

the Members of our leadership team—every Member of my caucus—as a friend, in addition to being your faithful colleague.

I would also like to thank our dear friend Senator PATTY MURRAY, who for the last 2 years has served this Chamber and served the American people faithfully as President pro tempore of the Senate.

Everyone here knows no Senator can get through the day or even through the hour without incredible staff. I have an amazing staff led by Mike Lynch, who has been with me since I just about started leading our team in Washington, and Martin Brennan, who has also been with me since I just about started in New York. What an amazing group of dedicated people. I am blessed, truly blessed to have such a great staff. I thank them, each and every one for their dedication, their brilliance, their unflinching faith in our democracy.

I wish to thank all of the staff across the Senate who do our caucus's work. You are the unsung heroes of our democracy. Every one of our staffers labors hard. Just about everyone could go out and make more money, but they are dedicated to making this country a better place, to helping the working people of America. We are lucky and blessed to have such a great staff.

I want to send a particular thanks to the Senate floor staff. We weren't able to get this much done without them, particularly Gary Myrick and the miracle workers in the Cloakroom who make this Chamber come to life, as well as the members at the front desk. Thank you all.

We have more work to do in this Chamber before the year is out, and we will have to hit the ground running when 2025 arrives. The challenges of our country remain great. Our divisions still run very deep, but our task in this Chamber cannot and will not change. We are sent here to make life better for the American people. So thank you to all of my colleagues. Let the work continue.

#### TRIBUTE TO LAPHONZA R. BUTLER

Mr. President, we are bidding farewell today to two of our Members on the Democrat side who will give speeches of farewell.

Later this afternoon, our colleague from California, Senator LAPHONZA BUTLER, will deliver her farewell address here on the Senate floor. Before she speaks, I want to share a few words about her time in the Senate.

When our late colleague Senator Feinstein passed away over a little over a year ago, I remember wondering to myself how anyone could ever follow in Dianne's footsteps. To follow Dianne, I knew it would take someone really special, someone really smart, really honorable, someone who always stepped up to the plate. It would take someone like LAPHONZA BUTLER.

Senator BUTLER wasn't out looking for this job. She didn't campaign for it. But it came to her doorstep; and when

asked to serve, she answered with great humility and a great sense of service and belief in America.

She followed her innate calling for service, which she learned while watching her mom work multiple jobs to keep their family above water. For the last year, she represented her beloved California—a huge complicated and beautiful State—admirably.

There is a general assumption around here that if you want to make a real difference in Washington, you have to spend years—sometimes people say even decades—learning the ropes and rising through the ranks. Well, Senator BUTLER sure turned that myth on its head. She proved that it isn't about how long you are here. It is about what you choose to do with the time you are here. And Senator BUTLER did a lot.

As a member of the Judiciary Committee, Senator BUTLER has helped advance and confirm one of the most well-qualified and diverse classes of judicial nominees in recent history.

She has been a champion for women and women's rights. She co-led legislation to restore the rights enshrined under *Roe v. Wade*.

She has done great work to bring our workforce up to speed in the age of artificial intelligence.

She has introduced legislation to provide more opportunity to farmers and small business owners, to help parents and families and caregivers address the mental health and substance abuse crisis, to increase civic participation among young voters, and so much more.

The bottom line is that Senator BUTLER did practically everything in her time in the Senate. She did it in only 1 year, and she was always ready to serve. When I had a tough job or even a job that wasn't very glamorous but would take some time and effort, Senator BUTLER always said yes. She wasn't one of these people just looking out for herself. She was looking out for the greater good in a beautiful way.

And, of course, as well, Senator BUTLER, much like her predecessor, was a historymaker, too. When she was sworn in a year ago, she became only the third Black woman in American history to serve in the Senate, the first openly lesbian Senator from California, and the first openly LGBTQ Senator of color.

And, finally, while I say reluctantly as a New Yorker, Senator BUTLER's year in the Senate concludes with one of the greatest accomplishments a Senator can achieve: one of her home State teams winning the World Series.

So, Senator BUTLER, thanks for all you have done. Thank you just for being you—such a decent, wonderful, honorable person. And the people of California and all of America are certainly proud of you and grateful for your service, too.

