

about his family, his wife Laurie, and their two children, Jacob and Sarah. There is a family that has known tremendous tragedy. Two of their children died in early infancy from a rare genetic disease. While Norm doesn't talk about this much, his reverence to life and his devotion to family are very clear.

Second only to his family has been his dedication to public service. It has literally defined his adult life. Maybe it was sheer destiny that he found his way to the Senate. After all, he is a graduate of James Madison High School in Brooklyn, which is also the alma mater of two of our Senate colleagues—CHUCK SCHUMER and BERNIE SANDERS.

Norm hit the ground running in politics, and he has not stopped. In college, he was a student activist, and in law school, he served as the president of his class. Immediately after getting his law degree, he joined the Minnesota Attorney General's Office, recruited by my good friend, legendary attorney general Warren Spannaus. Norm was in the Attorney General's Office 17 years, most of that time doing criminal prosecutions, ultimately rising to the position of solicitor general for the State of Minnesota.

In 1993, Norm was elected the mayor of St. Paul at a time when the city, especially its downtown, was suffering economically. During his 8 years as mayor, he worked to turn St. Paul around. Building public-private partnerships, he redeveloped the industrial riverfront into a recreational greenspace. A new Minnesota science museum was built overlooking the Mississippi River. Most famously, he brought hockey back to Minnesota, securing a new National Hockey League franchise that moved into the new arena. Hockey is very important in Minnesota.

In 1998, Norm was narrowly defeated in a three-way race for Minnesota Governor. The winner, of course, was Jesse Ventura—something not many people across the United States expected to happen. I think Norm once said that not everyone can say they lost to a candidate whose previous career highlight was being killed by an alien creature in the movie "Predator." But he took it in stride.

In 2002, Norm was elected to the Senate under tragic circumstances. Just days before the election, my good friends Paul Wellstone and his wife Sheila and their daughter Marcia and members of their staff were killed in a tragic plane crash in northern Minnesota. Norm became the Senator. Like Paul, Norm took his duties very seriously, and I could see that in my 2 years in the Senate. He cared deeply about the work he did in foreign relations, some of which people never really talked about, never made the front page of the newspaper, but it was something he cared deeply about.

Together, we worked on several issues in our State which were of key

importance, legislation to benefit our State. The most dramatic example of this spirit of cooperation was our response to the sudden collapse of the Interstate 35W bridge into the Mississippi River on August 1, 2007. Thirteen people were killed and 150 were injured, many with severe and permanent injuries. Literally our cities came to a stop. For our State, out of this unprecedented disaster, this public trauma was something to which they immediately responded.

I still remember when Senator Coleman and I came in the very next morning—we flew in with the Secretary of Transportation, Mary Peters—and there were already billboards up, literally 12 hours later, directing people where to go with the traffic and how to get buses to get to where they had to go. As I said that day, a bridge in America should not just fall down, but when one does fall down, we rebuild it. In the 72 hours immediately following the bridge collapse, Norm and I worked together to secure \$250 million in emergency bridge construction funding. Representative JIM OBERSTAR led the way in the House. Approval of this funding came with remarkable speed and bipartisanship. Capitol Hill veterans tell me it was a rare feat, aided by unity among Minnesota's elected leaders across the aisle, across the political spectrum. I am pleased to report that just 13 months after that collapse, Minnesota drivers were able to drive over a safe new 35W bridge and eight-lane highway. That is just 13 months after the collapse.

While the bridge is the most visible example, Norm and I had many other opportunities to work together on issues that mattered to the people in our State.

There was another Minnesota disaster in August 2007 when severe flooding hit the southeastern corner of our State. We worked on this together, along with Congressman WALZ, to ensure a rapid, effective response by Federal agencies to help communities, businesses, and families in need.

We worked together on the Agriculture Committee. We both served on that committee. We succeeded in passing a new farm bill that was very important to our State.

We worked together with a bipartisan group of Senators on energy legislation, to move forward in unity.

We worked together in securing Federal funds for the security costs of the Democratic and Republican National Conventions, along with our colleagues in Colorado. I still remember standing before this Chamber saying that I stood tall to obtain the funding to protect the security of the Republican leadership from across this country. We did that together.

