

he has remained a leader in the New York immigration law community and played a leading role in shaping U.S. and global migration policy. Most notably for New Yorkers, Austin Fragomen served as chairman of the New York City Bar's Justice Center and, since 2007, has provided at least one attorney to provide fulltime pro bono immigration services through the City Bar Justice Center to help with the underprivileged in New York to seek refuge from political and religious persecution or reunite with family members.

Austin Fragomen played a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of U.S. and global immigration policy and practice. He has testified numerous times before the House and Senate, including the Senate Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security, and Citizenship while I sat on that subcommittee. He chaired and/or taught at the annual Immigration and Naturalization Institute of the New York City-based Practising Law Institute for the past quarter of a century. He has written many treatises on different subspecialties of immigration law published through Thomson Reuters/West, chaired the American Council on International Personnel which later became the Council on Global Immigration, served as vice chair of the Center for Migration Studies and on the editorial board of the International Migration Review. Currently, Austin serves as chairman of the Business Mechanism of the Global Forum on Migration and Development and has participated at a number of GFMD and U.N. sponsored events and proceedings, including the Global Compact on Migration. The list goes on and on but suffice it to say that Austin Fragomen has shaped immigration law and policy and has served the underprivileged immigrant community of New York, in ways that very few if any has paralleled.

On April 20, 2024, Austin Fragomen is being honored on Ellis Island, NY, for his lifetime achievements and contributions. I congratulate him on his exemplary leadership and dedication to the principles of justice and equality. Austin Fragomen has made enduring contributions to the field of immigration law and has earned the respect and admiration of his peers, colleagues, and clients alike. His legacy as a visionary immigration thought leader continues to inspire and guide efforts to create a more just, compassionate, and equitable immigration system for all. I am proud to call him a fellow New Yorker.

#### TRIBUTE TO COLONEL DEBORAH J. McDONALD

Mr. REED. Mr. President, it is my honor to pay tribute to a great leader and exceptional officer of the U.S. Army, COL Deborah "Debbie" J. McDonald, as she retires after nearly 40 years of service to the Army and our Nation.

A proud Rhode Islander, Debbie grew up in Newport and graduated from Rog-

ers High School. Upon graduating from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1985, Colonel McDonald commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Transportation Corps. She served in a variety of field assignments, including Fort Sill, OK; Fort Devens, MA; Fort Campbell, KY; and Fort Leonard Wood, MO. Notably, as the commander of the 104th Medium Truck Company, she deployed as a separate company in support of Operations Desert Shield / Desert Storm. Her company provided long-haul transportation, primarily hauling water, ammunition, and food in support of XVIII Airborne Corps operations in theater.

In addition to her bachelor of science degree from West Point, Colonel McDonald holds a master's degree in information management from Oklahoma City University and a doctorate in education from the University of Florida. Her military education includes the Transportation Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the Master Fitness Course, the Combined Arms Staff Services School, the Army Inspector General Course, the Army Operations Research and Systems Analysis Course, and the United States Army Command and General Staff College.

For the past 15 years, Colonel McDonald served as the director of admissions for the U.S. Military Academy. In this capacity, she ensured West Point identified, recruited, and appointed capable and accomplished individuals. Colonel McDonald challenged her team and every element of the Army that supported her mission to seek new and better ways to inspire scholars, leaders, and athletes to choose West Point. Her tireless efforts to building a corps of cadets that mirrors the geographic, gender, racial, and ethnic diversity of the Nation has resulted in the most talented classes in the academy's 221-year history. Embracing her role in supporting the mission of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point "to build, educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets," Colonel McDonald has had a profound impact on a generation of future Army leaders.

She used all her skills and experience to modernize the admissions process: improving the experience for candidates and their families; creating a convenient online application process; and saving the academy millions of dollars in printing and mailing costs. Recognizing the broader requirements of the Army, Debbie improved the relationship between West Point and the U.S. Army Cadet Command, which ultimately enhanced Cadet Command's scholarship pool and helped the U.S. Army to meet its annual goal of assessing 6,000 to 7,000 second lieutenants into the force.

