

True, there is little left that Abraham Lincoln would recognize in our State today. There are just reminders of a once unbroken forest among the low hills; the soil—in it the graves of loved ones; and a great river separating north from south. In what does remain, though, we can still see where his character was formed, what prepared him for the trials to come.

The Lincolns arrived the same year Indiana became a State. It was still the frontier line. The woods were full of bears and the night air alive with the roar of mountain lions. This was a hard and heartbreaking life, uncertain and often short. Those years of Abraham Lincoln's life were characterized by loss—first the loss of his mother Nancy and later his sister Sarah—and by constant labor which he grew to so dislike. Schooling was scarce. Opportunities for self-improvement were few. By his own account, he had no more than a year of formal education.

Decades later, when Abraham Lincoln recalled his life in Indiana, he wrote, "My childhood home I see again, and sadden with the view," but he also wrote that among the memories, there was "pleasure in it, too." There were happy days in the Little Pigeon Creek community, captivating friends with his homespun stories, and there was the love of a stepmother who nurtured his curiosity.

The sparse schooling he had taught him to read and to write. In fact, he pored over what few books he could find: the Bible, a tattered biography of George Washington borrowed from a neighbor, and later a collection of Indiana law containing the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.

There was the Ohio River. That river was a gateway of possibilities and a point of departure to the outside world. Lincoln earned his first half dollar ferrying passengers on the river. He first saw the horror of slavery traveling down it.

By the time Abe Lincoln and his family left the Little Pigeon Creek community in 1830, Lincoln had spent a quarter of his life in Indiana. He crossed the Wabash River into Illinois, a grown man whose heart, touched by grief, was kind, generous, and strong; who could spin a yarn like no other; whose intellect far outpaced his meager education. Of course, he carried with him a great reverence for our founding's promise of freedom and a burning desire to rise in life.

Although Lincoln was loathe to speak of it as he grew older, those 14 years in Spencer County, IN—the sad and the joyous—shaped him. The qualities that saved the Union in its time of greatest peril were forged in the Indiana wilderness.

In March of 1865, only a few weeks before Lincoln's death, he addressed the 140th Indiana Regiment. The soldiers had recently captured a Confederate flag in North Carolina, which the President gave to Indiana Governor

Oliver Morton. Lincoln reminded those Hoosiers assembled that he was raised in their State, and he praised their Hoosier valor. But he was ever mindful of the Union. He said that day, "I would not wish to compliment Indiana above other states."

Well, Mr. President, for whatever it is worth, I do, because Lincoln belongs to all Americans, but Hoosiers can claim a special connection with Abraham Lincoln.

So, on the occasion of his birth, we once again celebrate the life and legacy of this remarkable Hoosier. He represents the best of us. He was one of us. 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. BROWN. 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 TRUDY PERKINS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Trudy Perkins, my communications director and the former acting chief of staff of my office, as she moves on to a new, well-deserved chapter—retirement.

Trudy's career has been unparalleled to say the least. She has spent 20 years working in Congress. Her service has made a difference for her colleagues and for so many Americans.

She grew up in Albany. If you take Route 90 just about 150 miles west—well, about 200 miles west, you will hit Cleveland. If you drive about 110 miles west, you will hit my wife's hometown of Ashtabula, OH. It is fitting that her final role in the Senate brought her back to a city on I-90.

Trudy is a proud member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and is an alumna of the State University of New York at Oswego. She spent the early years of her career working in television news, first in Albany—I know, in the Presiding Officer's State, you say "All-ba-nee," but up north, we say "All-buh-nee"—and then in Baltimore.

In 2002, she started on Capitol Hill with one of the real superstars in the House, now the late Representative Elijah Cummings, where she worked her way up to communications director and deputy chief of staff during her almost 20 years with that office. She served as an invaluable adviser to Representative Cummings. He trusted her with anything and everything. He often gave her phone number out to constituents and told them "Why don't you call Trudy" because things always got done. You know how Members of Congress don't always get them done, but people like Trudy Perkins do. He knew, no matter what the task was, that Trudy wouldn't just deliver, but she would do it kindly; she would do it with a smile; and she would do it with a positive attitude. It was easy for anyone to see her dedication to public

service and always, always, always to the constituents she served. She was dependable. She was hard-working. She was an integral member of their team and of the Cummings' office family.

