

to the cultural values, practices, traditions, and knowledge of the Gwich'in people."

So I am proud to be able to acknowledge the fine work of Rev. Dr. Trimble Gilbert of Arctic Village—I said Anaktuvuk; it is Arctic Village—and also to be able to offer him my personal congratulations this evening.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

### REMEMBERING JOANNE L. CICCHELLI

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there are some people in the world who can be captured by a single word. For JoAnne L. Cicchelli, who passed away in August, that word is joy. JoAnne lived her life in search of finding joy for herself and creating it for others.

JoAnne was born in Monroe, MI, and her childhood was filled with love, laughter, and learning. She attended Monroe High School and went on to attend Michigan State University in East Lansing, MI—an affiliation she was proud to display to the world, as evidenced by the Spartan green helmet bumper sticker that adorned her car. At Michigan State, JoAnne discovered the joy of education. She attended college during the 1960s, a time when young people all across the Nation were becoming increasingly politically active. JoAnne's college years, like those of many college students, were a time of discovery and exploration, engaging new ideas, people, and points of view. She developed an earnest desire to know more about the world around her, a desire she would carry with her for the rest of her life.

Life would lead JoAnne to Illinois—which eventually became home—and where she discovered the joy of teaching. In her early career, she served as an educator, teaching fifth grade and then high school history. She would come back to the field of education years later, when she would join Prime-Time School Television, a non-profit organization that connected teachers, families, and public television. I can only imagine how passionate, dedicated, and enthusiastic a teacher she must have been. Her students were lucky to learn from her. Understanding the importance of local education policy, she was also deeply involved in the community of Frances W. Parker School, a school in Lincoln Park, IL, where her daughters, granddaughters, and nephews all attended.

She also served on the board of Christopher House, a social service agency supporting families from birth through high school. After JoAnne played a pivotal role in helping them launch their middle school, they named it in her honor. In October 2018, I was fortunate enough to attend the groundbreaking of JoAnne L. Cicchelli Middle School, which now stands as a fitting tribute to JoAnne's dedication to education, learning, and children.

Anyone who knew JoAnne also knew she was deeply passionate about politics. She first entered the political realm following the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. She started as a precinct worker during mayoral campaigns, became a strategist, and ultimately served as the office manager for 43rd Ward Alderman Edwin Eisendrath. She loved Chicago and all who call the city home.

As an intellectual force, JoAnne could keep up with the best of them, but not everyone could keep up with her. JoAnne met her match in the early 1980s when she met former Chicago alderman, my friend William "Bill" Singer. They bonded over shared interests: politics, art, travel, and food, and in 1995, JoAnne and Bill were married in Florence, Italy. Their support and love for one another formed the foundation of their love for others.

But more than anything, JoAnne had a gift of connecting with people, making everyone she came across feel heard and valued. Whenever she would enter a store or sit down at a restaurant, she would immediately ask the saleswoman or server for their thoughts on the latest news, what was going on in Chicago, or politics. But these were not empty questions to fill moments of silence. She cared to hear what they had to say because she believed that every person had a role to play in making the world a better place. She longed to connect and find the joy in others.

JoAnne had a profound appreciation for beauty. In between discussions of how to expand access to education to more children or confront the issues of the day, she found herself most at home tending to her garden, deriving joy from the beauty of the natural world.

Loretta and I were lucky to have called JoAnne our treasured friend. To her husband Bill; her two daughters Elizabeth and Katherine; her three grandchildren Grace, Eleanor, and Beatrice; and to all of her family and friends who are also mourning this tremendous loss, we extend our sincerest sympathies. JoAnne was a light that brightened the lives of all of those in her orbit, and the world feels a little less luminous without her. We will miss her dearly.

### TULE RIVER TRIBE RESERVED WATER RIGHTS SETTLEMENT ACT OF 2023

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today, as ranking member of the Budget

et Committee, I placed a hold on S. 306, the Tule River Tribe Reserved Water Rights Settlement Act of 2023.

