

2007 Putin claims NATO's growth violates post-Cold War agreements, calling it "a serious provocation." Gorbachev counters that "the topic of NATO expansion was not discussed" as the Cold War thawed. Russia-based hackers launch crippling cyberattacks against Estonia.

April 2008 Germany and France block Ukraine and Georgia from NATO membership. Though NATO agrees that "these countries will become members of NATO," no timetable is set. Due to disputes over Macedonia's name, Greece blocks Macedonia from joining NATO. NATO endorses U.S. missile-defense deployments in Eastern Europe.

August 2008 Russia invades Georgia. The U.S. Air Force transports thousands of Georgian troops from Iraq to Georgia, likely preventing Russia from taking Tbilisi.

2009 President Barack Obama cancels missile-defense deployments in Eastern Europe. Warsaw calls the decision "catastrophic." Albania and Croatia join NATO. France returns to NATO's military-command structure.

2010 Washington and Moscow agree to New START, further reducing nuclear arsenals.

2011 NATO enforces a U.N. no-fly zone over Libya. Washington deactivates the Navy's North Atlantic-focused 2nd Fleet.

2012 Washington deactivates the Army's Germany-based V Corps.

2013 Washington withdraws every U.S. tank from Europe. Britain announces the closure of its garrison in Germany.

2014 Russia seizes Ukraine's Crimea and arms separatists in eastern Ukraine. Washington sends "nonlethal aid." Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko jabs, "One cannot win a war with blankets." Russia violates the INF and CFE treaties. NATO allies Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Netherlands and the United States conduct airstrikes against ISIS.

WARNINGS

As the 2020s neared, two U.S. presidents openly expressed frustration with NATO. Yet NATO would again prove its worth. "If we did not have NATO today," Gen. James Mattis said in 2017, "we would need to create it."

2016 NATO establishes battlegroups to deter Russian attacks against Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Poland. Obama tells British Prime Minister David Cameron, "You have to pay your fair share." Suspecting a coup, Turkish President Recep Erdogan arrests 40,000 Turkish citizens.

2017 President Donald Trump complains that NATO members "aren't paying what they should." At the height of the Cold War, the United States accounted for 56% of NATO's defense spending; by 2017, it's closer to 70%. Montenegro joins NATO. U.S. generals accuse Russia of arming the Taliban. Turkey purchases Russian air-defense systems.

2018 Asked during a NATO summit, "Would you leave us if we don't pay our bills?" Trump responds, "I would consider it." Washington reactivates the 2nd Fleet.

2020 The Republic of North Macedonia joins NATO. Washington reactivates V Corps-Forward in Poland.

May 2021 Russian cyberattacks hit U.S. energy infrastructure.

August 2021 President Joe Biden orders U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. As operations come to a close, 74% of troops deployed in the country that spawned 9/11 are not American.

December 2021 Putin demands NATO not expand, cease military activities in Eastern Europe, and withdraw forces to where they were before Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic joined NATO.

CORNERSTONE

With threats to the free world metastasizing, NATO solidified its role not only as the cornerstone of America's security, but as the coordinating hub for international security.

2022 Putin launches his second invasion of Ukraine, an all-out effort to seize Kyiv and erase Ukraine's independence. NATO members rush military aid to Kyiv. Although Ukraine isn't a NATO member, the allies recognize, finally, that Putin's war threatens what the North Atlantic Treaty calls the "stability and . . . security of the North Atlantic area."

NATO establishes battlegroups in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz announces a near-doubling of defense spending, declaring, "The world will no longer be the same."

In a visit to Poland, Biden echoes Pope John Paul II, urging Ukrainian refugees and their Polish hosts, "Be not afraid."

Longtime neutrals Sweden and Finland seek NATO membership. With Australia, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand attending the NATO summit, the alliance identifies China as a challenge and commits to working with Indo-Pacific partners on "shared security interests."

2023 Russia violates the New START Treaty. Washington establishes Army Garrison-Poland.

Finland joins NATO. Turkey and Hungary delay Sweden's accession. Germany deploys 4,000 troops to Lithuania; Britain announces deployment of 20,000 troops to NATO's northern flank. Putin deploys nuclear weapons in Belarus.

Allies unveil the NATO-Ukraine Defense Council.

2024 Sweden joins NATO. Twenty-three NATO members invest at least 2% of GDP on defense. The United States and Germany announce deployment on German territory of hypersonic weapons and Tomahawk land-attack missiles.

On its 75th anniversary, NATO—now 32 members—calls Russia a "direct threat to allies' security."

TRIBUTE TO KATHLEEN CATHEY

• Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I rise today to honor Kathleen Cathey, my friend and long-time field representative for eastern Oregon, who has dedicated her career to making our State an even better place for everyone to live and work.

