

As someone who has always worked hard to build relationships with Democrats, I knew I could always rely on BOB to find out the pulse of Democrats on an issue. And Democrats could turn to him too. Here is what Senator REID once said about BOB: "There is no more honorable Member of this body than BOB BENNETT."

BOB and I have found common cause over the years, among other things, in our defense of the First Amendment. I remember being in the trenches together over the flag-burning amendment, which we both opposed. Both of us, of course, also strongly oppose any desecration of the flag. But we agreed that an amendment to the Constitution was not the way to go. And in the end, we prevailed. We thought it was worth the fight to ensure that Congress didn't place any qualifiers on the First Amendment.

Over this time, BOB became one of my most trusted colleagues, and that is why, when I was elected Republican leader, I asked him if he would serve as one of my advisers. He is smart and level-headed, a proven leader, a successful entrepreneur, and when he speaks everyone listens. In addition, he has a remarkable gift of persuasion. Far from the floor is where BOB does his best work. It is a trait he learned from his dad.

As BOB once put it, "Building a consensus, building relationships where people will trust and do things for you is the hardest work of the Senate, and when it comes to fruition . . . it's also the most rewarding work in the Senate."

BOB decided long ago to do his best to stay out of the nasty political fights that occur from time to time in Washington. That is one of the reasons you don't ever see him on the Sunday shows. BOB knows that most of the time the media is just looking for that gotcha moment. He is more interested in spending his time focusing on what is best for his constituents, whether it is in this Chamber, in committee, or back home.

In addition to BOB's role in leadership, he served as the ranking member of the Rules and Administration Committee, as the chairman of the Joint Economic Committee, as the senior member of the Senate Banking Committee, as the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development and on the Senate Appropriations Committee. He has been involved in nearly every major issue that has come through this Chamber over the past two decades. He has worked hard to fix our economy and health care system, simplify the tax code, reform entitlement programs, and strengthen America's national security at home and abroad.

But BOB will tell you his most important job is being a husband. And of course today we also pay tribute to Joyce, who has played such an active role in the life of the Senate family over the years. We will miss them both.

Together, they have raised six children and in nearly 50 years of marriage, they have certainly seen a lot.

When asked about his legacy, BOB has pointed out that it was always his hope to live up to his own father's example of integrity and hard work. And BOB, we know that if your dad were here today, he would be so proud of all you have accomplished not only in this Chamber and for our country, but also as a devoted husband, father and grandfather. So it is with a sense of gratitude for all that he has meant to the Senate and to me personally, that I pay tribute to BOB BENNETT. It has been an honor to serve with him, and most importantly to call him a friend. And on behalf of the entire Senate family, I want to thank BOB for his service. He will be missed, and we wish him all the best in the next chapter of his life.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I too want to say a couple of words about BOB BENNETT. We are deeply impressed with his sense of integrity and his commitment to working for basic, sound principles. I might say he made a big impression on me when he came to my office—I think on his own, but maybe he was appointed to do so—to help find a way to make the Senate more relevant and to find ways to change the Senate rules to address some of the frustration a lot of Senators have. People who are watching may wonder, gosh, why do Senators think they are not relevant? I must say that a lot of Senators feel they want to get something done quickly and they are sometimes frustrated with the actions of another Senator who doesn't quite have the same idea. I was impressed with BOB's attitude. He talked to me and asked, "What can be done, Max? What ideas do you have?" It was very refreshing. I remember thinking at the time that this will be difficult, and I told him it would be difficult. I didn't tell him how difficult I thought it would be. But I was impressed with his freshness and his desire to help adjust the Senate rules.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2010

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will resume the consideration of House message to accompany H.R. 4853, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows: Motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 4853, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorization for the airport improvement program, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the

time until 3 p.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Pending:

Reid motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with Reid/McConnell amendment No. 4753 (to the House amendment to the Senate amendment), in the nature of a substitute.

Reid amendment No. 4754 (to amendment No. 4753), to change the enactment date.

Reid motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions.

Reid amendment No. 4755, to provide for a study.

Reid amendment No. 4756 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 4755), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 4757 (to amendment No. 4756), of a perfecting nature.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Montana is recognized.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following staff be allowed on the floor for the duration of the debate on the tax bill: Michael Grant, Kane Ossorio, Jack McGillis, Nicole Marchman, Manishi Rodrigo, Will Kellogg, Danielle Dellerson, Mary Baker, Greg Sullivan, Andrew Fishburn, and James Baker.

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

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, about 2 years ago, our economy was on the brink. One of the first things we did with our new President was to enact the American Recovery and Investment Act. We did so to jump-start our economy, and we did so to create jobs.

In the 2 years since, our economy has created and sustained more than 3.5 million jobs—3.5 million more than would have been available had we not taken that action. The economy is now starting to move in the right direction, but we still have a long way to go.

The positive momentum in the economy is fragile. We need to work tirelessly to protect it. Our first priority must be to create more jobs.

The lower tax rates enacted in 2001 and 2003, along with a number of other tax provisions, are set to expire at the end of this year. If we do not act, taxes will go up.

In addition, last month, the emergency Federal unemployment insurance programs expired. If we don't act, then by the end of next month 2 million Americans will be without the critical assistance they will need. That is help they will need to put food on the table and keep a roof over their head. The tax cuts and unemployment insurance both have a critical effect on the middle-class families, our economy, and on jobs.

A little more than a week ago, the Senate voted on two amendments that would have extended these tax cuts for the middle class and unemployment insurance. Our amendments would have