

working now as we speak to draft the legislation—to negotiate the legislation that will ultimately be committed to a draft. I hope, as we return tomorrow, we see positive signs of a conclusion to the drafting of that legislation and that this body can have an opportunity to study it in as much detail as necessary, proceed to debate, and I am hopeful it is the kind of legislation that we can all rally around, support, pass, and tell the American people that we are doing everything possible from a policy standpoint to protect them, to protect their communities, and to protect the financial institutions of this country.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR WARNER

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, we are all awaiting efforts of the negotiating teams who are working on a rescue plan to the current financial crisis. Many of us—as I know the distinguished Senator from Montana has—have lobbed in our thoughts and ideas, now we are waiting anxiously to see how they have fared in the negotiations.

And I would like to take this time while we wait to address another subject because a few months from now our colleague, JOHN WARNER, will retire from the Senate after 30 years of service to the people of Virginia and the people of America. His work in this Chamber and all these halls has made our country stronger. And in a place where partisan rancor too often rules the day, his is a legacy of honor and dignity that will stand long after he has gone. So I wanted to take a few moments to salute this man.

When JOHN WARNER's country called, he answered. In 1945, at 17 years of age, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and was sent to fight in World War II. When the war was over, JOHN attended a great Virginia institution, Washington and Lee University, on the GI bill. And in 1949, he entered law school at my own alma mater, the University of Virginia. But America called again, and JOHN answered again, interrupting his studies to serve as a ground officer with the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing in Korea. He returned home again, went back to UVA, and received his law degree in 1953. I would graduate almost 30 years after him. JOHN continued to serve in the Marine Corps Reserves after the war, attaining the rank of captain.

JOHN WARNER's mother once said she hoped he would one day become the

Secretary of the Navy. Well, in 1972 he fulfilled that hope, serving until 1974, during the challenging years of the Vietnam conflict. In that office, he succeeded his dear friend John Chafee, a fellow marine, later to become a U.S. Senator. It is John Chafee's seat that I am now privileged to hold.

During his first campaign for the Senate, Senator WARNER told the Washington Post:

When I was Secretary of the Navy I drove the admirals crazy. When I went to visit a ship I liked to go all over it and talk to sailors.

He is, in the words of ADM Mike Mullen, "a man whose love of country is matched only by his love [of] those who defend it."

In the Senate, JOHN WARNER's commitment to the men and women of America's armed services is evident in nearly everything he does. Alternating as chairman and ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee with his dear friend CARL LEVIN of Michigan, he has fought to ensure that those who serve this country receive the best possible health care and benefits. In 1999, they achieved for our troops their first major pay increase in 16 years—and this year, did it again.

In his 30 years in the Senate, JOHN WARNER has dedicated himself to helping his constituents and keeping our Nation secure. He has supported the hundreds of thousands of members of the military who are based in Virginia and serve at more than 90 installations throughout his State. He has helped keep Virginia's storied shipbuilding industry strong, preserving jobs and sustaining communities on Virginia's Atlantic coast.

In my home State of Rhode Island, on top of our State House dome is a statue of the Independent Man. The statue represents a spirit of liberty and freedom that has been cherished in Rhode Island back to the days of Roger Williams. Well, JOHN WARNER is Virginia's Independent Man. Over and over again, he has put his country first and done what he thought was right no matter what the politics.

Senator WARNER saw the need for a change of course in Iraq, and he has worked for real, urgent solutions to the threat of global warming. As part of the Gang of 14, he sought middle-ground answers to the challenging, controversial topic of judicial nominations. He refused to support President Reagan's nomination of Robert H. Bork to the Supreme Court in 1987—a principled stand with a political cost.

In 1994, when the Virginia Republican Party endorsed Oliver North for the State's junior Senate seat, JOHN WARNER refused to support the candidacy of a man who had been convicted of a felony. He said then:

I do not now, nor will I ever, run up my white flag and surrender my fight for what I believe is in the best interest of my country, my State and my party.

His relationship with our colleague, our fellow freshman in the Senate, Sen-

ator JIM WEBB of Virginia, is a model for the rest of the Senate of collegiality, enabling them together to extract from the difficult logjam of judicial nominations talented judges to serve Virginia.

Former Virginia Governor Linwood Holton paid Senator WARNER what I'd call the ultimate compliment around here:

He wants to solve problems.

We will all miss JOHN WARNER when he leaves the Senate this January. His hard work and independent spirit have enriched Congress for the past 30 years. And I count myself very fortunate to have served with him.

On a personal note, I thank JOHN WARNER for his exceptional, I daresay even avuncular kindness to me in my first term. From the vantage point of 30 years' seniority, I am a mere speck in the sweep of his tenure here. He has served with 273 Senators, I believe, and yet he has made me feel so welcome. In that kindness, I am the beneficiary of his friendship of many years with my father, a friendship that lasted as long as my lifetime to date. My father was a fellow World War II veteran, a fellow marine, a fellow public servant, and a man who I remember today as I express my affection and gratitude to the distinguished senior Senator from Virginia.

Reporters interviewing JOHN WARNER have noted his tendency to close his eyes and lean back in his chair while answering questions. It's not a sign of disrespect, they know, but rather a sign of deep concentration. I've seen him concentrating that way myself in deliberations behind the heavy steel doors of the Intelligence Committee.

I envision sometime, when the press inquiries, staff updates, legislative proposals and constituent requests have slowed, that Senator JOHN WARNER will take a moment to close his eyes, lean back in that chair, and reflect on what an extraordinary career his has been. I hope he remembers all the good he has done and all the goodwill and admiration he has earned among those who have been privileged to serve with him. Senator WARNER, I wish you, your wife Jeanne, and your family Godspeed and best wishes in all your future endeavors.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONSOLIDATED SECURITY, DISASTER ASSISTANCE, AND CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2009

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Chair lay before the Senate a message from the