

campaigns about ticks and other vector-borne diseases; and, third, it requires HHS to implement its national strategy to combat vector-borne diseases.

Our bill is named after our former colleague Senator Kay Hagan. Kay, with whom I had the pleasure of serving, passed away in October of 2019 at the age of 66 from complications of a deadly tick-borne illness known as the Powassan virus. It is my hope that reauthorizing the Tick Act will help prevent future tragedies such as this one.

Tick-borne diseases are a major public health concern, and the incidents have exploded over the past 20 years. Each year, the State of Maine has hit a new record high in the number of cases of Lyme disease. Last year, Maine reported 4,257 cases. Undoubtedly, that understates the number of cases because many are not reported. But that amount alone is more than double the number of cases reported in my home State just 6 years ago. Current projections show that 2026 will yet again be a record-setting year. This is a record that we do not want to set.

The Lewiston Sun Journal reported just last week that every community in Maine's Franklin County faces a high risk of tick encounters for this season. Nevertheless, I am encouraged that we are making progress, and we have made progress in the 6 years since this law was first enacted.

For example, a clinical trial for a Lyme disease vaccine is underway right now at the MaineHealth Institute for Research. It has always struck me, as I run, that every year my beloved Labrador retriever can get a vaccine for tick diseases and yet we cannot—we humans cannot—and I am hoping this clinical trial will be successful, and it will make a real difference.

Reauthorizing the Kay Hagan Tick Act would allow crucial projects, such as that research and others across the United States and public education campaigns—which are so important in teaching people what to do if they have a tick bite—that will all be allowed to continue.

I want to thank Senator SMITH for partnering with me on this reauthorization, and I would note that we have 21 bipartisan cosponsors. I urge all of my colleagues to support this life-saving legislation.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 154, S. 2398.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2398) to reauthorize the Kay Hagan Tick Act, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill which had been reported from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italics, as follows:

S. 2398

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

This Act may be cited as the “Kay Hagan Tick Reauthorization Act”.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF PROGRAMS.

(a) NATIONAL STRATEGY AND REGIONAL CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE IN VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES.—Section 317U of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247b–23) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “the Tick-Borne Disease Working Group established under section 2062 of the 21st Century Cures Act (42 U.S.C. 284s) and other individuals, as appropriate” and inserting “appropriate individuals”;

(2) in subsection (c), by striking “in coordination with” and inserting “acting through”; and

(3) in subsection (f), by striking “2021 through 2025” and inserting “2026 through 2030”.

(b) ENHANCED SUPPORT TO ASSIST HEALTH DEPARTMENTS IN ADDRESSING VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES.—Section 2822(c) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300hh–32(c)) is amended by striking “2021 through 2025” and inserting “2026 through 2030”.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be considered and agreed to and that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment, in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Ms. COLLINS. I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the bill?

Hearing none, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (S. 2398), as amended, was passed.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

DEONDR A DIXON INCLUDE PROJECT ACT OF 2026

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for the Senate to pass S. 1838, the DeOndra Dixon INCLUDE Project Act.

Thousands of Americans live with Down syndrome, and yet research has been underfunded for decades.

In 2017, Congress encouraged the National Institutes of Health, the NIH, to launch the INCLUDE Project—an effort to make groundbreaking discoveries about conditions that disproportionately affect people with Down syndrome, like Alzheimer's disease.

The INCLUDE Project brings together multiple NIH institutes under a coordinated approach that is already delivering significant scientific discoveries as well as new treatments.

The bipartisan, bicameral DeOndra Dixon INCLUDE Project Act will officially authorize the INCLUDE Project into law.

The bill will ensure that Congress and the American people have visibility into the scientific breakthroughs that are so needed for this community. The INCLUDE Project is already yielding significant scientific results, and Colorado is at the core of these scientific advances.