Although I don't find fault with the substance of the bill, the legislation is not paid for and would violate multiple budget enforcement rules. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the bill would increase the deficit by \$804 million.

### REMEMBERING JUAN LOPEZ

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, over the past 6 years, my office, and the office of my predecessor Senator Leahy, have received reports of recurring threats, attacks, arbitrary arrests, and assassinations of members of the Guapinol, Tocoa, and other communities in the Bajo Aguan region of Honduras. Those crimes were intended to intimidate and silence those who opposed an open-pit iron oxide mine and the Ecotek Thermoelectric Project which threaten their livelihoods and the region's environment and who challenged the companies and corrupt officials who profit from those projects.

Then on Saturday, September 14, I learned of the murder of Honduran environmental activist Juan Lopez, the latest victim of this epidemic of vigilante violence. Mr. Lopez, a winner of the Letelier-Moffitt Human Rights Award in 2019, had been a victim of wrongful imprisonment, false prosecution, and had spoken out against corrupt officials in Tocoa.

This outrageous crime struck a nerve for me because Mr. Lopez's murder was the latest in a pattern of similar killings. There have been six other assassinations of members of the Guapinol water defenders. No one has been prosecuted or punished for those crimes or for the murders of scores of other environmental and human rights defenders in Honduras.

Juan Lopez, like Berta Caceres—whose murder in 2016 was linked to officers of the company responsible for the hydroelectric project she and others in her indigenous community opposed—was a person of integrity. Both were courageous defenders of the environment and their communities, threatened by powerful interests supported by the corrupt Honduran Government of former Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernandez who, throughout that period and until his arrest and conviction for drug trafficking, was supported by the United States.

Mr. Lopez was killed after the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) issued precautionary measures in October 2023. The issuance of an IACHR protective measure is a mechanism to insist that the Honduran Government protect individuals who are at severe and urgent risk of irreparable harm to their rights to life and safety. But the Honduran Government failed to implement effective protective measures on behalf of these communities or their advocates like Mr. Lopez.

Such measures, if not enforced, are no better than the paper they are printed on. And that is the reality in Honduras, where people like Juan Lopez have had no one and nothing to protect them.

Instead, it is the victims, the activists, who are arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned, accused of crimes which in reality amount to nothing more than peacefully defending their land and their right to a healthy environment. Some have languished in pre-trial detention for years, for simply protesting a mine that has polluted the water source of thousands of people.

Honduras is currently a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council. Members of the council have a responsibility to uphold human rights standards. That has been a criterion of membership since the council was established in 2006. Yet the human rights of people like Juan Lopez and the other Guapinol water defenders are routinely violated with impunity.

My thoughts and condolences are with Mr. Lopez's family and with the other families in the Bajo Aguan communities. In response to this pattern of violence and the assassination of Mr. Lopez last Saturday, I believe that, at a minimum, three things need to be done, beginning immediately, and I urge the U.S. Ambassador to Honduras to insist on them as well: an international commission of experts to support the Honduran prosecutor's investigation of the murder of Juan Lopez, to ensure the investigation is credible, thorough, and impartial; protection for human rights defenders at risk in the Bajo Aguan region; and investigations of the abuses and corruption denounced by Juan Lopez and the pattern of violence against the Guapinol defenders.

The threats, false arrests, wrongful imprisonment, murder, and impunity in the Bajo Aguan have been tolerated—and in effect tacitly and even actively encouraged—by Honduran officials for far too long. It has also received far too little attention from the United States and other governments that have put the interests of foreign investors above those of the impoverished people who live in that troubled region. I hope that Juan Lopez's death will not only be answered by holding accountable those responsible, but that it will also mark the beginning of real change in the Bajo Aguan. The people of those communities should not have to live in fear that powerful companies and corrupt officials will steal their land, pollute their rivers, and murder them for peacefully defending the natural resources that are rightfully theirs.

#### TRIBUTE TO GILLIE HOPKINS

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, today I celebrate Rachel Gilbert Hopkins, a dedicated Vermonter who has worked to improve our State's adoption system and connect children to a loving family.

