

Now, Mr. President, I would like to say a prayer not just for Charlie but for our entire country.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.  
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: For thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

TRIBUTE TO ROSEMARY A. VASSILIADIS

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, today, I want to take some time to recognize a Nevadan and recognize specifically the legacy that Rosemary A. Vassiliadis has contributed to this country but to Nevada specifically.

On September 12, 2025, after 40 years delivering for Southern Nevada, including more than 28 years as an airport leader at Clark County's Department of Aviation, Director Vassiliadis will retire from her career in public service.

Rosemary started her career as budget chief for the city of Las Vegas in 1984 and has been working for her community ever since. I know; I have watched firsthand. I got to work side by side with her. She spent the last 12 years as the top executive of Harry Reid International Airport, leading one of the Nation's more dynamic airport systems.

Rosemary was appointed as the first woman director of Clark County's Department of Aviation in 2013 after nearly 16 years as deputy director.

I can't say enough about what she has contributed to Nevada, and I want to talk a little bit about it because, thanks in large part to her stewardship, Southern Nevada's aviation system has grown to a \$35 billion economic engine, employing more than 18,000 workers and serving as the gateway to the world's premiere tourism and convention destination. The system is anchored by LAS and includes four additional general aviation airports.

Rosemary's vision as head of LAS emphasized the importance of the airport as the first and last experience visitors had of Las Vegas, and she prioritized efforts to enhance that customer experience for all travelers. She worked to expand LAS to include the D gates and terminal 3, and her emphasis on strategic coordination helped move millions of travelers to the region during some of the country's largest sporting events, including the Super Bowl and the Formula 1 Las Vegas Grand Prix.

Under her leadership, the airport reached unprecedented milestones, including handling a record 58.4 million passengers in 2024. In the last 12 years,

the Harry Reid International Airport has welcomed visitors from new international destinations and solidified its spot as one of North America's top 10 commercial airports.

Rosemary has spent her career supporting the safety and security of all passengers and workers. During her tenure at the Clark County Department of Aviation, Rosemary led the airport system through extraordinary times, including navigating the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks and providing continued service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under her direction, LAS has also become a leader in the fight against human trafficking. I know this firsthand. As AG, I got to partner with her. As attorney general of Nevada, I got to partner with her and watch her focus on how we address this horrific human trafficking that is happening in this country. Rosemary was one of the first in her field to work with law enforcement and human trafficking experts to create the industry's most comprehensive initiative to train and educate airport employees, provide safe exit strategies for victims of human trafficking, and install multilingual signage in all the restrooms to help address this horrific, modern-day slavery that we are seeing.

Additionally, LAS remains an industry leader in security programs. Most people don't even know this. Rosemary established a partnership with the Transportation Security Administration and created a unique testing ground for new and emerging screening technologies in a live checkpoint environment.

Now, I have to stress this: This is the first and only innovation checkpoint, and Harry Reid Airport is designated as the Nation's only innovation airport. It is because of Rosemary and her team.

Rosemary has established the foundation for the Clark County airport system to continue to adapt as it serves the growing Southern Nevada population and the visitors the community welcomes each year.

As a lifelong Nevadan, I am so honored to have worked with Rosemary over so many years and greatly appreciate her tireless efforts to grow LAS and the Clark County airport system. Her leadership was revolutionary, and she will be missed.

But I want to stress even more. It is not just the work that she did as a civil servant, because I think that is a noble service, and that is what she believed in—always giving back to her community—but Rosemary is also an incredible, incredible mother, friend, neighbor, lifelong Nevadan who truly believed in her State and her community, and raised a great family.

Now I hope she has the opportunity, after all of the years she has given to so many people in Nevada and so many tourists—I am going to say to the staff I am looking at right now, if you have come to Las Vegas, you have come

through Rosemary's airport, and this is what it is about: making sure that people feel loved, support. She has not only done it for so many tourists, international and domestic, but she has done it for Nevadans and her family. I am so proud of her and got a chance to watch firsthand her commitment to her State, her country, and her family.