Today, Colorado is proudly home to the world's leading Down syndrome advocacy, research, and medical care partners at the Global Down Syndrome Foundation, the Linda Crnic Institute for Down Syndrome, the Alzheimer's and Cognition Center, and the Sie Center at Children's Hospital Colorado.

We need to make sure that improving health outcomes for individuals with Down syndrome remains a priority and do so in honor of DeOndra Dixon, an extraordinary person who was an advocate leaving a legacy that will help improve lives for generations.

This bill has support on both sides of the aisle, including Senators JERRY MORAN and CORY BOOKER and Representatives DIANA DEGETTE and RICHARD HUDSON. We also thank Senators BENNET, PADILLA, CAPITO, COONS, VAN HOLLEN, and OSSOFF for their support.

We are determined to get this bill across the finish line for DeOndra and for the thousands of Americans who will see their lives improve for the better by this critical research.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be discharged and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 1838.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1838) to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out a program of research, training, and investigation related to Down syndrome, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Hickenlooper substitute amendment at the desk be agreed to and that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 6751), in the nature of a substitute, was agreed to as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “DeOndra Dixon INCLUDE Project Act of 2026”.

SEC. 2. DEONDRA DIXON INCLUDE PROJECT.

Part B of title IV of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 284 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 409K. DOWN SYNDROME RESEARCH.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of NIH shall carry out a program of research, training, and investigation related to Down syndrome to be known as the 'Investigation of Co-occurring conditions across the Lifespan to Understand Down syndromeE Project' or the 'INCLUDE Project'.

"(b) PROGRAM ELEMENTS.—The program under subsection (a) shall include—

"(1) high-risk, high-reward research on the effects of trisomy 21 on human development and health;

"(2) promoting research for participants with Down syndrome across the lifespan, including cohort studies to facilitate improved understanding of Down syndrome and co-occurring conditions and development of new interventions;

"(3) expanding the number of clinical trials that are inclusive of, or expressly for, participants with Down syndrome, including novel biomedical and pharmacological interventions and other therapies designed to promote or enhance activities of daily living;

"(4) research on the biological mechanisms in individuals with Down syndrome pertaining to structural, functional, and behavioral anomalies and dysfunction as well as stunted growth;

"(5) supporting research to improve diagnosis and treatment of conditions co-occurring with Down syndrome, including the identification of biomarkers related to risk factors, diagnosis, and clinical research and therapeutics;

"(6) research on the causes of increased prevalence, and concurrent treatment, of co-occurring conditions, such as Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and autoimmunity, in individuals with Down syndrome; and

"(7) research, training, and investigation on improving the quality of life of individuals with Down syndrome and their families.

"(c) COORDINATION; PRIORITIZING NON-DUPLICATIVE RESEARCH.—The Director of NIH shall ensure that—

"(1) the programs and activities of the institutes and centers of the National Institutes of Health relating to Down syndrome and co-occurring conditions are coordinated, including through the Office of the Director of NIH and priority-setting reviews conducted pursuant to section 402(b)(3); and

"(2) such institutes and centers, prioritize, as appropriate, Down syndrome research that does not duplicate existing research activities of the National Institutes of Health.

"(d) CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS.—In carrying out activities under this section, the Director of NIH shall, as appropriate and to the maximum extent feasible, consult with relevant stakeholders, including patient advocates, to ensure that such activities take into consideration the needs of individuals with Down syndrome.

"(e) BIENNIAL REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of NIH shall submit, on a biennial basis, to the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, a report that catalogs the research conducted or supported under this section.

"(2) CONTENTS.—Each report under paragraph (1) shall include—

"(A) identification of the institute or center involved;

"(B) a statement of whether the research is or was being carried out directly by such institute or center or by multiple institutes and centers; and

"(C) identification of any resulting real-world evidence that is or may be used for clinical research and medical care for patients with Down syndrome."

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, I know of no further debate on the bill, as amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

Hearing none, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass, as amended?

