

TRIBUTES TO HON. JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER IV

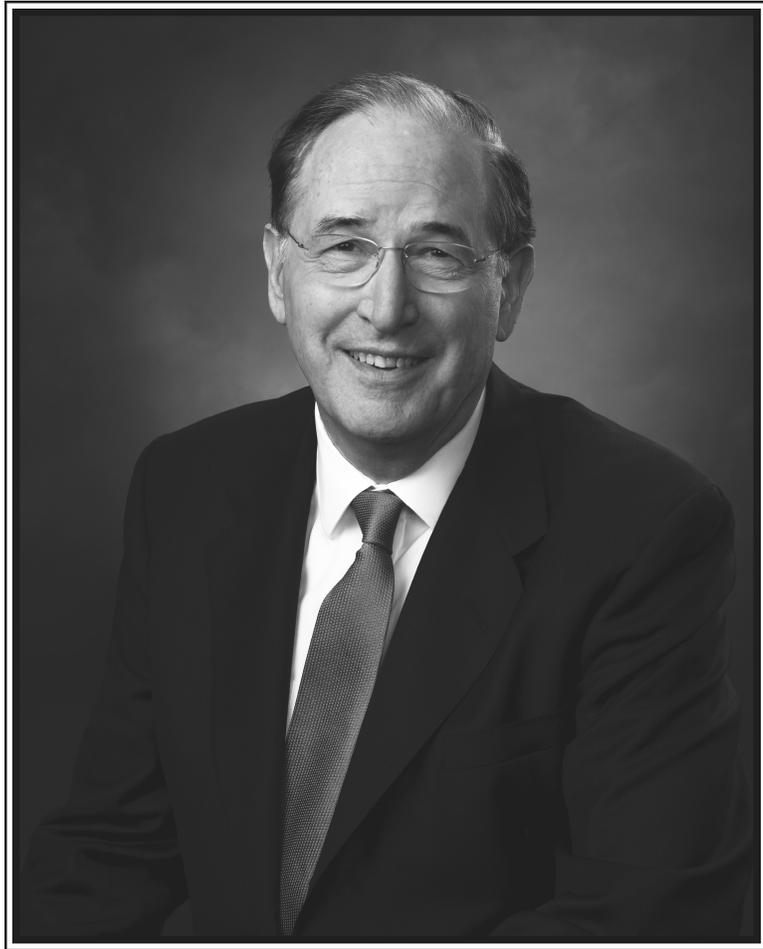
John D. Rockefeller IV

U.S. SENATOR FROM WEST VIRGINIA

TRIBUTES

IN THE CONGRESS OF
THE UNITED STATES





Courtesy U.S. Senate Historical Office

John D. Rockefeller IV

Tributes
Delivered in Congress

John D. Rockefeller IV
United States Senator
1985-2015



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of the
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BIOGRAPHY

Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER proudly served the people of West Virginia for nearly 50 years. JAY ROCKEFELLER first came to West Virginia in 1964 as a 27-year-old VISTA volunteer serving in the small mining community of Emmons. Many of the lessons that JAY ROCKEFELLER learned in Emmons shaped his public service career and led to his lifelong commitment to improving the lives of West Virginians and all Americans.

As a longtime advocate of accessible and quality health care, JAY ROCKEFELLER is recognized as one of the strongest champions for health care reform. He has an extensive and distinguished career of fighting to reduce the number of uninsured children and working families, protecting and improving seniors' and veterans' health care, and fighting for the promised health benefits of retired coal miners and steelworkers.

To diversify and expand economic opportunities, JAY ROCKEFELLER played an instrumental role in attracting new investment and jobs to West Virginia. In addition to bringing a Toyota manufacturing plant to Buffalo, JAY ROCKEFELLER recruited numerous national and international companies to the Mountain State, resulting in thousands of new jobs. At the same time, JAY ROCKEFELLER maintained a strong focus on strengthening core industries such as steel, coal, and chemicals, by fighting for fair trade policies and targeted tax relief. He also worked on policies that allowed for energy independence by drawing on West Virginia's natural resources to produce clean and reliable fuels.

As part of Senator ROCKEFELLER's effort to strengthen the lives of children and families, he coauthored legislation to improve educational opportunities for students, promote stability through adoptions and foster care, increase minimum wage for employees, reduce violence and obscenity on television, and help every school and library connect to the Internet. He also supported numerous targeted tax cuts for working families such as the child tax credit and the earned-income tax credit, and he supported eliminating the marriage penalty.

JAY ROCKEFELLER is also known for his strong national security credentials, support for our Nation's soldiers and veterans, and oversight of the country's intelligence programs. He has been critical of the Nation's mismanagement of the Iraq war, and pressed the United States to refocus its mission and resources on Al Qaeda and global terrorism.

Senator ROCKEFELLER was the chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, having previously served as chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. At the time of his retirement, he also served as chairman of the Health Care Subcommittee on Finance, and as a member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

JAY ROCKEFELLER graduated from Harvard University in 1961 with a B.A. in Far Eastern Languages and History. In 1964, he came to Emmons, WV, where he began his public service career serving the people of West Virginia. In 1966, he was elected to the West Virginia House of Delegates and to the office of West Virginia Secretary of State in 1968. He served as president of West Virginia Wesleyan College from 1973 to 1976. In 1976, JAY ROCKEFELLER was elected Governor of West Virginia, and was reelected in 1980. In 1984, he was elected to the U.S. Senate, and reelected in 1990, 1996, 2002, and 2008.

Since 1967, JAY ROCKEFELLER has been married to Sharon Percy Rockefeller with whom he has four children: John, Valerie, Charles, and Justin. JAY and Sharon are also the proud grandparents of four granddaughters and two grandsons.

Farewell to the Senate

Thursday, December 4, 2014

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to give my remarks while seated at my desk.

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

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. For hours and hours.

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

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, I come today with a spirit of reflection and optimism about our future. I am also compelled toward an honest assessment of where we are as a body—of the promise of what we can achieve when we don't shy away from compromise and what we can't achieve when we refuse to compromise.

I also have very much on my mind that the job of public service is very hard work, and it is an extremely noble and honorable calling. Here in the U.S. Senate we have the unique ability and responsibility to do very big things: ignite innovation in our schools and industries, grow and protect a healthy country, foster global change borne from policies that lead the globe. At the same time, we have the opportunity to touch individual lives with case management. One on one, with casework, we often reach people in their darkest hour.

I love the Senate. I love the intensity of the work, the gravity of the issues, and I love fighting for West Virginians here. I learned to love this fight, as many of you know, as a 27-year-old VISTA worker in the tiny coal community of Emmons, WV. It was a place that set my moral compass and gave me direction, where everything in my real life actually began. It is where I learned how little I knew about the

problems people faced there and in other places in the country, how little I knew, and what a humbling experience that was for me.

My time there was transformative. It explains every policy I have pursued and every vote I have cast. It was where my beliefs were bolted down and where my passions met my principles. Emmons was where I came to understand that out of our everyday struggles we can enlarge ourselves. We can grow greater. Truly making a difference couldn't be an afterthought. It never could. Rather, it requires a singular focus and relentless effort. It would be hard, but the work mattered. That is the deal here.

Important undertakings can't be halfhearted. You have to commit your whole self—almost like pushing a heavy rock uphill. With both of your hands you push, because if you let up for a split second with either hand, you and the rock go tumbling backward into the abyss. There is always so much at stake.

Even today in West Virginia too many are struggling. They are fighting to survive. I called them hard working when I really should say hard surviving, but they are hard working and trying to survive. They are wary of the future. They are scared of their possibilities. Sometimes they are afraid of themselves, which is partly a tradition which says that change is bad, that strangers are bad. I was bad for quite a long time. But that is the way people are. They don't really want to change. So change comes slowly. We just simply fight twice as hard, and nothing stops us.

There is vast dignity and vast honor in helping people. You cannot let go of it. I believe genuinely in the ability of government to do good, to serve, and to right injustices. This is why the Senate must be a place in which we embrace commitment to be deliberative, passionate, and unrelenting. But it must be a place in which we are driven only by the duty and trust bestowed upon us by the people who put us here. This is where everything else should be put aside—boxed out, as it were.

Yes, politics led us here. But this is where we shed the campaign—or should—and embrace our opportunities to lead, to listen, to dig in, to bridge differences, to govern, and to truly make a difference. At our core we must be drawn to the hard, all-consuming policy work that lives in briefings, hearing rooms, and roundtables back in our States. Yet our North Star must always be the real needs of the people we serve.

So policy to me starts with listening. It is seeing the faces of our constituents—not just thinking of a policy in terms of a policy, but a policy in terms of the people whom it would affect. You see your constituents, you hear them out, and you understand their needs and their problems. You get to know them very well, especially in a small State such as West Virginia. Listening to constituents and colleagues here alike is absolutely necessary. Good policy is born out of compromise. Compromise is not easy, but it can happen. If we truly listen to each other, it very well could.

We separate our campaign selves from our public service selves. The cruelty of perpetual campaigns destroys our ability to fulfill our oath of office. It is hard to build a working relationship in this institution without an honest and open approach with our colleagues—Republican or Democratic. But we must build that relationship because together we can do so much, and without it, we can do—as we have seen—nothing.

Listening and compromise were key to the work of the National Commission on Children in the 1990s. I was the chair of that Commission, which included a bipartisan group of government officials and appointed experts in various fields from all backgrounds. There were many of us—32—and we went all over the country for 2 years.

