Sierra Nevada has made great strides in improving the health and well-being of countless northern Nevadans by providing free medical resources to those in need.

The group's programs are tailored to aid and support the area's underserved populations and include connecting local families to medical equipment, prescription assistance, diabetic supplies, medical nutrition, home and vehicle modifications, and wellness education.

As a result of Ms. Meals' work, CARE Chest today owns its 5,000-square-foot facility in Reno and is considered a cornerstone of the northern Nevada community. The nonprofit has helped thousands of vulnerable Nevadans in their path to recovery. It is worth noting that, in 2010, during Ms. Meals' tenure, CARE Chest of Sierra Nevada was