

efforts by some to cut the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which we used to know as food stamps. Fortunately, those efforts to cut the program and to knock people off of the SNAP program were unsuccessful.

We came together in a bipartisan effort in both the House and the Senate, and the President signed it into the law just about a year ago—December 2018. The ink was barely dry on his signature when his administration and the Department of Agriculture started to think of other ways to do the same thing to SNAP they couldn't do by way of legislation.

So where are we? Well, we have had basically three proposals over the course of the last year by the administration that would take 4 million people out of the SNAP program, kick 4 million people off the program.

Here is what one of those proposals would do: According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's own estimates, the proposed changes to one part of SNAP called categorical eligibility would eliminate millions from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and it could also leave nearly 1 million children without access to free school meals. I don't know about everyone here, but I think that is a step in the wrong direction.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is important not only for those families—many of them working families, many of them with a child in the household who needs food assistance, who faces food insecurity without SNAP—many of those same families might have a child and an individual with a disability in the same household or one or the other. That is the SNAP program.

By the way, everyone else in the country benefits when people spend those SNAP dollars because when you provide those dollars and folks buy food, guess what happens. You guessed it. The economy gets a jump-start from that activity. The SNAP program isn't about just the people who are directly benefiting. I think we have an obligation to help them, for sure. We all benefit when there is economic activity. There is more than a bang for the buck in the SNAP program; you spend a buck, and you get a lot more than a buck in return.

This is all in the context of where we are with a lot of families. We hear a lot on the floor of this Chamber and I am sure on the floor of the other body, the House, about "Well, certain people shouldn't get this benefit," and some make an argument against that.

It is interesting that in the SNAP program for many years now, not just for the last couple of years, the payment error rate in that program has been way down, the lowest levels ever. Why? It is because of good efforts to detect fraud, and also technology allows payments to be tracked. The payment error rate is at its lowest level ever. Yet we still have efforts undertaken to knock people out of the pro-

gram. That is not just insulting, it is very dangerous to people's lives.

I hope Members of the Senate will tell the administration to back off those proposals that have been undertaken to knock literally, if you have the effect of all three proposals, 4 million people off of the program, many of whom are children.

This all happens in the context of those healthcare issues I raised before. The same child or the same family who might have their SNAP benefits cut or taken away might be the same family who is losing their coverage because of cuts to Medicaid and Medicare or because of the uninsured rate going way up in a country that was driving it way down. Both are happening at the same time.

BIPARTISAN AMERICAN MINERS ACT OF 2019

Mr. President, I want to raise another issue, and then I will conclude. This is about coal miners across the country but in particular in a couple of States, like my home State of Pennsylvania, and I know this is true of Kentucky and Virginia and West Virginia, just to name several—or I should say the main States we are talking about here.

The Bipartisan American Miners Act of 2019, S. 2788—I know Senator MANCHIN and others have spoken about this. We are trying to get this legislation or some version of this passed by the end of this year. I won't go through all the details of the legislation, but it attempts to help on the miners' pension issue—and these are obviously retired coal miners—as well as the healthcare for those same miners, those same families.

I will make a comment about what this means. Many of those same families had to wait way too long—several years—before this body acted to provide a measure of relief to some of those retired miners on healthcare. The job isn't done yet on healthcare but even more so on pensions.

The point I have always made here is that our government made a promise to them decades ago. In fact, it was the time when President Truman was in office in the late 1940s. We made a promise to coal miners at that time.

In that whole intervening time period, those decades, they kept their promises. Many of them were sent overseas to fight in wars, from World War II, to Korea, to Vietnam and beyond. They kept their promise to the country by fighting for their country. They kept their promise to their employer by going to work every day in the most dangerous job in the world, likely. I am not sure there is one that is more dangerous. They kept their promise to their families to go to work and to support them, sometimes on that one income of a coal miner.

In my home area of Northeastern Pennsylvania, the novelist Stephen Crane—he is known for the "Red Badge of Courage," but what he is not known for as much is an essay he wrote about coal mining in the late 1800s—1890s to

be exact. He described all the ways a coal miner could die in a coal mine. He described the coal mine as a place of inscrutable darkness, a soundless place of tangible loneliness, and then walked through the ways a miner could die.

