

continue to pray for them. We continue to celebrate with them the great, larger-than-life, and distinguished life of Senator John McCain.

It is hard to lose one of your best teammates, but I know the legacy John McCain leaves here in the Senate will long remain.

I want to echo a few comments made by the majority leader earlier today. John McCain was a lion in the Senate and in American politics. That is why I believe we should put together a bipartisan group who can bring together the best ideas on how we can memorialize his service to his country and his legacy here in the Senate. We should do this carefully and consider all options about what the best form that tribute should take. Doing this in a collaborative and a deliberate way I hope is how Senator McCain would have wanted it. I can't tell you how many times he always advocated for regular order. He didn't want ideas cooked up in some back room and then sprung on the Nation and the Senate; he wanted the committees to do their work because he knew that by doing so—by thinking about them, by testing ideas in a committee process—we improve the chances of a better product.

Despite our heavy loss, we can't lose sight of our other work, either. I think Senator McCain would want us to keep pushing the ball forward and achieving more on behalf of the American people.

We all remember him as a fighter until the very end, and staying in the fight and making progress for the American people is what he would expect of us as well.

NOMINATION OF BRETT KAVANAUGH

Mr. President, turning to that work before us, one of the most important constitutional duties the Senate performs is to provide advice and consent to the President on nominations to his Cabinet, to the Federal judiciary, and for other Senate-confirmable positions.

We have the responsibility to do that with a judge whom he has now nominated to succeed Anthony Kennedy as Associate Justice on the U.S. Supreme Court. The hearing on his confirmation will occur next week, and I hope we will move forward quickly thereafter to vote on his confirmation.

Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation process includes the largest production of documents ever in the Senate's consideration of a Supreme Court nominee. Well over 400,000 pages of documents have been produced on the judge's career. I appreciate Senator GRASSLEY's spearheading this effort in such a transparent, efficient, and thorough manner.

Of course, I think logic would tell us that the best way for us to judge Kavanaugh is how he ruled in real, concrete cases that came before him while serving on the DC Circuit Court of Appeals for 12 years. That is the best evidence of how he would perform if elevated and confirmed to the Supreme Court.

In Judge Kavanaugh's case, what those rulings show is that he is a dili-

gent and thoughtful judge. His rulings are clear and they are impartial.

One of his colleagues, Judge Laurence Silberman, called Judge Kavanaugh "one of the most serious judges" he has "ever encountered," and we expect that kind of seriousness and sobriety when it comes to people who wear the black robe and sit in judgment of cases. Attorneys who have practiced before Judge Kavanaugh describe him as an "extremely well-prepared, careful, and thorough" judge.

As I said, Judge Kavanaugh served on the DC Circuit, where he has authored 307 opinions and has attracted praise across the ideological spectrum for the clarity of his thought and expression and the precision of his legal reasoning.

He respects the roles and responsibilities that are assigned to the different branches of government—three coequal branches—by the Constitution, and he sees the proper role of the judiciary as a limited, albeit important, one—not to make policy but to interpret the law and apply it to individual cases impartially, as written, with no eye cast toward the politics of the outcome or a desire to put a thumb on the scales of justice in favor or against one of the litigants.

Judge Kavanaugh has shown through his opinions that he adheres to precedent—something careful, thoughtful judges do—paying a keen eye to legal history and tradition and putting an emphasis on the text of the relevant statutes when interpreting them. How better to effectuate Congress's intent than to read and apply the statutes that are signed into law.

This is in the nominee's own words:

[The] text may be pro-business or pro-labor, pro-development or pro-environment, pro-bank or pro-consumer. Regardless, judges should follow clear text where it leads.

Judge Kavanaugh also approaches his job with humility. When describing his mindset, he said that a good judge has to "keep learning," that they should constantly challenge themselves to study legal problems in greater depth, even when doing so forces them to reconsider their "instincts and prior inclinations."

That is exactly the kind of Justice the Supreme Court needs—one that is never content to rest on his laurels, one that is constantly educating and improving himself when it comes to the history of our country or the nuances and difficult or technical aspects of the law.

The truth is that since his nomination Judge Kavanaugh has demonstrated that he is imminently qualified and well respected by all who know him and those familiar with his work.

