

when a staffer handed a letter to Delaware's then-Governor TOM CARPER. The letter from a girl named Melissa read: "I am writing to the governors of all 50 states to ask the same question: What is the secret to happiness?"

"Dear Melissa," the Governor replied, "serve others. Sincerely, Tom." That was it. For then-Governor, now-Senator TOM CARPER, that simple selfless bit of advice—"serve others"—could sum up his entire political career and his life. He is moderate, bipartisan, and relentless.

As chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, TOM CARPER helped lead the fight to pass the Inflation Reduction Act, the most significant investment ever—to tackle the climate crisis. The law also helped lower healthcare costs and energy costs and strengthen America's energy security—what a combination.

TOM CARPER was a key author of the largest long-term infrastructure investment in the history of the United States, the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

As the last Vietnam veteran serving in the U.S. Senate—think about that for a moment: the last Vietnam veteran serving in the U.S. Senate—Senator TOM CARPER was a key force in passing many laws, including the Agent Orange Act of 2009; the PACT Act, to provide healthcare for veterans sick by exposure to burn pits and other toxic hazards; and a measure I authored with him that allows the VA to provide modest compensation for family members serving as caregivers for severely injured veterans.

TOM CARPER has also encouraged a generation of young people to enter public service and run for office. Next month, one of those people, one of those public servants who got her start as an intern in a congressional office that TOM CARPER handled, will take his place in this body. LISA BLUNT ROCH-ESTER will be the first woman and the first person of color Delawareans have ever sent to the U.S. Senate.

Thanks, TOM, for showing her and countless others the importance and dignity of public service.

TRIBUTE TO JOE MANCHIN III

JOE MANCHIN. As chair of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee since 2021, Senator JOE MANCHIN has been a decisive force on America's energy and environment agenda. He was a key player in passage of the Inflation Reduction Act. Independent analyses project that law will reduce U.S. carbon emissions by 40 percent by the year 2030 compared with 2005—if we give it a chance to work.

JOE MANCHIN was elected to the Senate in 2010 to fill the legendary vacancy created by the death of Robert C. Byrd. While he arrived here following the footsteps of a legend, he leaves behind some pretty big footprints himself.

TRIBUTE TO DEBBIE STABENOW

DEBBIE STABENOW. In the year 2000, Senator DEBBIE STABENOW became the first woman ever elected to the Senate

from the State of Michigan, but, as she says, it doesn't matter if you are first unless there is a second and a third.

Her leadership and example have undoubtedly persuaded more women to run for and win public office, including in the Senate. America is better for it even if we still have a long way to go.

As a longtime member and now chair of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee, she wrote much of the bipartisan 2014 farm bill and coauthored the 2018 farm bill. There is no other Senator on the floor of this body who has the competence, skill, and track record of DEBBIE STABENOW in the field of agriculture, forestry, and nutrition. She is simply the expert and has taught herself an arcane body of law to a degree that most of us just don't even comprehend.

Eight months ago, she unveiled the foundation for a strong, new farm bill containing hundreds of bipartisan provisions. More than ever before, these farm bills that DEBBIE has helped to write meet the needs of farmers in rural communities, while also protecting low-income seniors, moms with kids, and people with disabilities in need of affordable groceries.

In addition, Senator STABENOW has been a leader in protecting one of our greatest natural resources—and I know this one as well—the Great Lakes, including her pivotal role last year in advancing the Brandon Road Interbasin Project, a project with a long name but with a simple purpose: stop the invasion of the carp into the Great Lakes, which could be devastating to the future of those great bodies of water.

I know her Oldsmobile dealer father would be proud of the way she fought to save the U.S. auto industry when others were ready to give up on it. DEBBIE never gave up on the auto industry. She became our most forceful champion of that provision.

I am sorry that DEBBIE, just a few days ago, lost her mother, who was an extraordinary woman herself. But her mother, I am sure, was deeply proud of the time that DEBBIE spent her entire career prodding government to work for everyone, not just those who are well-connected.

I am proud to call DEBBIE my friend and colleague.

TRIBUTE TO LAPHONZA R. BUTLER

Finally, I want to acknowledge Senator LAPHONZA BUTLER. She was appointed just over a year ago to finish the term of the late Senator Dianne Feinstein. She took Senator Feinstein's seat on the Senate Judiciary Committee. I was honored to chair that committee and work with her every time we met.

