

diligent worker for the people of North Dakota. He has served our State in many different capacities. He served as tourism director and did a tremendous job promoting our State, promoting tourism, and, really, promoting the beauty and the history of our State in a way that brought a lot of national attention and really made a difference in terms of tourism for our State.

He also served our State as economic development director, something that is certainly near and dear to my heart. I have always believed that job creation is job one, and so, to me, that is the engine that drives the car. KEVIN served as the economic development director under Governor Schafer, my predecessor, and, again, did a fantastic job. He knows the importance of supporting our farmers and our small businesses, the energy industry, and all the things that really make our State go, and he has been a huge part of helping to create an environment in our State that, from a tax and a regulatory environment, has been very supportive of the growth and development of our economy and all aspects of our economy—as I say, from ag to energy, to technology, to manufacturing and throughout the small business world—and, like me, he is a true champion for small business. We are big believers that small business is what makes this economy go. Whether it is North Dakota or the United States of America, it is small business that makes our economy go.

As Governor, I had the opportunity to appoint KEVIN to our State's public service commission in 2003, and he followed that and ran and was elected to the PSC by the people of North Dakota and served as the public service commissioner for the State until 2012. Certainly, in that role he was a big part of the growth and development of our State.

Back in 2000, when I started as Governor, we produced less than 100,000 barrels of oil a day. Today, we now produce more than 1.5 million barrels of oil a day. The only State that produces more oil than North Dakota is Texas, and KEVIN was a big part of building that climate where the industry just developed amazing technologies and this whole shale play came to be. Of course, now the United States is the largest producer of oil and gas in the world.

So he truly understands that you have to help to promote that kind of economic development, but, at the same time, there is a reasonable role for regulation and things have to be done right and well and with good environmental stewardship.

Prior to joining me in the Senate, KEVIN served for three terms in the House of Representatives, where we worked together on many of our State's priorities. We share the same beliefs in not only our great State but in this great country, and we certainly had a tremendous working relationship in the House and now, of course, I am

pleased to have him as a colleague in the Senate.

We both served as members of the farm bill conference committee a year ago and were able to put in place a strong farm bill for our farmers and ranchers.

We both work to rein in regulation, as I said, to grow our economy, and to support our military. He is a member of the Armed Services Committee and also the Veterans' Affairs Committee and has already passed a resolution supporting our veterans with his Battle of the Bulge resolution, which has been passed by this body.

These are just a few of the things that he has already done as a Member of the U.S. Senate.

He has been a dedicated public servant for the people of North Dakota. He is also a very devoted family man. He and his wife Kris have three sons—Isaac, Ian, and Abel—and two daughters—Rachel and Annie. They are the proud grandparents of five. Now, I have him by one. I have six, but this is a competition. So we will see where it ends up.

He has a great family and has been a great partner in the Senate, and, of course, I look forward to continuing to work with him.

Again, I am very pleased today to introduce Senator KEVIN CRAMER for this speech.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

#### MAIDEN SPEECH

Mr. CRAMER. Madam President, a very special thanks to my senior Senator, my great friend, and our former Governor, Senator JOHN HOEVEN.

In fact, as he went through much of my speech for me, I thought to myself: Why, this is kind of like when I played high school basketball in Kindred, and we would be ahead by 20 points and the coach would get me off the bench and say: Go in and try not to screw this thing up. That is a little bit how I feel right now, but I thank him for the very kind introduction. Most of it was true.

The idea of a maiden speech a year into your first term may seem a little odd, but I actually kind of like the idea. It gives me a year's worth of opportunity to reflect, which creates greater clarity about the future and vision.

The first thing I want to say to all of my colleagues here is thank you for being so welcoming—and I mean all of them. What they say about the Senate and the collegiality of it is very true. It is not just true. It is really important, and it is something worth preserving.

I can honestly say that out of the 99 that I have met, I love every one, individually and collectively, and appreciate all they have meant to me.

Kris and I have been married for 33 years. We have five children together, and I am going to talk about one in particular in a little bit.

Our children range in ages from 12 to 38, and that is too long of a story to explain, but we love and are proud of all of them.