So as a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I look forward next Tuesday to participating in the confirmation hearings, and soon thereafter I look forward to voting to confirm him as the next Justice on the Supreme Court of the United States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

REMEMBERING JOHN MCCAIN

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, when you walk by Senator McCain's desk and see the black drape and the bowl of white roses, it really underscores the loss. We lost a colleague. We lost a friend. The country lost a true public servant.

We have heard the stories. After being shot down, spending all those years in the Hanoi Hilton, beaten nearly to death when he was fished out of the lake in downtown Hanoi, he continued to serve his country—in the Navy, in Congress, in this Senate, and, of course, as the party's nominee for President.

His call to serve and his sense of duty and honor is the legacy of John McCain. He is an example for all of us.

He was a fighter, and he was funny too. Maybe it was the years in prison or the long line of military service or the sometimes tense humor of fighter pilots. Maybe it was that legacy of his family in the military, but he knew in his soul how special the United States was and what the United States could do for its people and for the world.

Sometimes we forget the stories of the excruciating pain that Senator McCain went through as a POW. In 2000 David Foster Wallace, in *Rolling Stone* magazine, wrote an article. I want to give you some of the graphic details after he had been nearly beaten to death and his weight had gone down to 100 pounds. When they found out that his father was a four-star admiral and his grandfather was a four-star admiral, they decided they were going to offer him early release. This is what the author writes:

McCain, 100 pounds and barely able to stand, refused [release]. The U.S. military's Code of Conduct for Prisoners of War said that POWs had to be released in the order they were captured, and there were others who'd been in [that prison] Hoa Lo a long time, and McCain refused to violate the Code. The commandant, not pleased, right there in the office had guards break his ribs, rebreak his arm, knock his teeth out. McCain still refused to leave without the other POWs. And so then he spent four more years in Hoa Lo [prison] like this, much of the time in solitary, in the dark, in a closet-sized box called a "punishment cell." Maybe you've heard all this before . . . [there have certainly been] profiles of John McCain. But try to imagine the moment between getting offered early release and turning it down. Try to imagine it was you. Imagine how loudly your most basic, primal self-interest would have cried out to you in that moment, and all the ways you could rationalize accepting the [commandant's] offer. Can you hear it? If so, would you refuse to go? You simply can't know for sure. None of us can. It's hard to even imagine the pain and the fear in that moment, much less how you'd react.

That was written 18 years ago about John. In that moment, you could summarize his courage, his strength, and his will to overcome. But here in the Senate we saw a leader who thought that public service was a noble calling,

a leader who always tried to do the right thing, who always put the people of his country ahead of himself—an individual who always believed that we, as Americans, can subscribe to a cause greater than ourselves.

America is certainly going to miss John McCain. For this Senator and for Grace, as well, it was certainly a privilege to know the McCains and to look up to him as a role model, not only for this Senator but for the entire country.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REMEMBERING JOHN MCCAIN

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak in honor, in memory, of our colleague Senator John Sidney McCain III. I asked myself a series of questions as I was trying to prepare for today's comments.

First, who was he? Who was John McCain? John was a man deeply in love with his country and its promise, a man optimistic that tomorrow would be better than today, and a man grateful for the chance to serve a cause greater than himself. His humor was rooted in that hopefulness, the sometimes sharp sting of his words in debate rooted in his passion for his cause and his love of the fight, and his restlessness rooted in impatience to get on with it, to get busy defending liberty or making a difference in the world to help soften the burdens of millions not yet free. John was both a romantic and a cynic, as some of have said, in love with and passionate about the causes he fought for, yet clear-eyed about the long odds he often faced in a world hostile to our ideals.

In trying to summarize John, just reviewing a few of his titles barely captures the sweep and complexity of this man—naval aviator, POW, captain, Congressman, Senator, chairman of the Commerce Committee, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Presidential nominee of his party, statesman, hero.

John also treasured, deeply, two titles rarely mentioned here—husband and father. He clearly loved his family and was every bit as privately passionate about them as he was publicly passionate about the causes he fought for here and around the world.

To Cindy and to all of John's family, thank you so much for sharing him with us, for sustaining him in his service over 60 years of his remarkable service to our Nation.

