

channeling funding into fixing our highways and bridges, as well as funding programs to get lead and other contaminants out of drinking water. He crafted the Water Resources Development Act of 2024, which is named in his honor. TOM has also been a leader on climate change, helping craft the Inflation Reduction Act and supporting climate mitigation and resilience efforts. His work in support of his dear friend and former colleague President Biden in support of this legislation over the last 4 years will make a huge difference for Americans for decades to come.

Senator BOB CASEY has been a champion of the most vulnerable: children, the elderly, individuals with disabilities, and people just trying to make ends meet. He has been a leading Senate advocate for addressing food insecurity, supporting programs like the emergency food assistance program (TEFAP) and SNAP. He is the author of the bipartisan ABLE Act, which allows individuals with disabilities to save funds for care and qualified expenses without jeopardizing their eligibility for other Federal assistance. And he has introduced legislation to expand and build on this successful initiative. BOB also wrote the Campus SAVE Act to create uniform reporting for sexual violence on college campuses. It is a testament to BOB's character that so many Pennsylvania's political leaders from both parties have praised his work ethic and commitment to helping the people of the Commonwealth.

Senator JOE MANCHIN has been at the fulcrum of power in the Senate over the last 4 years. In working to address the interests of his State, he has been unafraid to challenge and change orthodoxy. While his views may differ from others in our party, there is no doubt that he has done much to advance the goal all Democrats share: making life better for average Americans. Quite frankly, without his leadership, we would not have the bipartisan infrastructure law or the Inflation Reduction Act. And because of JOE's involvement, we were able to ensure that all of the investments in the Inflation Reduction Act were fully offset by ensuring that corporations and the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share of taxes. That is an important achievement, and JOE deserves full credit for it.

Senator MITT ROMNEY is an extraordinary American. Respected across the aisle, across the country, and throughout the world, he has held high office in two States: Senator for Utah and Governor of Massachusetts. He has been the Republican nominee for the Presidency. After becoming CEO of the Salt Lake Olympics organizing committee, he helped save the 2002 Winter Games from disarray and mismanagement, making it one of the most successful Winter Olympics ever. MITT really has done it all. He has even laced up the gloves and boxed with heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield. Now, the politics of Massachusetts and

Utah are vastly different, but MITT has shown that he can bring people with different outlooks together to get things done. And truth be told, the reforms to the healthcare system that he implemented when he was Governor of Massachusetts helped shape the Affordable Care Act at the Federal level. As a Member of the Senate, MITT has been a courageous defender of democracy, willing to put country ahead of party, even when it meant harsh criticism. I have been delighted to work with MITT, and I am proud to be joining in introducing his final piece of bipartisan legislation, the Preserving American Dominance in AI Act, which we will be working to pass next year.

Senator KYRSTEN SINEMA has been a skilled and pragmatic dealmaker, working on a variety of important bills from the bipartisan infrastructure law to the bipartisan immigration bill, which unfortunately, was scuttled at the last minute at the request of President Trump. I know that in her next chapter Senator SINEMA will continue to work hard to bring people together, build consensus, and solve problems.

Senator DEBBIE STABENOW has been a colleague, friend, and leader here in the Senate since she arrived in 2001. She has been a defender of the auto industry, helping U.S. automakers emerge from the Great Recession and turn to a new, greener future. She has also been at the forefront of revitalizing Michigan cities through initiatives like the New Markets Tax Credit and through investments to remove lead from drinking water. With Senator Roy Blunt, she helped expand the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic Program nationwide under the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, and she has championed funding for community health centers along with Senator ROGER WICKER. And as chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, she has fought to expand child nutrition programs, which have been so critical in reducing poverty over the last 4 years and in helping kids get a great start in life. I am going to miss Debbie and her ability to work hard and achieve results for people who need help the most.