Our five grandchildren are a little closer in range. They range from 1 to 7, and we love every single one of them—Lyla, Beau, Nico, Chet, and Willa—with all the love any grandparent could come with and with all the love that God has for us.

I think it is important for people to know I am a child of God and a follower of Jesus, and it informs everything that I do, both at home and here and throughout life.

I think it is important to know a little bit about where you come from. I was raised by loving parents. My dad was a rural electric lineman who never once complained about going out in a storm to get the lights back on for the farmers of our area. My mother was an elder care giver when she wasn't pumping gas at the local Farmers Union station. They did whatever they needed to do to help us kids and to provide for our family. We never felt like we needed anything because we didn't. We were loved, and we were well cared for and had great examples of culture and work ethic and values that are North Dakotan.

I think it is important to understand where a person comes from, but I want to fast forward a little bit to this last year. I said I was going to talk a little bit about one of our sons. It was a tough campaign. A lot of people think that North Dakota is this bright red State and that everyone who runs there who is Republican wins. While that certainly has been the trend, I think it is sort of important for people to know that I am the first Republican in my lifetime to hold the seat that I hold right now for the people of North Dakota. In fact, the names of the previous Senators in this lineage are in this desk that I stand at.

So it was a tough campaign. I got into the race late. I really didn't aspire to be a Senator. I liked the House of Representatives and still do, but the call came and I answered it.

But what made the year so tough—and, fortunately, it was shorter than most campaign years in the U.S. Senate—is that I got in late. So it was a short year, but in the middle of the campaign, in the early part of the campaign, our 35-year-old son Isaac became very ill. He suffered from alcohol-induced liver disease, and we spent a good month and a half in the middle of an already short campaign at his bedside in intensive care both in Bismarck and in Rochester at the Mayo Clinic. I say that because it was perhaps one of the hardest 6 or 7 weeks of my life, the deepest valley of my life, but it was also one of the most instructive and informing. It was as informing as all those years in North Dakota in the State office helping Senator HOEVEN—then-Governor HOEVEN—build this dynamic economy.

Those several weeks with my son probably prepared me as well for this

job as any. I got to see our healthcare industry up close. I got to know more about addiction and mental illness and how tragic it is and how devastating it can be and how consequential not dealing with it actually is. It robs people of life. It is not just an inconvenience. So it was instructive in those senses, but more than that, I got to learn about our community.

I heard from thousands of Americans who watched this very public tragedy play out in the public arena because of the very public job I was seeking, and my faith in mankind was enhanced. My faith in God was strengthened—learning that the sufficiency of His grace is more than adequate not just for salvation but for life, and it makes everything shall we say clearer for me today.

Senator HOEVEN raised the subject of some of my committee assignments, and I wanted to speak to that for a minute because he is a very important part, as you can tell, of my public life and career. While I stand on the shoulders of former Governor and former Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer—JOHN and I both served with him in economic development when JOHN was president of the bank in North Dakota—it was JOHN HOEVEN who gave me my first entree into elected office at the Public Service Commission in North Dakota and worked with me. Then, of course, I had the opportunity to serve with him as he sat on the farm bill conference committee when I served in the House of Representatives.

When I had that very first important meeting with Leader MCCONNELL to talk about what committees I wanted to be on in the Senate, realizing that I was coming from the House, where I only served on only one—I served on the Energy and Commerce Committee. It is an important committee, a big committee, but it was only one committee. Here, I would serve on three or four or, as it turns out, five. The first thing I did was look at Senator HOEVEN's committee assignments, and I wanted to assess how I could complement where he serves. He served on the Agriculture Committee and the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. It made sense to me, with my environmental and regulatory background, to serve on the Environment and Public Works Committee, where both agriculture and energy development are greatly impacted. Whether it is environmental policy or land policy, regulations that I think serve as a bit of a taking of farmers' land are every bit as important as the revenue they receive through safety net programs. So I sought and received that.

With respect to the Banking Committee, JOHN talked a little bit about that and my role as an economic director in the State of North Dakota. I have always liked macroeconomics, and it has intrigued me how financial and economic policy go together. But as interesting as the Federal Reserve is to me, and it is, and as important as

the Export-Import Bank is to me, and it is, it is really the community bank—like the bank Senator HOEVEN comes from and whose family started and was building in North Dakota, the local credit unions, the farm lenders—that is what drives me more than anything in the Banking Committee.