Thoughtful, collegial, hard-working—you could always find her ready to proceed forward for as much time as it may take. She sought to advance the ideals of our Nation and give voice to Americans facing critical challenges, from access to reproductive health care to voter suppression.

She is one of the youngest Senators, the third Black woman and 12th Black

person to serve in this Chamber and the only Black person ever to chair the Constitution subcommittee. She has brought an important new voice to our debates. We are grateful for her new perspectives and her distinguished service.

As I said, Mr. President, I will have more to say about other departing Senators. For now, I want to say to these Senators: It has been an honor to serve with you, to work with you for the good of our Nation and the good of the world.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, today, the Senate will continue working to confirm more of President Biden's well-qualified judicial nominees.

On Monday, I filed cloture on five more district court judges. We will continue the process of confirming those judges later this morning. We will begin with votes on two district court judges for the Northern District of New York, Anthony Brindisi and Elizabeth Coombe.

Anthony Brindisi, I know well. He is a proud son of Utica, a former Member of Congress. I worked closely with him on many issues for Upstate New York, particularly his hometown of Utica, where my dad was raised, so I have a particular affinity to him.

Anthony Brindisi is a proud son of Utica. He is also an exceptionally qualified attorney whose legal acumen and deep care for the Mohawk Valley and all of Central New York will make him an excellent addition to the Northern District.

Beth Coombe has also been a trailblazing prosecutor for her entire career in Albany and Syracuse, the first woman to become Federal criminal chief for the Northern District. I am proud to see her ascend to the Federal bench.

After we vote on these judges, we will then vote to advance Sarah Davenport to be a district court judge for the District of New Mexico, and we will keep moving forward with the remaining judges as soon as possible.

Democrats have made confirming President Biden's well-qualified judges a top priority the last few years. It will remain a priority until our very last day in the majority.

TRIBUTE TO DEBBIE STABENOW

Mr. President, finally, let me close on a bittersweet but deeply grateful note.

Later this afternoon, Senators will gather in the Chamber to hear the farewell remarks of a beloved colleague, our dear friend—my dear friend—DEBBIE STABENOW of Michigan. She will leave the Senate at the end of this year after 24 remarkable years in this Chamber and many, many more in public service.

But today, I don't want to start my tribute by listing off DEBBIE's myriad

accomplishments—although, they are great—nor do I want to focus on how much all of us in the Democratic caucus love to work with her—though, we certainly do.

And, you know, as leader, you can't do everything yourself, and I don't try. And you give jobs to different people. When you give DEBBIE STABENOW a job, she gets the job done. Every time I call DEBBIE—it is so frequent—and I ask her to do this or do that, I know it will get done and get done well because of her phenomenal dedication and ability and energy and drive. And she does it all with a smile on her face. She is just great.

But let me begin by focusing a couple of blocks down the street from DEBBIE's alma mater, Michigan State University, and an old bar called the Coral Gables. There as a college student, DEBBIE was a regular working, of all things, as a folk singer. Yes, DEBBIE sang part time to earn a little money on the side back in college. And many years later, once in the Senate, her love of folk music led her to achieve a lifelong goal of singing with Peter, Paul, and Mary, all for raising money for anti-bullying causes.

She was in a little singing group. I forgot the name of the fellow. It was DEBBIE and—I don't remember—DEBBIE and Dan or something like that. I hope she mentions it on the floor when she speaks.

Why do I mention this? Simple, for DEBBIE STABENOW, an elected leader with very few peers in this Chamber, the first woman to represent Michigan in the U.S. Senate, politics by itself has never been the end goal.

For DEBBIE, the end goal has always been her community and about building support for worthy causes, about being a constant presence in her hometown on campus in Lansing or all over the State, the kind of person who loved getting to know everyone on a first-name basis. That has always been DEBBIE at her core. Add to that a thirst for fairness, a love of complex problems, a knack in persistence for winning, and you get the senior Senator from Michigan.

Saying good-bye is heart-wrenching. Saying thank you is hardly sufficient. After two decades, there is no policy issue left that DEBBIE hasn't shaped or progressed in some meaningful way. She has authored hundreds of bills that have become law. Her work has been ahead of the curve.

Look no further than her legacy on closing the gap for mental health policy. She so cared about people's mental health. She knew that the Federal Government had to step up to the plate. It was a decade-long campaign for her, but she never gave up. It didn't matter if it was a Democratic President, Republican President, Democratic majority leader, Republican majority leader. She kept at it, kept at it, kept at it.