Married to her West Point classmate, LTC Kenneth "Kenny" W. McDonald, U.S. Army, Retired, Debbie is also the proud mother of MAJ Anna Mendoza, U.S. Army, and CPT Joshua McDonald, U.S. Army. On behalf of the Senate and

the United States of America, I thank Colonel McDonald, her husband Kenny, their daughter and son, and their entire family for their commitment, sacrifice, and contributions to our Nation. I join my colleagues in wishing her a long and joyful retirement. Well done.

#### REMEMBERING RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize the life and leadership of Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, known as "the Rebbe," the head of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement. Since 1978, every U.S. President has commemorated this day as Education and Sharing Day in recognition of the Rebbe's commitment to bettering the education of all people.

Through decades of service and leadership, the Rebbe emphasized that education should not just be about imparting knowledge, but must instill values essential for living a meaningful life, fostering moral character, and contributing to the betterment of individuals and society at large.

The Rebbe promoted America's unique role as a superpower and had meaningful relationships with several of our Nation's leaders who saw him as the moral guide of so many. For the Rebbe, America was a beacon of light to be utilized in influencing the moral betterment of all humanity, and he often pointed to the words "In God We Trust" enshrined on our currency as a defining element of the great American story.

Under the Rebbe's leadership, Chabad-Lubavitch became the largest Jewish educational organization and fastest growing Jewish movement in the world. Today, there are more than 3,500 Chabad-Lubavitch centers providing educational, religious, and humanitarian services in 103 countries and in all 50 States, including in my home State of South Dakota.

The Rebbe envisioned that the world would come to a state of peace. He exemplified how humanity, through moral education, charitable deeds, and acts of kindness, can bring our world to the time when "swords are turned into plowshares," with peace and prosperity for all.

On the Rebbe's birthday, today, April 18, it is fitting that we honor him by striving to apply his teachings with greater diligence, embodying his vision of a world illuminated by compassion and goodwill for all.

#### TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL A.C. ROPER

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the career of LTG A.C. Roper, the deputy commander of the United States Northern Command—USNORTHCOM—and United States Element, North American Aerospace Defense Command—NORAD. Lieutenant General Roper is a native of the great State of Alabama, where

he graduated from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He and Edith, his wife of 39 years, are also the proud parents of two daughters. I know that after over 40 years of distinguished military service, your family is looking forward to your retirement.

In capacity as a civilian, Lieutenant General Roper has over 33 years of law enforcement experience, culminating with his 10-year tenure as the chief of police of the Birmingham Police Department, the largest municipal police department in the State of Alabama. A dedicated law enforcement professional, he is a graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation—FBI—National Academy, the FBI National Executive Institute, and is an adjunct professor of criminal justice. He specialized in protecting critical infrastructure and served on the executive board of the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force.

Lieutenant General Roper is a role model for aspiring servicemembers and law enforcement officers. He has demonstrated the power of passion and purpose in fulfilling a life of service. Lieutenant General Roper, thank you for your long and distinguished career in service to our Nation. On the occasion of your retirement, I wish you and your entire family the best. Congratulations on a job well done.

#### TRIBUTE TO DAVID BEARDEN

Ms. CAPITO. Mr. President, I rise to honor Mr. David M. Bearden for his lengthy career of public service to the U.S. Congress and the American people. After more than 33 years at the Congressional Research Service, or CRS, Mr. Bearden recently retired at the end of March as a specialist in environmental policy.

Mr. Bearden hails from Guntersville, AL. After graduating from the University of the South in Sewanee, TN, with a theology degree and backpacking around Europe, he moved to Washington, DC. In August 1990, Mr. Bearden was hired as a clerk at the Library of Congress, where he began to gradually climb the ranks. In 1991, Mr. Bearden served in the CRS inquiry unit, where he earned the prestigious Award for Meritorious Service for his work during the Persian Gulf War. Following his stint with the inquiry unit, Mr. Bearden became a production assistant, helping colleagues to prepare reports and memoranda in varied subject areas. After several years as a production assistant, Mr. Bearden became an environmental information analyst and began to specifically focus on environmental issues. Mr. Bearden became an analyst in environmental policy in 2002 and continued to amass a wealth of knowledge on the topics he covered.