The Veterans' Affairs Committee is a great committee, and it is something that I could never have imagined aspiring to or being involved with. But I do know that JOHN and I love veterans. North Dakota is home to only 750,000 people, but 52,000 of them are veterans. In North Dakota, patriots sign up at a rate four times the national average. So public service in the form of wearing the military uniform is really big and really important in our part of the country.

I had an opportunity for a number of years to chair the Rough Riders Honor Flight in North Dakota, where we raised the money and organized the trips for about 500 World War II veterans to come see the memorial built in their honor. What a moving experience that was.

Before servicemembers return from duty, of course, they serve, and that is why we should be working to give them the best resources we can, which is why today is an appropriate day for this maiden speech, because it is also a day we passed a very important National Defense Authorization Act to provide the tools and the things our military men and women need to be the dominating force for good in the world. It is an honor to serve them.

I am the very first member of the Senate Armed Services Committee from North Dakota. I didn't know that when I sought that committee assignment to complement my Veterans' Affairs assignment, but I am honored to do it. The reason I sought that one is because again, going back, Senator HOEVEN is a defense appropriator. I thought, how can I best look out for North Dakota's assets? And the Armed Services Committee seemed like the right place to be.

I also believe that North Dakota's assets are perfectly positioned for the future of warfighting. So I am very grateful today for the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act and for the opportunity to serve on the Armed Services Committee.

We have Air Force bases in both Minot and Grand Forks. Their histories are similar, but their new missions are very different. In Minot, we have two-thirds of the nuclear triad and the B-52 bombers that carry those impressive bombs and, of course, the intercontinental ballistic missiles, which are being replaced now by the ground-based strategic deterrent. The modernization of our nuclear triad in this NDAA is very important to our State, and I am honored to have been a part of seeing it through to completion.

We also have a very important space radar station in Cavalier—something very few people know about. Very few

people in North Dakota are aware of that space station in Cavalier. Yet it is a very important asset. Now, as we launch this sixth service, the Space Force, again, we will see very important opportunities for North Dakota.

We also have an excellent National Guard—both Army and Air Force National Guard—that does important work not just locally—and they do great work locally—but around the globe. Every Member here can attest to the power of their National Guard. Our ISR systems over in Fargo, flying the UABs—it is just remarkable, what they do and what they contribute to the national defense, our Air National Guard in Fargo, the 119th Wing, the Happy Hooligans.

The Grand Forks Air Force Base—as I said, a base that was similar in its founding to Minot—is now a UAB base, a global hot base where they do important ISR work. Again, in the future of warfighting, the importance of good intelligence is so critical, and the airmen in Grand Forks are second to none in carrying out that mission.

Again, the strategic pick of my assignments was designed to complement Senator HOEVEN's and serve the good people of North Dakota.

I will spend a little bit of time talking about my service in the House of Representatives because it is the People's House. I love the People's House. Senator THUNE from South Dakota served in the House of Representatives, and he knows what it is like to be the only Member from an entire State. It has its opportunities and its challenges.

I used to say to students who came to visit: If you want to know what America looks like, go to the House of Representatives, sit upstairs, look down, and you will see 435 people who are just like 700,000 others—just like each one of them.

The diversity of our country is perfectly demonstrated in the House. I absolutely loved that, but I also knew how hard it was, because if I could get my colleagues from South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, and Alaska to go along with me, I would have five votes. That is almost 10 percent of California. That is a lot of relationship building to get things done. Yet I love it. There are still things about the House that I watch and love. There are things lately I watch and I wonder, but there are a lot of things I love about the House. The Founders knew exactly what they were doing when they created it.

To come here and be one of two, to be a Member of the U.S. Senate, which is the equalizer for our legislative Chambers—our Founders really knew what they were doing. To have an opportunity to work with you all to provide a level playing field for the people of a smaller State has been truly, truly marvelous.