#### TRIBUTE TO JOE MANCHIN III

Mr. President, this afternoon another dear colleague of ours will give his farewell address, Senator JOE MANCHIN

of West Virginia. It fills me with great pleasure and a little sadness to say a few words in his honor.

Every now and then, you get to work with someone who reminds us that politics, just like practically all other pursuits in life, is deceptively simple. It is about relationships, about strong partnerships, about strong beliefs, and it takes having good friends in this place to get difficult things done.

Today, I wish to pay tribute to a very dear friend, one of my closest friends in the Senate—even when we disagreed, we stayed friendly, stayed good friends—and, of course, a longtime colleague, Senator JOE MANCHIN of West Virginia.

On the surface, JOE MANCHIN and CHUCK SCHUMER will appear to have little in common. For one, JOE was born in Farmington, WV, a coal mining town of around 400 people. I was, of course, born in Brooklyn, where you can walk past 400 people before breakfast.

JOE's family on his father's side traces their lineage to hilly enclaves of the Calabria region of Italy. Much of my family, meanwhile, comes from Galicia, in modern day Ukraine.

While JOE got a scholarship to play football at West Virginia University—he was going to be great star until he was injured—I was cut from the college basketball team on day one. Coach asked me could I dribble. I said: It is not my strong suit, sir. He said: Go home.

Beneath the surface, however, JOE and I have some unexpected common links. We both have grandparents whose lives were shaped in dramatic ways by union life. My grandfather went as far as helping his employees form a union in Utica, while his grandfather, sadly, was fired for trying to organize a union in Farmington.

Both of our fathers were small business owners. JOE's dad took over a family grocery store where JOE himself worked for much of his early years, while my dad ran an exterminating business.

Both our families found home within communities where everyone knew your name and where hard times forced everyone to come together.

For JOE's family, it was the awful day that the Manchin Grocery store burned down. When JOE recalls the incident, he has said that moment taught him the value of persistence—that is something my dad, my late father, always talked about—and the importance of leaning on your community to rebuild from tragedy. And that is something any New Yorker will relate to.

So yes, Mr. President, it is these common threads that fill me today with gratitude. These are links that shape who JOE MANCHIN the public servant is at his core: someone who wants to keep alive the very same American dream his family got to enjoy—a place where hard work, community and equal opportunity are the keys to a better life.

Some of the biggest accomplishments of the past few years would not have gotten done without JOE's help. He was always able to reach across the aisle to help us achieve bipartisan legislation that we are so proud of in these past two Senates. Without him, we couldn't have gotten the Inflation Reduction Act done. He was persistent. He was a tiger on that one.

He and I got together alone in one week—we sat in a room, a little room. No one knew we were negotiating the IRA. JOE didn't want anyone to know because he would be besieged by people. So we sat in that room day in and day out. Then all of a sudden, the legislation, after no one knew we were doing it, popped out. As a result, so much was accomplished.

We made historic strides towards climate change in a very positive way—tax breaks to help clean energy evolve—and it has grown beyond what either of us thought. This was the first major legislation in decades that lowered the cost of prescription drugs. And there were JOE MANCHIN and CHUCK SCHUMER—close friends, colleagues with a mission—getting this done. And we did it in that little room all alone.

At the same time, Senator MANCHIN was always reminding us that deficit reduction was important. And in the IRA—which he appropriately named the Inflation Reduction Act—for every dollar we invested, we also saved towards cutting down the deficit through this bill.

Very few pieces of legislation, major pieces, have ever done that, but to JOE's great credit, the IRA did.

JOE was also an important player on a number of other key bipartisan wins, like the gun safety bill and infrastructure legislation. Under our majority, even though I had lots of disagreements, and we had a few fights—not physical, he would have clobbered me in those—JOE MANCHIN has been an invaluable partner, a dedicated public servant, and a dear friend until the end.

Of course, JOE and I didn't agree on everything, after all, who here thinks that New York and West Virginia could agree all the time? But despite these disagreements, what mattered was this: No matter the issue, I always knew that JOE would be true to who he was, to put the people of West Virginia first, and to seek consensus, even if there was just a shred of an opportunity. He was so persistent at it, and that is why he was as successful as he was. These things I will always cherish about serving with the Senator from West Virginia, but also we were just close friends, aside from politics. We talked to each other all the time. We each knew each other's phone numbers by heart. That 304 number popped up on my phone more than just about any other. And we had some great times together.