Rosemary, I wish you all the best. Wherever you go next, whatever the next chapter, know that you will always have my support and my friendship and I look forward to seeing what you do next.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

HEALTHCARE

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, we are in the middle of a full-blown healthcare crisis. Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress are ripping away healthcare from 15 million Americans. And now, thanks to Donald Trump, one in four nursing homes could close, community health clinics are on the brink of shutting their doors, hospitals, already filled to the brim with patients, are bracing for the biggest cuts in decades. Kids with cancer are watching as promising research, their only chance at treatment, is shut down and health insurance premiums are skyrocketing.

Talk to anyone in the country, and they will tell you that the cost of going to the doctor is already way too high because the reality is that healthcare in America was already failing families even before Trump and Republicans took a chain saw to it.

Massachusetts lost two hospitals last year in the biggest healthcare bankruptcy in decades. Our community health centers were already down to counting their nickels to keep the door open. And now, the Republicans have come in and said they want to take away money that helps cover mamas giving birth and neighbors who need wheelchairs and home health aides so that they can hand that money over to billionaire CEOs. Trump's one-two punch of chaotic tariffs and his Big Beautiful Bill is going to push middle-class families in America over a financial cliff.

Before working moms got broke from a cancer diagnosis, Congress must act. Before community hospitals are forced to shut down, Congress must act. Before your neighbor with the home health aide loses his care, Congress must act.

That is why Democrats are saying, if Republicans want our votes, they need to restore healthcare for Americans. We made it about as clear as we humanly can. The American people need affordable healthcare. No one should go bankrupt because they got sick and needed to see a doctor.

And if the Republicans want to shut down government so that they can keep increasing costs and cutting healthcare, then they need to explain that and not just to us; they need to

explain it to the American people. Every Senator here is here to work for the American people, and part of that job is coming to the negotiating table and making a plan to fund government. But Donald Trump flat-out said he doesn't want to negotiate with Democrats. He said:

Don't even bother dealing with them.

OK, then, Republicans control the House, the Senate, and the White House. You own the healthcare crisis. Democrats believe that not a single newborn baby in America should lose healthcare, not a single senior should be tossed out of their nursing home and onto the curb, and not a single person should have to drive hours and hours to get to the nearest hospital.

If we are going to pass a budget for the U.S. Government, then we need to save healthcare for millions of Americans, period.

And make no mistake, every penny of funding needs to be protected from a Trump power grab. Since the week he took office, Donald Trump has been trying to illegally rip away money from programs that Congress has already agreed to fund. His latest ploy: an attempt to zero out funding without even asking for Congress's approval. It is a dirty trick, and it is illegal. We can't have Democrats and Republicans in Congress agree to a budget that helps people get to the doctor and pay for lifesaving cancer research and then turn around and have Donald Trump just halt that money. We need proper safeguards.

So this is our moment. This is our chance to restore healthcare for millions of people in this country. Right now is our small window of opportunity. The Democrats are ready to go. We want to seize this opportunity. It is only the Republicans who stand in the way.

I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from North Carolina.

ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF HURRICANE HELENE

**Mr. BUDD.** Mr. President, I rise today in remembrance of the 1-year anniversary of Hurricane Helene, a disaster of unprecedented magnitude that devastated North Carolina's Appalachian Mountains.

On the evening of September 26, 2024, this historic storm struck the Blue Ridge Mountains, leaving a trail of devastation in its wake, putting the livelihoods of thousands of North Carolinians on hold, and shattering many communities.

As we approach this solemn anniversary, I want to reflect on the lives that Hurricane Helene took with her. One hundred eight lives were tragically lost in this disaster, leaving their families grieving. To this day, five individuals remain unaccounted for, leaving their loved ones without answers.

In their loss, we are reminded of the comfort and hope found in the 23rd Psalm:

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me.

God has been with us in grief, and he is now with us in recovery.

But when I look back on this past year, what is most visible is not destruction; it is resilience: neighbors helping neighbors, communities coming together, and the people of the Appalachian Mountains leaning on faith and hope and determination to carry us through the aftermath of the storm.