Vermont's team within the Department for Children and Families, Family Services Division (FSD) is critically important and does life-changing work every day for children in need. Rachel Gilbert Hopkins, or "Gillie" as she is known by all, has made an incredible impact. As codirector of Project Family, a partnership between Lund and DCF, Gillie has overseen the completion of more than 2,260 adoptions, advancing child welfare and permanency in our State and changing the lives of children and families.

For this reason alone, she is an excellent nominee for the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute's Angels in Adoption honor. But it is also Gillie's far-reaching impact beyond adoption and permanency that has inspired this honor, and at the recommendation of her friends and peers who have witnessed her dedication, I submit her name and this honor to the RECORD today.

As her peers say, Gillie has an "unwavering commitment to prioritizing the best interests of every child." She conducts trainings to empower her colleagues with the tools to advocate for children. She also works with the regional offices and the judiciary to address the barriers to permanency, using research to establish procedures that cultivate efficiency and smoother processes. Gillie has created inclusive spaces, groups, and supportive environments for people to live authentically and has worked on actions that enhance adoption competence among FSD staff.

Gillie Hopkins is champion for children, families, and Vermont communities and is well-deserving of the Angels in Adoption honor because of her extraordinary work and dedicated commitment to our State.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO HOPE PORTER AND MARIE RIDDER

• Mr. Kaine. Mr. President, I rise to recognize two champions of Virginia's outdoors, Hope Porter and Marie Ridder, as they both celebrate 100th birthdays in the coming months. I offer these comments with the support of my colleague Senator MARK WARNER.

Hope Porter's activism and advocacy for open space dates back to the 1940s living in Fauquier County, VA. Hope had the foresight to see that the post-war boom in growth and automobile travel would require new safeguards to ensure that growth was sustainable and would not erase what makes Virginia's historic Piedmont region a special place. Through leading a series of campaigns over many years, she helped pioneer land preservation tools that are known across America today, from zoning to comprehensive land-use planning to private conservation easements. Another legacy is an open space advocacy group, the Piedmont Envi-

ronmental Council, which she helped found and which for over 40 years has scrutinized proposed commercial ventures and asked tough questions while protecting hundreds of thousands of acres of Piedmont lands under conservation easement. Hope's love for Virginia's outdoors extends to her own land. She has protected 47 acres of Wildcat Mountain, a 200-acre farm near Marshall, and the farmland where she currently lives. Hope continues to follow Fauquier County government and shares her wisdom with a variety of current and aspiring leaders.

Marie Ridder has been a one-woman force of nature on behalf of the outdoors in Virginia and beyond. She chaired the Virginia State Parks Commission and Virginia Council on Environment and served as vice chair of the Landmarks Commission of the U.S. Department of the Interior. She was instrumental in the growth of organizations like the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, Piedmont Environmental Council, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Lands, and the American Farmland Trust. Her individual investments and land donations have literally shaped the landscape of Virginia, protecting countless farms and viewsheds and historic properties through conservation easements. She has influenced Presidents, Governors, and international leaders. She has given of her own time and resources and spearheaded efforts to mobilize other resources to protect open space. Any person walking or bird flying through the Virginia Piedmont has Marie to thank for the natural landscape they encounter.

I will join Hope and Marie, together with their families and friends, as the Piedmont Environmental Council celebrates their leadership this Saturday, September 21. We will also celebrate that Hope and Marie have been friends for 70 years.

As Senators and Governors, MARK WARNER and I have supported preserving Virginia's open space for future generations to enjoy. Whenever we close the deal on a particularly beautiful parcel, we get to make a speech, cut a ribbon, bask in the applause. But those moments don't happen without years of effort and persistence from people like Hope and Marie—and the organizations they have founded and the dollars and hours they have put in over many decades. I wish Hope Porter and Marie Ridder a very happy birthday and celebrate their life achievements that will be felt in Virginia for 100 more years and beyond.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Stringer, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages