

they were the founders there of I AM ALS.

Brian was only 37 years old when he was diagnosed with ALS—37—so super young. And he was told 6 months: You have got 6 months to live.

He is a father to two little girls, and he just said: Got to keep fighting. We have got to keep fighting for a cure—a cure that will allow him to raise his daughters with his wife.

And I think it is fair to say that, 4 years later now, Brian is just as determined, just as tireless an advocate for ALS and the ALS community.

So, again, I think about people like Brian and Dan, my cousin Jenny, who lost Pat to this awful disease in 2013. He lived with ALS for 8 years. Our family lived with ALS for those 8 years.

And so the advocacy continues because of the passion for so many who have lived through a life that is almost difficult for us to imagine.

And as they have come out of losing a loved one to a disease like this, to know that they are willing to carry that flag, that they are willing to commit their time, their resources, and everything that they have so that others don't go through this, we honor them. We honor that commitment.

I am so pleased to be able to work with my partner on this and to know that this was a good success, but we are going to need to be doing more, and I will be doing it with him.

I yield to my friend from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. I want to express my gratitude to my friend and colleague from Alaska.

It is, indeed, a deep well of darkness into which a family is cast when they receive a diagnosis of ALS.

My own awareness of this disease and its dread consequences is rooted in a number of cases that came to me and my extended family now quite a few years ago.

My brother is with us here in the Chamber today, and his dear friend Dan Loftus passed through ALS, and I remember the pain that this caused him and the depth of that loss.

A friend of mine from Delaware, Alex Snyder-Mackler, first shared with me his father Scott's diagnosis with ALS, now 20 years ago. And year after year, as many of us would gather in Newark and run a 5K and do a fundraiser for some sort of research, for some sort of hope, his father Scott slowly slipped away.

I talked to Alex this morning and was reminded of how much this means to those families who have come through this.

Max Walton, a dear friend of mine in the bar in Delaware, and his father—just an unbelievable character, a great and funny and creative and capable man who built a family business and then slipped from us through ALS.

ALS was first known to America when Lou Gehrig, an outstanding baseball player, got it. And he is still famous for his "I am the luckiest man in the world" speech, when he announced his retirement from baseball.

But 80 years later—80 years later—it is still a mystery to science and a death sentence to those who get this dread diagnosis who are often told they have just a few short years to live. This bill in their name and honor confronts this stark reality and makes progress.

I cannot close without thanking two other people—Meghan Taira, who is tireless here on the floor in helping move and prioritize things working for Leader SCHUMER, who lost her own mother, Ellen Taira, to ALS, and last, if I could, for someone whom I am not worthy of.

I have a legislative director, Brian Winseck, who is a spectacular human being, whose skill and persistence and diligence and dedication for my side of this kept us at it every day. His father Joseph was a high school civics teacher, and the loss of his life through ALS is something from which Brian has made so much good for others through his role in helping shepherd this through my office.

What Senator MURKOWSKI and I are showing for a moment here today is an answer to a question so many families, so many people living with ALS, so many who have lost a loved one to ALS wonder in the dark moments: Does anyone care? Does anyone see this? Does anyone know what is happening? Is anyone going to do something about this?

The families and those who are living today with ALS and those who have lost someone to ALS need to know that your advocacy is heard, that it moved a mountain here in the Congress, and it will begin moving resources and energy and dedication.

We are at the beginning of the next step of this journey, but, as my dear friend, under whom I served many, many years ago in a very dark time in the history of South Africa, said: Hope. Hope is being able to see that despite all the darkness, there is still light.

Bishop Desmond Tutu spoke that to the people of South Africa struggling in a very dark time and place.

To the families, the survivors, and those who are living with ALS, my dear friend from Alaska and I and the folks in our families and on our staff and in the many countless teams of advocates around this country hope that this holiday season, that this Christmas, that this year, we have brought you some glimmer of the light that you have brought to us.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL RANDI LUDINGTON

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I think here in the Senate, so many of us

have the privilege to occasionally host military fellows, congressional military fellows, and I would like to take just a minute here to recognize the great work of a former member of my staff, Air Force Lt. Col. Randi Ludington. She spent the last year working in my personal office as part of the U.S. Air Force congressional fellowship program. She just concluded that fellowship program just last week and has moved on to her next assignment, but I think it is important to be able to publicly express my appreciation for the work she did over the last year and really for her service to the Nation overall.