The bill (S. 1838), as amended, was passed.

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

RECOGNIZING THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am very pleased that we could pass these two very important bills this afternoon.

I would be remiss if I did not mention that the University of Maine has an excellent lab that specializes in testing ticks for pathogens, and it has worked very closely with our game wardens, with foresters, with the others who are routinely in the woods of Maine and are exposed to tick bites. It actually has developed a little tick kit where you can send the tick into the lab, and it will be tested for pathogens.

So I would be remiss if I did not salute the University of Maine for its excellent work on tick-borne illnesses. This legislation is going to make a big difference in helping to advance their work, as well as the research at the MaineHealth research institute.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). The Senator from Colorado.

DOWN SYNDROME ADVOCACY

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. Mr. President, I also would be remiss if I didn't recognize, once again, the incredible partners that have been behind these Down syndrome advocacy, research, and medical care—primarily the Global Down Syndrome Foundation, but also the Linda Crnic Institute for Down Syndrome, the Alzheimer's and Cognition Center, and the Sie Center at Children's Hospital Colorado.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, a few years ago, I met a young woman who lives in the Chicago suburbs. She told me a story of her college career and what it led to. It was something I had never heard before.

Her experience in trying to pursue a degree leading to law enforcement took her not to the normal, predictable academic sources, but to a new industry, which was opening up in our country—for-profit colleges and universities.

Hers was a sad story. She had been enrolled in one of these for-profit colleges and paid the tuition, took the courses—some of them in person, some of them online—and ultimately went to a counselor and asked if she was headed for a bachelor's degree because of her coursework, and he assured her that she was. She went on to say that she hoped to be able to get into law enforcement—that was her ultimate goal. He gave her assurances that that would happen.

She finished her degree at this for-profit college and university in Chicago and then took her certificate showing her graduation to would-be employers—police departments in the area. They laughed at her, and they said: That is not a real school. That is a for-profit school, and the courses you took don't count. If you want a degree in law enforcement that leads to a real job, you can't get it from a for-profit college and university.

Well, that was a heartbreak to her because she spent years working on it. But what was even worse was, she was so deeply in debt for student loans that she borrowed from this phony university.

She, when I met her, was living in her parents' basement, had no future ahead of her for doing what she thought was the right thing—getting a college degree.

What she didn't know, and what we know now, is that there are two numbers that tell the story of for-profit colleges and universities. You hear their names like University of Phoenix—that is probably the most prominent one people hear over and over—and you see their advertisements and brochures that are mailed to high school seniors enticing them to sign up for these for-profit schools.

What you don't know is that although only 8 percent of high school graduates go to for-profit colleges and universities—8 percent—30 percent of all student loan defaults are the students from these same schools.

What is going on here? Such a low number—8 percent—going on to these schools and such a high number of loan defaults. That is because they issue worthless degrees and entice these students into deep debt.

Many times, a parent or even a grandparent will cosign on the loans for these for-profit schools; and when everything falls apart, as it is likely to, everybody is held liable and responsible. That is why we have had an ongoing battle here in Washington for years against the for-profit college and university industry.

There was a legal battle in a case called *Sweet v. McMahon*, which has gone on for years. It finally, this week, came to an end, and it is an important

case on the subject of for-profit colleges and universities.

It was the largest class-action settlement against the Federal Government in the history of our Nation. That is life-changing news for nearly half a million Federal student loan borrowers who will receive \$23 billion in relief after being misled and defrauded by for-profit colleges.

If you listen to the radio on your morning commute or watch TV after a long day's work, then you have no doubt been hit with flashy advertising from institutions like the University of Phoenix looking to lure in unsuspecting students.

Here is the catch: These institutions often rip off those students, lying about their prospects for a job, their ability to have credits that transfer to any other school, or their likely salary after graduation.

In fact, these schools, as I mentioned, enroll only 8 percent of the students but account for 30 percent of all Federal student loan defaults. Too much debt; too little education.