I can tell you that reaching consensus was tough, but we listened, we debated, and we came to trust. Even the most liberal and conservative among us knew that each of us had the best interests of our party. That was not in dispute.

While meeting in Williamsburg, VA, which was where we had been meeting at the time, I had to leave suddenly for an important Senate vote on Iraq. I handed over the gavel to our most conservative Republican member, someone in whom I had trust. That shocked people, but it helped on the consensus.

In the end we were proud to vote 32 to 0 in support of the legislation that we put forward and our policy statement as a whole, and it included both policies. It included the creation of a new Republican child tax credit for the first time and a major expansion of the earned-income tax credit, which has lifted millions of American families out of poverty.

It worked because we listened to one another, respected one another, and we wanted to come to an agreement. It was clear, it was obvious, and there it was—32 to 0. Unbelievable, but it happened.

Is that possible these days? My answer is yes, and I believe that we can see that spirit again as we address the future of the bipartisan Children's Health Insurance Program—CHIP, the way it is known. It currently provides health care to 8.3 million children and pregnant women nationwide, and 40,000 of those are in West Virginia. CHIP is so important to me because it offers health care which is tailored to children; to wit, it has both mental and dental health care tailored to children. It is, in fact, better coverage than the Affordable Care Act provides children.

From those early days at VISTA, I have seen the devastating toll that lack of medical care can extract from a child's well-being and their health—particularly their self-esteem—and even their will to succeed.

Many of you also know the names and faces of children who have gone without access to proper health care, and those are the ones we fight for. That is why CHIP has always been a bipartisan effort, driven by the needs of real kids and their families. Senators Grassley and Hatch were instrumental in its creation over a period of a couple years and long arguments, and they continue to be strong advocates.

The bipartisanship program has opened doors for millions who desperately needed to get into a doctor's office, had never been able to do so, and now are able to do so.

But a warning—every door that CHIP opened will be closed unless we can agree to carry CHIP funding past mid-2015, and I don't know what the prospects for that are. All I know is that if they aren't done properly, those doors close; those kids had access to doctors, but they don't anymore. That is unconscionable to me. We have to look at the faces of those children in our own States and think about that. It is those individual faces that I remember.

Remembering for whom we work is paramount. When any corporate CEO comes to my office, I show them a prized birthday gift to my four children—our four children—my wife is here—a picture of a hard-working coal miner whose face is honest but hurting and very proud. That picture means so much to me because it embodies the spirit of those whom I am here to serve, and silently reminds us of why we must work toward a common ground—why this is not about Democrats and Republicans, but it is about the people whom we are here to serve, bringing different viewpoints to what that means.

Senator Mike Enzi and I are not on the same side of every vote—to put it mildly—but we are very good friends—a friendship that was made years ago when I was serving on the President’s HOPE mission and he was the mayor of Gillette, WY, going slightly crazy trying to build houses for all the people moving in there through coal. He also had sideburns. I say that oftentimes—off the record.

On a gray day in January 2006, West Virginia was frozen in disbelief when we learned that 12 trapped miners were killed in Sago Mine—a mine in the north central part of the State.

In the days that followed, as we struggled to make sense of what had happened, Senator Enzi and Senator Isakson joined Senator Kennedy, Senator Manchin, and myself in West Virginia. The first two did not merely visit—they came to understand. They came to learn. They came to share in the grief and to offer their support to the community, and you could tell that in their faces.

Together, out of tragedy—and because they were members of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee—we forged a compromise on mine safety legislation that brought about, frankly, the strongest safety improvements in a generation. It was huge for us. Only 16 States mine coal, but we are one of them.

To this day, Senator Isakson carries a picture of one of the Sago miners. It is not in the wallet that he is carrying today, but it is in the other wallet back in Atlanta. I don’t care where it is, that picture is in his wallet every single day. We knew that, as public officials, compromising and really leading, men govern—which is why we were there.

Answering the needs of our country is our responsibility, and we do the best when we work shoulder to shoulder. It was working shoulder to shoulder when we set our country on a path to future innovation.

A few years ago, America’s domination in our innovation—our inventions and creative problem solving—was eroding, and we all knew it. We needed to act. We needed to reinvigorate our leadership in those areas and to keep our jobs and our future more secure.

We answered that call with a bipartisan compromise that delivered the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act. I will never forget that. This legislation made historic investments in basic research, science, technology, engineering, and math education.

Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, who preceded John Thune on the Commerce Committee, Senator Alexander, and I sought unanimous consent to get the bill passed—because we thought we worked out the details pretty well—and could do it prior to the recess. Therefore, we had to do it by unanimous consent. But there were five objections holding the bill still.

Instead of retreating to party corners and pointing fingers, we compromised right on that center aisle—right there next to Senator Collins. We wound it up and down, we added a little money and we took a little bit of money off. Mostly we took several billion dollars off. We removed a couple of programs that weren't absolutely necessary to satisfy Kay Bailey Hutchison or Lamar Alexander. And we had ourselves a \$44 billion bill over 5 years on which we agreed. We didn't have to have a vote. Senator Hutchison and Senator Alexander tenaciously worked to clear the holds. It was absolutely beautiful—a \$44 billion program to reinvigorate our Nation, cerebrally and productively. Together we passed a bill to revive our country's flagging global performance ranking and catapult us to success. Reaching moments like those requires persistence. It demands collaboration. It demands trust and compromise, and it is so worth it.

I am driven by the process of creating policy. I love doing that. It is grinding, it is intense, it can be frustrating and sometimes heartbreaking—often heartbreaking. But when we accomplish something that is meaningful to the people who have entrusted us to represent them, there is no greater reward.

We have to know who and what we must fight for in our work and in our own personal views. We have to know and understand those who will benefit and those who will lose. And we have to be ready for it to take a long time—much longer than we thought—sometimes 5 years, sometimes 10 years. That makes no difference. You keep at it. You don't let go of it, because if you keep at it, somewhere along the way some combination of Senators is going to say, yeah, that is OK. And then we get ourselves a bill.

We keep in our souls the faces of the people we try to help, the people in my case who were all too often left behind. The Senate must face serious social and policy issues from health care to cybersecurity, caring for veterans coming home, building up our infrastructure, making our economy work for everyone. These are our core responsibilities. I am proud that we have made some progress. While we seem right now

to be at an impasse, I know the Senate will rise to the position of addressing our issues and at some point in some way it will happen. As a governing body, we must not allow recent failures to take root, to mean too much to us. We must not be focused on episodic “gotcha” issues rather than working to address broader, more systemic problem solving. No one else is going to step in to do this if we don’t.

The truth was on full display a few weeks ago when the Senate failed to move forward on National Security Administration reforms necessary to uphold the mission of protecting our Nation. These are issues on which I have very strong views. I have taken very seriously my 14 years on the Intelligence Committee, as a member and as chairman, because the global threats we face increase daily as the world becomes more connected. We depend on the highly trained professionals at NSA to zero in on those threats. There are only 22 of them that make sort of final decisions. They are highly trained. They have taken the oath of office to protect our Nation.

Now I don’t think we have any excuse to outsource our intelligence work to telecommunications firms. I work on the Commerce Committee. I have seen what the telecommunications companies do when they can get away with it—you know, everything from cramming to—just all kinds of not very nice things. It is the job of government to address this issue. The private sector and the free market alone cannot solve those kinds of problems and should not. That is a government responsibility being carried out with great success.

A lot of people say, oh, what if? But the fact is nobody has ever been able to show me somebody whose privacy has been influenced or broken into by the NSA. Good, hard-working people can be destroyed by circumstances beyond their control. It is our job to not let that happen. It is our job to help to give everyone a fair shot. It is much easier to say than to do, but that is our charge.

Too many children come into a world where circumstances preclude the opportunities they should have. We cannot discount the many challenges our society still faces. It is unconscionable in a country like ours that people go without health care or go hungry or have no place to call home.

When shareholders and the free market cannot or will not solve our problems, it is government’s responsibility to step in every time. People can decry government all they want, but we are here for a reason. When private companies decide there isn’t enough profit to provide Internet to rural areas,

then we step in and we expand broadband, allowing the E-rate to go farther and farther out. It now covers 97 percent of all schools in the country.

Maybe the private sector decides they cannot make enough by insuring the sickest of our children. We must act. That is our core mission. It is who we are as an institution. It is who we must always be.

We have worked to give children a fair shot through the E-Rate Program which introduces the most rural classrooms and the smallest libraries to the world through the Internet, access to a foreign language class or research, and it gives every child a key to unlock their potential. It doesn't mean they will, but it means they can.

We know health care is fundamental to a fair shot as well. We cannot learn or keep a job if we are sick. But providing that care has not always been as profitable as some companies would like. So we make sure millions of Americans could have the dignity of access to health care under the Affordable Care Act.

My friend Sam is one of the faces I will never forget. When he was battling childhood leukemia and hit his lifetime insurance cap—it is a technical term for a savage consequence—his parents' insurance companies walked away from this courageous little fighter. His parents, both schoolteachers, were left with heart-wrenching decisions such as getting divorced—which they considered—so Sam could qualify for Medicaid. Well, in the end it didn't matter; Sam lost his battle with cancer. But today under the Affordable Care Act we have made sure that no insurance companies can abandon someone like Sam when they need help the most. Health care reform will never take away the crushing agony of parents with sick kids. Heartbreaking situations like Sam's drove us to say no more, and we changed the law. Parents deserve to focus every bit of their energy fighting for their kids in every way, not fighting profit-obsessed insurance companies. So we did the right thing.

