

Werfel, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue for the term expiring November 12, 2027.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alaska.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES L. BUCKLEY

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam President, I am honored, so honored, to say a few words this morning about Judge James Buckley—a statesman; a patriot; a member of the World War II Greatest Generation; a senior Reagan State Department official; a DC Court of Appeals judge; a former Member of this body, the U.S. Senate; a friend; and a shining example of a good, meaningful life lived in full.

It is not very often that you get to say happy birthday to your hundred-year-old mentor on the Senate floor, but today, I get to do that to one of my mentors.

Judge Buckley has been a mentor and role model to me and so many other people who worked for him or worked with him over the past century.

So, Judge, I hope you are watching. I hope some of your family members are watching. I want to wish you a happy hundredth birthday from the U.S. Senate. We have this wonderful card here signed by dozens of U.S. Senators—Republicans, Democrats, Independents—here on the Senate floor on your hundredth birthday, right now. We are going to deliver this to you soon.

For those watching, who is this remarkable American statesman? There is a wonderful Wall Street Journal op-ed in this morning's Journal entitled "Jim Buckley's Century of Service." I encourage all of my Senate colleagues to read it.

He was from a very large and famous Connecticut family with many prominent brothers and sisters—10 of them. It is quite large. His younger brother was the conservative intellectual William F. Buckley.

James Buckley—Judge Buckley, as I like to call him—served his country in so many ways: as I noted, first, heroically, as a World War II Naval officer. He served in many battles, including the Battle of Okinawa, which was the bloodiest battle in U.S. Navy history.

He served as a U.S. Senator from New York and Under Secretary of State in the Reagan administration, a judge on the Federal court of appeals for the DC Circuit right down the road, commonly referred to as "the second-most important court in the land."

Think about that. That is service at the highest levels of three different branches of government—the only living American to do that and the oldest Member of the U.S. Senate, former Member.

In every position, Judge Buckley, throughout his life, brought integrity, a fierce intellect, and a compelling commitment to American exceptionalism.

I have known Judge Buckley for 30 years. He is a man of faith, class, dig-

nity, and humility. He has never stopped serving his country. Even into his late nineties, he was still at work writing a very well-received book on public policy just a few years ago called "Saving Congress from Itself."

A few years back, I suggested that he present his book to us at one of our Republican lunches. In so doing, I explained to the judge the way in which we have lunches here in the Senate. Three times a week, we get together. There is the Tuesday policy lunch; there is the Wednesday—what we call—Steering Committee lunch; and then there is the Thursday lunch, more informal, hosted by members of our conference who can brag a little bit about their State and feed us great food from their State. So I suggested to the judge, come by the Wednesday Steering Committee lunch and share with us your new book. And I noted, you know, you may know, Judge, that the Steering Committee was initially set up a long time ago by a group of more conservative Senators but is now pretty much attended by all Republican Senators for lunch. Was he familiar with the Steering Committee, I asked the judge.

In typical, James Buckley humble fashion, he said quietly: Why, DAN, yes, I believe I was one of the cofounders of the Steering Committee.

Of course, you were, Judge. Of course, you were.

Anyway, we all had a great, very memorable lunch here in the Senate with Jim Buckley, where just in an hour, so many of my colleagues learned so much from him, which is what he has been doing his whole life.

I got to know Judge Buckley when I caught a lucky break 30 years ago and was hired by him as his fourth law clerk—kind of a law clerk intern—when he was a DC Circuit Court of Appeals judge right down the road and I was in my final year at Georgetown Law School. This was an incredible experience for me.

As most know, and I already mentioned, the DC Circuit is considered the second most important court in the country and, of course, is known as a feeder court into the U.S. Supreme Court for law clerks, but particularly for judges. Just look at all the former DC Circuit judges who went on to be Supreme Court Justices: Burger, Scalia, Ginsburg, Thomas, Roberts, Kavanaugh, and Jackson.

As a Georgetown law student, this internship was a very exciting opportunity for me, and I saw up close in Judge Buckley an example of principled jurisprudence that was anchored in the text of Federal statutes and the Constitution that recognized and emphasized the limits on Federal judiciary and agency powers and that understood the importance of federalism and the separation of powers in our constitutional system of ordered liberty.