I will not elaborate on my years as tourism director and economic development director or even on the Public Service Commission because Senator

HOEVEN has done a good job on that. I would just say this: The thing that I learned more than anything on the Public Service Commission, even though—I carried the pipeline portfolio; sited the original Keystone Pipeline; sited thousands of miles of transmission lines, electric, gas, oil; carried the coal portfolio in reclamation; and worked with the Department of the Interior on those issues that are very important to our State. What I learned more from all of that than even big-time economics or engineering or energy security—as important as those lessons were over the 10 years I served, the thing I learned the most was how important the people are. In the wisdom of the Midwest, the laws required that whether you were raising somebody's utility rates, siting a pipeline or transmission lines, siting a refinery or a coal-fired powerplant or a wind farm, you had to hold a hearing in the community where the investment was taking place. In other words, you couldn't hide behind the pillars of the State capitol; you had to go to them and make it easy for them to come to you.

I learned from the people of the prairies of North Dakota about not just life in general but how to site a pipeline. It was a farmer in Walsh County who said about the Keystone Pipeline at an open meeting: I don't know much about laying pipelines, but personally, I would try to avoid that quarry you are going through.

So some very high-paid engineers moved the pipeline away from the rocks and into better soil.

It was the mayor of Park River who came to a committee meeting and said to me: I don't know much about pipelines, but you are going right through the aquifer that serves the municipal water supply of my community. I think it would be better to move it.

So I paid engineers to move it away from the aquifer.

Through the collective wisdom of the people of North Dakota and the individual wisdom of many of the individuals of North Dakota, I learned that was something not to be taken for granted or wasted, which is why, in my service in the House and here in the Senate, I spend so much time holding townhalls of all types—so I wouldn't rob myself of the value and the benefit of the collective wisdom of the people I serve.

I am so grateful to Senator HOEVEN. He is a skilled and accomplished leader. He works tirelessly—you all know that—on behalf of the people of North Dakota. He is relentless in his pursuit of things for North Dakota. He has been a great friend and mentor. I am thankful for his partnership and his willingness to work with me in the future, as he did when I was on the Public Service Commission.

As we go forward, I do have a couple of thoughts about some challenges. As I talked about this accessibility issue, this opportunity we have particularly in small States to know the people we

work for really well and for them to have the opportunity to know us really well and to collect their wisdom, I fear a little bit that the lessons learned from being so close to the people are lost in this town—not so much by Members of Congress, but I am a fervent advocate of the administration and their officials getting out to our small towns and into the towns of North Dakota and other towns throughout our country.

It is an area where I think the Trump administration has excelled beyond anybody. In fact, I believe this President to be the most accessible President probably since Abraham Lincoln, who used to hold office hours right in the White House, where people could come in off the street and have an audience with him. And I am not just talking about rallies. I am talking about a President who visits the State to speak with leaders at roundtables and a Vice President who comes to our military installations to meet with the airmen.

We have an Agriculture Secretary who has been to North Dakota—what, three or four times, JOHN?—not just to talk to the very important leaders of the Farm Bureau and the farmers union and the commodity groups, but I am talking about the farmers who get their fingers dirty. We have a Commerce Secretary who, in the middle of negotiating with China, came to North Dakota to talk to those farmers about the impact of tariffs on their markets; a Veterans Affairs Secretary who studies the alternative treatments being advanced and made available in Fargo; an EPA Administrator who lets North Dakotans continue to lead the way on promoting good waters of the United States policy; an Air Force Secretary who understands air capabilities because she has seen them firsthand; an Interior Secretary who came to listen to the concerns of farmers and actually changed the direction of certain regulations as a result of farmers pointing out how their personal property rights were being stolen by the Federal Government; and a NASA Administrator who observed the first ever university space program at the University of North Dakota.

The list goes on and on, and I will spare you from it, but I think it is an important lesson and testament to how good this country can be and how much better it can be if we listen to the people in the heartland. All of this is why, in addition to bringing people of influence to my State so hopefully they can be influenced by it, I am concerned about the sheer magnitude of our bureaucracy.

This week, we are going to hopefully pass a \$1.5 trillion discretionary budget or appropriations, but I worry about the people who are going to manage that \$1.5 trillion being so out of touch with real, everyday Americans.