I know we have advanced from the 1890s—thank God we have—but there are still coal miners in the recent history of this country who have lost their lives. All they have asked us to do—they haven't asked us to come up with some new fancy plan for them and their families; all they have asked us to do is to have this government—the executive branch and the legislative branch—keep the promise to coal miners and their families with regard to healthcare and pensions. Both of those parts of our policy are promises.

So when we work on this between now and the end of the year to try to find a solution, we will be only meeting that basic obligation of keeping our promise to retired coal miners and their families like they kept their promise to their country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROMNEY). The Senator from Kansas.

TRIBUTE TO KELLY MCMANUS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, today, I want to take a moment to recognize the contributions of Kelly McManus. She is a member of my staff. She is U.S. Army MAJ Kelly McManus, who has spent the last year working in my personal office as part of the U.S. Army Congressional Fellowship Program.

Before Kelly departs my office here at the end of the year to return to the Big Army, I rise to express my appreciation to Major McManus for all of her hard work and dedication and service to our Nation.

Kelly's 10 years of service in the U.S. Army have developed her leadership abilities and shaped her perspective on major defense issues of national significance. These assets and attributes have made her an invaluable asset to our team as we work to serve Kansans, servicemembers, and veterans.

Before joining our office, Kelly's assignments had taken her around the world in service of our country. She deployed to both Iraq and Kuwait to support operations New Dawn and Spartan Shield, from 2011 to 2012, served as the medical planner for the Allied Land Command in NATO headquarters in Izmir, Turkey, and reported to Wiesbaden, Germany, to serve on the personal staff of the U.S. Army Europe headquarters commanding general, LTG Ben Hodges.

Kelly has also served stateside, leading her detachment through deployment in Fort Dix, NJ, in support of Hurricane Sandy relief efforts and commanded a medical company in the 2nd Infantry Division at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington State.

Kelly joined our team in January 2018. From day one, she embraced Kansas, its people, and the challenges they face day in and day out. On her first official trip to Kansas, she visited our

military installations and talked with soldiers and airmen to learn about their life experiences. She made it a priority to spend time in Kansas and to learn from the Kansas people so that she could bring their thoughts and ideas back to the Nation's Capital. These personal conversations with Kansans and Kelly's experience in the Army have helped to drive meaningful policy.

She led our efforts to secure maternity leave for those serving in the National Guard and Reserve after talking with an expectant mother in the Kansas National Guard. She has also sought to increase access to suicide prevention programs and destigmatize the notions surrounding mental illness.

In addition, her experiences in serving in uniform have been instrumental to my efforts to support our veterans. Over the past year, I have continually been impressed by Kelly's leadership and professionalism. At every opportunity, she has proven herself to be an important and fully integrated member of my team, carrying the equal weight and responsibility of my personal staff. Her seamless communications and her skill in tackling issues big and small have been a great benefit to our office and the people that we serve. Kelly has exceeded all of my expectations and has demonstrated a commitment to excellence that has been nothing short of outstanding.

A testament to her leadership over the past year was her promotion to major in July. It was my honor to be part of her promotion ceremony and to have the privilege to pin her new and deserving rank on her uniform.

It will be sad when she leaves our office at the end of the month, but I know she will serve the Army well next year in the Army's Budget Liaison Office, where I am confident she will be a highly effective ambassador to Congress for the Army.

Kelly is one of the most impressive military officers I have had the honor of knowing, and I hold her in the highest regard, personally and professionally. She is a significant asset to our country and to the U.S. Army. Kelly represents the best that the Army has to offer, and I know that she will continue to be a benefit to the future of our Nation. There is no group of people I hold in higher regard than those who serve our Nation, and I want to reiterate my gratitude to Kelly for her dedication and service to our country.

Once again, thank you, Kelly, for all you have done for Kansans this year and what you will continue to do for our Nation. You have been a model of selfless service and leadership. I know you will continue to do great things throughout your Army career and your life in service, wherever that path my lead you.

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.

Mr. GRASSLEY. 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 BERKLEY BEDELL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to pay tribute to an extraordinary Iowan with whom I shared a decades-long friendship—a very prominent Democrat from my State.