As an analyst, Mr. Bearden primarily focused on the implementation of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, also known as the Superfund law. His extensive research of individual

contaminated sites was immensely beneficial for Members' offices representing their impacted constituents and communities. It was in this capacity that I first interacted with Mr. Bearden professionally. I relied on his expertise in the aftermath of the 2014 Elk River chemical spill in Charleston, WV, and I was not shy to do so again in the future. Beyond Superfund, Mr. Bearden specialized in some of the most complex environmental laws on the books, including the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act, National Environmental Policy Act, among others.

With decades of experience, Mr. Bearden became the go-to analyst and coordinator for high-profile cross-cutting environmental issues that involved clean-up or contamination, including concerns over specific chemicals such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances or PFAS. Much of his work involved direct support of the legislative process by providing expert analysis and consultative support for a wide range of environmental policy issues. Through it all, Mr. Bearden approached each request with a high level of consistency in objectivity, nonpartisanship, authoritativeness, and timeliness, the core values of the Congressional Research Service. He has a particular quality of breaking down complex topics into easy-to-understand narratives that intersperse facts-of-the-matter with the law and relevant legislative history. Members and staff appreciated his practical explanation of issues and how the Federal Government can address them, evidenced by his requested testimony in several hearings, ranging from the topic of addressing radioactive contamination at the Marshall Islands to the Federal and State relationship in implementing the Superfund law.

While members of my own staff have personally benefited from Mr. Bearden's mentorship and expertise, his talents for teaching and professional development also benefitted his fellow colleagues at CRS. Over the last few years, Mr. Bearden was a mentor to new and less experienced colleagues, sharing the wisdom and expertise he has accumulated. A point he emphasizes to mentees is that the work is never about those who work for CRS, but always about who CRS serves: Members of Congress and their staff. His style of mentoring reflects the objectivity, balance, and authoritativeness of CRS work, but also comes with unique wit that brings some humanity to the job.

Mr. Bearden is retiring as an expert in his field. On behalf of the U.S. Senate and the American people, I wish to express gratitude for the contributions of Mr. Bearden during his over three decades at CRS. I thank him and wish him all the best in retirement.

#### TRIBUTE TO DIANNE RENNACK

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Dianne E. Rennack, specialist in foreign policy at the Congressional Research Service—CRS—for her distinguished career in service to Congress. Ms. Rennack retired on March 29 after more than 39 years with CRS, during which time she has made exceptional contributions to Congress as an expert on sanctions policy and foreign affairs legislation. Ms. Rennack has called Maryland home for many decades, making it a home for her family. She has dedicated her time to Maryland through volunteer work at Shephard's Table and the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, once being named Volunteer of the Year.

Since 1985, Ms. Rennack has informed Congress on some of the most important foreign policy issues of our time. Congressional committees have relied on her nonpartisan sanctions policy expertise to shape legislation and inform their oversight activities. Her knowledge of executive-legislative branch relations and general foreign policy authorities has been a critical resource for Congress and long made her a pillar of the institutional memory of Congress.

For years, Ms. Rennack was the driving force behind updates to the Legislation on Foreign Relations compendium, a resource used across the foreign policy community. She provided leadership at crucial times in CRS history, serving 3 years as head of FDT's foreign policy management and global issues section. Ms. Rennack is also known among her colleagues for her commitment to substantive collaboration and mentoring. Her dedication to sharing with junior colleagues the expertise she has earned over nearly four decades of service will have a lasting impact on the work of Congress.

Throughout her career, Ms. Rennack has personified CRS's mission of providing authoritative, objective, nonpartisan, and timely service to Congress. In recognition of her wide-ranging achievements on behalf of the Congress, she received the CRS Directors Award in 2019 and the Distinguished Service Award in 2024.

In conclusion, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Dianne Rennack for her outstanding contributions to the Senate community and the country and offer her best wishes in her retirement.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### FAITH MONTH

● Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, Americans across the country, led by Concerned Women for America, CWA—the Nation's largest public policy organization for women—and other faith-based organizations will again celebrate April as Faith Month. I commend this noble effort calling on all people of faith to join in prayer, to give thanks, and to celebrate their faith.