

policy since the Great Depression, Steve was instrumental in shaping the CARES Act, asking questions that others had not considered, and foreseeing challenges in time to tweak our legislative response.

On top of it all, he has carried the unenviable but essential responsibility of ensuring my entire office upholds the highest standards of professional ethics. The team looks forward with pained amusement to his annual impression of the Grinch who stole Christmas and with sincere appreciation for his patient counsel that keeps us all in the clear.

Steve is the consummate professional at everything—that is, except golf. Perhaps I can accept the blame for keeping him too busy at the office to play more often.

Steve's pride in Kentucky roots is, more than anything, a pride in his family. I know he makes his mother Kathy, his sister Annie, and his niece and nephew very, very proud. So, Steve, thank you so much.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE FRAGOSO

Mr. President, next is my chief counsel Mike Fragoso. Like so many of the well-qualified jurists he has helped to put on the Federal courts over the years, Mike—or “Frag” is what we call him—came with an Ivy League pedigree and an impressive resume of legal brilliance.

But unlike his peers in black robes, he also carries a reputation as my office sartorial master.

Frag is another member of my staff with a challenging multifaceted mandate. From the judicial confirmation process to matters of criminal justice and border security, I call on Frag to wear many hats. And when the circumstances permit, he pairs them with three-piece suits.

Seriously, it is a job that draws on every bit of Frag's experience traveling the width of Republican politics from Jeff Flake to CHUCK GRASSLEY and plumbing the depth of conservative jurisprudence.

Frag is equally at home in the high-minded philosophical discourse of the legal community and the urgent pragmatism of Congressional dealmaking.

He is so exceptionally competent that he often produces from his desk the work that would normally require, literally, teams of outside counsel.

Frag stands on deeply held principles but maintains a firm grasp on the realm of the possible. He is willing to exhaust creative effort and sacrifice holidays to make headway against even the most intractable problems. He knows which screws to twist to hold misbehavior and miscarriage of justice to account.

Fighting the good fight can be draining, especially when the good guys come up emptyhanded. But much to his colleague's delight, Frag never misses an opportunity to elicit much-needed laughs and self-effacing humor with gag gifts he seemingly produces from thin air.

I am certain he showers his wife Ashley and their daughters Maria, Aurelia, and Helena with similar joy and even greater pride than he has for his noble work.

Frag, Frags, thanks for everything.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT KAREM

Mr. President, there is a certain irony in the fact that many years ago my team found a kid who would end up as my fiercest adviser in the cause of restoring American hard power working in the world of American soft power.

In those earliest days, my fellow Kentuckian Robert Karem frequently found himself driving me around town doing important events.

These days, however, as my national security adviser, I frequently send Robert to the ends of the Earth and to the seats of foreign governments as a trusted representative of the entire Senate.

Of course, there was a period in between when I had to exercise some strategic patience, and I am not referring to the moments when classified meetings make Robert difficult to reach. I mean that his talents couldn't be contained.

And over the years, they have landed him in the service of a veritable who is who of Republican foreign policy luminaries. I am certain that each of them found, as I did, a deep intellect and appetite for knowledge, a relentless focus on worthy causes, and a passion for advancing them that simmered just beneath the surface.

Certainly, this last bit represents a compromise between Robert's experiences in the boiling cauldron of the House and his appreciation for the cooling saucer of the Senate.

When Robert returned to my office 6 years ago, I handed him a portfolio full of tough problems with no easy solution. It demands that he juggle the urgent and the important; the big picture and the smallest detail; the security of the Senate in moments of unprecedented crisis; and the enduring credibility of America's commitments in the world.

Robert knows how to advance the ball in international settings with cosmopolitan tact, meet naivete and incompetence around Washington with righteous ire, and defuse office monotony with strikes of high yield, precision-guided humor.

I am grateful for all of it and for the loyalty and dedication that should make his family, his Commonwealth, and his Nation very, very proud. Thank you, Robert.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN CHAPUIS

Mr. President, now, folks all around the Senate appreciate this body's cooling saucer of a reputation, but no one embodies it like my senior adviser on commerce and tax policy, John Chapuis.

To be sure, “Chappy” cut his teeth with our former colleague Tom Coburn, who prided himself on playing an active and assertive role out here on the

floor. And his work in the Whip's office under Senator CORNYN dropped him straight into the middle of vote-counting chaos.

