

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

along to his wife and two children. Each one of these officers and firefighters we lost this year was a neighbor or loved one, a member of the community, and an extraordinary Coloradan who gave their life to protect their communities. While we remember those whom we lost this year, we must also continue to celebrate those who continue to serve today.

TRIBUTE TO OFFICER MICHAEL LOHMAN

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, in August, I was fortunate to award Officer Michael Lohman of the Greeley Police Department with the Congressional Badge of Bravery for his heroic actions apprehending the driver of a stolen vehicle in 2017.

While at the driver-side window of the vehicle, the driver pulled a gun on Officer Lohman, who immediately engaged with the driver to take the weapon. The driver pulled Officer Lohman into the vehicle and began accelerating, dragging him along the street. Officer Lohman kept his cool and was able to pull the suspect from the vehicle while it was still moving and apprehended him with the help of other officers.

These actions saved the lives of anyone in the path of that vehicle, as well as the life of his partner who was at the passenger side of the vehicle when the gun was pulled. These actions give our communities peace of mind, knowing that heroes like Officer Lohman continue to keep all of us safe. But we know every brave action doesn't get the recognition that it deserves.

Every day, there are law enforcement and first responders who act with complete selflessness. They do this not to seek recognition or praise, but simply because it is what they were called to do.

Jamie and I would like to send our thanks to the families of our law enforcement and first responders. Every day these men and women say goodbye to their loved ones, unsure of what that day will hold for them. I am sure these goodbyes are much more difficult during the holiday season, but without the love and support of those at home, the jobs of law enforcement and our first responders would be that much more difficult. We thank them for their continued sacrifice.

RECOGNIZING THE U.S. CAPITOL POLICE

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I would also like to take a moment to say thanks to the men and women of the U.S. Capitol Police. They work long hours to ensure that Members of the staff and Members themselves are able to carry out their duties safely. On top of that important duty, they also protect the public who comes to visit to express their opinion, to express their right to assemble and free speech in the Capitol and beyond, not only to tour this beautiful Capitol Building, but to make sure their thoughts are heard on our Nation's policy issues.

I know every one of my colleagues will join us in expressing our gratitude to law enforcement and first responders not only in Colorado, but across this Nation this holiday season. They will give up time with their own families to make sure that others are safe.

To all those who defend that thin blue line, thank you, and God bless. You have my enduring support. May you all have a happy and blessed holiday season.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

TRIBUTE TO JOHNNY ISAKSON

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Madam President, today I rise for the opportunity to commend Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON on his retirement from the U.S. Senate.

I am a relatively new Member to the Senate, but I think we all remember the first time we ever walked onto the Senate floor. I know I certainly do because that is the day I met Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON.

With both of us being from the South, I knew we would probably have a lot in common, a similar view on life, and a heart for the South, but it didn't take me long to learn that JOHNNY has a universal heart.

I am guilty of the expression, "Nothing is special until you make it special." JOHNNY has such a generous gift of making things special. He has the gift of making everyone around him feel special. His heart and his attitude sees the best in people and yet goes further to let them know how much they mean to him.

He exemplifies being a leader, an encourager, and an investor of people. He is never too busy to ask how you are doing or to ask about your family. Common courtesy sometimes isn't always that common anymore, but I assure you it is with JOHNNY ISAKSON.

His brilliance is unquestionable. His ability to articulate what is important to him is just simply amazing. He can deliver a message that not only expresses his concern but also has answers and solutions based on his experience and his tremendous wisdom.

He is the gentle calm in a tremendous storm. He has the words of wisdom when so many are bewildered. He is the guiding light in the darkest times. He provides the needed laugh in times of tension and the voice of reason in times of uncertainty. His love is deep, and his compassion is true.

He knows how to be a friend. He was a born leader and has the ability to capture opportunities and turn them into successes. My world has been enhanced and enriched by this wonderful and precious human being.

JOHNNY learned a long time ago that the joy of living comes in giving. You know when a person has in his heart that joy, that wasn't put there by the world.

When I think about the true statesmen I have met in my brief time in the Senate, I will certainly have "Georgia on My Mind."

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The Senator from Florida.

VENEZUELA

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I rise to speak again today about the crisis in Venezuela—a defining human rights issue of our time.

Nicolas Maduro is starving his own people, and innocent children are dying. It is a genocide right here in our hemisphere. Every day that passes, the situation in Venezuela grows more dire.

The United States and all freedom-loving countries around the world must do more. As Governor, I strictly prohibited the State of Florida, including all State agencies, from investing in any company that did business with Maduro's repressive regime.

I am grateful for the bipartisan support this bill has received, and I specifically thank Senator ROSEN for her leadership and for joining me in this effort.

We must never give up on the fight for freedom, and I look forward to all of my colleagues joining me in support of the people of Venezuela.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate in Spanish.

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

(English translation of the statement made in Spanish is as follows:)

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. I stand with the people of Venezuela and will always fight for freedom and democracy in Latin America.

I understand my colleague has an objection. I am disappointed, but I look forward to working with him to address his concerns.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I rise to highlight several key parts of the appropriations package the Senate will be considering later on this week. First, I want to point out some statistics. Ninety-two thousand of our coal miners are counting on us to protect their pensions. Thirteen thousand coal miners are counting on us to protect their healthcare benefits. This week, we will have a chance to do just that.

I am very proud to have worked with our leader, Senator MCCONNELL, Senator MANCHIN, Senator PORTMAN, and others to introduce and champion the Bipartisan American Miners Act. I appreciate that my counterpart on the House side, Congressman DAVID MCKINLEY, has worked consistently and tirelessly on this bill in the House, along with our other Representatives from West Virginia, ALEX MOONEY and CAROL MILLER. Most of all, I appreciate the West Virginian miners and their families who have traveled to Washington to advocate for their promised benefits and for their communities. I