

I am now a colonel in the Marine Corps Reserve, working again on these issues in the INDOPACOM theater.

Let me conclude with this: American commitment and resolve for Taiwan has been part of our law, heritage, trade, economics, and military deployments for decades and should be for decades to come. The S.T.A.N.D. with Taiwan Act of 2022 is the next logical step to demonstrate America's commitment to Taiwan, this time emphasizing the deterrent power of our economic and financial strengths.

It is our values of freedom, innovation, the rule of law, individual rights, and openness that the Chinese Communist Party is most afraid of. We must be ready as democracies to defend these values or risk a world increasingly governed by autocracy, surveillance, aggression, and permanent conflict. The S.T.A.N.D. with Taiwan Act will help us do just that.

TRIBUTE TO EMMA BROYLES

Madam President, it has been a busy week. Let's face it—it has been a contentious week here in the U.S. Senate. We had a big vote last night. I spoke about the issues we were debating last night and a few times on the Senate floor. Just a minute ago, I introduced a bill of mine on a very serious topic regarding a possible war with China and Taiwan. So it has been busy.

To be honest, my team and I were focused on a lot of these issues, and we were thinking about skipping my favorite part of the week—coming down on the Senate floor and talking about the Alaskan of the week—but then we came across a Twitter meme. You almost have to see it to completely understand it, but the gist of it was this: We in the Senate can't achieve civility without an "Alaskan of the Week" speech at the end of the week to lift spirits here in the Senate.

I kind of appreciated that meme, so we wanted to make sure that we, after a rough, contentious couple of weeks, ended it on a note that was uplifting and to highlight another very special Alaskan, as I try to do pretty much every week, whose role right now in our country is, in fact, going to be about bringing civility and respect and emphasizing the importance of service to all people of the United States and across the globe. So I thought, what a great time for an "Alaskan of the Week" speech. I know the pages love it.

So let me introduce to you our Alaskan of the week this week: 20-year-old Emma Broyles from Anchorage, who broke through barriers to become the first Alaskan and the first Korean American ever to be crowned Miss America. This just happened a couple weeks ago. Emma is very well-deserving, as you will see, and when it was announced that she had won Miss America, when that happened, when her name was announced, she cried tears of joy, of course, and Alaskans across the State cheered.

Now, every Miss America contestant picks a cause to champion. Special

Olympics, which I love—I am probably Alaska's Special Olympics biggest fan—was Emma's cause.

The night of the event, they held a watch party at the Jim Balamici Special Olympics training center in Anchorage, which is a great facility. Our Special Olympian athletes were the loudest of any group in the State cheering for Emma and her great win. Then, of course, there is the huge, extended Korean-American family who was also cheering, laughing, and crying when it was announced that she had won.

After it was done, Emma told reporters: "I didn't even expect to make the top 10. I was there for the good time and the cheesecake." That is Emma for you—funny, self-deprecating, humble, and real, just like her home State. She is the perfect Miss America to represent the great State of Alaska.

So let me tell you about our Miss America, America's Miss America, Alaska's Miss America, and her goals going forward.

About 50 years ago, Emma's grandparents emigrated from Korea to Anchorage. They wanted to raise a family, to live the American dream. Alaska, of course, is a great place to do that.

By the way, we have the greatest, strongest, most incredible Korean-American community in Alaska, who are just incredible Americans.

Emma's grandparents' daughter—Emma's mom—Julie was born in Anchorage, and so was her father Ron. Emma grew up a typical Alaskan kid—like my three daughters—fishing, winter sports, hard work at school, community-oriented. Her mom was a special education teacher, and her older brother has Down syndrome.

Emma likes to say that she went to her first Special Olympics meet when she was in the womb, so she has been a fan literally from the beginning of her life, and that is one of the reasons she is so passionate about that issue. She knows firsthand, like many of us do, the power of Special Olympic athletes to inspire and to be such great representatives for inclusion and respect and healthy competition.

Emma graduated from Service High School and made her way to Arizona State University, where she is now a junior studying biomedical sciences and voice performance. She wants to be a doctor. In fact, she wants to be a dermatologist.

Emma shared something with the world during the Miss America pageant that was very brave, like so many young women are doing now, particularly our athletes who have to perform and have a platform and use that platform for good, to talk about some difficult issues. Emma told the world that she had been diagnosed with ADHD—attention deficit hyperactivity disorder—which led to chronic scratching and skin-pinching issues.