Kathleen is retiring at the end of the year after nearly 20 years of service closing the 2,500 mile gap between eastern Oregon and Washington, DC.

Before I go into the long list of Kathleen's many achievements delivering for the people of eastern Oregon, I want to briefly mention the unique circumstances of her service to 11 of Oregon's 36 counties.

Distances between communities in Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco, and Wheeler Counties are measured in hours, not miles. In the colder months, snow and ice often makes traveling through this part of our State that much more grueling. In the hotter months, wildfires can do the same.

Yet, from Arlington to Zumwalt and everywhere in-between, Kathleen showed up each and every time a wild-

fire, snowstorm, flood, drought, or any crisis struck. She showed up to help Oregonians and their families, small businesses, farmers, ranchers, county commissioners, you name it. She showed up to help everyone in the most rural parts of our State navigate the bureaucratic labyrinth of Federal Agencies operating thousands of miles away.

During the 2020 floods in Umatilla County, Kathleen worked around the clock to get help to everybody who needed it.

As a former basketball player, I am especially fond of the coaching maxim about coming to play every day.

Kathleen Cathey came to play every day for eastern Oregon.

In her final months on the job, she showed up with the same passion and dedication she has brought over the past two decades to her work. She has been working tirelessly to find a legislative solution before the end of this year for the Owyhee Canyonlands around Malheur County, the only part of Oregon that is in the mountain time zone.

The Owyhee is a natural treasure of extraordinary beauty that is home to all sorts of endangered species, including ranchers and their way of life. And as I speak on the floor at this very moment, Kathleen is working to get this community-driven solution over the finish line, which sets an example for the rest of our country about reaching across divides and coming up with solutions that leave everyone better off.

Kathleen made her way onto Team Wyden after working on the school board in her hometown of La Grande, working with the Union County Commission on Children and Families; and as a mental health training coordinator.

She came to that public service after moving to Union County 50 years ago with her family when she was just entering her freshman year in high school.

Kathleen followed the path of community service carved out by her parents John and Elinor Riley, who both volunteered in local projects like the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show, the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Union, the Union Family Clinic, Habitat for Humanity and the Union Planning Commission.

From day one on the job as my eastern Oregon field representative, Kathleen got to work for veterans after the Veterans Administration had announced plans to close the nearby Walla Walla VA hospital.

The result? She helped make the successful case that the VA needed to keep services nearby at Walla Walla because veterans deserved to get their healthcare close to home.

But Kathleen didn't stop there. In 2008, she pressed for the VA to open the La Grande Community Based Outpatient Clinic, and she has continued her work to stop the VA from closing the nearest alcohol and drug residential treatment facility in Walla Walla

and moving services 150 miles farther away to Spokane.

Agriculture plays a huge role in communities in eastern Oregon, a connection between land and life that Kathleen knows from growing up in Union County. As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, I lead a committee that has jurisdiction over things like tax policy, Medicare, and Medicaid. Understandably, it can be hard for folks in Eastern Oregon to understand how exactly those policies impact them. Kathleen has always known how to help connect the dots. She made the case for a national review of drug manufacturing and quotas for ADHD medicines in eastern Oregon. She was our leading voice when the Baker Hospital closed its maternity ward with less than 30 days notice to the community.

One of the biggest ways Kathleen helped connect the dots was through the Finance Committee's work on trade.

With such a robust agricultural sector, trade policy has a deep impact on the farmers, ranchers, and producers in the eastern part of our State. Kathleen, among her many talents, is a master convener. She put her expertise and connections to good use, working with local ranchers and the State of Oregon, as well as the USDA, to support Oregon in reinstating its State meat inspection program.

This program is helping protect Oregon our ranchers from inflationary pricing of larger national meat processors, while striking a blow against national and international meat monopolies. It is also more humane for the animals and helps cut down on carbon emissions associated with cattle ranching and meat processing.

With accomplishments like these, it is no surprise that Kathleen's teamwork in eastern Oregon earned her the 2023 Above and Beyond Award from the Oregon Wheat Growers.

Simply put, Kathleen Cathey came to play every day for rural Oregon and always fought to improve the lives of those in its small communities. She battled to expand rural broadband in recent years into every nook and cranny of our State. And she worked just as hard each year to ensure eastern Oregon secures its fair share of Federal funds for roads, schools, and more from the Secure Rural Schools or Payment in Lieu of Taxes programs.

Bottom line, I have always counted on Kathleen for her good counsel, even temperament, and deep community connections. I have no doubt that a public service dynamo like Kathleen will find many ways to keep helping eastern Oregon in the future.