For 17 years now, Randi has served in the U.S. Air Force. She was first an enlisted financial technician before she earned her commission and worked her way up to the rank of lieutenant colonel. She had a level of exposure before coming to my office certainly. These experiences of being in different places around the world, leading airmen, advising commanders, really proved invaluable when she came to provide her expertise in my office.

Not only has she spearheaded efforts legislatively and prepped me for meetings and hearings, she really became a key member of our team, working with Alaskans, working with counterparts back here, but really serving them just as she would serve her own troops.

When we were faced with a very chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan, Randi was one of those who was really burning the midnight oil. She was putting in long days and long nights, answering calls from constituents and veterans who were seeking help. She was doing just that. She was there around the clock, sometimes just listening, offering words of support; other times just really helping to synchronize the efforts between people on the ground in Kabul, lining them up with Departments and Agencies here in Washington, doing everything she could to try to help facilitate the needs of so many who were so desperate to get out.

In the end, Randi was honored by an Alaska Native Corporation, the Goldbelt Corporation. They had been engaged in an airlift, a significant airlift, and she was recognized by Goldbelt for her dedicated efforts assisting them throughout that whole ordeal. So it was nice to know that she had received not only the recognition and thanks from those here, fellows back in Alaska, but also the broader international recognition.

So I take this moment to just express my thanks to Randi. It was a pleasure having her in my office. She has a fabulous family. It was a great pleasure to be able to get to meet her husband Brad, an Air Force veteran himself. They have three super-great little kids: Charlee, Ryan, and Graham.

I wish Randi and her family nothing but the best as she moves forward with her military career.

I feel very fortunate that we get some of our Nation's best, who are able

to take kind of a little bit of a detour through their professional trajectory in the military to come here, work with us, share their level of expertise, and also educate themselves on the internal process we have here.

I was very fortunate to have her as part of my team. I think we should all be proud to know that it is leaders like her who comprise our military.

So, again, thank you, Randi, for what you have done for our country and what you have done to help Alaska.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SASSE. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CARDIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

PURDUE UNIVERSITY

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, according to ProPublica reporting, a Purdue student from China, Zhihao Kong, who goes by the nickname “Moody,” wrote a letter condemning the Chinese Communist Party for killing dissidents in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

We all know the famous image of the man who stood courageously, not in front of one tank—most of the images that ran in U.S. newspapers were of one guy standing in front of a tank. And if you just look at that image, you can assume that the tank commander is some nutjob who decided he was going to torment this kid. But if you actually look at the image, as you can through U.S. photo archives, and you pan back out, that first tank is one tank in a long, long, long, long line of tanks coming that this man stands courageously in front of. It is not one nutjob tank commander looking at this guy in Tiananmen Square; it is an autocratic government that is scared to death of the courage of free people. And that man stood there courageously as the Chinese Communist Party was murdering students in Tiananmen Square.

The Purdue graduate student, Moody, decided to write an open letter about that reminding students in America and around the world of what happened in Tiananmen Square.

Well, guess what happened next. After Moody published his essay, China’s secret police decided to go visit his family and intimidate them so that they might put pressure on him, asking him, commanding him, coercing him, twisting the arms of his parents and loved ones, to stop talking about the truth, about what happened in Tiananmen Square in June of 1989.

When Mr. Kong refused to back down, other Chinese students at Purdue—not Chinese students in Beijing, Chinese graduate students at Purdue—decided that it was their obligation to harass Mr. Kong. They pursued him around campus, and they threatened to report

him to the Chinese Embassy. Think about that for a second.

What do we think about Embassies as for? Two hundred countries around the face of the Earth, and when you are traveling and you have a lost passport or you suffer some, you know, petty crime or you have a family member who has a medical emergency back home, you call up your Embassy for help because you think these are people who love you. You are in a foreign place and you don’t maybe speak the language and the Embassy is there to help you navigate a world where you might not know the language, the laws, or the customs.