These were lifelong lessons for me, and I continue to use them daily right here in the U.S. Senate.

I enjoyed this job so much and was learning so much that I pretty much quit going to many of my law school classes.

For the young people watching, especially law students, don't do that. That was a dumb idea. My very low grade in my evidence class was evidence of this.

Judge Buckley, back then, tolerated me in his chambers 30 years ago, but he really developed a special bond with my then-girlfriend, Julie, who is now my wife of over 28 years.

Julie and the judge had a small-world connection concerning the great State of Alaska that was quite remarkable.

In 1971, there was a very important bill being debated right here in the U.S. Senate called the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, what we call ANCSA. That bill became the world's largest land settlement for indigenous people ever, anywhere in the world. Right here in America, 44 million acres of Federal land went to the Native people of Alaska. And Jim Buckley, then a first-term U.S. Senator in his first year, became a big supporter of Native rights in Alaska. It was curious, interesting. What was going on there?

He was a conservative Republican and believed in property rights, and ownership, and free enterprise, and fee simple lands for the Native people, which was what ANCSA was all about—much different than the lower 48, where the system of reservations and land held in trust by the Federal Government does not work well.

There was something else going on there, the Alaska Native leaders went to Washington in force to lobby different Senators. Senator Buckley was lobbied by a beautiful 36-year-old brilliant Alaska Native leader named Mary Jane Fate, who just so happened to be my wife's—then my girlfriend's—mom. So the judge and my girlfriend, Julie, figured that out, put two and two together, that her mom was one of the big reasons in terms of lobbying that he got interested in the ANCSA legislation and was a strong supporter of that.

Of course, that cemented their relationship and our relationship, and Julie and I and the judge have been great friends ever since. I do want to thank him, again, on behalf of the people of Alaska for being such a strong supporter of that legislation, which literally changed the history trajectory of our State for the better 51 years ago.

A few years ago, I was asked by the outstanding organization, The Fund for American Studies, to give an address about honorable leadership—honorable leadership—and I made my entire speech about the life and example of James Buckley.

Honorable leadership and upholding the highest values of ethical service, which is what the life of Judge Buckley epitomizes, is not always easy.

For example, as a U.S. Senator, Judge Buckley was one of the first Members of the Senate Republican caucus to call on President Nixon to resign

in the wake of the Watergate scandal. That certainly was not easy.

He was also an early Republican leader on issues of environmental stewardship and responsible, commonsense conservationism in the spirit of Republican President Teddy Roosevelt that has the support from local communities.

He cosponsored legislation that created the Gateway National Recreation Area, which stretches along the northeast Atlantic coast from New York to New Jersey and is home to one of the most significant bird sanctuaries in the northeast part of the United States.

As an avid birder himself, I am sure that this is one of the many proud aspects of the judge's important legacy to New York and to the rest of the country.

I think without a doubt, the most important legacy Jim Buckley has left all of us in the past 100 years has been his commitment to freedom and American liberty in both words and deeds.

He fought for American freedom in the Pacific in World War II. Like so many from his "greatest generation," he literally saved the world from tyranny.

He spoke eloquently of American freedom throughout his life. In another one of his books, titled "If Men Were Angels," he wrote the following:

I believe that in the last analysis the most important thing in social and political life is freedom, and I believe that it is because of the safeguards written into the Constitution, and the character of the American people, that we have enjoyed it in so great a measure.

More than any other country.

Mr. President, this great American patriot has left his mark on the American soul and American history and American heritage at the highest levels of our Federal Government, in all three branches of service.

Thank you for your exceptional service to our great Nation, Judge Buckley. All of the U.S. Senate and all of America wish you a happy and healthy 100th birthday.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LUIJÁN). The majority whip.

WOMEN'S HEALTH PROTECTION ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, yesterday, I joined Leader SCHUMER, Senators BALDWIN, BLUMENTHAL, and MURRAY and a number of my colleagues in introducing a piece of legislation that is urgently needed. It is entitled the Women's Health Protection Act of 2023.

This bill would protect the right to obtain and provide reproductive healthcare—as basic as anything in America—as well as the freedom of Americans to seek this care free of medically unnecessary restrictions or limitations as to where a patient can receive it.