Government also did the right thing when I fought for what I thought my life depended on, because it did, to pass the Coal Act of 1992, long forgotten. We had to step in and stop some coal companies from walking away from benefits which they had promised by contract to retired coal miners and their widows—folks who were mostly in their seventies and eighties. Passing the Coal Act was enormously important to our country. It not only prevented in absolute terms a national coal strike in 1993, but it delivered on the promise

of lifetime health benefits earned by 200,000 retired coal miners and their widows. They would not have been taken care of if those companies had their way.

Nor can we rely on the private sector alone to take care of our veterans. It is government's duty to provide the health care they earned. We do this through community-based clinics and improved services for PTSD, traumatic brain injury, and family support. It is expensive. Senator Rob Portman and I wanted to pass a bill which would cause the Department of Defense to give all people entering the military mental health screening—not when they came back from Iraq or Afghanistan or somewhere else, but before they went in, and then on an annual basis do that again to build a database, to make sure we knew that we could take care of them better when they came home.

We rightly asked the government to take on some of society's most fundamental needs. What I found in Emmons was a community of genuinely strong and incredibly hard-working people who were essentially on their own trying to survive. The free market had not made sure that communities such as Emmons had good roads or any schools or any schoolbuses or any clean drinking water or safe jobs. But from my point of view they deserved all of those. They deserved to have their shot. Working together on the needs of places such as Emmons speaks to our core human connection and to an aspiration for the greater good.

That is what drove me into public service. It was not something I could help. I just had to do it, to help people with everything that I have. Every individual in every community such as Emmons deserves to have public officials who will fight the big fight and the personal ones, the casework.

Extending a hand on those personal challenges is incredibly meaningful work. Our constituents face these fights with herculean courage but not always the resources to solve the problems in front of them. People like the 8-year-old who needed a bone marrow transplant, a procedure that in 1990 was considered experimental. Our office intervened. We helped that boy get that transplant and he still lives today. As a Senator, you take on those fights with the same vigor as any policy or ideological debate and you are equally proud when you win and you are equally hurt when you lose.

When I came to West Virginia 50 years ago, I was searching for a clear purpose for my life's work. I wanted the work to be really hard, and what I got was an opportunity to work really hard along with a real and utterly spiritual sense of

mission. This work demands and deserves nothing less than everything that we have to give.

I will miss the Senate. Some days I don't want to leave, but it is time, which brings me to some profoundly important notes of gratitude.

To my colleagues, I say thank you.

I have mentioned some. I could mention so many. You are dedicated, you are brilliant, and you are public servants. I love you for putting up with what you have to, particularly the way elections are these days. I respect you for it so much. Thank you for fighting alongside me. Thank you for challenging me.

To my staff, a Senator is really nothing without his staff or her staff, and there is not a more committed, talented, and deeply passionate staff in the U.S. Senate. To my staff, you live and you breathe your work every day. You inspire me with your endless capacity for redressing injustice and fighting for people who need you and come to you in need. You never turned a single West Virginian away. I glory in my gratitude to you.

To my family, who has sacrificed so much, I thank you. I have been selfish in my devotion to my work, and I have been vastly inept in balancing family and work. Public service is not encouraging of balance.

Sharon, you are everything—an extraordinary mother, a remarkable businesswoman, and you are a public servant. You have been a visionary in public broadcasting. Our entire Nation is indebted to your efforts to educate and inform us. The impact you continue to make on public life is truly remarkable. Any achievement I am proud of I share with you eternally.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

Our children—John, Valerie, Charles, and Justin—have all been very thoughtful and endlessly supportive in my absences. Our grandchildren bring me so much joy, and I really hope to see a lot more of them.

To West Virginia, thank you for placing your faith in me—I know it was hard at first—and giving me the greatest reward: the chance to fight for meaningful and lasting opportunity for those who were too often forgotten but absolutely deserve the best.

My fellow West Virginians, I am forever inspired by you, and I am forever transformed by you.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

TRIBUTES

TO

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER IV

Proceedings in the Senate

THURSDAY, *December 4, 2014*

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I have a couple of things I wish to do before I assume the Chair, and I want to express my great gratitude to my friend from Massachusetts for his willingness to sit tight for a little bit.

I was sitting here thinking about the two men I want to talk about, and I was thinking about how similar they are; how different their backgrounds are but how similar their goals in life and their interests in the people they serve. It is the great irony of our democracy that regardless of where you come from, if you come to serve the public, you come to love the public, and you come to believe in the work you do and believe that every person has to be given an opportunity.

So I first want to offer my great condolences to the family of Mayor Denny Walaker from our great city of Fargo, ND. It is truly with a heavy heart I come to the floor to pay tribute to the mayor of Fargo. . . .

Mr. President, I have only known JAY for a couple of years. When I first started, I would go home to North Dakota and people would ask me kind of consistently: So whom do you meet? To whom do you listen? What has been a big surprise? Who are your favorite people?

This may come as a surprise because I didn't come with the idea that I would have an opportunity to work with or spend time with Senator ROCKEFELLER, but I said, "The one person who impressed me the most when I first got here was Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER."

For so many of us, he is a giant—not only physically.

They would say, "What about him?"

One of my finest moments was watching Senator ROCKEFELLER stand and visit with Barbara Mikulski. I am pretty sure she might be the shortest person in the Senate, and I am pretty sure JAY might be the tallest.

I would say, "What you don't know about Senator ROCKEFELLER is that not only in intellectual stature but in physical stature he is a giant of a man."

But it is not the intellectual stature of Senator ROCKEFELLER that impressed me. It certainly wasn't his size that impressed me. It was the size of his heart and how much he cared for the people he served in West Virginia.

I had a chance this year to travel to West Virginia and spend time with the folks of his great State. As they were looking at this transition, they would tell me stories about Senator ROCKEFELLER. They would tell me stories about what he meant to them and the things he had gone out of his way to do—things that were beyond maybe even what the expectations of a populous would ever be, but JAY was there for them, and they knew that every day when he woke up, in his heart were the people of West Virginia. I think we heard that today with his floor speech, as he talked about the impact of coming to West Virginia as a young VISTA worker, the impact it had on him that changed his life and created the man we see today.

So I celebrate a Senator with an enormous intellect and an enormous capacity for facts and data and public policy, but that wasn't what made him a great Senator. What made JAY ROCKEFELLER a great Senator was his enormous heart for the people he served.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I begin by echoing the wonderful analysis of my colleague Senator Heitkamp relative to how much we are all going to miss Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER. As she pointed out, he reminded us today why we all are here, and that is to try to make a difference for our constituents and for the people we serve. No one did that better than JAY ROCKEFELLER. He was always a voice for those most in need and never stopped fighting for the people he served. We will certainly miss him. . . .

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, Scripture tells us that to those whom much is given, much is required. My friend, Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER, can rest well knowing that he has passed that biblical test.

JOHN DAVISON ROCKEFELLER IV, is the eldest son of the eldest son of the eldest son of the founder of Standard Oil—America's first billionaire. Senator ROCKEFELLER grew up amid wealth in Manhattan and Westchester County, NY. He prepped at Exeter and graduated from Harvard. He was destined for a life of comfort and privilege far removed from the

struggle of the poor. But this man, this ROCKEFELLER, consciously chose a different path in life. And he has spent 50 years—two-thirds of his life—working to try to make life better for people who too often have precious little.

He has been a Member of this Senate for 30 years. You can see his legacy throughout West Virginia and across America. You can see it in children who have better schools, miners who have safer working conditions and seniors who have retired with greater dignity. You can see his legacy in the 8 million American children who receive health care through CHIP, the Children's Health Insurance Program, which JAY ROCKEFELLER authored.

You can see his formidable legacy in the additional millions of Americans who—because of the Affordable Care Act—now have reliable health insurance, many of them for the first time in their lives. No one in this Senate has worked longer than he for affordable health care for all Americans.

Unlike some Senators, JAY ROCKEFELLER did not grow up dreaming of being a Senator. As a young man at Harvard, he had planned a career in diplomacy, focusing on Asia. He even took time off from college to live for a while in Japan. But something momentous happened when he graduated from college in 1961. America had just elected a hopeful, young President who made Americans believe, as Senator ROCKEFELLER would later say, "that America could achieve anything."

Senator ROCKEFELLER called his father and his Uncle Nelson, then the Governor of New York, to let them know he had switched from Rockefeller Republican to Kennedy Democrat. The family took the news surprisingly well.

Soon after, Senator ROCKEFELLER was asked by Robert Kennedy to help establish the Peace Corps; he worked for 2 years as a chief assistant to Sargent Shriver, the first Peace Corps director.

In 1964 a friend told him that he did not need to travel halfway around the world to help people in need. There were people here in America, in his friend's home State of West Virginia, living on the outskirts of hope. So JAY ROCKEFELLER asked Bobby Kennedy to send him to West Virginia as a volunteer for VISTA, the precursor to AmeriCorps.

He planned to spend a year in West Virginia. He has never left.

At age 27, in the tiny Appalachian coal mining town of Emmons, WV—population 346—JAY ROCKEFELLER discov-

ered his defining purpose. He saw that people working together and a caring government could transform lives and communities for the better.

In 1966, he was elected to West Virginia's House of Delegates.

In 1968 he was running for West Virginia secretary of state when his last great hero, Bobby Kennedy, was murdered. His Uncle Nelson, Governor of New York, offered repeatedly to appoint his nephew to fill out Senator Kennedy's term in the U.S. Senate—but JAY ROCKEFELLER refused. He told his uncle that if he were going to serve in this Senate, he wanted to earn his seat.