We joined to secure educational benefits owed to our National Guard and Reserve troops returning from Active Duty overseas. We are so proud of our National Guard in Minnesota. The Red Bulls have served longer in Iraq than

any other National Guard unit in the country. And Norm and I worked together to make sure we expanded the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Program to help those Guard and Reserve who really have no base to go home to but go home to little towns across our State. We worked on that together.

Our State has a proud tradition of electing both Democrats and Republicans to office. They expect us to work together. From the very beginning, Norm and I knew that was part of our duty to the people of our State, that was part of our obligation, no matter if we disagreed on issues, that we were going to work together.

So today I acknowledge my former colleague, Norm Coleman, for the strength he has shown during this long campaign, for the grace he showed last week when he made that difficult decision, and for the fine work he did for the people of Minnesota.

Madam President, I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FOOD SAFETY SYSTEM REFORM

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I am here to talk briefly today about food safety, something about which I care deeply. As you probably know, the last few food epidemics, from the jalapeno peppers to peanut butter, would not have been solved except for the hard work of the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Health, which is a model for how we can solve these epidemics. Thirteen people died with the last peanut butter one. It was only when someone died and was sick in Minnesota that it got solved.

Clearly, while we are proud of the work we do, we have to bring out this model nationally. I am proud to be doing a bill with Senator CHAMBLISS to try to bring out this model for the rest of the country.

I do note today that the Washington Post has a strong editorial recommending we do something to improve the food safety of this Nation. I think it is worth reading that editorial. They are talking about the need to get something done. Just this week, the White House came out with its food safety recommendations which include, as I said, building a new national traceback and response system, including clear industry guidance, a new unified incidence command system, and improved use of technology to deliver individual food safety alerts to consumers. We can truly do better.

There is also a bill—the bill Senator CHAMBLISS and I have sponsored focuses on the end of this problem when

a foodborne illness is out there—there is also a bill to prevent it in the first place, a bipartisan bill in the Senate. Senator DICK DURBIN is heading up that bill, along with JUDD GREGG, TED KENNEDY, RICHARD BURR, CHRIS DODD, and LAMAR ALEXANDER, and Senator CHAMBLISS and I are also sponsors of that legislation. The idea of that legislation is to beef up the FDA to improve our capacity to prevent food safety problems.

As we all know, the tragedy that happened in Georgia where the information did not get to the right people, where inspectors had come in or not enough inspections had come in—the information did not get up the food chain, so to say. No one knew what was going on, that there were violations at this plant, and 13 people died. That has to change.

We also have to improve our capacity to detect and respond with inspections, surveillance, and traceability. We also have in this bill ways to enhance U.S. food defense capabilities and to increase FDA resources. We have seen just recently the problem with the refrigerator cookie dough manufactured by Nestle. So we know this problem has not ended and it continues.

I am urging the Senate to take action, first of all, on the Food Safety Modernization Act of 2009, the bipartisan bill, to give the FDA more tools to do what it does. We have already seen the good work the Agriculture Department does with certain fields, and we need to build on this work and make sure we are able to catch these things before they get out into the food stream and the people of our country. Secondly, when it does happen, when salmonella or something does get out there, we have to respond quickly.

I also urge the Senate, as part of these FDA measures, to pass the Food Safety Rapid Response Act, a bill I have with Senator CHAMBLISS. This is a smart bill. It uses these models of epidemiology tools that should be used all over the country.

It should not have to be the case that people have to get sick in Minnesota before we solve this problem. According to the Centers for Disease Control, foodborne disease causes about 76 million illnesses, 325,000 hospitalizations, and 5,000 deaths in the United States every year.

We should not wait. We should be acting on these two bills. We have a full agenda, but we have before us two bills that have bipartisan support. We have not heard people attacking them. They are the way to go. We have food industry people involved in both of these bills who also want to get them passed. Obviously, they do not want to keep losing profits because of food scares across this country. Let's get these bills done and improve our food safety system in the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from South Dakota.