You can call it whatever you want. Some people call it the deep-state, out-of-control bureaucracy, misguided but

well-intentioned public servants, power-hungry civil employees, whatever you call it. I call it unelected bureaucracy that has codified corruption in many cases. They turned their own interpretation of guidelines into infallible laws, placing the creation and implementation of their policies and processes above the needs of the American people whom we serve and the elected leaders that send them there.

I had experienced it many times in the 6 years I had been in the House, but I experienced it multiple more times in the Senate. Whether this comes from a place of self-preservation or self-importance, I believe it has to come to an end.

A defining part of my tenure since the day I arrived until the day I leave will be to take on a bureaucracy that I believe has run rampant. There are several Cabinet officials and agencies that can attest to that statement already.

I am not unreasonable about it, I don't think. I don't intend to be, but, Madam President, I am passionate about it. As I have made clear, I do not believe in the abolition of government. But I do think government needs to be more responsive to the people that pay for it. We ought to be giving the people a government that is worth their investment.

I aim as my highest goal at the highest level to return the focus of the Federal Government back to the people. I have listened to so many well-intentioned bureaucrats explain their process, explain their system, explain their traditions and rarely do they talk about a human being on the other end of all of that, so I am committed to doing what is best for the people of this country with a very keen focus on the 750,000 North Dakotans whom I committed my life to serving. Their individual and collective wisdom, along with their values, as old-fashioned as they may seem to some, is our contribution to a great nation. They would want me to say to all of you, Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I would just like to say how much I appreciate Senator CRAMER, the working relationship that we have, not just here but a working relationship that goes back many, many years. As you can tell, he speaks very well, but what comes through is not only his commitment to his family and his faith, but his commitment to the people of North Dakota and his commitment to the people of this country.

It doesn't matter what issue he is working on. He takes the time to listen to everybody, and he is always willing to explain where he is coming from and why he comes to the conclusion he does. But there is no question, he loves his faith; he loves his family; he loves his State; and he loves this country.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

REMEMBERING BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES KEMP McLAUGHLIN

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I rise today to honor the legacy of a member of our greatest generation, the founder and first commander of the West Virginia Air National Guard, a World War II veteran, an American hero, and a friend of both of ours, retired Brig. Gen. James Kemp McLaughlin.

He was born on December 7, 1918, in Braxton County, to James and Almira McLaughlin. Kemp was a staunch leader with unparalleled patriotism, and his devotion to God, State, and country was unmatched. Gayle and I were honored to call him a friend, and I know I join so many when I say that West Virginia has lost a shining star. He is dearly missed.

Ever since the historic beginning of our State, we have never failed to answer our country's call. No demand has been too great, no danger too daunting, and no trial too threatening. Kemp took part in some of the most important battles of World War II. Following his education at West Virginia University, Kemp joined the U.S. Air Corps at age 23, shortly before the attacks on Pearl Harbor, the day of his birthday.

He flew nearly 40 B-17 Flying Fortress bomber missions during the war, including support for the troops on the beaches of Normandy in 1944. In 1934, Kemp led a 350-plane attack on a factory in Germany, a raid that became known as Black Thursday. On too many occasions, Kent's planes would be so damaged that it was a miracle he made it back safe.

His actions were instrumental in not only destroying Nazi efforts, but as one of the "Mighty" 8th Air Force in Europe, he was also instrumental in developing what is known as air superiority, a vital factor in deciding the outcome of a modern conventional war. He paved the way for all citizen airmen who strive to follow in his footsteps.

Kemp completed 39 combat missions during World War II and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross four times. His vast experience aided him years later when he was asked to lead the Air National Guard's 167th Fighter Squadron in Charleston, WV. When that squadron moved to Martinsburg, Charleston's Guard unit became the 130th Airlift Wing.

Throughout the rest of his extraordinary life, Kemp continued to pay homage to his fallen comrades and serve his community. He served as Kanawha County commissioner and as a member of the West Virginia House of Delegates. He is a legend here in West Virginia and was one of the most selfless people that I have ever had the pleasure of calling a dear friend.

As Governor, my most honored titled was that of commander-in-chief of the Guard. I have seen firsthand how the

Air National Guard protects the citizens of West Virginia when we are in our most desperate hour of need and how they protect our country when called upon to serve at the command of the President of the United States. The integrity of our Guard is due in large part to Kemp's legacy of excellence and his commitment to seeing our Guard and our home State flourish.