Kathleen leaves my office with all my best wishes for a happy retirement with her husband Larry, hugging and doting on their grandkids—all while she carves out time for peaceful walks, smooth bike rides, quiet reading, and preparing pumpkin muffins and other tasty offerings in her kitchen.

As we like to say in our little corner of the world: once a member of Team

Wyden, always a member of Team Wyden. I will miss Kathleen's passion, guidance, and friendship immensely. I will always be grateful that she chose to share her talents with our team, and I take comfort in knowing that her good counsel will never be more than a phone call away.●

TRIBUTE TO HAROLD HIRSCH

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I rise on behalf of myself and Senator CRAPO, speaking as chair and ranking member of the Finance Committee. Today, we commend Harold Hirsch on his service to the U.S. Congress for over 47 years. Mr. Hirsch served as a lawyer and tax expert on the staff of the nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation of the United States Congress from the beginning of 1977 to October 2024, when he retired. Prior to 1977, Mr. Hirsch had worked as a lawyer for the office of the Judge Advocate General and for the legislation and regulations section at the Internal Revenue Service, government service for which we also thank him.

As is well known, the staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation staff performs useful or at times indispensable functions to the Members as the Congress develops tax legislation. Mr. Hirsch's legal acumen, drafting brilliance, and deep understanding of tax policy issues contributed to the quality of tax legislation in numerous tax bills over the period he served on the JCT staff. Though reserved, even self-effacing, Mr. Hirsch brought thoughtful commentary to the development of proposed tax legislation. He gave an extremely careful reading of proposed legislative text, and his keen eye for possible statutory errors averted problems that would otherwise have plagued taxpayers, practitioners, and government administrators alike. Mr. Hirsch's technical skills and expertise in the craft of helping the Congress produce the best statutory representation of Members' intent redounded to the benefit of the American taxpayer.

This dedicated work should not go unknown and unrecognized. The Congress thanks Mr. Hirsch for his service in the field of tax legislation.

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR MATTHEW "MADDOG" GUERTIN

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, I would like to take a few moments to recognize Maj. Matthew "Maddog" Guertin who has worked in my Senate office this year as a defense fellow. Major Guertin—soon to be lieutenant colonel—is a patriot who has served our country nobly and made it a safer place. In 1 short year, he has proven to be an invaluable member of my staff.

Major Guertin commissioned into the Air Force in 2010 as a distinguished graduate from the U.S. Air Force Academy. After completing his graduate degree from Rice University, he trained at the prestigious Euro-NATO Joint

Jet Pilot Training in Texas before becoming an F-22 pilot. He quickly became a proven combat leader, having flown 150 combat hours in support of Operation INHERENT RESOLVE, including 10 sorties over Syria and Iraq and dozens of defensive counter air hours to protect American ground troops. The Air Force stated that his actions "directly contributed to the defeat of Islamic State insurgents." Major Guertin also flew hundreds of hours on Operation NOBLE EAGLE and alert missions in defense of the Alaskan coast and National Capital Region.

Following his deployment to the Middle East, Major Guertin spent 3 years at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska, flying and instructing pilots on the F-22. There, he earned the Meritorious Service Medal for outstanding work in leading 206 airmen, increasing the base's operational capability, and playing a pivotal role advancing Air Force capabilities during Arctic exercises. In 2021, he moved to Joint Base Langley-Eustis in Virginia where he quickly distinguished himself as the Air Force's F-22 subject matter expert.

During his time in Virginia, Major Guertin led all requirements and force structure planning for a fleet of 185 F-22 aircraft, affecting about \$7 billion in investment over a 5-year period. He secured a \$1.4 billion budget increase for the F-22 and successfully executed 30 program requirements. That is three times more program requirements than the last 19 years of F-22 history combined. Major Guertin ultimately championed the upgrades to the F-22 being implemented today that will secure the fighter as the United States' premier air superiority platform throughout the decade and beyond.

For his contributions to such a critical aspect of U.S. military strategy, the Air Force awarded Major Guertin the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Defense Department gave him the 2023 Defense Acquisition Workforce Award for Requirements Management.

I could not have been assigned a more knowledgeable and skilled pilot to join my office in January 2023, representing the Air Force in Congress as a defense fellow.

During his time in my office, Major Guertin staffed high level meetings and helped prepare me for numerous committee hearings, briefings, and legislative efforts. His colleagues deeply appreciated his initiative, dedication, and good cheer. He clearly demonstrated his passion and dedication to making this great Nation safer every single day working in the Senate.

Thankfully, the Air Force also recognizes his commitment to service, as it recently announced Major Guertin's upcoming promotion to lieutenant colonel.

Finally, I cannot honor Major Guertin without also thanking his family: his wife Jamie and his four children Abigail, Benjamin, Madison, and Nathan. Major Guertin is clearly a great father and a great husband, and I