

Senator MANCHIN has a resolution to authorize the Senate legal counsel to defend the Affordable Care Act on behalf of the Senate. We intend to force a vote on his resolution as soon as possible.

Every Republican who claims to be for protections for preexisting conditions ought to vote aye on that resolution. It is the quickest and best way to ensure that the court case against the Affordable Care Act does not remove these protections and the rest of our healthcare law.

Legislation—some of my colleagues are seeking refuge: Well, we will just pass legislation to tweak this or tweak that. Legislation would be difficult and slow and, frankly, unnecessary at this stage. We know how hard it is to do any healthcare legislation in this body.

Unfortunately, a good number of Republicans and President Trump, by their actions, have shown they want to cut healthcare. We are never going to get a deal with Democrats in the Senate—or the House Democrats who are going to be in charge—on doing that.

Senator MANCHIN's proposal is the best and first way to go. I urge my friends on the other side—all who talked about preexisting conditions: Put your money where your mouth is and support Senator MANCHIN's solution. To Leader MCCONNELL, who says he wants to protect preexisting conditions: Bring the Manchin resolution to the floor.

FIRST STEP ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Later this afternoon, the Senate will likely vote on a package of amendments and then final passage of bipartisan criminal justice reform. I wholeheartedly support the bill and intend to vote yes on final passage later today.

Among other important changes, the legislation will give judges more discretion in sentencing for low-level, nonviolent drug offenders who cooperate with the government. It will provide more support and new incentives for prisoners to participate in programming or other productive activities that will better prepare them to return to society as productive individuals, and it will effectively end the practice of juvenile solitary confinement and the cruel shackling of pregnant prisoners.

Despite what some of the opponents of the bill claim, the legislation is certainly not a "get out of jail free" card for violent criminals or sex offenders. That is simply not true.

Rather, the bill makes smart changes to our criminal justice system in ways that make it more fair, more humane, and more just. Individuals serving time in prison for these low-level prison crimes—nonviolent drug offenders—will eventually be released.

It is in the interest of both currently incarcerated individuals and the communities to which they will eventually return to ensure we are doing every-

thing in our power to set them up for successful reintegration into our society so that they don't commit another crime. It is very important and the right thing to do. We need workers. We need productive citizens. We can't take 5 percent of America and just write them off. This bill says that we can't.

I want to commend so many people who did such good work on this bill. I want to thank my colleague Senator DURBIN. This has been a passion of his for many years. I want to thank Senator BOOKER, who was principled. He knew when to hold, knew when to fold. That is why we have such a good bill. I want to thank Senator WHITEHOUSE, who worked really hard to make sure those in prison would get the kind of training and drug treatment they need so that they can be successful and productive citizens when they get outside.

I want to thank some of our Republican colleagues—the Senator from Iowa and the Senator from Utah—who had the courage to stand up and do the right thing here. There will be those on either side who object to things that were left out or included in the bill. As I say often, that is the nature of compromise. You can't let the perfect be the enemy of the good.

This bill, with strong bipartisan support, should pass this afternoon with strong bipartisan majorities.

TRIBUTE TO JOE DONNELLY

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally, on a matter near and dear to my heart, the great Senator from the great State of Indiana—unfortunately, we are going to be saying goodbye to Members of our caucus who won't be returning to the 116th. This morning, I want to share some words about the senior Senator from Indiana, my dear friend JOE DONNELLY.

Most folks don't know this, but JOE is actually a native New Yorker. Maybe it is because of his affable personality, his agreeableness, his midwestern decency that folks don't think he came from New York, and they are surprised to learn it.

After falling in love with Indiana after college, JOE is now fond of saying: "You can pick where you live, but you can't pick where you're born." JOE, on behalf of all New Yorkers, I officially forgive you for saying that.

But like all of the young Irish Catholic kids from Long Island, JOE's dream was to go to Notre Dame. JOE likes to say that all good Irish Catholic kids are handed an application to Notre Dame, along with their baptism, and go to Notre Dame JOE did, where his long career and life in the State of Indiana began.

Something about JOE's inherent decency drew people toward him. His first foray in politics came when he received a phone call from a local official in the Democratic Party. JOE thought he was calling to ask for a donation, but the official instead asked him if he would like to run for the State legislature.