He won that race for secretary of state and went on to serve two terms as West Virginia's Governor.

In 30 years in the U.S. Senate, Senator ROCKEFELLER has been a passionate advocate for his State, for America's children, for seniors, coal miners and others. He not only earned his seat in this body, he distinguished it with his thoughtful, compassionate, dedicated service.

Five years ago, during a late-night Senate Finance Committee markup of the bill that would become the Affordable Care Act, Senator ROCKEFELLER recalled some of the people from that little mining town of Emmons, WV, who he met 50 years ago. It was close to midnight on a Friday night. His voice broke with emotion as he spoke about the hardships and unfairness that pervaded the lives of many of the people in Emmons. He also spoke about the hope that good government programs, like Medicare and Medicaid, had brought to their lives.

He said that he had kept a journal during his VISTA years in Emmons and written detailed notes in it each night. He said that, in 43 years, he had never been able to bring himself to open that book. It was too painful to look back.

When Senator ROCKEFELLER looks back on his years in the Senate, I hope that he will feel a deserved sense of pride in the great and positive changes he helped make possible during his time here. I wish him, his wonderful and accomplished wife Sharon—the daughter of former Illinois Senator Charles Percy—and their family all the best in their future endeavors.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, in his three decades in the Senate, JAY ROCKEFELLER established a strong reputation as a leader who offered innovative, commonsense solutions. He has served the people of West Virginia and of America with

distinction. To me, he has been an admired colleague. He will always be a good friend.

To fully understand Senator ROCKEFELLER's dedication during his 30 years of service in the Senate, it is necessary to go back 50 years, to 1964, when he traveled to West Virginia as a VISTA volunteer. Like Maine, West Virginia is a large rural State with many low-income residents and an aging population. From strengthening our rural hospitals to fighting the scourge of prescription drug abuse, I have been fortunate to work with a leader who sees access to affordable, quality health care not as just a series of issues to address but as his life's work.

One of our greatest achievements together was the inclusion of our language in the 2003 tax bill to provide temporary, targeted fiscal relief to the States—which, at the time, were awash in red ink due to a severe economic downturn driven in large part by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Senator ROCKEFELLER and I worked with then-Senator Ben Nelson on legislation to provide \$20 billion in short-term fiscal relief to States, half of which was used to provide health insurance to low-income citizens through the Medicaid Program. In Senator ROCKEFELLER's words, "No government program more fully embodies our nation's tradition of community and mutual obligation than Medicaid," and he has consistently demonstrated national leadership to provide essential health care services to the most vulnerable among us.

As cochair of the Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease, I have greatly appreciated Senator ROCKEFELLER's leadership on legislative initiatives to combat Alzheimer's, as well as the contributions the Blanchette Rockefeller Neurosciences Institute makes to our understanding and eventual conquest of this devastating illness.

From VISTA volunteer to Governor and Senator, Senator ROCKEFELLER has devoted a half century of intellect, energy, and compassion to others. There is no better way to sum up his contributions than the words the Senator himself chose when he announced his retirement: "Public service demands and very much deserves nothing less than every single thing that you have to bring to bear." That is precisely what Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER has given his State and our country, and I thank him for his commitment, integrity, and friendship.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, It is one of the Senate's great traditions that each retiring Senator is given some time on

the floor to share with us what they have learned during their service in the Senate and their thoughts about our future as a Nation as the chapter of this great adventure in their life comes to a close. Then, we, their colleagues, take a moment to share with them what we have learned from them from their service in the Senate and what lessons we will take with us in the days and months to come from our work together here in the Capitol.

That is why I greatly appreciate having the opportunity to be here for JAY's final speech on the Senate floor. It is one of those moments that I will long remember, another moment in which JAY has not only been a witness to our Nation's history, but in this case, it's another time when he has written it with his well-chosen words.

This moment is one of those I call an instant replay memory. It means so much to me because I have known JAY ROCKEFELLER for a longer time than I have known any other Member of the Senate. In fact, when we first met, serving in Washington, DC, here in the Senate, was the furthest thing from our minds.

When I first had the chance to get to know JAY he was the Governor of West Virginia and I was the mayor of Gillette. Coal was a great part of the day-to-day life of my hometown and his home State and together we were serving on the Energy Council. I remember when JAY came to Gillette for a visit. I had the chance to give him a tour of the mines of the Gillette area. As we were traveling around the site JAY said to me, "You don't mine coal. You just back up the trains and load them up!" I knew immediately what point he was making about the difference between the mines of Gillette and the mines of West Virginia. While the people of my State were working to keep up coal production by removing the surface coal facing one set of hazards, West Virginia miners were heading deep into the earth to face a different kind of challenge.

Make no mistake, mining is both a difficult and a dangerous occupation for all who have dedicated their lives to working the mines. It is labor intensive and every miner who makes it down the shafts to begin work knows there is always a chance they might not be coming home again.

It was a lesson we were reminded of in 2006 when the mine tragedies occurred at the Alma and Sago mines in West Virginia. Those were difficult days for his State. JAY's leadership came to the front as we went as a delegation to console the families of those miners from the Sago mines who had

lost their lives and listened to their concerns. They shared their great loss with us, but as they did there was another message that seemed to come to us from all those with whom we spoke—"Don't let this happen to another family." It was clear. Something needed to be done to bring mine safety up to more modern standards. After meeting with the families we returned to Washington committed to get something done to honor the memory of those lost miners and make mining a safer occupation. As I thought about the beginnings of a legislative response to this issue, I remembered JAY's remarks to me that day in Gillette as he pointed out the different mining standards and the need for different approaches to mining safety. It was clear that a safety policy for our Nation's mines would have to address every facet of the industry and bring more modern technologies to accident prevention and rescue efforts.

Soon after we returned from West Virginia the entire delegation joined together to begin the work that needed to be done to minimize the danger and increase our ability to respond whenever a problem or hazard threatened the miners. The result was the Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response (MINER) Act. It was the first major advance in mining safety that had been legislated in 30 years. That law will always be remembered as a part of JAY's legacy of service to the people of West Virginia. It was a change in our mining communities and businesses that will continue to have an impact in the years to come in our ability to protect the lives of miners all over this Nation. It is also a warning—as use of coal plunges, there is less incentive for safety inventors.

That is just one moment in which JAY made a difference in the present and future of our Nation. If you look at JAY's impressive legislative record throughout his career you will note that he has been productive and effective in promoting his legislative agenda no matter which party was in control of the Congress. That is because JAY has always been willing to work with Members from both sides of the aisle and all sides of an issue. That is why he has been able to accomplish so very much for West Virginia and the Nation.

As we have heard, JAY has quite a remarkable story to tell. It truly began years ago when a younger—but equally committed—JAY ROCKEFELLER came to work in a small town in West Virginia as a part of the VISTA Program. The plan was for him to work with the people of the area for about a year. As the old adage says so well, "God had other plans."

That experience changed his life and his goals for the future. It led him to run for office and then progress in opportunity and service to the people of West Virginia as he worked his way to the U.S. Senate and this moment on the Senate floor.

So, that is what I have learned from you, JAY. As I mentioned, there are times when we are sure what we want to do with our lives, but “God has other plans” which often leads to something better for us and the world around us than what we were planning on. If JAY hadn’t made that decision back when he first arrived in West Virginia to do whatever he could to make life better for the people of that State it might never have been accomplished quite the way he has been able to do it. I have always suspected that God gives us all a mission in life, a chance to respond to a higher calling and make that inspired moment the beginning of our life’s work. JAY ROCKEFELLER did that and that is the lesson I have learned from him.

Thanks for your service in the Senate, JAY, and for all you have done for West Virginia and our Nation. Thanks, too, for your friendship. Fortunately, you will never be more than a phone call away. Keep in touch. Your comments, suggestions, and West Virginia commonsense ideas will always be welcome. Diana joins in sending our best wishes to you. We will look forward to seeing you in the days and months to come.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, today we honor the distinguished career of my dear friend and colleague, Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER of West Virginia.

As a young man, with all his talents—and coming from a prominent family—there were many things JAY ROCKEFELLER could have done with his life.

His choice says more about him than any speech in the Senate ever could: He chose to devote himself to serving others.

So he volunteered for the Peace Corps, and then the AmeriCorps VISTA Program, which brought him to the small mining town of Emmons, WV.

That is where he discovered the purpose that would define his career—and his life.

From that day forward, he took a personal stake in the issues that affected West Virginians.

That passion became stronger as he climbed the ranks of government, from secretary of state, to Governor, and finally to U.S. Senator. Through it all, he remained grounded by a sensibility of what was best for the people he met in Emmons—and throughout the Mountain State.

He met West Virginians who could not afford basic health care—and so Senator ROCKEFELLER became a champion for reform that made health care a right, not a privilege.

He met West Virginians who were hurt in mining accidents, or made ill from the air they breathed, and he fought for reforms that improved their safety.

He has always understood that our Nation is best when we have jobs that make the middle class strong, like manufacturing. The coal, steel, and chemical industries in West Virginia have all relied on his support.

He believed that government should fight for those who were least able to fight for themselves.

This compelled him to go to work on behalf of children whose families did not qualify for Medicaid—and yet could not afford private insurance. In 1997, he was a leader in creating the Children’s Health Insurance Program, known as CHIP, and ever since, those children would not be allowed to slip through the cracks in our health care system.