NPR recently highlighted the story of Jessica Feindt of Michigan. She enrolled at the University of Phoenix to study psychology.

She said she "paid a lot out of pocket" and "through student loans."

She realized later that the school's recruitment counselor had repeatedly misled her, including by telling her that a degree would be accepted by Michigan graduate programs—that was false.

By the time she had learned her degree was useless, she was already underwater and deeply in debt. So she joined this class-action lawsuit, originally filed during President Trump's first term, to get relief. Mr. President, 4 years later—it took 4 years—she will finally see the relief, which she is entitled to.

The first Trump administration—go figure—denied nearly all of these claims by the students, which a Federal court described as "disturbingly Kafkaesque."

But in 2022, President Joe Biden and his administration settled the case and forgave the student loan debts of nearly 300,000 borrowers who had been defrauded. Under the terms of that settlement, borrowers who were not part of the original class had 5 months to file claims. If the Department of Education had not adjudicated the additional claims by early 2026, borrowers still waiting in limbo would be automatically entitled to relief.

But while the Trump administration can quickly green-light permanent tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans, as in their so-called Big Beautiful Bill, they hesitated when it came to giving relief to these students who just wanted a fair shot.

In late 2025, the Trump administration asked for an additional 18 months to review the students' claims—students who were defrauded by these schools.

A Federal district judge said "enough." Last month, a panel of three judges from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit unanimously upheld this decision. Good.

Like their tactics with DACA recipients and the slow-walking of renewal applications with the USCIS, the administration was asking for more time so that they could bleed out these borrowers and deny relief to hundreds of thousands of students deep in debt living in their parents' basement trying to figure out if they had a future.

This is where the priorities lie. I am glad these borrowers, after years and years of waiting, will finally get the relief they are entitled to.

For the last 15 years or more, I have sent a letter to every high school counselor in the State of Illinois. I send it about the first of the year and warn them: Be careful not to let your students be lured into these for-profit colleges and universities. They are going to send them brochures. They are going to tee them up with all sorts of things on the internet. It will be a dazzling display about the college, which is not a real college; it is a for-profit college and university.

Be careful. The time that you spend there, the money that you spend there may be a total waste or worse. It could be a debt that trails you for years and years, if not decades, in your life.

Thank goodness for these students, the thousands of students who are benefited by President Biden's decision. The courts finally stood by them and gave these students a second chance. It has been a situation I have run into time and again. I have threatened some of these for-profit schools as a way of getting them to drop the loans that they were enforcing on these students because I know what happens in the end.

Students need to be careful. You can't go wrong starting with city colleges and community colleges in your community. It is affordable. There are alternatives there. Most of the time, the hours that you earn there are going to be transferable to real colleges and universities. I beg my young students in Illinois to start there and the student counselors to do their job and discourage kids from getting involved with these for-profit schools.

ENERGY GRANT FUNDING

Mr. President, last October, the Trump administration cut more than \$7 billion in energy grant funding going to States across America, including more than \$580 million for Illinois. At the time, the administration promised that these cancellations were meant to cut "waste, fraud, and abuse." But someone once told me that in politics there is always a good reason, and then there is always a real reason.

Of the 284 cancelled grants, how many do you think went to a State that voted for President Trump? 100? 50? 10? Of the 284 grants this administration revoked, only one went to a State that voted for Donald Trump.

The rest went to blue States. At the time, the Trump administration went through pains to tell us that these cancellations were not political. We knew that could not be true. And now, we have proof.

The Department of Energy admitted in court documents that these cancellations were "based solely on the political identity of the recipient's state," or in other words "whether the recipient's location was in a Blue State." The administration wasn't making policy based on what's best for America. They were making decisions based on the President's vendettas. This is petty, it is unlawful, and it is wrong.