Now, we don't hear a lot about that, but roughly 2 percent of the population

has this challenge, mostly young women. That is why Emma wants to be a dermatologist—to help young women like her who suffer from this disorder or other medical challenges.

"It was kind of a hard thing for me to share at first," Emma said, with the world during the pageant. "I wasn't sure if I was ready to be that vulnerable, you know, on a national stage with hundreds [of] thousands of people watching."

That is what she said, but she did it. She did it. That was very courageous, and we are better for it.

With Emma's beautiful singing voice, her poise, her bravery in highlighting an issue that has caused her a lot of pain, her role of championing the Special Olympics, her heritage, her home State, the crown looked very natural and beautiful atop Emma's head, like it was meant to be there.

Here is what she told a reporter after she won:

There were a lot of people who felt like they saw themselves in me.

She talked about all of the positive messages she had received from people all across America, Alaska, and the entire world after she won.

They told her how wonderful it was to see someone like them, someone who had similar issues or someone who has a family member who has a disability, and she talked about it courageously. They told her how wonderful it was "seeing themselves in me and seeing this kind of relatable figure and someone they can look to." That is Emma.

I think you are starting to see what a great young woman she is. Like so many of us, she had a tough time during COVID last year, but she overcame it. She said, "I hope that other people know that they can do the same thing," overcoming these challenges, "whatever it is they're struggling with."

So thank you, Emma, for being such an inspiration—incredible job, incredible courage, incredible poise.

I also—because I am talking about Emma—want to recognize so many other incredible Alaska women who have recently stepped up, done amazing things.

We have a State of very strong women. I am lucky to be surrounded by them everywhere—my wife, my daughters, cousins, sisters-in-law.

There is a famous saying in our State, and when you come to Alaska, you see it everywhere—T-shirts, mugs, bumper stickers. It is a simple saying: Alaska girls kick ass.

Now, look, I am not sure I am supposed to be able to say that on the Senate floor, but I just did. I hope I am not going to get fined or anything. But take a look. It is everywhere in our State. I love the bumper stickers.

And that, in the past year, has really proven to be true—truer than ever. We have our first Alaskan to win Miss America, our Alaskan of the Week today, Emma Broyles. We had our first

Alaskan, Lydia Jacoby, to win a gold medal in swimming, where we don't even have an Olympic-size swimming pool. She won the breaststroke in an amazing race. She did such a great job that she is the first person in U.S. Senate history to be Alaskan of the Week twice—not sure that is ever going to happen again.

We have the first Alaskan woman, Deniz Burnham, chosen to be a NASA astronaut. Another woman, Nichole Ayers, who was stationed at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, was also picked to be an astronaut.

I don't know. It is something about breathing the air.

And, as usual, we have winter olympians going to the Winter Olympics again this year, like we almost always do—strong, very strong, in that area: Rosie Brennan, Vicky Persinger.

And there is Quannah Chasinghorse, an Alaskan Native—a young Alaskan Native woman who was featured recently on the cover of *Vogue*.

So it has been a great year for strong Alaskan women. And to Emma, I just want to say: You make us all proud. Congratulations on your incredible win: Miss America, first Alaskan ever. You have been an inspiration to us. Thank you for your courage, your willingness to speak out on tough issues and take up great causes like our Special Olympic athletes. And, of course, congratulations on being our Alaskan of the Week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ROSEN). The Senator from Ohio.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, 10 minutes ago there was a different Nevada Senator sitting at the Presiding Officer's chair. Welcome.

I was at a roundtable this morning with a group of Ohio county commissioners from conservative counties like Warren and Medina and more progressive counties like Lucas and Hamilton—Republicans and Democrats alike; male, female; a good cross section of Ohio leaders—talking about the projects we are going to build and the good-paying jobs we are going to create—jobs that will not be off-shored this time because we came together to pass the bipartisan infrastructure bill.

Yesterday, I was on a media call with the Republican mayor of Findlay, OH, about the I-75 bridge project that they need in Hancock County.

The day before, I was at another roundtable with western Ohio leaders, talking with them about how we can leverage these investments. It is some of the most important work I am going to be doing over the coming months, working with local and Federal officials to make sure this investment translates into Ohio jobs.

The Presiding Officer understands this, that we pass legislation here. With it, sometimes, comes a good bit of money, like with infrastructure. But it is also up to us, as representing our States, to make sure those dollars are

spent efficiently and effectively and quickly, frankly.

The infrastructure bill is some of the most important work we have done in the Senate in a long time. We are investing in our country.

For years, mayors and businesses and workers have been telling us, as their representatives, as their Senators, about the need to upgrade infrastructure, but we have noticed over the years that candidates of both parties have promised infrastructure. "We are going to pass an infrastructure bill when I am elected," they say. Plenty talk about it, but now, with a new President and a new majority in the Senate and the House, we are finally getting it done with this bipartisan infrastructure bill.

Over the past few months, I have heard from communities about the projects that this is going to allow them to accomplish.

In Toledo, with the mayor, talking about the city's plans to replace lead pipes—my State has the dubious distinction of being the second leading State, if you will. Our State has the second-most lead-contaminated pipes from main water lines and the pipes going into people's homes. We have 600,000 pipes like that going into people's homes that have high levels of lead.

And science has known, paint companies have known, lead manufacturers have known that infants, babies ingest lead. It affects their brain development for the rest of their lives. So one of our goals, working with the mayor of Toledo, is over the next several years to replace those pipes.

Ohio will get someone \$1 billion in new funding to improve water infrastructure.

The Western Hills Viaduct in Cincinnati, the Patterson Avenue Bridge in Dayton—Ohio has some 3,200 bridges eligible for upgrades. Some of them, like the Brent Spence, unbelievably, across the Ohio River, carries 3 percent of GDP every day across that river.

Some of those bridges are—when I grew up working the family farm, driving a tractor with a hay wagon crossing little culvert bridges that dot our countryside and all over my State, many of those are in states of disrepair.

We have seen the new pollution-free buses that communities like Akron and Canton, Columbus, and Lake County are rolling out through Laketrans, their transit system. We have heard about how they are going to expand service so people can get to work and school.

We have some 60,000 buses—big city buses—and another 50 or 60,000 small transit, more rural buses, that need to be replaced. They are fossil fuel, mostly diesel engines, and we are going to replace those over the next several years with low-emission or zero-emission buses.

From the Port of Ashtabula, the community my wife grew up in, we are hearing about how upgrades to our

ports will increase investment and help speed up and grow Ohio supply chains.

As the Presiding Officer knows, this Congress, this Senate and the House, frankly, over the years, at the behest of corporate lobbyists, sold us out on trade agreements, sold us out on tax policy, so that so many jobs left our country. The industrial Midwest was hit the hardest, but every State was hit by that job loss because of bad government policy, again, lobbied by some of the largest corporations in the world—the tech companies, the drug companies, the oil industry.

We now have a President who wants to get it right and bring those supply chains closer to home.

Now this, we also see how Ohio needs better rail infrastructure—new rail cars for Cleveland RTA, better Amtrak service, safer rail crossings.

But, fundamentally, this bill—the infrastructure bill—is a jobs bill. It will create construction jobs, to be sure. It will create jobs—union jobs: carpenters, millwrights, electricians, plumbers and pipe fitters, sheet metal workers, laborers. It will create those kinds of jobs but also create manufacturing jobs through the supply chain.

Senator PORTMAN and I worked to make sure this bill has the strongest "Buy America" requirements ever in an infrastructure bill with our Build America, Buy America Act.

Every one of these projects will come with the strongest ever "Buy America" rules. No more bridges—no more bay bridges in Northern California—made entirely with Chinese steel.

We introduced the "Build America, Buy America" bill on President Trump's inauguration day. Unfortunately, nothing moved because everything got crowded out of President Trump's agenda so they could give a huge tax cut to the richest people in the country.

We worked with other leaders now, 4 years later, with a new President, to get it right.

With "Buy America" particularly, I call out Senator BALDWIN from Wisconsin, Senator PETERS from Michigan and their work.

We are putting in place a clear, permanent standard: If American tax dollars are involved, American workers should be getting the jobs. It is going to mean more contracts for Ohio businesses.

Cleveland Cliffs' new plant in Toledo, talking about what we are doing there, it is the cleanest steel making, I believe, in the entire world at that new plant.

Owens Corning in Toledo; Gradall Industries in New Philadelphia, OH, on the edge of Appalachia.

We have the potential for hundreds more bridge projects around the State using American rebar, American steel, American iron.

It is an investment in Ohio that will pay off, creating jobs now, both during construction and up and down the supply chain. It will help attract new businesses. It will help keep the existing