COMMENDING NORM COLEMAN

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I would like to join some of my colleagues today who have spoken previously in reflecting upon the service of our colleague, Norm Coleman. As we all know, the election process in Minnesota has come to a conclusion. We have welcomed his successor to the U.S. Senate. But I also want to just make some remarks about Senator Coleman's service in the Senate and sort of my recollections of that.

Obviously, all of us come here motivated to do different things. We all have reasons we want to be in public service, things we want to accomplish. Senator Coleman, obviously, came from the State of Minnesota, having been in an executive position where he served as mayor of St. Paul. He accomplished some wonderful things for the State, not the least of which was bringing hockey to Minnesota. That is something that any of us from that region of the country know was greatly appreciated by the citizens of his city and his State.

Norm and I came to the Senate under different circumstances. I recall having traveled around the country with Senator Coleman as we were campaigning together in 2002 trying to come to the Senate and having that opportunity to get to know him. When you travel with somebody on an ongoing basis, you get to know them not on a superficial basis—the way many of us here get to know people, sort of on a thin level—but you get a chance to really get a glimpse into the soul of people when you are in certain circumstances, when you are in tough campaigns. Certainly, Norm was no stranger to tough campaigns.

As it turned out, that 2002 election Norm was elected to the Senate. I lost my election in 2002 and didn't come here until a couple of years later. But during the course of the campaigns, and then having served with Norm Coleman—representing a neighbor State in South Dakota—we shared a lot of common interests. Whether it was agriculture or renewable energy or the economy in our States and trying to create jobs in the upper Midwest of this country, Norm Coleman was somebody who, more than anything else, cared about results.

There are so many instances here where we get drawn into debates in the Senate and the partisan lines get drawn and a lot of ideology comes into play. Obviously, that is part of the process as well. But the bottom line was that Norm Coleman cared about getting things done for the people of Minnesota. I think that was the kind of can-do attitude he brought to his job as mayor and to all the other areas of public service in which he was engaged during the course of his career in public life.

But coming to the Senate, I am sure, had to have been frustrating because this is a place where sometimes it is very difficult to see the result and the

outcome of your efforts. Norm was someone who was focused. He was intent upon getting things done, getting things accomplished, and I think during his service here he did some great things for the people of Minnesota and for the people of this country.

If he were here, I think he would tell you that in coming to the Senate—and I would tell you the same thing—he can now look back on some of the things he was involved in getting done, such as being involved in the big debates over the confirmation of Chief Justice John Roberts or Justice Sam Alito—these were big debates in which we were all involved in seeing good people put on the Supreme Court of this country. We worked in areas that were specific to our States—again, agriculture, renewable energy, putting energy policies in place that I think will drive America's future in terms of trying to lessen our dependence upon foreign sources of energy and, obviously, trying to bring more economic opportunity to this country by promoting the energy sources we have right here, particularly in places such as the Midwest where we can produce biofuels and wind and all those sorts of things.

Those are the kinds of issues Norm Coleman was committed to because he understood the profound impact they had on the citizens of his State of Minnesota. I also think sometimes around here people tend to—as we all do because we all are elected to represent constituencies—sometimes feel pressured to make votes that might be more political. But I have seen Norm Coleman time and again come in here and make votes—sometimes tough votes—that he thought were the right ones for the future of this country. That, too, is a quality that sometimes is lacking and can be rare in public life.

So I just wanted to express my appreciation for having had the opportunity to serve with Norm Coleman in the Senate. He is someone who I think was a tremendous reflection upon the State of Minnesota, the people of his State; someone who was intent upon doing the right thing for the future of this country; and, frankly, someone who, in my view, brought an authenticity and a genuineness to this body and to this world of politics in Washington, DC, which sometimes is lacking in those qualities. He was sincere, he was genuine, and you knew exactly where he was coming from. With Norm Coleman, what you saw was what you got.

I was pleased to have had the opportunity not only to serve with him in the Senate and to call him a colleague, but more importantly than that to call he and Laurie and their family friends because that is something that is also rare in Washington, DC. Sometimes the Senate can be a lonely place, and when you develop a friendship of the type and depth that I have with Norm Coleman, I find that to be very rare around here and something I will treasure and remember for some time to come.