I was so honored to get to know John first as a colleague and then as a traveling companion and mentor and, in recent years, to be able to count him as a friend. We didn't always agree, or even often agree, on a very wide range

of policy and political issues. On one thing in particular, I deeply admired and followed his lead as best I could. John was convinced what makes America great, what has always made America great, is its values, its principles; that we stand for something in the world, not the example of our power but the power of our example; that only when we fight for those values, when we fight for the values that define us apart from other powerful nations—for human rights, for freedom of speech and religious expression, for a free press, an independent judiciary, open and fair elections, for the very foundations of democracy as guarantors of human liberty—only then do we best use our power to act in the world.

What impact did John McCain have on those of us in the Senate and on our country? John commanded this Chamber when he spoke like few others I have ever known, and he commanded it precisely because he called us to our better selves, to put down the tools of petty partisanship so often on display here and to work together to fashion better solutions to the problems of our day.

It was a great honor to be his cosponsor on his last immigration reform bill earlier this year—a bill which offered not partisan promises but a way forward to fix our immigration system, which has, for far too long, been badly broken.

Indeed, from immigration to healthcare, national security to foreign relations, John challenged us, pushed us to act in ways more worthy of this place and its history as the greatest deliberative body on Earth, as a full equal to the Executive, our President, as a group elected and empowered over longer terms to know each other, to respect each other, and engage with each other in the real and hard and good work of advancing America's values at home and abroad.

What impact did John McCain have on me, the junior Senator from Delaware? First, my predecessor, former Senator and Vice President Joe Biden, let me know, from my first day here, that John was a treasure and a challenge and that I would, in serving alongside him, have a unique opportunity to learn from someone whose scope of experience was, in many ways, unmatched among our current Senate colleagues.

I had the honor of traveling with John, of seeing him at his absolute best, of seeing him show compassion for Syrian refugees at a camp in Jordan, hearing him confront corrupt foreign leaders and encourage our men and women in harm's way, and, most memorably, visiting Vietnam to see the genuine warmth with which the Vietnamese people and their leaders regarded him.

I first encountered John overseas on my first codel, or congressional delegation trip, just a few months into my first term, early in 2011. I was traveling with Senators MANCHIN, CORKER, and

SANDERS, and we had visited Pakistan, Afghanistan, Jordan, and Israel. It was quite a group and a memorable trip at a time of great conflict, particularly in Afghanistan and Pakistan. It was our last day in Israel before returning home. I spotted former Senator Joe Lieberman of Connecticut at dinner at the David Citadel Hotel, and he waved me over. He and McCain had just finished a long dinner, and Lieberman asked me to sit down and talk about our trip, our experiences, and recent developments in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

McCain barely acknowledged my presence with a gruff grunt and seemed genuinely distracted and even annoyed as I was answering Joe Lieberman's questions, McCain looking around the room and barely paying any attention. After 10 minutes, John snapped to and asked me three pointed and challenging questions, testing my observations and my conclusions. Rattled and intimidated, I defended as best I could my insights before his withering questioning. McCain grunted and stormed off, and in the silence of his wake he left behind him, Joe Lieberman leaned over and said: I think he really likes you.

I said: How can you tell?

To which Lieberman responded: He wouldn't have bothered asking you those questions or waiting for your answers if he didn't think you had something to say.

There followed invitations to travel, which I accepted less often than I should have, but three trips were especially memorable. While visiting a refugee camp in Jordan where hundreds of Syrians had literally just arrived, fleeing the butchery of Assad's troops, John wept with compassion for women who recounted their husbands being murdered before them and their children being taken from them. John promised to fight for them and their cause relentlessly, and he did.

Just after inauguration last year at the North Atlantic Regional Security Conference in Halifax, Canada, I got to see John command respect across the board from political and military leaders from a dozen countries, and I heard as leaders from allies and partners across Europe—from the Baltics to the Balkans—pressed him for reassurance that we would keep our commitments, defend our values, and stand by their young democracies in the face of Russian aggression.

During that trip, too, Senator McCain, once again, reiterated his principled, unequivocal stand against the use of torture. His unwavering commitment on that issue at that critical time was just one of the many ways John nudged us ever closer to our ideals.

Finally, on an unforgettable trip to Vietnam just last June, I got to visit the Hanoi Hilton with John to hear his indescribable description of the deep deprivations of his long captivity and torture and then got to see in person