What happened in the United States—a freedom-loving place—is that these Chinese students, Chinese nationals here in school at Purdue, decided that they thought it might be their job to contact the Chinese Embassy to tattle on Mr. Kong because the man had the courage to tell the truth. He had spoken online. He had written online. He had been involved in dissident events.

So what happened then, besides his parents being harassed by the Chinese secret police and besides graduate students following him around campus to intimidate him and threaten to report him to the Embassy, WeChat decided that they needed to block and suspend his account to cut off his communications with the outside world.

A few days before he was scheduled to speak at a Zoom commemoration of the Tiananmen Square massacre, the secret police went to visit his parents again, reminding them that they needed to make sure he put an end to his activism—read “truth-telling.”

It is convenient for Americans to look the other way and stay silent in the face of this. We have seen many American professional sports leagues; we have seen Hollywood companies lusting after Chinese middle-class markets; we have seen the Marriott hotel chain agreeing to intimidate their own employees so that their employees didn’t acknowledge what has happened in Hong Kong and the threats currently against Taiwan; we have seen this censorship using economic statecraft from Beijing to intimidate Americans and American companies and American institutions to do their bidding to suppress people who might tell the truth.

It is convenient to stay silent. Many of our institutions have pathetically agreed with Beijing that they would self-censor at Beijing’s and Chairman Xi’s bidding.

Well, guess who didn’t do that. Purdue University decided they were not going to do that.

So there is a lot of bad stuff happening in the world because of the expansionistic desires of the CCP, and we have a lot of Americans and American institutions who are willing to be complicit in the CCP’s desired expansionism, but Purdue didn’t. So we should pause today, just for a minute, and celebrate that good news. We should celebrate that courage.

Mitch Daniels, former Governor of Indiana, current President of Purdue, decided that this was not OK, and it was important to tell the truth about this fact, what had happened, and that this wasn’t OK.

I would like to read into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD today President Daniels’ letter to the Purdue campus 36 hours ago because we need a hell of a lot more truth-telling like this in American life. Here is Mitch Daniels and the Purdue leadership on behalf of not just Purdue but American values:

Dear Purdue students, staff and faculty,

Purdue [has] learned from a national news account last week that one of our students, after speaking out on behalf of freedom and others martyred for advocating for [freedom], was harassed and threatened by other students from his own home country [in this country]. Worse still, [this student’s] family back home, in this case [the home being] China, was visited and threatened by agents of that nation’s secret police.

We regret that we were unaware at the time of these events and [we] had to learn of them from national sources. That reflects the atmosphere of intimidation that we have discovered [surrounding] this specific sort of speech.

Any such intimidation is unacceptable and [it is] unwelcome on our campus. Purdue has punished less personal, direct and threatening conduct. Anyone taking exception to the speech in question had their own right to express their disagreement, but not to engage in the actions of harassment which occurred here. If those students who issued the threats can be identified, they will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Likewise, any student found to have reported another student to any foreign entity for exercising their freedom of speech or belief will be subject to significant [action].

International students are nothing new at Purdue University, which welcomed its first Asian admittees over a century ago. We are proud that several hundred international students, nearly 200 of them [from China], enrolled [at Purdue] again this fall.

But joining the Purdue community requires acceptance of [our] rules and values, and no value is more central to our institution or to higher education generally than the freedom of inquiry and expression. Those seeking to deny those rights to others, let alone to collude with foreign governments in repressing them, will need to pursue their education elsewhere.

Sincerely,

Mitch

Chairman Xi is a coward, and he sends his goons to intimidate people for telling the truth. That is who Chairman Xi is. He doesn’t believe in the dignity of people. He doesn’t believe that they are image-bearers of God. He doesn’t believe they have the rights of free speech, religion, press, assembly, and protest. He believes that you must intimidate college students for telling the truth. If they are saying something to a small group of people 6,000 miles away, Chairman Xi is intimidated, and he is scared.

That student told the truth. We should celebrate that student. Mitch Daniels and Purdue University stood up to that kind of intimidation. We should celebrate that because that is what American courage looks like, and we need a whole hell of a lot more of it.