When visitors come to West Virginia, I jump at the chance to tell them we are home to the most hard-working and patriotic people in the Nation. We have fought in more wars, shed more blood, and lost more lives for the cause of freedom than most any other State. We have always done the heavy lifting and never complained.

We have mined the coal and forged the steel that built the guns, ships, and factories that have protected and continue to protect our country to this day. I am so deeply proud of what West Virginians like Kemp have accomplished and what they will continue to accomplish to protect the freedoms we hold dear. We have every reason to be proud and to stand tall knowing that West Virginia is the reason Americans sleep peacefully at night.

Kemp is survived by his children, Laura, Mary, and Kemp, Jr., and their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I know he and Constance, his lovely wife of nearly 50 years, are looking down on each of you and all of us with a smile.

West Virginia is great because our people are great—Mountaineers who will always be free. We are tough, independent, inventive, and honest, our character shaped by the wilderness of our State—its rushing streams, its boundless blue skies, its divine forests, and its majestic mountains. We are West Virginians. Like the brave, loyal patriots who made our State the 35th star on Old Glory, our love of God and country and family and State is unshakeable.

I know that 20, 50, or another 156 years from now, that will always remain the same. That legacy laid the groundwork for heroes like Kemp McLaughlin, and now, he serves as an inspiration to all who wish to follow in his footsteps and live a life filled with patriotism, service, faith, and family.

There are so few of our American heroes left from Kemp's generation. It is our responsibility and privilege to ensure that their service and sacrifice is never forgotten. The sun will never set on Kemp's legacy of service, his generosity, his love for his family, and his devotion to God, our home State, and our beautiful country.

I know with the condolences of myself and you, Madam President, that we will always remember and keep Kemp in our prayers.

Thank you, and God bless.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

HONORING MASTER TROOPER WILLIAM MODEN, CORPORAL DANIEL GROVES, SERGEANT JOSHUA VOTH, KEN JONES, TRAVIS DAVIS, AND TROY JACKSON

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I rise to give thanks to the brave men and women of law enforcement in Colorado and across the country. Every holiday season, I am reminded of the sacrifice that these brave officers make in order to make sure that everybody's holiday season is enjoyed safely and that every day is enjoyed safely and securely.

Across the United States this year, 115 law enforcement officers have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. In Colorado, we honor those who lost their lives this year. Master Trooper William Moden was killed earlier this year when he was struck by a vehicle as he was investigating a crash. He served the Colorado State Patrol for 12 years. Corporal Daniel Groves was also killed by a passing vehicle while assisting another driver during the blizzard last winter. Corporal Groves also served the Colorado State Patrol for 12 years.

Unfortunately, I also come to the floor to honor three other brave men and women—you can see them here—who have given their lives just this past month. Sergeant Joshua Voth served the Colorado Department of Corrections and was stationed at the Canyon City Correction Facility. He was killed this month when an issue with the boiler caused an explosion. Sergeant Voth was 28 years old and leaves behind his wife and three children. He served at the Canyon City facility for 3 years and helped teach inmates valuable skills to help smooth the plan to rehabilitation.

We also lost other beloved members of our first responder community. They need to be remembered and honored as well. Ken Jones, a member of the Summit Fire and EMS, was killed on December 7 while responding to a fire at Copper Mountain. Ken served in that department for 20 years and was known by his colleagues as "a firefighter's firefighter." Travis Davis, the deputy chief of operations for Summit Fire and EMS, remembers him as an "Oak" and said everyone in the organization learned something in Ken's steady and calm demeanor. We thank Ken and his family for two decades of service and send our sincerest thoughts to all those who knew him.

I also would like to recognize Troy Jackson, a former assistant chief of operations for the South Metro Fire Rescue, who passed away just yesterday morning after a battle of what is believed to be job-related cancer. Chief Jackson was first hired in 1990 and served nearly three decades before stepping away in 2016 due to his health. He was open about his battle with cancer, in hopes that he could teach other firefighters how to avoid these risks.

We thank Chief Jackson for his service and send our thoughts and prayers