A year ago, when Helene first hit, there was no way in or out of the mountains. When I was able to get through, I was in contact with numerous local leaders who tried to describe what was happening on the ground. I saw the impact firsthand thanks to North Carolina agriculture commissioner Steve Troxler when we surveyed the devastation together in a forestry helicopter. Shortly thereafter, I made the first of many on-the-ground visits to the affected towns.

What I quickly saw was the tremendous work being done by Samaritan's Purse and Baptists on Mission, along with many other faith- and community-based organizations and nonprofits that stepped up to help. Companies like Lowe's, Walmart, AT&T, Verizon, and many more stepped up significantly in contributing funds and resources to support rebuilding efforts.

I spoke to local heroes—our first responders—some of whom had not been home in days and were left unsure of the status of their own homes and families. In Fairview, two landslides claimed the lives of 11 members of the Craig family, and they had lived on that land for over a century. I embraced residents as they wept—shaken by their unimaginable loss—as they were left to navigate the uncertainty of just how to move forward. But what struck me the most was the willingness of ordinary people to step up with extraordinary courage and put themselves at risk to save a life.

In Spruce Pine, Eddie Hunnell jumped into rushing waters to save a stranger whose home was being washed away.

Junior Singleton—75 years old from Avery County—woke up to water in his basement that was rising quickly. As neighbors gathered at his home on high ground, he recognized someone was missing. He waded through the floodwaters to get his neighbors out of their home and safely to higher ground.

Medics in Mitchell County, during the shelter-in-place order, responded to a teen boy experiencing a seizure. They had to cut their way through downed trees to reach the boy's home and deliver lifesaving care.

In Yancey County, Mountain Heritage High School students are partnering with Rebuilding Hollers to build tiny homes for Hurricane Helene survivors. Their work restores not just shelter but the hope that people can begin to rebuild their lives.

In Madison County, the catastrophic flooding in Hot Springs—home to just 520 people—gave rise to the Rebuild Hot Springs Area organization. To-

gether, this small town and its neighbors have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to help families return home and businesses to reopen. Though challenges remain, on May 2, the town officially reopened its doors to welcome visitors once again.

In Henderson County, chief Steve Freeman led Bat Cave's volunteer fire department through Helene by urging evacuations, coordinating rescues, and conducting welfare checks for weeks without any power. He expanded his crew, patrolled the rivers daily, and built a spirit of unity, helping neighbors endure and rebuild together.

In Chimney Rock, which was one of the hardest hit towns, manager Stephen Duncan and mayor Peter O'Leary are charting a path forward. With nonprofits like Spokes of Hope, the Great Needs Trust, and Amish partners from Pennsylvania, the community is rebuilding Main Street with reclaimed wood and donated supplies, restoring not only buildings but a sense of hope.

Large sections of the Blue Ridge Parkway are now back open. The parkway serves as a lifeline to the travel and tourism industry in Western North Carolina, and it is the foundation of the small business economy. Work is ongoing on the most damaged sections of the parkway, and those stretches are slated to reopen next year.

Now, while we have seen some successes as folks work to return to normal, there is still a lot of work to do to make sure Western North Carolina is stronger than it was before those fateful days. As we shifted from response to recovery, communities spent millions of dollars of their own to clean up and rebuild with the promise of Federal reimbursement. They have been met with unnecessary bureaucratic gridlock as the Federal Government reviews grant applications and slow-pay funds.

I have talked to local officials about how the slow pace of reimbursements was putting a strain on their general budgets that are still reeling from the economic impacts of lost tourism and businesses that never reopened. I have continued to fight to make sure our communities have the support that they need from their Federal Government to get these critical reimbursement checks signed and out the door for the people of Western North Carolina.

As we approach the 1-year anniversary of the most expensive and deadly natural disaster in North Carolina's history, we have much work still to do. The backlog is too long. There are still tarps on homes. Roads and bridges remain unbuilt. Needs are great, and help is just too slow. But we are finally starting to reduce the backlog of projects awaiting Federal reimbursement. President Trump and I know that the needs are still urgent, and we are working together to get Western North Carolinians the help that they need.