JOE responded: "OK, I'm eating my cereal; I'll get back to you on that." The people of Indiana and the people of America are glad JOE finished that bowl of cereal and decided a career in public service might suit him.

It didn't happen right away though. JOE lost that first race. A few years later, he found himself coaching the son of his opponent from that race in a local basketball league. At the first practice, sensing trepidation in the young man, JOE hugged him and said: Don't worry. It won't affect your playing time.

That is the kind of little story that shows the decency of JOE DONNELLY—what a good man he is, how he cares about other people's feelings, how he holds no grudges or resentments and always gives his political opponents and, in this case, their children the benefit of the doubt.

He always tried to see things from other people's perspective. That quality is what made him such an effective and well liked Member of this body. It is hard to be both effective and well liked here. JOE is both.

And, of course, he hustled. A DONNELLY day in Indiana is legendary among his staff. It begins before sunrise and ends long after the sun has set.

I travel to every county in my State every year, which is 62. JOE, of course, outdid me. He makes it to each of Indiana's 92 counties every year. When he offers an opinion on where to find the best gas station or fried chicken in Indiana, you know it is coming from real authority.

JOE's dad was a small business owner on Long Island who used to tell him as a boy: JOE, just do the work. That is what JOE DONNELLY did. He did the work. And because he did the work, even in this divided Congress and this divided partisan era, JOE got a whole lot done. He passed right-to-try legislation, which, according to Republican Senator RON JOHNSON, "would not have happened without JOE DONNELLY."

There are going to be people who live decades from now because of his hard work and passion on that bill. JOE worked tirelessly on behalf of veterans as a member of Armed Services, and he passed legislation to reduce the number of military suicides. Again, there are going to be families who don't have to live with suicide of a family member, service member because of JOE's hard work and dedication and political skill in getting this passed.

JOE worked across the aisle with Senator YOUNG, his colleague, to pass a bill that would improve mental health assistance for our police because he knew, coming from a family of police officers, the daily strain that officers undergo in risking their lives for our safety.

I could go on, but suffice it to say that JOE DONNELLY will leave this Chamber with an outstanding bipartisan legacy in his wake.

So at a time when our politics is so angry and divisive, losing someone like

JOE DONNELLY is a real loss. It is a loss for this body, a loss for the State of Indiana, and a real loss for America. He is an independent man and an honest person, and in a politics that is far too short on both, we will miss his steady hand here in the Senate, but also at first base, where he was relied on in the Congressional Baseball Games year after year.

We thank Jill, his lovely wife, whom he met in Indiana. Maybe she was the first reason he never went back to New York. We thank his children, Molly and Joe, Jr., for letting us borrow him these past 6 years.

JOE and I are friends for life. This election result will not break that friendship and that bond.

Iris and I and all of the Members of this Chamber wish JOE and his family the very best. Since there are no New York schools in the college football playoffs, this Senator will be rooting for JOE's beloved Fighting Irish.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam President, I thank the leader, who is my friend and colleague, CHUCK SCHUMER, for his kind words.

I thank Senator DURBIN, who is here, as well, and I thank all the Members.

I see my friend Senator FISCHER. We team up on the Strategic Forces Subcommittee.

Of my friend Senator GRASSLEY, not everybody knows Senator GRASSLEY has relatives who are spending eternal rest in Michigan City, IN, which is not too far away from where I live.

To everybody who works here—to the incredible team that makes everything go and to all of our pages who have done such a wonderful job—it has been such a privilege to serve in the U.S. Senate. What an unthinkable thing for a kid to have a chance to do. To actually be here takes your breath away. Our Nation is so extraordinary, such a wonderful place. The trust we are given to represent our people is something that we take so seriously.

To the whole team, nothing we do could ever be done without your hard work, and the effort we have put in to be part of that is something I will never forget. I just say thank you. Thanks to everybody here. It has been such a privilege.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

SAVE OUR SEAS ACT OF 2017— Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the House message to accompany S. 756, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

House message to accompany S. 756, a bill to reauthorize and amend the Marine Debris Act to promote international action to reduce marine debris, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the bill, with McConnell (for Grassley) amendment No. 4108, to provide for programs to help reduce the risk that prisoners will recidivate upon release from prison.

