

add that to the 35 percent of the population that is the essential workforce, that is 50 percent of the population that could have the vaccine if they chose to have it.

I think most people think that we are there, in our State and other places, by sometime in April. In fact, Dr. Fauci said that Americans determined to be at the highest risk—healthcare workers, frontline workers, seniors, those with underlying conditions—could be vaccinated by the end of the year.

Certainly, if there is a second shot, it might be by the end of January, and you have 15 percent of the whole population vaccinated by the end of January or sometime in January, and another 35 percent would have the vaccine available to them by sometime in April.

Then we look at the rest of the population. But in each step of the way—let me say again—every time you take somebody off the playing field of where contact with the virus could successfully occur, everybody else gets safer too.

If a person who has been vaccinated is where the germs happen to land instead of the person standing beside them who wasn't vaccinated, the life of that particular germ is gone, and eventually that is how you emerge from a pandemic. There just aren't enough people left for this to land on that either haven't had it or haven't had the vaccine to prevent it.

It is a critical time. It is an important time. I think we have written two new chapters in pandemic response, both in testing and in vaccines.

Operation Warp Speed has done in months what typically can take 10 to 15 years and, even in an expedited way, can take 2 to 3 to 5 years.

Given the urgent need to beat this virus, I think Operation Warp Speed, with the great scientific community—a lot of this is built on research that was funded by NIH. One of the priorities of the Congress for the last 5 years has been to increase NIH funding, at a time when we know more about genetics.

Two of these vaccines are basically based on the molecular code that is sort of the software for genetics. It is a different way than vaccines have been developed before and would not have been developed without government-encouraged research.

Having a diverse selection of vaccines means there are different people producing vaccines at the same time in different places, and we will have, more likely, a quick and fair distribution of any FDA-authorized vaccines.

Certainly, I have been frustrated, as many of us have, to think that we have not been able to reach an agreement on what money we might need to finish this vaccine effort, the distribution effort.

Hopefully, we can come to the next round of COVID relief sooner rather than later.

As I said earlier this week, a targeted funding package now will have a lot

more impact than a much bigger package would have 4 or 5 months from now. There is no reason we shouldn't be able to find common ground. This is a time when we can make that effort to finish the job. The pandemic is affecting Americans every day. I have talked to a lot of people who have seen greater numbers of drug dependency and huge declines in mental health because that support network is gone and isolation has taken over, and worry about family, finances, and health has become a big part of that.

Let's show the people we work for that we are going to be able to continue this job, and let's praise the great researchers in our country and others who stepped forward in incredible ways to do things that just 9 months ago nobody thought could possibly be established in the timeframe we are working on right now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 568.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Lanny Erdos, of Ohio, to be Director of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Erdos nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

REMEMBERING CHARLES CARROLL SMITH

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to take a few moments to say fare-

well to a friend and a public servant who served my State of Illinois and our Nation well. His name was Charles Carroll Smith, but his friends called him Charlie. He died on the day after Thanksgiving. Our paths crossed often over the years.

Charlie served as Illinois' deputy secretary of state under then-Secretary of State Alan Dixon. When Alan Dixon was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1980, Charlie came to Washington with him. He was a key member of the Dixon staff, serving as both legislative director and senior national security adviser. When Alan Dixon left the Senate, Charlie joined the staff of Kentucky Senator Wendell Ford, then the Senate's Democratic whip. Charlie was Senator Ford's legislative staff director and a trusted adviser to Senator Ford on matters involving national security and foreign relations.

He helped craft and pass many important pieces of legislation, including the 1990 law establishing the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission in 1990. He went on to serve as executive director of the 1995 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission—a massive task to try to realign America's military bases with the realities of the post-Cold War world.

The work of the Base Closure Commission was necessary, complex, and historic, and Charlie's intricate understanding of both the Defense Department and the security needs of America and our allies was critical to the commission's success. Despite the gargantuan task, Charlie was never too busy to listen. I and all of the Members of the Illinois congressional delegation appreciated his willingness to always consider fairly our explanations about the national security importance of the military bases in our State. He never put his thumb on the scale for Illinois, but he made sure that we received a fair hearing. The day the commission announced its recommendations in 2005, Charlie called me to explain in layman's language just what the recommendations meant for Illinois and for America. I have never met anyone with a greater understanding of the workings of the Defense Department and the ability to translate that knowledge into plain English. He was a rare one.

Charlie came by his political and legislative skills the old-fashioned way. He inherited them. He grew up in an Irish Catholic Democratic family on the North Side of Chicago. His father was in politics; his mother was a professor. Charlie was the first-born and only son in the family of three children.

The Smith family took politics and democracy seriously. Charlie and his father were both named Charles Carroll Smith, senior and junior. Family legend has it that they were descended from Charles Carroll, one of the signers of America's Declaration of Independence and a member of the Continental Congress. Whether it was true or not—

this was before at-home DNA testing—the Smith family strove to live up to Charles Carroll's patriotic example.

When Charlie was about 11, his father decided that the Smith family home should be a laboratory of democracy. They would discuss important events at the dinner table, and once a week, they would have a meeting to vote on matters involving the family. After just one or two of these family meetings, Charlie had an epiphany. He told his sister Sheila: “You know, if we three kids stick together, we can outvote Mom and Dad.” He said: “I want a bike. What do you want?” Charlie figured out what both of his sisters wanted and how to deliver it. At the next family meeting, the girls supported Charlie’s proposal to buy him a bike. The kids won, and Charlie got his bike. The Smith family never held another family vote, but Charlie would go on to use his coalition-building skills in the interest of public service for the rest of his life.