It has been about 9 months since the Thomas-Alito Court ripped away this fundamental right in America and put a target on the backs of women and healthcare providers across the coun-

try. Since then, we have heard one horror story after another—stories of rape victims as young as 10 years old who have been forced to travel across State lines to receive critical healthcare, stories of women who were suffering miscarriages but still have been denied care by doctors in red States where the doctors are afraid of being charged with a crime, stories of women who have been abandoned by their State's leaders, many of whom have found refuge in the State of Illinois.

Despite these stories of girls and women who have been denied critical healthcare because of partisan politics, Republicans are continuing to push dangerous abortion bans and restrictions. These politicians think they know better than the women who are affected by these decisions and their doctors.

Beware of the moment when legislators start playing doctor. They are doing it all across America on this issue. They are wrong.

We need to respect the freedom and right of women and the expertise of their medical professionals, period, and we need to recognize that politicians have no business in the hospital room or in the doctor's office. There should be a matter of privacy and respect that should be guiding our policy.

If we want to defend freedom and fundamental rights in America, we need to pass the Women's Health Protection Act.

The debate has even gone so far as to affect the corner drugstore.

This week, I was on the phone with the CEO of Walgreens, an Illinois-based company, one of the largest pharmacy companies in the United States of America. They are torn currently by an announcement of policy earlier this week which generated a lot of controversy: whether or not they will dispense medications which are used to end a pregnancy.

I begged them to at least wait until this issue has become clearer in the courts before taking a corporate position. The other major pharmacy chains are making the same decision themselves. We will find out what they conclude.

But it is an indication that this debate has gone far beyond the floor of the U.S. Senate in Washington—it is on your street corner; it is in your mall; it is in the shopping center that you have been going to all your life—as to whether or not you can have access to a drug that was judged safe and effective 20 years ago by the Federal Government.

That is what happens when legislators decide to be doctors.

CHILD LABOR

Mr. President, on another topic, when you stop by the grocery store to pick up your favorite box of cereal or some chicken breasts for dinner, would you ever guess you were buying a product that had been produced by exploited children? Not in America. Not in 2023. Sorry, I am afraid it is so.

Last week, the New York Times ran an extremely important article about an investigation on what it deemed the "new economy of exploitation." That economy is powered by young migrant children who arrived in this country without their parents and are working at unthinkably dangerous jobs in the American economy.

But the exploitation is not limited to migrant children. In factories across the country, from North Carolina to South Dakota, children as young as 12 years of age—that is right, 12 years of age—are working in the dead of night, in some of the most grueling environments imaginable: freezing cold slaughterhouses and auto part assembly plants—12 years old. These children work as long as 12 hours per shift, and, for migrant children, many are under pressure to send money back home or to pay back the criminals who smuggled them across the border.

Often, these children go to school in the morning because they are trying to learn to speak English and get an education. How can you learn when you are running on no sleep?

Mr. President, I have some personal familiarity with some of these working conditions. When I was a college student, I worked two or three summers to pay my way through college. One of the jobs was on the railroad, a tradition in my family. Fortunately for me, I only have a minor scar to show for my time in the switchyard, but many others were not so lucky.

The other job I had while I worked my way through college was in a meatpacking facility. I spent four summers there. I saw almost every aspect of that type of environment. I cannot imagine a 12-year-old in that dangerous environment. So when I hear young children are working long hours in meatpacking plants and slaughterhouses, it is beyond horrifying. It is beyond unconscionable, and it has to end.

These accounts of children working in slaughterhouses and factories are not only shocking; they are blatantly unlawful in America. Our Nation outlawed oppressive child labor almost 100 years ago. This is a problem that should be relegated to history books or novels by Dickens, but it is not.

In fact, since 2018, there has been a nearly 70-percent increase in illegally employed children. When the number of children being forced to work dangerous and potentially deadly jobs is on the rise, it is clear that our child labor laws are not up to speed.

Let me add the obvious. This is another condemnation of the failure of our immigration policy in America. Consider the fact that people desperately need workers—desperately. In every corner of my State of Illinois, they tell me one after the other: We need more police. We need more firefighters. We need more ambulance drivers. We need more healthcare workers. We need more workers in our nursing home—and on and on and on.

And why are we facing these shortages? We are facing them because, for 4