Division I of McConnell (for Kennedy/Cotton) amendment No. 4109 (to amendment No. 4108), to require the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to notify each victim of the offense for which the prisoner is imprisoned the date on which the prisoner will be released.

Division II of McConnell (for Kennedy/Cotton) amendment No. 4109 (to amendment No. 4108), to require the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to notify each victim of the offense for which the prisoner is imprisoned the date on which the prisoner will be released.

Division III of McConnell (for Kennedy/Cotton) amendment No. 4109 (to amendment No. 4108), to require the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to notify each victim of the offense for which the prisoner is imprisoned the date on which the prisoner will be released.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, because it has been announced that we have gone to the bill, it makes it necessary for me to ask to speak for a few minutes, as in morning business, on a subject that is unrelated to the bill before us.

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, before I go to that subject, I just heard Senator SCHUMER speak about the bill before the Senate, the criminal justice reform bill, but he has left the floor now. I thank him for his kind remarks and his backing of that bill—a very overwhelmingly bipartisan piece of legislation that is going to be the first major change in criminal justice legislation since the Clinton era of the early 1990s.

TRIBUTE TO JILL KOZENY

Madam President, throughout my 38 years in the U.S. Senate, I have come to the floor tens of thousands of times. I have come to vote, to give speeches, to manage bills, and to debate issues that impact Iowans and the American people. As all of us do, I also vote from the Senate floor. Since 1981, I have cast 12,800 votes on behalf of Iowans. I take pride that I haven't missed a single vote since 1993. In fact, I hold the longest consecutive voting streak in Senate history. Since my reelection to a seventh term, I am now the longest serving U.S. Senator from Iowa.

It is the privilege of my life to represent my home State. I wake up every day being grateful to work another day for my fellow Iowans. I am also grateful for the service, dedication, and loyalty of my Senate staff, who work every day to help me to serve Iowans. The work of my staff is what brings me to the Senate floor today. I am here to pay tribute to an extraordinary staffer

who is also an extraordinary individual.

Jill Kozeny has served on my staff for the last 30 years. To put that in perspective, she has worked on behalf of Iowans and the American people for more than half of her life and has done that right here in the Senate. Jill is a patriot and a public servant and has a servant's heart through and through.

They say all good things come to an end, and at the end of the 115th Congress, Jill Kozeny, my chief of staff, will close this incredible chapter in her life.

After graduating from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, the Omaha native worked for Nebraska Senator David Karnes. Then she applied to be my assistant press secretary. I offered her the job. At first, she turned it down. She said she had decided she wanted to attend law school. Yet 24 hours later, she called back. She had changed her mind and wanted to come to work for me. She never looked back. Nebraska's loss was Iowa's gain.

Jill first joined my Senate staff in 1989. She arrived to Hart 135 under the name of Jill Hegstrom. After having worked for 30 years for the people of Iowa, I would say Jill more than qualifies as an honorary Iowan. In fact, she was married in Des Moines to Tom Kozeny, her husband. As many of my colleagues know, for the last 38 years, I have held a meeting in each of Iowa's 99 counties—at least 1 every year—and for the last 30 of those years, Jill has staffed hundreds of those county meetings and Q and A's along the way. This is where the rubber meets the road—in sitting down and talking to Iowans and in meeting Iowans in their hometown communities to hear their concerns and doing it face-to-face.

Day after day, Jill Kozeny has worked her tail off to make sure that our office and my staff have addressed the concerns of Iowans. Whatever uncertainty Jill had before joining my staff has evaporated completely through these years. Her confidence and her competence have grown as she has risen through the ranks. As press secretary and director of communications, she worked for years in leading my communications staff. She developed respect, trust, and credibility with reporters, and that is hard to do in this town. A request for information from even a weekly newspaper in Iowa was treated as importantly as one from a national correspondent or a television news anchor.

Jill has been a loyal and trusted adviser to me and a trusted leader and mentor to my entire staff. In 2013, when the job opened up, I didn't hesitate to hire her to lead my office as chief of staff. Jill's tenure as a trusted and loyal adviser truly understates the depth of her contribution and service over these many years. At every turn, she has gone the extra mile—above and beyond the call of duty—to make sure my office has operated effectively and efficiently for Iowans. With Jill at the