It is especially egregious to cancel these crucial grants when Americans' energy bills are skyrocketing. In the last year alone, Illinoisans paid \$210 more for their power, and that number is only expected to go up in light of Trump's war with Iran. You would think that President Trump, who ran on bringing costs down on "day one," would make addressing these record price hikes his top priority. Instead, he has deeply undermined our capacity to lower prices, all to settle petty political scores.

In Illinois, more than \$150 million of the cancelled awards were meant to upgrade the power grid. These upgrades would have made the grid more reliable in the face of rising energy demand. Now, that work is in jeopardy. When the government cancels funding for grid upgrades, those needs do not just go away. Instead, utility companies will pass along the cost of upgrades to consumers. My constituents are paying more for their electricity, heating, and cooling because of President Trump.

That is why I am leading Illinois Democrats in a letter to Secretary of Energy Chris Wright and OMB Director Russ Vought outlining the harm these cancellations have done to our State over the past 9 months. I urge my Republican colleagues to join in urging this administration to reverse course and reject this administration's blatant defiance of Congress' authority under the Constitution. If this precedent is set, your State could be next to see its funding revoked.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO DANIELLE JANOWSKI

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, as the Presiding Officer knows, one of the privileges of being a Senator is the opportunity to work alongside dedicated, talented staff. They take the Senator's ideas and concepts and turn them into real legislation that improves the lives of our constituents and improves our

country. Without them, we are unable to do our job.

As I near the end of my career in Congress, I reflect on the staff who have come and gone and the work we have done that will have a lasting impact on the Nation.

Today, I honor an invaluable member of my team, my HELP Committee deputy staff director, Danielle Janowski. She is leaving Capitol Hill after nearly 17 years of service.

Danielle joined my HELP Committee leadership team in 2023 when I became the ranking member. She had previously worked in the House and for Senators ERNST and THUNE. As deputy staff director, she kept the trains moving. She made sure that staff were all rowing in the same direction and that every committee product was done on time and was of the highest quality.

Danielle is an institutionalist at heart, and it was through that lens that she always fought for the HELP Committee to be strategic, thorough, and professional. She cares about this institution and what it represents. She views it as her duty to mentor other young staffers to carry forward the traditions and collaboration that the Senate deserves.

It is because of her leadership that the HELP Committee has been successful in getting bills signed into law that lower the cost of healthcare, strengthen our education system, empower workers, and enhance our retirement system.

Importantly, Danielle has been a leader in the fight for life. She spearheaded my work to protect unborn babies and mothers, an issue so important to me and to the people of Louisiana. Her passion for this cause and her deep connection with the pro-life community made her indispensable and an effective champion. She was instrumental in leading the first pro-life hearing this Congress, my investigation into abortion pill manufacturers harming mothers, and our efforts to eliminate funding for Planned Parenthood in the Working Families Tax Cuts. None of this would have been possible without her passion, strategic guidance, and unrelenting determination. Babies' lives have been saved, and families are better off because of the work that she led. And what can be more important than that?

What Danielle will be most remembered for on our HELP team is her exceptional leadership and friendship. She is beloved by everyone who worked with her—a trusted and calming presence during transitions and chaotic times. When there was conflict or when staff simply needed someone to talk to, Danielle was there. She is an advocate, a mentor, a sounding board, and a friend to everyone.

Her departure is not only a loss for the office but for the entire Capitol Hill community. But our loss is someone else's gain. I am proud she will continue her public service at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Serv-

ices, leading policy to improve families' health and drive down the cost of care. She will continue to make a positive difference and be an invaluable partner to those who remain in Congress. I look forward to working with her in this new capacity.

It has been a pleasure to watch Danielle grow as a leader and as a person. I thank her for her service to my office, to the Senate, and to the Nation.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BUDD). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Missouri.