Senator JON TESTER is a big man with a big heart. He will tell you he is just a simple farmer from Big Sandy, MT, and that is true. Running the family farm remains the center of his life and defines his character, but it is not the full story. His interests, knowledge, and intellect are wide-ranging and deep. He can speak with authority on complex banking, foreign policy, defense, and veterans issues, as well as agriculture. As a plain-spoken Westerner, he can put these complicated topics in terms everybody can understand, usually with a healthy dose of humor. But when it comes to hard work, JON is no-nonsense. He is a serious legislator, particularly as chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee. His work to pass the PACT Act has thrown a lifeline to veterans who

were exposed to toxins as a result of their service. Millions of veterans and their families are receiving lifesaving benefits as the result of his work. And without JON, it wouldn't have happened.

These colleagues have made the Senate and our Nation a better place because of their service. While their time in this body will be ending with the 118th Congress, I know each of them will continue to work to make a positive difference for the country.

TRIBUTE TO SARAH BENZING

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor my longtime chief of staff, my campaign manager in 2012, and a proud daughter of the Midwest, Sarah Benzing.

Sarah grew up in Neola, IA, a town of about 800 people. There were just 36 people in her rural high school in the Tri-Center Community School District.

Sarah was raised by her parents Nick and Diana Benzing, in a family of farmers, truck drivers, and union members: AFSCME, IAM, NEA, UAW.

And Sarah has brought those working-class values to everything she has done throughout an accomplished career serving the public.

It is become a bit of a cliché to say that someone never forgot where they came from. Not only has Sarah never forgotten her roots, they are woven into every decision she makes and every job she has done.

She has worked all over the country, from Iowa to Massachusetts to Virginia to, of course, Ohio, which she adopted as her second home. Sarah has put working people at the center of all she does.

So many of the people who have worked with her in this office have shared stories about what makes her such an effective and admired leader and mentor.

She has a unique ability to quickly grasp and cut to the heart of any problem and to pull the right people together and empower them to solve it. She is not just a boss; she is truly a manager. She sees people's strengths and elevates them into the right roles to accomplish things as a team.

As a manager, she has always been there to help, but she also knows when the best way to help is to push you to meet your own potential.

It is easy to get caught up in the day to day stress of running an office or a campaign, and to lose track of actually managing staff. Sarah never does. She takes the time to invest in people, and the office serves Ohioans better for it.

A testament to that is how many of the people she has worked with who remain close personal friends.

Sarah brings a warmth and approachability to the office that could probably only come from both a Midwesterner and from someone who began her career as an organizer. Around the office, staff call her the People's Chief. You are just as likely to find her chatting in the front office with the staff

assistants as you are behind a closed door with the legislative director.

Swapping recipes, chatting about pets, remembering details about people's lives and their families, Sarah makes time for everyone and gets to know everyone who comes through this office.

And she brings the joy. She never takes anything, including herself, too seriously, and she makes this job fun whenever and however she can. Cookie competitions, book club, potlucks, even a mock Iowa caucus, work is never boring when Sarah is in charge. And her enthusiasm is infectious.

Over a decade as chief, Sarah has also become a master of this institution. She knows how to get things done.

And all of that stems from her judgment and her internal compass, always seeing this job through the eyes of workers.

When we first began working on the multiemployer pension crisis more than 7 years ago, most people in this town didn't want to touch it. No one thought it was solvable, and they thought it was too politically risky. A lot of staffers in this building probably would have advised me against getting involved. But Sarah dove in.

And one reason is that she didn't just sit in Washington discussing the policy. She actually met the people. She spent time in Ohio talking with Rita Lewis and Mike Walden and so many of the Ohio workers and retirees whose retirement security—pensions they earned and paid into—was about to be ripped away.

And in no small part because of Sarah's skill and commitment, we got it done.

For the rest of their lives, 100,000 Ohioans will get checks in the mail every month from the pensions they earned because of the work of this office, led by Sarah Benzing.

That was emblematic of how Sarah approached this job. She didn't stay in Washington. She came to Ohio as often as possible, traveling all over the State meeting with workers and small businesses owners and local leaders all over the State.

She is an excellent listener, and so often, the result of those conversations was legislation or other actions that made a real difference in people's lives. She paid just as much attention to our staff in Ohio as those in DC.

Sarah also understood that to get things done for Ohio, we had to work with our colleagues, regardless of party. Sarah forged bonds with and is respected by chiefs on both sides of the aisle.