Trudy has been an integral and trusted leader in my office. We were so lucky to have inherited her, in a sense, after the death of Representative Cummings. In January 2020, she joined my staff as the communications director. At the time, she was the only Black communications director serving in a Senate personal office. She had a talent for communications and press and the experience to prove it. That was clear to me before we ever spoke.

As I got to know her, I learned how much she cared about the issues that I care about and that Senator WYDEN does and Senator WARNOCK, the Presiding Officer, does. I learned how much she cared about those issues that matter most: civil rights, labor rights. She understood this from the writings about Dr. King's speeches, when Dr. King spent a lot of time talking to labor unions. Dr. King, in his last weeks of life, went to Memphis because of a labor strike of sanitation workers, and she understood, as I do and as John Lewis did, how Dr. King wove workers' rights and civil rights and women's rights and human rights all together. Trudy gets that.

From day one, she proved to be such an asset in our office by stepping in and leading a robust communications team during some of the most tumultuous years in the Senate that I have ever seen. In her first month, we faced domestic and foreign crises that she navigated with a steady hand. During her second month, the COVID-19 pandemic broke out. It was an uncertain time. We all know that, and all of us in the country know that. We had never seen anything like it. Trudy stepped up and delivered for Ohioans and for her team in our office.

She transitioned our press shop from an in-person operation to a virtual one. It was a transition nobody had ever tried before that brought challenges and technical difficulties but also new opportunities to connect with Ohioans and with the Ohio media. At every turn, Trudy Perkins led with grace. She made sure that Ohioans got the information they needed to navigate the pandemic. She made a difference for so many in our office and in our State.

Her impact can't be measured just by her ability to meet challenge after challenge as her leadership also extended far beyond the technical aspects of a difficult job. She was a compassionate resource for everyone on her staff.

She took time to get to know the team and understand how they operated as a unit and who they are as individuals. She listened. She truly cared. And for the communications team, Trudy Perkins was a rock. She was a smiling face on Zoom calls. She organized virtual game nights and made a

difficult time a little easier as our office and world settled into a “new normal.”

A couple of years later, when our chief of staff took a temporary leave from the office, it wasn't even a close call. We knew Trudy was the right choice to lead the entire office in the interim. It was a big job to take on. She stepped up. The transition was seamless. She led the office through a historic year that brought so many wins for Ohioans: the CHIPS Act, the PACT Act, the Inflation Reduction Act. She led our shift back to an in-person work.

To say the least, it has been an eventful 3 years. Through it all, Trudy has been a dedicated member of this office. She has been a leader. This office wouldn't be the place it is today without her.

As a communications director, she always had her team's back. She went to bat for them. She supported them in and out of the office, attending events on her personal time, like choir concerts, to cheer them on.

As a manager, she gave junior staff the room they needed to grow. She listened. She recognized potential. She invested in every member of our team. She made sure everyone was set up for success so they would move forward even after she would leave.

She is a trusted adviser, a talented brainstormer. She is an advocate for women, especially for women of color, across the Senate. She makes colleagues feel appreciated and seen.

Most of all, Trudy believes in this office and this institution and the good that each of us can do for Ohioans and Americans.

Every member of our staff—from the interns to the senior staff—have learned from Trudy Perkins, whether it is her communications expertise or how to stay calm in stressful situations or even just to show kindness and smile after a long day.

We have certainly picked up a few of her sayings along the way, like “no ma'am pam” and “hot diggity dog.” She doesn't always talk that way, but sometimes.

We will miss her sense of humor. We will miss her laugh, which you can hear from any corner of the office. And if the microphones were loud enough, you could have just heard it then from this corner. I know every member of Team Brown will miss having her as part of this team.