Over this past weekend, former Iowa Congressman Berkley Bedell passed away at the age of 98. For nearly a century of life, Berkley took his grandmother's advice to heart: "You can do almost anything within reason if you will only set your mind to it."

From an early age, Berkley Bedell set his mind to a high standard of achievement. He set an example for the rest of us. He practiced what he preached and he made a difference in this world.

As a child raised during the Great Depression, Berkley became a soldier in the U.S. Army. He was, obviously, a World War II veteran, an entrepreneur, a job creator, a philanthropist, a policy influencer, and, most of all, a devoted husband and father.

What I left out is how I got acquainted with him. He was a fellow Member of the House of Representatives during my early years and for some time after I came to the Senate. Our decades-long friendship began when Berkley and I were elected to serve Iowans in the House of Representatives in 1974. Soon after the orientation for new Members, Barbara and I developed a close relationship with Elinor and Berkley. This friendship remained for the next 45 years.

Looking back, those were lonely days for a freshman Republican House Member. That is when the Watergate scandal upended the midterm elections. Voters elected 91 new House Members to that Congress. I happened to be the only Republican in the Iowa congressional delegation. Among our so-called Watergate class of 1974, I was joined by Iowans Tom Harkin, Michael Blouin, and Berkley Bedell. We were all freshman Members of Congress. We joined then with more senior Members from the State of Iowa—Neal Smith, who went on to serve 36 years in the House, and Ed Mezvinsky. The Democrat Senators from Iowa were Dick Clark and John Culver. Berkley would go on to represent Iowa's Sixth Congressional District for six terms, from 1975 to 1987. Even though he lived about another 32 years after that, I presume he would have served a lot longer if his health had held out.

Although Berkley and I didn't share the same political points of view, we did share a common approach for representative government, meaning with dialogue and feedback from Iowans that was very necessary if we were going to represent them properly. Most

often, the forums for that were our respective townhall meetings.

Throughout our service together in Congress, party labels didn't displace our ability to work with and for Iowans. As one example, during the farm crisis of the 1980s, which was much worse than this farm crisis we have right now, we used our voices to raise public awareness and steer help to struggling farm communities in our home State. We did everything possible to shape farm policy and restore hope to thousands of farm families who were coping with double-digit inflation and with the farm debt crisis.

As a Federal lawmaker, Berkley took his oversight work seriously. Even though I take oversight seriously, I didn't do it in quite the way he did. His was kind of an unorthodox approach. He just ventured, willy-nilly, into a Federal bureaucracy here or a Federal bureaucracy over there. He took the liberty of dropping by in person at these agencies. He would go up to people and ask: What is your job? I don't know exactly the questions he asked, but in knowing Berkley the way I did, I think he probably wanted to have very calm conversations with them to determine what they did and maybe even see if they were doing it right, particularly if they were spending the taxpayers' money right. He did this to keep tabs on how these Federal employees in these various bureaucracies were serving the Nation and, particularly, serving Iowans. Now, that is what I would call an in-the-flesh gut check—a very different type of oversight from what I have done.

Berkley was born in Spirit Lake, IA. I assume he lived his entire life in Spirit Lake, IA, except for the period of time he was in the military and until he spent some retirement time in Florida. Spirit Lake, IA, is a close-knit farming community in Dickinson County. His neck of the woods is located in the Iowa Great Lakes region—a regional destination for fishing, boating, and outdoor recreation. I will bet the Presiding Officer has been there many times.

The area is fondly known as the University of Okoboji, where generations of families go year after year to vacation and enjoy life. By the way, the University of Okoboji is not really a university but is very much a selling point for that part of the State, from an economic development point of view, and it has worked very successfully.

As I just described, this is where Berkley's insatiable work ethic took root. It guided him for his nearly 100 years of life on Earth. Through philanthropic good works, he leaves behind a legacy of conservation, stewardship, and historic preservation. With his wife, he helped to launch the Okoboji Foundation more than three decades ago. Since then, the foundation has awarded millions of dollars to scores of nonprofit organizations in that lakes region of Iowa.