But that pedigree did nothing if not make Chappy a master of Senate rules and procedure; and with that mastery comes a calm, collected assurance, the composure of a recovering collegiate athlete, the competence of a Senate expert at the top of his game.

Chappy's path through the Senate has earned him a well-deserved reputation as a Swiss Army knife. He can cite Senate rule, chapter and verse, with the most seasoned cloakroom staff. He can carry the day on consequential nominations with deep-dive background research. And, of course, most recently, he can keep me sharp, parsing tariff disputes and employment reports with equal ease.

In the proudest tradition of an institution where Senators once relied on much smaller staffs, Chappy is the utility player every team wishes it had.

Of course, the team that can claim Chappy's proudest allegiance is the one he has built with his wife Suzanne, herself a distinguished member of the Senate family in the Chaplain's office. As I understand it, the wonderful story that now includes two young sons, Sullivan and Fielding, began with a proposal at the top of the Capitol dome. I am just grateful the Republican leader's office gets to be a part of it.

Chappy, thank you so much.

TRIBUTE TO ERICA SUARES

Mr. President, I can't help but wonder how many of the industries and constituencies seeking the ear of my office on any given day know that my senior adviser responsible for business coalitions is also a watercolor painter whose work adorns the invitations my colleagues receive to our annual Kentucky Derby lunch or whether Erica Suarez's former colleagues at Coastal Living magazine have followed along as her reputation as consummate adviser has reached every corner of the uppermost echelons of Republican politics—Jim DeMint, to MITT ROMNEY, to me.

Erica's innate talents for diplomacy and coordination are undeniable. For more than a decade, I have trusted Erica to relay important guidance around the Republican conference and build consensus across business and advocacy groups. She is charismatic, perceptive, and highly intelligent. In the heat of battle, she has been known to forgo sleep for days.

But the depth of Erica's commitment and the breadth of her professional accomplishments are a testament to something else—a genuine, friendly warmth that is downright difficult to sustain in a town like Washington.

As much as she excels at tending relationships with stakeholders across the Senate and private sector, Erica tends relationships with her colleagues with the utmost care. She takes it upon herself to welcome new arrivals, to celebrate birthdays with requisite

cookie cakes, and to fulfill other duties that come along with being indisputably the heart and soul of the office.

I know my entire team is grateful to occupy a small part of Erica's heart. The rest rightly belongs to her family—her mother Suri and her late father Roger—whom she continues to make so very, very proud.

Erica, thank you.

TRIBUTE TO TERRY VAN DOREN

Mr. President, Terry Van Doren has told me before about the awe he felt as a farm kid from downstate Illinois visiting the Harry Truman Presidential Library and seeing a replica of a bust that stands in the hall outside this Chamber here in the Capitol. The thought of seeing the real thing, let alone passing it by every day at work, was a thrill.

What says the most about Terry—or, as we call him, TVD—is that after 12 years on my team, I am certain he still feels the thrill of service here in the Capitol. That is not to say the Senate hasn't tried mightily to grind it out of him.

For more than a decade, Terry has juggled a uniquely challenging portfolio that encompasses agriculture, transportation, energy, and a laundry list of niche constituencies in between.

With massive implications for Federal spending and issues that matter deeply to Kentucky, Terry inevitably finds himself in the thick of every vote-arama, every government funding fight, and every last-dash legislative effort right before the holidays. With a steady hand, deep expertise, and unwavering loyalty to me and the folks I represent, Terry has been an extraordinarily effective workhorse—even if, in one instance, it meant becoming an expert on racehorses.

From spearheading the CRA process in defense against harmful overregulation to shepherding massive, bipartisan accomplishments on infrastructure and agriculture, he has exercised his talents with a mild manner, with self-effacing humility, and with undaunted optimism that this might be the year that the Senate's schedule doesn't spoil his hunting season travel plans.

So I am grateful to Terry's family—his wife Lisa and their kids Amelia and Bobby—for letting us lean on him literally at all hours.

Thanks again, Terry.

TRIBUTE TO JODY WRIGHT

Mr. President, now, if personnel is policy, I have been fortunate to have outstanding personnel on my team, but if you want to make a lasting impact, you need good personnel in every corner of the government. To do that, you need somebody like my nominations counsel, Jody Wright.