She knew how important it was for Ohioans that their Senators work together for our State. For the majority of my time in the Senate, our counterpart was Senator Portman. Sarah and Senator Portman's chief forged a genuine and productive partnership, working together on everything from strengthening trade enforcement to protecting Lake Erie to securing resources for Ohio.

Sarah's time as chief has spanned multiple Presidents, two impeachments, a global pandemic. And through it all, Sarah has had an uncommon steadiness about her leadership.

Sarah has been a steady and visionary leader for this office—and for Connie and me, an invaluable confidant and friend.

We first met Sarah not in Washington, but in Ohio. We sat around our kitchen table with Connie and John Ryan and our dog Gracie, who took to Sarah immediately. Sitting there over homemade chili, with Gracie sitting next to Sarah as she scratched Gracie's ears, talking about Ohio and the campaign ahead—and about our families and about Sarah's hometown and about our pets, as the conversation wandered—it was so clear that Sarah belonged.

She would move to Ohio a few weeks later. And over the years, Sarah gotten to know that kitchen table well. She has become part of—at times, it feels like the heart of—a big extended family. And we have gotten to know her family; she is so devoted to her husband Erik and her stepchildren Jay, Daona, and Noa.

Sarah, thank you for a life of service to our country and the people who make it work and for nearly 15 years of friendship.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR BROWN'S ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring our administrative team. Their hard work and dedication make our day-to-day operations possible.

They are the glue that holds our office together, from making sure staff have the technology they need to do their jobs, to making sure to ensuring that every day runs as smoothly as possible for staff and for the Ohioans who interact with our office.

Every single member of Team Brown depends on the administrative and operations team.

From the staff assistants who man the front desks, to the special assistants who oversee the interns, without your work, this office wouldn't have accomplished nearly as much or been able to do our best work for Ohio.

None of our work would be possible with our deputy chief of staff and long-time operations director, Mary Topolinski.

Mary joined our office at the beginning of 2009. From her first days on the job, it was clear that nothing fell through the cracks on Mary's watch. She was on top of everything. She was always thinking three steps ahead and had solutions even before problems arose.

Her job entailed more than anyone could ever realize, and she was always looking for new ways to help support the people who work here and the Ohioans we serve.

She always made sure staff was taken care of and had what they need-

ed, whether it was straightforward or complicated. And no matter how long it took, Mary was there.

When COVID struck and launched our office into uncertain times and almost every policy and procedure went out the window, Mary handled it with grace.

She made sure the office kept running smoothly as we transitioned to remote work. She made sure everyone had the information and support that they needed to keep doing their jobs and that there would be no interruption in service for Ohioans.

Because of Mary, we were able to keep serving Ohio in a moment when they needed us the most. Our constituent phone lines stayed on. Casework continued. Our worked never so much as paused. It was a hard time for everyone and for staff, and Mary was a rock.

When we returned to the office, the same was true.

Her dedication to this body extended beyond even this office. Mary was always working to make the Senate a better place to work, serving on committees to put in place new systems and technologies to support the work of every office.

As the operations director, Mary navigated delicate situations, sometimes had to have tough conversations, and always made sure our work remained centered on the people we serve.

She did it all with grace and thoughtfulness and care for her colleagues.

For Team Brown, Mary always showed up. Her door was always open, and she was always ready to offer advice or support or to just listen.

Mary understood that this office is more than just a place people work; it is a huge part of our staff's lives, and they do their jobs better when there is comradery and a little fun.

She planned happy hours and office events and staff outings, making sure everyone felt welcome and enjoyed themselves. She organized book club and holiday parties and celebrations for birthdays and staff departures and special events in people's lives.

For 15 years, Mary made this office run, and she made it thrive. Mary oversaw a team spanning from DC to Cleveland to Columbus to Cincinnati. Together, they made our work for Ohioans possible.

Anourath Arounlangsy, our deputy administrative director and lead intern coordinator, took care of everyone on the team. Whether coaching an intern through a difficult situation or providing staff with support, he missed no detail. Anourath sees through every single task assigned and catches mistakes before they happen. He works hard every single day and is a joy to be around.

Nelson Richardson, our systems administrator, has the difficult task of managing equipment and troubleshooting technology for dozens of staff. He does so without getting flustered or