In 1968, Charlie joined the U.S. Army and served as an intelligence officer in Vietnam during the Tet offensive.

He left public service in 1999 and began his second career as a lobbyist. He was respected by members of Congress on both sides of the aisle as a straight shooter and a good man.

Besides his family, politics, and public service, Charlie loved the Chicago Bears and the Cubs and playing golf. Every Christmas season, Charlie hosted a party for his friends at the Army Navy Country Club in Arlington, VA. It was always a great, bipartisan celebration. This Friday, Charlie’s friends will gather by Zoom to remember him on what would have been his 26th annual Christmas party. He will be missed there, and he will be missed in the halls of Congress, in his old neighborhood in Chicago, and many other places.

Loretta and I send our condolences to Charlie’s wife Patti Turner; his sisters, Sheila Smith and Catherine Wilson; and his many, many friends.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO LAURA NOWLIN

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I have the honor of recognizing Laura Nowlin of Teton County for her compassion and dedication to her community.

Since 1986, Laura has devoted her time to working at the Teton County Food Pantry as both a volunteer and a member of the executive board. Over the course of her 33 years at the food pantry, she ensured families in the community had healthy and hearty groceries with no exceptions. Rain or shine, Laura was always there to help the people of Teton County get the nutrition they needed.

Recently named a board member emeritus of the pantry, Laura will be dearly missed by her colleagues. Her

unwavering selflessness was an incredibly valuable asset to both the pantry and her community.

It is my distinct honor to recognize Laura for her tireless service to the people of Teton County. Her kindness and charitable approach to work serves as an inspiration to all Montanans who serve our communities.●

TRIBUTE TO ROY LEE LINDSEY

• Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I am pleased to recognize Mr. Roy Lee Lindsey for his 22 years of service at the Oklahoma Pork Council. Since 1998, he has served as a steadfast advocate for pork producers and the agriculture industry in Oklahoma and we are grateful for his years of service.

Over the years, I have had the experience of working directly with Roy Lee on a number of issues, and I have greatly valued his insight, partnership, and dedication to ensuring the hard-working pork producers in the State of Oklahoma have access to the Federal resources they need. Anyone who has had the pleasure to meet and work with Roy Lee can attest for his love of the state of Oklahoma and the pork industry. His unwavering passion and dedication have enabled him to be an extraordinary ambassador for Oklahoma, both regionally and nationally.

From sharing producers’ perspectives on multiple farm bill reauthorizations to engaging in workforce development initiatives to educate our future generation of farmers, Roy Lee has always provided a judicious, thoughtful, and considerate perspective on Federal policy. His understanding of the challenges of agriculture production and appreciation for the producers he represents has consistently been apparent in his advocacy efforts and instrumental in the pork industry’s growth and prosperity in Oklahoma.

I know I join his family and all that know him in thanking him for his years of service and contributions to Oklahoma and our entire agriculture community.●

TRIBUTE TO BRENT HILL

• Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, along with my colleague Senator MIKE CRAPO, I rise today to recognize Idaho State Senate President Pro Tempore Brent Hill’s 19 years of service to the State of Idaho.

In 2001, Brent Hill was appointed to lead Idaho’s 34th District as a State senator. He quickly developed a reputation as a legislator who led with integrity, civility and kindness—characteristics that earned him reelection to serve nine consecutive terms in the Idaho State Senate.

In the Idaho Senate and throughout the 34th District, Brent was known as a stalwart supporter of small businesses, family values, natural resources, and public education. Brent’s expansive knowledge of the Federal and State tax codes from his experience as a CEO,

CPA, and a financial planner allowed him to shape Idaho’s tax policy and communicate complex tax legislation to fellow legislators and constituents. He considered tax dollars sacred and took great care in spending them responsibly.

As he climbed the ranks of leadership to become president pro tempore, Brent never forgot the people he served in Madison and Bonneville Counties and always demonstrated true concern for their challenges and concerns. Despite the demands on his time, he continued to serve his community on the board of the Citizens Community Bank and as president of the Rexburg Chamber of Commerce and Rexburg Kiwanis Club. He never stopped advocating on behalf of his constituents, regularly contacting our offices to secure assistance for those needing help with Federal agencies.

Senator Brent Hill leaves behind a legacy of service and integrity, and we wish him and his wife Julie, their children and grandchildren the best as he transitions back to private life. His steadfast leadership will be missed in the Idaho Senate, but we know his community and our State will continue to be blessed by his influence for years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR JOHN PAUL CHRISTENSEN

• Mr. ROMNEY. Mr. President, we rise to congratulate John Paul Christensen on his lifetime of service to the State of Utah and Sanpete County and most recently his service as mayor of Mayfield, UT. John’s service also includes a career in law enforcement, as an emergency medical responder and as a city councilman.

As a sixth-generation native of Sanpete County, John has dedicated his life to the betterment of his community. By virtue of his stewardship as mayor, the people of Mayfield have John to thank for dramatic improvements to the city’s infrastructure, including its culinary water and drainage systems, streets, roadways, cemetery, and Mayfield Park. Mayor Christensen’s accomplishments are made possible in large part by the industrious community of volunteers and spirit of friendship that Mayfield boasts.

The residents of Mayfield know John as a man of great character and compassion. In law enforcement and as an emergency medical responder, the community trusted John with protecting their lives and livelihoods, an often thankless duty that requires mental fortitude and dedication to serving the greater good. His long tenure in public service is evidence of his success.

Although he is leaving public office, we know that John will continue to serve his community and family with heart. As a devoted husband to Julie, a father of 9, and a grandfather of 19, John’s legacy and example will endure. The great people of Mayfield, Sanpete