Senator ROCKEFELLER’s impulse to speak up for those who did not have a voice led him to seek improvements for the care of foster children, working to expand incentives for parents to adopt so that foster children could have a permanent home.

On the other end of the spectrum, he was compelled to fight to keep Medicare strong, so that it had the funding it needed to make good on its promise to our Nation’s seniors. He was committed to making sure that all safety net programs stayed true to their founding principles, which is why he has resisted efforts to privatize Social Security and promoted programs that increase seniors’ access to affordable prescription drugs.

Even as he tackled the tough issues, Senator ROCKEFELLER’s charm and sincerity were key to bridging partisan gaps and building consensus necessary to get bills passed.

Senator ROCKEFELLER leaves the Senate, after a distinguished career. Fortunately for us, his legacy of compassionate and conscientious service will endure long into the future.

I know how hard it is for Senator ROCKEFELLER to leave this Chamber. I hope he knows that it is hard for us to watch him go.

I thank Senator ROCKEFELLER, for his tireless service to this country, and for his faithful service to the people of West Virginia.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, Senator ROCKEFELLER's nearly 50 years of public service has left West Virginia and our country a better place. Whether it is promoting health care, education, economic growth, or veterans, Senator ROCKEFELLER has led the way, acting to improve the lives of hard-working Americans.

When it comes to protecting consumers and children, Senator ROCKEFELLER has been a legislative partner and a national leader. I want to especially point out his tireless efforts to increase educational opportunities for children around the country.

The E-rate has proved essential and exceptional in linking up schools and libraries to the Internet. The E-rate has democratized access to brighter futures and better technology. The E-rate is the only technology that has been deployed as fast in poor neighborhoods as it has in rich ones.

Chairman ROCKEFELLER, your legacy will live on for decades to come. Whether in rural areas, or urban ones, affluent, or low-income communities, all corners of our great Nation will continue to feel your impact.

Finally, I want to personally thank you for your friendship throughout my tenure in Congress.

These walls will feel emptier without you next year.

I wish you, your wife Sharon, and the rest of your family many more years of fulfillment in your next endeavors.

MONDAY, *December 8, 2014*

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is said that you do not choose your family, and that is true. We are born into our families. We have no way to determine the family we are born into. Yet as a 27-year-old JAY ROCKEFELLER chose to make the people of West Virginia his family. How did that happen? How did JAY ROCKEFELLER, born in New York to one of the most famous American families, one of the great dynasties in the history of this country, end up in West Virginia?

He was an undergraduate student at Harvard. He decided he did not like some of the things Harvard was doing, and so he left. He dropped out of school and went to Japan. He spent 3 years in Japan. He became an interpreter. He knows the Japanese language extremely well. He loves the Japanese people. He started out at Harvard. As I indicated, after his junior year, he left for Japan. He was there for 3 years.

He came home, returned to Harvard, and finished his degree.

JAY ROCKEFELLER, as a 27-year-old, could have done anything, gone anyplace, gotten any education, started any business, or he could have sat around at a home on one of the beaches around the world and just done nothing. But that is not JAY ROCKEFELLER. He wanted to do something. He did not know what he wanted to do. This ROCKEFELLER wanted to do something that was different.

A friend of his published here for many years a magazine called the Washington Monthly, a guy by the name of Pete Peters. He was a man-about-town. Everybody liked him very much, and he was very close to JAY ROCKEFELLER. So JAY talked to him one day trying to find what he should do in life. Here he was, one of the wealthiest men in America. He had a Harvard degree.

“What should I do?”

Pete Peters told him, “What you should do is go someplace and work with poor people.”

“Where should I go?”

“Why not West Virginia?”

“West Virginia?”

“West Virginia.”

So he joined AmeriCorps. As a VISTA volunteer, he moved to the small mining community of Emmons, WV. That was in 1964. This man of means, this man of stature, this man of notoriety went to this small little town in West Virginia.

It was not easy for JAY ROCKEFELLER to suddenly find himself in a setting he had never imagined. In the first 6 months he was there, he could hardly get anyone to talk to him. He is kind of an intimidating man. His name is ROCKEFELLER. He is 6 feet 7. But eventually his goodness came through. The people of Emmons, WV, started talking to him, and they really liked the man. From 1964 when he moved there, he knew he wanted to identify with poor people, and that is what he has done since 1964.

In 1966 he was elected to the West Virginia House of Delegates Assembly.

In 1968 he was chosen to serve as the secretary of state in the State of West Virginia.

He then became the president of West Virginia Wesleyan College and served there for 3 years.

He then was twice elected Governor of the State of West Virginia. He served from 1976 to 1984.

Governor ROCKEFELLER became Senator ROCKEFELLER in 1985. From the time he first stepped onto the Senate floor, he made it clear he was here for one reason: to fight for the people of West Virginia. Senator ROCKEFELLER fought to provide his constituents with health care. He was an architect of CHIP, a children's health program. It is an insurance program. The Children's Health Insurance Program is one of the most important health initiatives in America's history for kids. He fought to protect Medicaid for half a million West Virginians and for millions and millions of Americans.

He has been a senior member of the Committee on Finance, the chairman of the Commerce Committee, and chairman of the Intelligence Committee. What a remarkable career he has had. He fought very hard to protect the American people from President Bush's efforts to privatize Social Security. He has protected retirement disability benefits by doing that for millions and millions of Americans.

His efforts to help West Virginia have not been confined to this building. As the senior Senator from West Virginia, this big man—I repeat, 6 feet 7—with a very long reach, has used that reach to bring jobs to his home State as Governor and as Senator. Because of his recruiting, there are thousands and thousands of West Virginians employed at the Toyota factory in Buffalo; Hino Motors in Williamstown; and at the Kureha plant in a town called Belle. Thousands and thousands of jobs. Diamond Electric, Nippon Thermostat, and NGK Spark Plugs are all companies Senator and Governor ROCKEFELLER helped bring to West Virginia.

The people of West Virginia have been blessed to have Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER as a family member for the last 50 years. They have been blessed to have a person of his integrity and tenacity looking out for them in the Senate.

My respect for JAY ROCKEFELLER is unlimited. He has been my colleague for the entire time I have been in the Congress—32 years. Now, as his time in the Senate comes to an end, he will be sorely missed.

I am sure JAY is looking forward to spending more time with Sharon, this wonderful woman—and by the way, whose father was a U.S. Senator—and their children John, Valerie, Charles, and Justin, and their six grandchildren.

I so admire this good man. I congratulate him on a very distinguished career, including five terms in the U.S. Senate and two terms as Governor. I wish him the very best in life.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I have only heard two of the comments of the majority leader—one for the distinguished

Senator from Michigan [Mr. Levin] and one for the distinguished Senator from West Virginia [Mr. ROCKEFELLER]. I have to say that both of those Senators deserve a lot of commendation for the service they have given to the Senate. They are both friends of mine. . . .

Senator ROCKEFELLER is on the Finance Committee with me. He is one of the senior people on that committee and certainly one of the people I have enjoyed working with. We worked a number of years ago on the CHIP bill, the SCHIP bill, and he was of inestimable help there. I have to say he has been a wonderful member of the very important Finance Committee.

I will miss both of these brethren and wish them the very best in their lives as they go through the remaining years of their lives, and hopefully they and their families will have a wonderful time together.

Mr. NELSON. . . . I reflect back just a few days ago when Senator ROCKEFELLER gave his farewell speech. He is another extraordinary public servant who has demonstrated selfless public service. He is a Senator who, because of his family heritage, could have done anything he wanted, but he chose—after a life of privilege, growing up as a young man, and after having spent time abroad—to go to one of the poorest States in the Union. He first was a volunteer to the poor and later developed a distinguished record of public service that included secretary of state, Governor, and now a five-term Senator. I will speak later about other colleagues who are leaving.

These are just two examples. Senator ROCKEFELLER and my seatmate Senator Pryor are extraordinary public servants who when you talked to them and when you looked in their eyes, if they gave you their word, that was it. You didn't have to worry about it.

Some say it is a throwback to the old days. The old days is a throwback that we ought to go to, when if a Senator gave you his or her word, that was it, when there was civility among Senators, when there was not an avalanche of outside money that came in to try to define you with statements that were not true.

We see what has happened to our politics in America today with exceptional millions of dollars coming into a State, buying up television, to create a statement in 27 seconds often that is not true and that fact checkers say is not true, factcheck.org and Politifact.

Yet when we talk to the TV stations and the broadcast stations and show them the fact checkers, they will still run the TV ads. But rather than talk about the mistakes that were made with the *Citizens United* Supreme Court case and missing by one vote in this Chamber several years ago—we had 59 votes and we needed 60 to cut off debate so we could get to the DISCLOSE Act, a DISCLOSE Act that did not counter the Supreme Court decision, it just said if you are going to spend all this money, you are going to have to say who it is that is doing the contribution.

Of course, if we had been able to pass that, then all of this money would not be flowing because it is hiding behind this masquerade of the Committee for Good Government or the ABC committee for whatever. So they masquerade behind that veil to spend all of that money for their ultimate purposes.

It caught a number of our people. Just look at what happened in the runoff election this last Saturday. Look at the imbalance of the spending on television that occurred since the general election and the runoff in the State of Louisiana.

I will speak about Senator Landrieu, Senator Udall, Senator Begich, and Senator Kay Hagan later.

I wanted particularly to talk about Senator ROCKEFELLER, our chairman of the Commerce Committee, and Senator Pryor, one of the finest public servants I have ever had a chance to serve with.

TUESDAY, *December 9, 2014*

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I would like to take a few minutes to salute my colleagues who are departing the Senate at the end of this year with the conclusion of the 113th Congress: Mark Begich of Alaska, Saxby Chambliss of Georgia, Tom Coburn of Oklahoma, Kay Hagan of North Carolina, Tom Harkin of Iowa, Mike Johanns of Nebraska, Tim Johnson of South Dakota, Mary Landrieu of Louisiana, Carl Levin of Michigan, Mark Pryor of Arkansas, JAY ROCKEFELLER of West Virginia, Mark Udall of Colorado, and John Walsh of Montana.

They have all worked hard, ceaselessly giving their energy and considerable time and service to their constituents, to their home States and to our country. I want to thank them for their service and for their kindness to me over many

years in so many cases. In particular, I want to say a few words about these colleagues. . . .

Today, we are recognizing the work of JAY ROCKEFELLER as chairman of the Intelligence Committee, along with Senator Feinstein. But he has been such a stalwart in so many different areas: as chairman of the Commerce Committee, someone who has championed the Children's Health Insurance Program, someone who has been in the lead with respect to advocacy for the E-rate, which helps bring broadband connectivity to all of our libraries and schools, to EPSCoR. I can go on and on for a remarkable career by a remarkable individual, a real gentleman, someone whom I am proud to call a friend and am deeply indebted to his friendship. . . .

Along with all of my other colleagues who are leaving us at the conclusion of the 113th Congress, let me thank them for their service, their dedication to improving the lives of Americans, and on a very personal level for their friendship. I wish them all well.

WEDNESDAY, *December 10, 2014*

Mr. COONS. . . . As I close, I would also like to thank those of our colleagues who will be leaving the Senate after the New Year.

It is an incredible privilege to work in this Chamber and to represent the people. Every day I am awed by the dedication and talent of many of my colleagues, public servants who come to work to fight for their States and their government.

To those who are ending their service in the Senate, know that I value your friendship and partnership. It has been an honor to work with you, and I thank you for all you have done for our Nation.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I add my congratulations to Senator Chambliss. It is strange, coming here in the last 2 years and getting to serve only 2 years with giants in the Senate like Saxby, like Tom Harkin, and like Senator ROCKEFELLER, whose legacies will live on. . . .

ORDER FOR PRINTING OF SENATE DOCUMENT

Mr. BENNET. I ask unanimous consent that the tributes to retiring Senators be printed as a Senate document and

that Senators be permitted to submit tributes until December 23, 2014.

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

THURSDAY, *December 11, 2014*

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I wish to share a few remarks as we mark the end of the long tenure of Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER and his service to his country and to the Senate. He has served in the Senate for 30 years. He served two terms as Governor of West Virginia, and served as secretary of state, and in the house of delegates.

He came to the State of West Virginia as a young VISTA volunteer. I have heard him tell the story about that, how he really wanted to participate and reach out and help others. He came to West Virginia as a young man and stayed. He worked with people in a small mining community. His heart was right to try to be helpful. He came from a prestigious family, but he wanted to help others.

He has been a remarkable Member of the Senate for 30 years now. He has a brilliant mind, capable of grasping all sorts of thoughts, but he also has the ability to delight in little things. One of those is sports. He has a tremendous capacity to have in that brain of his sports trivia. He likes the Atlanta Braves. He knows Southeastern Conference football. I have been pleased to be able to chat with him on occasion on the floor.

It just goes to show a lot of times people don't realize that we get along pretty well in this body personally. We may disagree on issues, but we care about one another. JAY ROCKEFELLER has always been nice to me. He has always been a friend. He has always been courteous. He has always been collegial to me, and I have appreciated that over the years. So I wish to thank him for his service to his country, his commitment to others, and I wish him Godspeed in his further endeavors.

FRIDAY, *December 12, 2014*

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I pay tribute to my friend and colleague JAY ROCKEFELLER, who will soon retire from

the Senate. I have known JAY for many years. He is a man of principle who has dedicated his life to serving the citizens of West Virginia. He is a serious legislator and an honorable man. I will miss him.

Senator ROCKEFELLER is a member of a prominent and distinguished American family. He is the great-grandson of John D. Rockefeller, the founder of Standard Oil. JAY was born in New York City and attended school at Phillips Exeter Academy and Harvard College, from which he earned an A.B. After college JAY worked for the Peace Corps and the Department of Far Eastern Affairs. He then went to work for the Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) Program, during which time he moved to West Virginia.

Senator ROCKEFELLER began his political career in 1966, when he was elected to the West Virginia House of Delegates. Two years later he became the West Virginia secretary of state. After a brief stint as president of West Virginia Wesleyan College, JAY returned to public service in 1976, when he was elected Governor of West Virginia. Following two successful terms as Governor, he won election to the U.S. Senate in 1984, where he has served ever since.

Senator ROCKEFELLER has held a number of important positions in the Senate, including chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, where I was privileged to serve with him. This is a crucially important committee that deals with some of the weightiest issues that come before Congress. JAY led the committee with equanimity and respect. His work helped keep our country safe.

Senator ROCKEFELLER has also been an active legislator. I was honored to work with him on the creation of the State Children's Health Insurance Program, or SCHIP, which has made health insurance available to millions of children. Other issues JAY and I have worked on together over the years include tax reform, stem cell research, and protecting the American flag. He and I did not always see eye to eye, but I always knew he did what he thought was right.

Mr. President, I am grateful to have been able to serve alongside Senator ROCKEFELLER these past 30 years. He's a man of deep conviction, and a man utterly devoted to the people of his home State of West Virginia. I wish the very best for him, his wife Sharon, and their family as they enter the next chapter of their lives.

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, as the 113th Congress comes to a close, the time has come to say goodbye to several colleagues and friends who will leave at the end of this Con-

gress. Today, I would like to pay tribute to our friend and colleague, JAY ROCKEFELLER. Senator ROCKEFELLER has served the people of West Virginia for 50 years, the last 30 of them in the U.S. Senate.

While Senator ROCKEFELLER has accomplished many notable things in his decades of service, you can really sum up much of what he did for our country in one word—kids. Nelson Mandela once said “There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.” JAY ROCKEFELLER worked tirelessly to ensure that we never lost sight of our children as we worked on issues large and small.

One key example of his advocacy is the Children’s Health Insurance Program or CHIP as it is better known. In the 1990s, Members like JAY ROCKEFELLER came together and created CHIP to ensure low-income children of working parents had access to health care. When my father was Governor of Pennsylvania, he signed into law the CHIP Program that initially insured over 50,000 children across the State and served as a model for the national program. On a personal level, I thank Senator ROCKEFELLER for helping to expand this program to children around the country and I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure CHIP remains strong for children in the years ahead.

In 2009 health care reform was on the agenda again and JAY ROCKEFELLER played a key role in getting a number of important provisions included. He pushed to expand Medicaid and to make sure insurance companies actually spent the bulk of dollars on health care and not administrative costs. He also worked to ensure that information provided to consumers buying insurance on the exchange could be understood by all, and, of course, he led the charge to protect CHIP kids and make sure they did not end up with the short end of the stick.

Senator ROCKEFELLER’s work extends far beyond health care and children. Coal miners and their families have had no better friend in the Senate than JAY ROCKEFELLER. He has tirelessly fought and won battles to protect their health, safety, and pensions while also protecting and preserving black lung benefits for workers made sick by doing their jobs. His advocacy in this body will be missed. Now it is up to the rest of us to carry the torch.

Senator ROCKEFELLER is quoted as follows in the Charleston Daily Mail last year:

ROCKEFELLER said he knew all the Kennedys well but liked Bobby best. “Because he struck me,” ROCKEFELLER said. “He had a soul, and there are a lot of photographs of him in West Virginia later when he ran for president sitting on a slag heap, looking mournful, looking off into the distance, thinking, ‘Why does this condition exist, what can I do?’”

JAY ROCKEFELLER also has a soul and he has spent his life asking those same questions and finding ways to make things better. We will miss him in the Senate. We will miss his conscience and his voice, but we will never forget his example. I thank him for his decades of service and wish him well.

MONDAY, *December 15, 2014*

Mr. WYDEN. ... With respect to Senator ROCKEFELLER, one of the challenges right now for some of us is to get our arms around the idea that Senator ROCKEFELLER will no longer be serving in the Senate. This is a challenge for me especially because I remember watching Senator ROCKEFELLER’s work years before I had entered public life.

Right after I got out of law school, we started the Oregon Gray Panthers. I had a full head of hair and rugged good looks. We were passing around petitions for the wonderful work Senator ROCKEFELLER was doing on behalf of the elderly. He was in the vanguard even then in the health care field. I know the Presiding Officer from the State of Wisconsin has been very interested in this—in ensuring that there are more options for older people, particularly in the long-term care setting.

We were passing petitions around—the Gray Panthers back in those days—urging that Americans and the Senate all rally to Senator ROCKEFELLER’s work to ensure that there were more alternatives to nursing home care. It was just the beginning of the effort to create more options for home care for seniors. Now it is an idea we pretty much accept as gospel. But Senator ROCKEFELLER, as has been the case, was way ahead of his time. That is the time when I began to really be a charter member of what I guess I will call the ROCKEFELLER grassroots delegation that was sweeping the country for health care reform.

As the Presiding Officer and our colleagues know, Senator ROCKEFELLER’s accomplishments in a number of fields have been exceptional. They span a host of issues, from cybersecurity to reducing violence on television to improving

our transportation system and, of course, we have all seen his leadership in reining in some of the excesses of the CIA. He is a very strong supporter of the rank and file—the thousands of individuals who work in the intelligence field who are as patriotic as it is possible to be and do wonderful work to protect our people. Senator ROCKEFELLER has said that as they do that work, they are stronger when there is vigorous congressional oversight, and we are very grateful for his work. I have sat next to him on the Intelligence Committee for many years and have watched his leadership there.

Today, though, as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, I wish to focus in particular on Senator ROCKEFELLER's work on that committee. I will start by noting that his service on the Finance Committee is really a family legacy. His great-grandfather, Nelson Aldrich, the Senator from Rhode Island, not only served on the Finance Committee but is often described as one of the committee's most distinguished chairs. On the committee Senator ROCKEFELLER has exercised similar influence.

JAY ROCKEFELLER has served on the Senate Finance Committee for 28 years—longer than all but 11 other Senators—and his tireless work on the committee has had a profound and positive impact. He has been a leader on maintaining a strong U.S. trade policy, while thinking creatively about Asia long before it became cool. He also has been a great advocate for fairness in the tax system—something I know many of us consider a special priority at this time.

Senator ROCKEFELLER has paid special attention to programs such as the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program, including the health coverage tax credit, the earned-income tax credit, and the child tax credit. That was drawn from recommendations of the National Commission on Children which Senator ROCKEFELLER, as is the case so often, ably chaired.

So I wish to speak about the common denominator in these kinds of efforts. It is really pretty direct because it captures JAY ROCKEFELLER's approach to public service and to life: Reach out to those who don't have power and clout, those who don't have a lot of political influence and political action committees, and lend a hand. Make the difference. Particularly for millions of Americans to whom JAY ROCKEFELLER gave voice, now they have an opportunity—millions of men, women, and children—to enjoy better lives and a more secure future because of JAY ROCKEFELLER's strong moral compass.

Now, as I touched on at the beginning of my comments, my first experience in watching JAY ROCKEFELLER—I am of the view that health care is the area where Senator ROCKEFELLER’s legacy is going to be especially important. In a sense, JAY ROCKEFELLER always captured the notion that if you and your loved ones don’t have their health, it is pretty hard to do anything else. In other words, if you aren’t feeling well, if you are facing a chronic illness, how do you jump up and enjoy the wonderful outdoors of Oregon, Wisconsin, and West Virginia? So JAY ROCKEFELLER always said that health care was a special priority for him, and we see it in a whole host of accomplishments.

JAY ROCKEFELLER has been a leader in the fight against Alzheimer’s and other neurological conditions. He was a powerful and persistent voice, particularly in advocating for low-income Americans in the Affordable Care Act. I am especially pleased to note that Senator ROCKEFELLER, along with my colleague and partner on the Finance Committee Senator Hatch, really played the key role in creating the Children’s Health Insurance Program. This is a program I hope not only will be extended but also strengthened in the next Congress. As many Members of this body know, JAY ROCKEFELLER’s work to protect and expand Medicaid is without equal.

Over the past half century, we can count on one hand the Senators who have done an extraordinary amount to improve the health care of America, and when we look at that handful of Senators, JAY ROCKEFELLER is right at the top.

I started with a personal comment about JAY ROCKEFELLER, and I wish to end with one. When Chairman Baucus chose to take the Ambassador position in China, where he is doing a fine job, JAY ROCKEFELLER was next in line to replace Chairman Baucus. Make no mistake about it, JAY ROCKEFELLER would have been an outstanding chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. But his decision to decline that opportunity and to continue his work on the Senate Commerce Committee allowed me to accept the position as the chairman of the Finance Committee and the responsibility that has gone along with it. That kind of approach was really characteristic of JAY ROCKEFELLER—not wanting to push himself out front. As I have indicated, I told him I think he would have been a superb chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. But I wish to note on the personal side, as I started on the personal side, my thanks to JAY ROCKEFELLER.

So I close simply by saying that now, as the chairman of the Finance Committee and in the years ahead, my goal—when we take up issues such as health care, tax fairness, and a trade policy that lets us tap global markets but works for the middle class worker—and I think it is the goal of other members of the Senate Finance Committee—it is our goal in the days ahead to live up to the high standard that Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER has set.

With that, I yield the floor on my remarks about Senator ROCKEFELLER.

Mr. THUNE. I thank my colleague from Oregon Senator Wyden for his continued leadership on this issue. I want to echo what he said about Senator ROCKEFELLER.

I had the opportunity to serve as his ranking Republican on the Senate Commerce Committee and really enjoyed serving with him during his chairmanship and learned a lot. He is someone who has great experience here—36 years in the Senate. I have been here now for 10. So I have a lot to learn from people like Senator ROCKEFELLER.

We did some good things together. We just recently got through the Senate the cybersecurity bill that the Commerce Committee passed earlier this year and the satellite television reauthorization this year. It is always somewhat controversial to move that legislation, but we were successful in getting that ultimately enacted this year. We moved the STB reauthorization bill, Surface Transportation Board, which had rail reforms in it, out of the Commerce Committee. Unfortunately, they didn't get it considered on the floor of the Senate but had hearings on numerous issues that are under the jurisdiction of the Commerce Committee. I appreciate so much Chairman ROCKEFELLER's leadership and his service here. Like him, I come from a small State. We share a lot of things in common. We came from small communities and represent people who work hard and just want a fair break and want to make sure that the people they elect to represent them in Washington, DC, are staying focused on the issues that are important to their livelihood. I appreciate his leadership on those issues.

I have to say that he stands tall among our colleagues. I think he probably has the distinction of being the tallest Senator. The Senator from Oregon, Senator Wyden, and I are not far behind. But if Senator ROCKEFELLER ever stood up all the way, I think he would have us by several inches. The tall guy caucus here in the Senate will be less represented when Senator ROCKEFELLER departs. I have always

enjoyed his sense of humor and the way in which he approaches the job and the passion he feels for public service. We wish him well in his retirement and thank him for a long and distinguished career here in the Senate.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, for nearly 30 years, West Virginians have elected JAY ROCKEFELLER to represent them in the U.S. Senate. When he retires in January, he will leave a record of tireless service on behalf of West Virginians and all Americans.

Senator ROCKEFELLER ranks among the champions of affordable health care. He coauthored the Child Health Insurance Program, CHIP, a program I have also been proud to support, which provides health care coverage to more than 6 million children each year, who would otherwise be uninsured. A former chair of the Veterans Affairs Committee, he authored legislation to improve care for our Nation's heroes. He was instrumental in the creation of a commission on long-term care to look for solutions to a lack of essential long-term medical support for millions of Americans. With Ted Kennedy, he led the charge for health care reform in the Senate in the 1990s. The list of achievements goes on.

For nearly 50 years, Senator ROCKEFELLER has served the people of West Virginia as a State representative, a secretary of state, a college president, a Governor, and, for the last 30 years, as a U.S. Senator. He is a dear and valued friend. I wish JAY and his wife Sharon the very best as he retires from the Senate.

TUESDAY, *December 16, 2014*

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor one of my best friends in the Senate and a longtime public servant whom I greatly admire, JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER IV.

In 1964, in Athens, OH, President JOHNSON went to Ohio University, and he said:

Poverty hides its face behind a mask of affluence. But I call upon you to help me to get out there and unmask it, take that mask off of that face of affluence and let the world see what we have, and let the world do something about it.

Several months later, JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER IV, 27 years old, came to West Virginia as a VISTA volunteer. Well educated and well connected, JAY ROCKEFELLER could have cho-

sen any career he wanted. But to him, it was about public service.

This year marks JAY's 50th year in public service. He found himself in Emmons, WV. Emmons, WV, is a small town. JAY didn't shy away. JAY didn't keep his distance. He wanted to know the people he was going to be working with, and he set out to do that. For 2 years, he worked alongside the people of Emmons for accessible health care, for education, for opportunities. His work included dismantling and moving a condemned elementary school from a neighboring town onto a flatbed truck, and establishing it in Emmons as a community center.

JAY never forgot that, JAY, who in this Chamber sits across the aisle from me at this desk. I was sitting here 2 weeks ago and JAY was talking about Emmons. He said going to Emmons—and I will quote from his farewell speech 2 weeks ago to the Senate:

That set my moral compass and gave me direction. Where everything in my real life began. Where I learned how little I knew about the problems people face. I was humbled by that lesson.

He went on to say:

My time in Emmons was transformative. It explains every policy I pursued and every vote I have cast. It was where my beliefs were bolted down. And where my passion met my principle.

Fifty years ago, JAY learned those lessons. For 50 years, as a VISTA volunteer, as a State legislator, as the secretary of state, as the Governor of West Virginia, and as a Senator for three decades from West Virginia, he learned those beliefs. They were bolted down, and he practiced those beliefs.

In 1966, he was elected to the West Virginia House. Two years later, JAY had an opportunity that most people I know would not have refused.

Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated—the Senator from New York at that time. In June 1968, the Governor of New York, Nelson Rockefeller—JAY ROCKEFELLER's uncle—offered that appointment to the U.S. Senate to JAY ROCKEFELLER. His answer to his uncle was: “No, thank you. I want to earn a seat some day in the U.S. Senate.”

That is what JAY set out to do. He reminded us a few weeks ago:

Important undertakings can't be halfhearted. You have to commit your whole self—almost like pushing a heavy rock uphill. With both of your hands you push, because if you let up for a split second with either hand, you and the rock go tumbling backward into the abyss.