Some of the happiest times I had in the Senate were on JOE MANCHIN's boat. He would bring in great Italian

food. And then he would turn on his sound system, and we would all be singing—Democrats and Republicans—hits from the fifties, sixties, seventies. JOE would just play the first two or three notes, and then we would have to guess what the song was. We were both pretty great at it, and what great times they were.

JOE is the kind of friend who breaks the tension with a sudden joke, the kind of colleague who breaks gridlock with a helping hand, and the kind of public servant who breaks cynicism by reminding everyone that what we do here, we do for the people back home.

So, JOE, thank you for the many good years of partnership in this Chamber. As you know, I tried to recruit you, successfully, when you first ran, and you have had great service to our country since then. And I hope you don't regret that I recruited you, and you came here. I am sure you don't because you have done so much and made so many good friends.

JOE, thank you for all you have done serving our country and serving the people of West Virginia. We wish the best to you, to Gayle, to your beautiful family, which you always talk about, and to all the people of West Virginia whom you so admirably served.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to complete my remarks before the recess.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to echo comments just made by the majority leader Senator SCHUMER, of my gratitude to the Democratic caucus for giving me an opportunity to continue to serve as the whip.

The whip, I am often asked what it is all about, what is this job.

And I say the skills that are necessary for this job I developed in the first grade, to be able to count up to 60, if needed, and to be able to count up to 41 in a position of resistance. That is an overstatement, of course, but not much.

I thank my colleagues for giving me this opportunity over the last 2 years and looking forward to the next 2.

#### JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

Mr. President, this has been one of the busiest legislative times of my time on Capitol Hill. We have been working for 4 years in the Senate Judiciary Committee to fill vacancies in the Federal courts around America. People retire; they pass away; some of them decide to do something else with their lives, creating a vacancy for what was supposed to be a lifetime position.

Over the last 4 years, working with President Biden's White House, we have filled more than 200 slots in the Federal judiciary. Over one-fourth of the existing article III judges have

been replaced or given a successor because of the work of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which I chair, and with it, the work on the floor to pass these same nominees, which requires the work of the staff, the majority leader, of course, and the whip on the floor. So I was called into action at both levels for success, and we have quite a record to show for it.

#### TRIBUTE TO LAPHONZA R. BUTLER

Mr. President, I would like to say a few words about two of my colleagues who will be making farewell remarks today in the Senate; first, LAPHONZA BUTLER. She succeeded Senator Dianne Feinstein as Senator from our largest State, the State of California. Dianne Feinstein was a close friend and a seatmate of mine for many years. I can't tell you how many times we sat together, considered nominees and legislation, and listened to one another's speeches. I really respected her so much, and she did an extraordinary job in the Senate.

So when she passed away and Senator BUTLER took her place, many people wondered who could step into her shoes for this period of time. LAPHONZA BUTLER was that person. She was given an extraordinary assignment. She took a slot on the Senate Judiciary Committee, which I chair, and in that position had to get into the daily combat—political combat—that took place in that committee.

I would say, with some immodesty, that it is one of the most challenging committees on Capitol Hill because it has an extraordinarily important agenda when it comes to the political issues before it and because of some of the personalities that populate the chairs of that committee on both sides of the aisle.

Senator BUTLER brought her own style and her own approach to it and did so, so well. She was able to see the old admonition is true that "politics ain't beanbag" in the Senate Judiciary Committee. She stood up for her State effectively and she articulated her positions convincingly and she was always there when needed.

I want to thank her for being part of the process of filling these vacancies in the Federal judiciary with the most diverse group of judges in our history. It is something that will live on long beyond Senator BUTLER and myself. So I thank her for her friendship, her smile, her determination, and her success on the Senate Judiciary Committee and in the Senate as a whole.

#### TRIBUTE TO JOE MANCHIN III

Mr. President, JOE MANCHIN is going to give his farewell address on the floor. The Senator from West Virginia and I have served together, and I have come to appreciate JOE's politics, and the way he handles decision making. Sometimes I disagree with him vehemently and am frustrated by his position, but I understand he represents his own conscience, his people of West Virginia, and the reality of politics in the State. Time and again, he has made a difference when needed.