For starters, Jody has the institutional credentials of a Senate thoroughbred. From the whip's office under Don Nickles to the Republican Cloakroom, Jody knows as well as anyone just what it takes to make this place tick. She is well-versed in the Senate's

written rules and, just as importantly, in the unwritten ones. Trust me, when you are trying to clear last-minute logjams on the floor, it helps to have someone who speaks these languages fluently.

Of course, nominations don't start here in the Senate. Jody's work necessarily involves a hefty dose of executive branch procedure. To further complicate matters, the nature of the job changes significantly depending on which party is in the White House. These days, Jody has excelled at identifying and claiming rare opportunities for Republican appointees to influence policy in meaningful ways.

Jody's work is a delicate balancing act on the best of days, but it also requires the sort of people skills and undaunted optimism that this proud Texan has in spades. Her sunny disposition isn't reserved for meetings with candidates from public office; it is doled out around my office and the entire Senate, wherever and whenever it is needed most. And it speaks to the pride I know Jody feels to work right here in the Capitol. That is second only to Jody's pride in her family—in her husband Glenn's own service in the Navy and in the joys of raising their daughter Grace, whom I know Jody's colleagues have enjoyed watching grow up.

So, Jody, thank you so much.

Mr. President, if you can believe it, the work of thanking the incredible staff of my Republican leader office is still unfinished. I will still need to brag on a few more outstanding leaders who have made so much of our success possible, and I look forward to doing that sometime soon.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HANSSEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, let me tell you two brief stories.

A high schooler takes from the internet a picture of a female classmate, then uses artificial intelligence to "nudify" that young girl, and shares this deepfake sexually explicit image with the rest of the school on social media. The classmate—mortified and humiliated—doesn't want to show her face at school. She is afraid. She spends a week begging her parents not to force her to go back. Her parents, futilely, report the images to the social media company, but they never hear even a word back. Meanwhile, everyone at the school knows who distributed this sexually explicit image of this 14-year-old girl, but he faces no consequences.

Here is the second story: A teenage boy begins a relationship online with a young girl. He is smitten, and they de-

cide to swap explicit photos with each other, but it turns out the teenage girl is a scammer, and he has just fallen prey to sextortion. The scammer repeatedly messages the young man, demanding payment or the explicit photos will be sent to his friends via a social media network. The young man—embarrassed, mortified, thinking there is no way out—dies by suicide. His name was Gavin Guffey.

His father is here today advocating to hold Big Tech accountable. On my lapel, I am wearing the heart emoji that Gavin texted his family moments before he took his own life.

Where do these stories take place—in Texas? New Jersey? South Carolina? Washington? California? Illinois? Florida? Sadly, the answer is all of them.

American high schools are experiencing an explosion of AI-generated sexual images, and in many cases, there is no consequence and no recourse for the teenage girls or boys like Gavin. There have been thousands and thousands of cases of sleazebags using nonconsensual, intimate images to extort victims both sexually and financially.

In fact, the FBI just issued a warning this year about the growing threat of sextortion for minors online. There are dozens of families across the country whose children have taken their own lives because of their fear of these images being released. There are hundreds of high schoolers targeted, often by their own classmates, who are experiencing incredible psychological harms in knowing that these images exist and are still out there.

And your child's images aren't just targeted while they are in middle school or in high school. In New York, a young man right out of high school took images of his former classmates from their social media profiles and used AI to alter the images in a sexually explicit manner. He then posted them for the world to see, along with their personal identifying information, encouraging violence and harassment against those he was victimizing. He was convicted only of a misdemeanor, and he faced zero charges for the deepfake explicit images. I would venture to guess some of the victims tried and failed to get these fake images removed by the tech company.

I have spoken to these victims and their parents, including two 14-year-old girls who were victims in the same month, with the same story, on opposite sides of the country. These girls were scared; they were hopeless; but they also wanted justice and relief from these images so they took action.

Elliston Berry of Texas and Francesca Mani of New Jersey bravely spoke up about their experiences and how the TAKE IT DOWN Act—my bipartisan legislation with Democrat Senator AMY KLOBUCHAR—would have protected them and afforded them justice for these horrific acts. Both Elliston and Francesca testified at a field hearing for the Senate Commerce