At the beginning of this Congress, I asked each member of my staff to share a meaningful memory from the 117th Congress—and this is where the Presiding Officer comes in. Trudy reminded me of the Letter from a Birmingham Jail reading that she organized after former Senator Jones asked me to continue the tradition. We chose three Republicans and three Democrats to read Dr. King's immortal words. Trudy asked that Senator WARNOCK read the final section, as RAPHAEL is the first Black Senator from Georgia

and serves as the senior pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, where Dr. King attended and Dr. King's father was the pastor.

It was a moment of immense symbolism and joy as he read his predecessor's words on the Senate floor. That letter also includes perhaps my favorite Dr. King quote:

Human progress never rolls in on the wheels of inevitability.

I will say that again:

Human progress never rolls in on the wheels of inevitability.

Progress rolls in because we make it so. It rolls in because we organize, we push, we work every angle for as long as it takes. Progress rolls in because of people like Trudy Perkins who dedicate their lives to fighting to make a difference in this world. Our country is a better place because of her service and because of her leadership.

Trudy will be spending more time with her mother in Maryland. Her dedication to her family has always been unwavering.

Trudy, you will be missed more than you know. We will continue to fight for the values that you hold dear and make a difference in the lives of all Ohioans.

On behalf of everyone in our office, the staff on the Banking and Housing Committee, some of my colleagues who know Trudy, and all those who have had the honor of working with her, we congratulate Trudy Perkins on her career. We wish her well in retirement. We thank her from the bottom of our hearts for her terrific service to our Nation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, before he leaves the floor, I just want my colleague to know that what you just heard from Senator BROWN is why, every single day, he gives public service a good name. He shows up, and he works for the people. It is thrilling to see that, as always, he recognizes that he can't do it by himself. He has got staff, and it is so appropriate to hear him and his gracious remarks about his colleague who is moving on.

Mr. President, it is great to see you.

For those who aren't familiar, those of us on the Senate Finance Committee have been so proud to work with our colleague Senator WARNOCK, particularly his championship of affordable medicine and affordable insulin, where he has been a leader for all of us on this side of the aisle. And had he had his way, all Americans—not just those who depend on Medicare—would already have the benefits of more affordable medicine.

NOMINATION OF ADRIENNE C. NELSON

Mr. President, I want to use my time to offer my unwavering support for the confirmation of Associate Justice Adrienne Nelson to the U.S. District Court for Oregon.

Through a powerful combination of legal knowledge and a commitment to

justice for all, Justice Adrienne Nelson has amassed an extraordinary record, earning her a well-deserved seat on the Oregon Supreme Court, the first Black woman ever to serve there.

Before she was the first Black woman Oregon Supreme Court justice, before law school, before her impressive legal career, which includes her 12 years of experience on Multnomah County Circuit Court, in private practice, as a public defender, even before she could vote, Judge Nelson was No. 1 in her class at an Arkansas high school that wouldn't recognize her as valedictorian because of the color of her skin. The lawsuit that followed in her name ensured that no student could be denied any accomplishment based on their race, and that victory activated a lifelong legal mind and civil rights champion.

Around my State, Justice Nelson is lauded for her prodigious work ethic, her integrity, and her humility. Support for her nomination comes from her fellow Justices on the Oregon Supreme Court, nonprofit and business leaders, law enforcement officials from urban and rural communities; and that includes district attorneys, the sheriff of our largest county, and a former U.S. Attorney who served under both Democratic and Republican administrations.

There is so much to like about Judge Nelson, but what I like most is that she is a role model for young people. Young people in my State really look up to Judge Nelson. In fact, there is an Adrienne C. Nelson High School in Happy Valley, OR. I think everybody reports that the students there just adore her.

In addition to these impressive accomplishments and the praise and her service as a role model, she has never lost sight of that valedictorian fighting tooth and nail within the American legal system to make ours a better and even stronger country for everybody. I am certain she is going to bring that dedication and commitment to justice for all to every single case that crosses her desk.

There is no question that, with Justice Nelson's top-notch qualifications, she is going to make a superb Federal judge. It is all these reasons together that causes me tonight to urge our colleagues—it will happen shortly, later in the week—to vote for this supremely qualified candidate to the U.S. District Court.

In Oregon, we are all so proud of Judge Adrienne Nelson, and I believe all Americans will be when she is in service on the court.

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

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