RECOGNIZING THE 1960 UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI TIGERS FOOTBALL TEAM

Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, I rise today to honor one of the greatest teams to ever wear the black and gold, the 1960 Missouri Tigers. They finished 11 and 0. They conquered the Big Eight. They defeated the Navy Midshipmen 21 to 14 in the Orange Bowl in Florida. But their greatness can't be measured by their record alone; their story is about something deeper—perseverance after humiliation, accountability in the face of injustice, and the integrity of men who kept their word.

To understand what they accomplished, we must go back 2 years. Dan Devine arrived at Missouri in 1958 and inherited a program searching for its footing. His first team brought one terrible afternoon in Norman, OK. The Sooners beat Missouri 39 to nothing. It was a humiliating, dismantling, and devastating loss.

After the game, Coach Devine stood before his players in the visiting locker room, knowing full well many of those men would graduate having never beaten OU. Coach Devine looked at the younger men and made a promise: Two years from that day, Missouri would return to Norman, and Missouri would win.

That was no small pledge. Oklahoma ruled the conference at that time. The Sooners hadn't lost a conference game at home since 1942. Norman was where the soaring dreams of visiting teams came crashing down to reality. But a promise had been made by Coach Devine, so for 2 years, the Tigers went to work.

By the fall of 1960, Missouri had become a machine—powerful, disciplined, relentless. The Tigers went into Happy Valley and beat Penn State. They traveled to Lincoln, NE, and shut out the Cornhuskers. They defeated the powerhouse that was Colorado. Eight games, eight victories—not a single team put up double digits against them.

Then came the return to Norman. Oklahoma struck first. For a moment, the Tigers were seeing ghosts. For a moment, the boys in black and gold had “Boomer Sooner” ringing in their ears. For a moment, it felt like 1958 all over again. But this Missouri team did not panic; it answered.

Norris Stevenson, one of the great pioneers in Mizzou history, tore down the sideline for a 77-yard touchdown. Later, with Oklahoma threatening to seize the momentum, Stevenson broke free again, this time from 60 yards out. He finished with 169 rushing yards and two touchdowns. Missouri finished with 41 points. And when the clock hit triple zeroes, the scoreboard read “Missouri 41, Oklahoma 19.” Two years from the humiliating loss on the field, Dan Devine and his players walked out of Norman as victors—a promise they had kept.

The Tigers returned home undefeated and ranked No. 1 in the Nation. Only one obstacle remained between Missouri and an unblemished season. Unfortunately, that obstacle was Kansas.

Rivalry games can produce strange results. Sometimes, the underdog rises. Sometimes, the favorite has an off day. And sometimes, Kansas simply uses a player who wasn't eligible to be on the field.

The Jayhawks defeated Missouri on the scoreboard. For a few brief and fraudulent weeks, they called themselves conference champs, but there was a problem: The Jayhawks had discovered that the only way they could execute better than Missouri was by breaking the rules.

The Big Eight ordered Kansas to forfeit the victory and stripped the Jayhawks of the conference title. Kansas could keep the memory of the final whistle; Missouri kept the title. That distinction matters. A football game, yes, is a contest of strength, but it is a contest that is governed by rules. Without rules, victory means nothing. A championship obtained by cheating is not a championship at all.

The people of Kansas have spent more than six decades trying to turn a blatant penalty into a moral victory, but the truth is harder to bear, and facts are stubborn things. Missouri finished 11 and 0, reminding the conference and the American populace that cheaters never truly win.

But Missouri's season wasn't finished. On January 2, 1961, the Tigers took the field in Miami against fourth-ranked Navy. Watching from the stands was President John F. Kennedy. Navy had a Heisman Trophy winner named Joe Bellino. Missouri had a defense built to break the will of its opponent.

The Tigers held that year's Heisman winner just to 4 rushing yards. Then they overcame a 98-yard fumble return. They absorbed every blow Navy could deliver, and when the night was over, Missouri had won 21 to 14, securing the first bowl victory in school history.

Every generation needs examples of men who stuck to their word. Dan