And when the time came ripe to add significant dollars to mental health on several different occasions, she did,

most recently on our major gun bill in 2022 where over \$14 billion was added for mental health. That wouldn't have happened without DEBBIE STABENOW. She does amazing work. Amazing work.

Of course, her true love will always be the place she calls home. It will always be the people of Michigan, from the rural farmers she has relentlessly championed through the farm bill. I never forget her devotion to the cherry farmers and reminding us that Michigan is the biggest sweet cherry State in the country. I reminded her New York is the biggest sour cherry State in the country.

Anyway, she has always fiercely protected the farmers of Michigan to the Great Lakes to the small town and working class and middle class families just trying to afford health care and prescription drugs.

When the auto industry needed saving in a moment of crisis, DEBBIE came to their rescue.

When hungry kids and hungry families needed someone to fight for their needs in the highest echelons of government, DEBBIE was their voice. There were a lot of people on the Ag Committee who didn't want to feed children, hungry children, and give them what they needed. DEBBIE knew that they needed certain things as well for their row crops. She always was able to weave together a coalition that would pass the Ag bill, help hungry children, and help the farmers.

And when our caucus needed good leaders and team players to guide us, organize us, and help us achieve our goals, DEBBIE stepped up to the plate. Just 4 years in her time into the Senate, she became the third-ranking Democrat in the caucus when she was named caucus secretary by the late Harry Reid. And for many years, she has been an expert and skillful force as chairman of the DPCC—our Democratic Policy and Communications Committee—organizing weekly lunches, providing messaging and strategy resources and organizing our caucus's yearly retreat.

At all of our Tuesday lunches, DEBBIE would get up and go over our strategy—every Tuesday—and everybody listened, and everybody followed. She would publish a list of who has helped us, giving them credit and then expanding the list of who else would help us, because they weren't on the list the previous week.

And, of course, I want to thank DEBBIE for her many, many years as leader of the Ag Committee and on the farm bill. It is a cause she dedicated herself. Together we worked on getting help for our specialty crops, our fruits and vegetables, which Michigan and New York have so much produce from. She was a champion of this legislation—all ag legislation—and I commend her for recent work in releasing a strong bill.

So to lose DEBBIE—I begged her to stay when she told me a year and a half ago that she wasn't going to run. Al-

though, true to her commitment, DEBBIE said: Don't worry, we will have a great new Senator to take my place, and I will make sure she wins. And she did, and now we have ELISSA SLOTKIN coming, who was a protege of DEBBIE's. When she makes a commitment, there it is, it gets done.

Finally, what is incredible about DEBBIE's legacy is that things could have turned out very, very differently. In fact, DEBBIE's preference growing up was to serve in a different capacity, perhaps criminal justice, perhaps social work, which she studied in college. Political life may not have been in the cards at all were it not for an incident that occurred in graduate school. Because while she was studying at Michigan State—she is a Spartan—a local county commissioner announced he was shutting down the only nursing home in town that served low-income seniors.

The decision lit a fire within DEBBIE, a deep anger at the utter callousness of the decision. What this official did was simply unfair, it was mean-spirited. So DEBBIE, then just 24 years old with no political experience, decided to run against him. The incumbent wasn't exactly respectful about a younger woman challenging his seat. But then she won. She won in a landslide. And, of course, her goal was not to win the election but to save the nursing home. And she did. And along the way, DEBBIE discovered she loved running for office because she loved people. She just has that friendly, all-embracing look, and she would meet people. She would shake hands. She would get to know the entire town on a first-name basis and, most of all, listening to what her neighbors were thinking as she met them.

So from then on, DEBBIE never looked back. Thank God for that, too, because now that time has come for us to say goodbye. DEBBIE's mom, who instilled in her a belief in political activism, just passed away but made sure she mailed her absentee ballot while she was sick. One of her last acts was to make sure she voted. That is where DEBBIE got it all. She always talks glowingly about her mom. And her mom knows, we all know, that DEBBIE STABENOW leaves our country a better, stronger, healthier place than the day she chose to save the nursing home.

So, DEBBIE, thank you, thank you, thank you. We will miss you. I certainly will miss you. You are one of my best friends and one of my best members of the team. But we are happy for you and your family, and we know you are going to continue to do great things for our country and for Michigan in the years to come.

DEBBIE, Godspeed. Godspeed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the past 4 years have been marked by increasing instability on the world stage. Over the course of the Biden administration, we