JAY had a chance to prove that in this body over 20 years ago. He pushed that rock uphill to fight to protect retired coal miners' promised health care benefits. It is easy for Members of this Senate who have good titles, who are well paid, who dress like this, who don't really need to go out and listen to the public very much, to forget people like union coal miners or nonunion coal miners.

He called this "the greatest moment of my career." JAY threatened to keep the Senate in session. He was going to do whatever it took—22 years ago, over Christmas, over New Year's, whatever it took—to make sure his colleagues didn't leave town before passing the 1992 Coal Act. Because of his legislation, more than 200,000 coal miners and their families have kept the benefits they were promised.

He spearheaded efforts to ensure workplace safety. I have talked to JAY after coal mining disasters when miners are killed in one of the most treacherous, difficult, and dangerous jobs we can imagine. I can see the pain in his face because he knows people who work in the mines and he has listened to them.

When Lincoln's staff wanted him to stay in the White House and win the war and free the slaves and preserve the Union, Lincoln used to say, "I have to go out and get my public opinion bath." That is what JAY did. A son and grandson of privilege, JAY understood that he served the public best when he got his public opinion bath and when he went out and listened to people. He fought against unfair trade practices, and he fought against tax policies that shipped jobs overseas. He reinvigorated the Steel Caucus, fighting for an industry that clearly has been victimized by unfair trade practices.

Most important in JAY's career—and the thing I think he is most proud of—was another lesson he learned in Emmons, WV. He learned that many of the community school-aged children had never been to a doctor, they had never seen a dentist before because their families simply didn't have the money. Because of that, JAY made accessible, affordable health care for children part of his lifelong mission. He believes that health care is a right and not a privilege.

He championed Medicaid expansion, and he championed this new health care law. It has JAY ROCKEFELLER's fingerprints all over it. That is why hundreds of thousands of people in my State are grateful to JAY ROCKEFELLER, because hundreds of thousands of people in Ohio now have health insurance who didn't have it before. Hundreds of thousands of

families have benefited for a couple of decades because their children had health insurance. Again, this is because of JAY ROCKEFELLER.

In 1997, he devoted much of his time and career at that point to help write the Children's Health Insurance Program, CHIP. Because of CHIP, 8 million children across this country—some of them in Emmons, WV, and some of them in my hometown of Mansfield, OH—now have access to health care, health care that they would not have otherwise. He continues that fight always on health care.

I want to close with this. I have seen a lot of Senators come and go. I have seen a lot of Members come and go. I have seen a lot of public officials come and go. There can be a shortage of humility in these jobs. As Members of the House and Members of the Senate, sometimes we are a little puffed up about our titles and about the power that many of us have, and we are caught up in the way we are treated. People are often obsequious to Members in Congress, and all of that.

What stands out to me—it is even more remarkable when you consider his family and what he came from—is JAY ROCKEFELLER's humility. Here is the best example, I think. I found out almost by accident what JAY, as a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, would do regularly during his time in the Senate is he would send all the staff away, he would send the press away, and he would go to someone's home or community center or rec center or labor hall and he would sit with a number of veterans and listen to their stories. He would take notes and help those individually who might need help. Most important, he was listening to their stories.

It reminds me of another story from Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln's staff watched him, during one of his public opinion baths, talk to a number of people who were pushing him on something that mattered to them personally.

His staff wanted to send them away. Lincoln said, "No, I am not going to do that." Then Lincoln said—about these people who were talking to him, ordinary citizens outside the White House or anywhere else the President of the United States may have been—Lincoln said, "They don't want much. They get so little. Each one considers his business of great importance. I know how I should feel if I were in their place."

I can see JAY ROCKEFELLER meeting with veterans, many of whom had never been thanked for their service. Many of

them were suffering from wartime injuries from their time in the service, coming back to West Virginia and eking out a living. I can see JAY ROCKEFELLER saying the same thing: They don't want much. They get so little. Each one considers his business of great importance. I know how I should feel if I were in their place.

Going back 2 weeks ago to JAY's farewell speech across the aisle at this desk, he called upon us to remember that "our North Star must always be the real needs of the people we serve." JAY used his farewell speech to exhort us to do better on behalf of miners, on behalf of veterans, on behalf of single parents, on behalf of children, on behalf of sick people, people who do not always get a fair shake in life.

He found his North Star in public service, a career he chose because he wanted a mission to complete, a cause to believe in, a dream to follow. He found that mission. He found that cause. He found that dream in Emmons, WV, in 1964. It never left him. That is my friend JAY ROCKEFELLER. For all of that we are so grateful.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. . . . Before I proceed, I would like to thank the good Senator from Ohio for his tributary remarks regarding JAY ROCKEFELLER, an uncommon man of the people. . . .

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, as we wind down the final days of the 113th Congress, it is a good time both to reflect on the past and to look toward the future. I have been very moved as I listened to the farewell speeches of our departing Senators, and I wish I had time to pay tribute to each one of them. They have all been wonderful colleagues, and I enjoyed working with and getting to know every one of them. I wish them all the very best in all their future endeavors. They will most certainly be missed. . . .

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to my friend and colleague, Senator JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER IV, who will soon retire from the Senate after representing his beloved West Virginia for the last 30 years.

Senator ROCKEFELLER and I both came to Washington after having previously served as Governors of our home States, and I have been grateful for his friendship and counsel. I would also note that Senator ROCKEFELLER has some familiarity with New Hampshire, having graduated from Phillips Exeter Academy.

Senator ROCKEFELLER will forever be remembered in the Senate for his dedication to the hard-working people of West Virginia. When West Virginia coal mining companies threatened to abandon their pension obligations to miners, Senator ROCKEFELLER successfully fought to pass the Coal Act of 1992 to safeguard their retirements. Among his numerous other legislative accomplishments, Senator ROCKEFELLER will certainly be remembered as the father of the Children's Health Insurance Program. Since its creation in 1997, CHIP has provided millions of low-income children and pregnant women access to health insurance. Just last year, CHIP touched the lives of more than 8 million Americans.

During his lengthy career Senator ROCKEFELLER chaired the Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs, Intelligence, and most recently Commerce, Science, and Transportation. As a chairman, Senator ROCKEFELLER believed strongly that good policy started with listening and ran his committees in a way that allowed all Senators, no matter their party, a voice and a role in the legislative process.

The example set by Senator ROCKEFELLER is an inspiration to all of us who serve in the Senate. On behalf of the people of New Hampshire, I thank him for his years of dedicated service to our country and wish him the best in his well-deserved retirement.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to a man who has dedicated nearly 50 years to public service. That is our retiring colleague Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER of West Virginia.

JAY ROCKEFELLER's lifetime of service was shaped by his experience as a VISTA worker in a rural coal town in West Virginia. JAY told me that this experience was life changing, coming as he did from a very privileged background. Working day to day in that community, learning the hopes and fears and anxieties of the people, and seeing their struggles led to his lifelong commitment to improving the lot of working people everywhere.

In his farewell remarks to the Senate, Senator ROCKEFELLER said that the Senate must be a "place in which we embrace the commitment to be deliberative, passionate, and unrelenting."

Senator ROCKEFELLER embodied these qualities while serving the people of West Virginia. He has been a deliberative, passionate, and unrelenting champion, especially for those whose circumstances in life are the hardest.

His work on health care has impacted Americans in every corner of the United States, from the mountains of West Virginia, to my State of Hawaii. He was instrumental in the efforts to establish the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP, which provides care to more than 8 million children across the Nation. More than 30,000 of those children who currently receive coverage for necessary primary and preventive health care are those children in my State of Hawaii.

From his Medicare Drug Savings Act to his Rebuilding America's Schools Act, JAY ROCKEFELLER has truly been a champion for those who needed a hand up in life.

We are all aware of JAY's efforts to enhance our national security while also holding our Nation to the highest standards possible as a chairman and member of the Senate Intelligence Committee. His commitment to keeping America safe is met only by his commitment to ensure that our Nation's veterans get the care and benefits that they have earned and deserve. I have been privileged to serve with JAY on the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Senator ROCKEFELLER reminds us that to those upon whom fortune has smiled, there is no greater calling than to dedicate ourselves to fight hard for those struggling, for those hard working, and for those who put us here.

As Senators I hope that we heed JAY's words and in the coming Congress we work together on a bipartisan basis to collaborate and compromise on behalf of America's workers and families.

On a personal note, JAY and I had one of the best conversations recently on the Senate floor where we discovered that we were two pretty private people, some would even describe as introverts, who picked a most public of arenas, politics, to do our life's work of making a difference in the lives of those we are privileged to represent.

Thank you for your service, Senator ROCKEFELLER. It has been an honor being your colleague and serving with you.

Aloha JAY, a hui hou, or "until we meet again."

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I wish to celebrate and thank the 13 outgoing Senators who have worked tirelessly to represent their home States in the Senate: Senator Mark Begich, Senator Saxby Chambliss, Senator Tom Coburn, Senator Kay Hagan, Senator Tom Harkin, Senator Mike Johanns, Senator Tim Johnson, Senator Mary Landrieu, Senator Carl Levin, Senator Mark Pryor, Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER, Senator Mark Udall, and Senator John Walsh.

I have worked side by side with these men and women for years—some for decades—and witnessed first hand their extraordinary commitment to public service and to the people they so proudly represent.

Even when we didn't see eye to eye on every issue, I always deeply respected and admired their service to our Nation and their dedication to fight for what they believe in.

It has been a privilege to serve alongside each and every one of these extraordinary colleagues. I will miss their leadership and their friendship, and I wish them all the best as they embark on the next chapter.

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