

Senator SESSIONS: Thank you. Thank you Mr. President. We're not of the same political party, sometimes we disagree, but speaking as an American, we are one nation and we have one President who serves us all. Thank you for being my President, thank you for being our President.

So let's all enjoy now a final selection from Andrea Bocelli.

[Song]

Mr. Andrea Bocelli: Thank you very much. I'm very ashamed of my English because I would like to tell you many, many things but I can't because my English is very poor. But I live this moment like a dream, because very often my country has been in trouble, just because the left and the right never are able to speak with each other. And in this country where I received a lot, a big, big affection, incredible affection, today I received also a big teaching. I will try going back to my country, Italy, to transmit this will that for me is the most important thing—the will to pray together. Thank you very much.

Senator PRYOR: Thank you Andrea. Just like your songs that was very beautiful. At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock." Let's be wise people in the important roles that we're about to step back into in a few minutes and put what we've heard and learned here into practice.

Senator SESSIONS: Love God. Love your neighbor. Let's make that simple rule our guide and make our complex world a better one today. And to offer our closing prayer, please welcome Olympic gold medalist, Gabrielle Douglas.

Ms. Gabrielle Douglas: Thank you. It's such an honor to be here today with so many distinguished leaders, especially Mr. President, Mrs. Obama, Mr. Vice President and the Honorable MARK PRYOR and the Honorable JEFF SESSIONS. Now please, please join me as we bow our heads and pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the many continued blessings. We uplift every leader from every nation and ask that you continue to give them wisdom as they govern. Teach us to walk in humility, strengthen us as we strive to fulfill your plan, your purpose for our lives. And as we go from here, I pray we would all pursue your peace, your love and your grace, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Senator PRYOR: We're done, thank you, God bless you.

EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR A FEW

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article written by Ken Hamilton, Executive Vice President of the Wyoming Farm Bureau that was Published in the April 2013 edition of Wyoming Agriculture. The article's title is "Equal Access to Justice for a few."

Mr. President, while we continue to fight for increased transparency with regards to the Equal Access to Justice Act, one thing is already clear—the Federal Government is picking winners and losers. Mr. Hamilton calls this a "cozy appearance between the groups who sue the Federal Government and the desire by the government to help pay their way." He points out in one recent case of several environmental groups suing the Fish and Wildlife

Service over wolf delisting efforts where the Federal Government quickly approved their November 2012 claim for \$380,000 in attorney fees. That is \$380,000 dollars of hard-earned American taxpayer dollars this administration's Justice Department was more than happy to hand over to their political allies.

Ken continues to illustrate the apparent political fingerprints and favoritism in the Justice Department by stating, "Meanwhile back at the ranch, the Wyoming Wolf Coalition through its attorney Harriet Hageman, has asked the Federal Government for their fees under EAJA. These fees, one-tenth of the environmental claim, have been argued over by the same Federal Government since April of 2011." Let me repeat that. Since 2011, the Justice Department has been actively arguing over an EAJA claim of approximately \$36,000 to a group that supported wolf delisting when the same Justice Department agreed to send \$380,000 to environmental groups opposed to the delisting of wolves.

Based on these facts I would have to agree with Ken's conclusion that, "the Equal Access to Justice Act is being applied less than equally by the Federal Government. It appears that if they agree with you they will send you a check, but if they do not they will send you an attorney's response denying you your money."

This administration should not be in the business of playing favorites by rewarding their political friends with taxpayer dollars. I commend Ken for highlighting the apparent inequality and abuse of the so-called Equal Access to Justice Act. This is one of the reasons I plan to continue fighting for real transparency regarding which groups are receiving EAJA payments, why they are receiving it, and how much money—taxpayer money—is being given away. It is time the Equal Access to Justice Act truly live up to its name.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Opinion Editorial, Mar. 26, 2013]
EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR A FEW
(By Ken Hamilton, Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation, Executive Vice President)

Many people are aware of the efforts to reform the Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA) in order to bring more transparency to the process of the federal government paying attorney fees. Based on information researched and brought to light through the Budd-Falen law offices we found out that monies were being awarded without the slightest effort by the government to keep track of who received them and why. Thus, the need for some transparency and oversight. We have also seen some of the recipients fight efforts to bring transparency and why wouldn't they? After all, this is something that helps off-set their cost of suing the federal government.

The other aspect of this that some have wondered about is the sometimes cozy appearance between these groups who sue the

federal government and the desire by the government to help pay their way.

Recently, several environmental groups settled with the federal government over their attorney fees for suing the Fish and Wildlife Service on wolf delisting efforts in Montana and Idaho. The settlement agreed to by the federal government will pay the groups \$380,000 for their attorney fees. This request for money was filed with the courts in November of 2012 and the government didn't object to this filing.

Meanwhile back at the ranch, the Wyoming Wolf Coalition through its attorney Harriet Hageman, has asked the federal government for their fees under EAJA. These fees, a tenth of the environmental claim, have been argued over by the same federal government since April of 2011.

Given this interesting development it certainly appears the federal government, through the Justice Department, does not apply justice uniformly. Perhaps the Justice Department is concerned that these multimillion dollar environmental groups should be paid because they have resources far beyond the troublesome rancher, sportsmen, outfitters and local governments and they could use the money but those other entities should be denied because they are poor.

Perhaps they feel that almost \$400,000 is not a big deal, but \$36,000 is a huge deal worthy of Justice Department attorney time to file objections.

Who knows, but one thing is apparent and that is the Equal Access to Justice Act is being applied less than equally by the federal government. It appears that if they agree with you they will send you a check, but if they do not they will send you an attorney's response denying you your money.

GRASSBAUGH VETERANS PROJECT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the commencement of the Captain Jonathan D. Grassbaugh Veterans Project. CPT Jonathan Grassbaugh and three other soldiers were killed in action in Iraq on April 7, 2007, when an insurgent detonated a 500-pound explosive beneath their truck. His wife, CPT Jenna C. Grassbaugh, has collaborated with the Ohio State University Moritz College of Law to create the Captain Jonathan D. Grassbaugh Veterans Project. The Jonathan D. Grassbaugh Veterans Project will provide veterans returning from deployment with legal assistance, with the help of law students aided by professional lawyers.

CPT Jenna Grassbaugh donated \$250,000 of her husband's life insurance policy to the Moritz College of Law in order to honor her husband's legacy and assist returning veterans. The Grassbaugh Veterans Project will open in April and will be operational by fall 2014.

I would also like to pay tribute to Jonathan D. Grassbaugh and the rich legacy he leaves. His commitment to service is an inspiration to all of us and he will not be forgotten. I would also like to recognize CPT Jenna Grassbaugh for honoring the legacy of her husband in such a meaningful way.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL KENNETH W. McDONALD

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the accomplishments of LTC