

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

Kenneth McDonald, who is retiring this month after a distinguished career of over 28 years of service to the United States Army and the Nation.

Lieutenant Colonel McDonald graduated from West Point in 1985 with a degree in Civil Engineering and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He subsequently served as a platoon leader, support platoon leader, and executive officer in the 299th Engineer Battalion (Corps Combat) at Fort Sill, OK. He later commanded Delta Company, 20th Engineer Battalion at Fort Campbell, KY and served as S3 and executive officer for the 577th Engineer Battalion, Fort Leonard Wood, MO.

Throughout his career, Lieutenant Colonel McDonald deployed to Iraq for Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Kosovo, and Korea. In 2006, Kenny volunteered for service in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and served as deputy commander, Gulf Region Division South District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Basrah. During his 2 year tour, he was responsible for over \$500 million worth of construction projects, including the Basrah Children's Hospital. In 2008, he and members of his team were severely wounded in an ambush while they were inspecting the hospital. He recovered from his wounds at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and later was assigned to the West Point Warrior Transition Unit. While still assigned to the WTU, he requested and was allowed to serve as the deputy commander, New York District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Lieutenant Colonel McDonald also served as an instructor and assistant professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering and the Department of Civil and Mechanical Engineering at West Point. In 2009, he was promoted to associate professor and served as engineering program director for the Department of Systems Engineering at West Point. During his tenure, the Engineering Management Program was recognized 3 years in a row as the top Engineering Management Program for undergraduate education in the Nation by the American Society for Engineering Management.

His military awards and decorations include the Bronze Star; Purple Heart; Meritorious Service Medal; Joint Service Commendation Medal; Army Commendation Medal; Army Achievement Medal; Joint Meritorious Unit Award; Meritorious Unit Commendation; Army Superior Unit Award; Air Assault; Airborne; Ranger Tab; and Combat Action Badge.

Kenny and his wife COL Debbie McDonald, who currently serves as the director of admissions at West Point, have two grown children. Their daughter Anna is a 1LT Quartermaster Officer and Company Commander and their son Joshua is a cadet at West Point. I congratulate Kenny on a job well done, and wish him and his family the very best in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO GORDON MOULTON

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Gordon Moulton in honor of his retirement after 46 years of service to the University of South Alabama. Gordon dedicated his life to the success of the university and its surrounding communities and served as university president for 16 years. I am honored to call this remarkable man my friend and fellow Alabamian.

Gordon received his B.S. in Industrial Management from the Georgia Institute of Technology and an M.B.A. from Emory University. He was also awarded an honorary doctorate from Spring Hill College in 2006.

He began his service at the University of South Alabama 3 years after its founding in 1966 as a business faculty member and went on to launch the School of Computer and Information Sciences as its first dean. He was named president of the university in 1998. Gordon's numerous successes at the university include increasing academic programs and scholarships, securing grants for cancer research, expanding student opportunities, development and renovation of various facilities, and the creation of the USA Research and Technology Park which has provided many jobs and opportunities for high-tech industry partnerships in south Alabama.

During his tenure as President, the University of South Alabama was able to launch "Campaign USA," a highly successful fundraising effort that has raised millions for the university. He also worked to form a critical partnership with Infirmity Health System which has been instrumental in making improvements in area health care. For his work in the area, Gordon was named "Mobilian of the Year" in 2002.

Over the years, Gordon and his wife Geri have donated generously to the University of South Alabama, most recently presenting the University with \$3 million in order to fund cancer research at the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute. Their generosity, compassion, and dedication to finding a cure for cancer is both admirable and humbling. In addition to funding for cancer research, they have given millions to fund Moulton Tower and Alumni Plaza, Geri Moulton Children's Park at the USA Children's and Women's Hospital, and various scholarships and athletic endeavors.

Today, it is rare to see an individual so invested in one institution for the larger part of his career, but the work that Gordon Moulton has done at and for the University of the South will forever be remembered by its students, faculty, board of trustees, and the communities in and around Mobile that have benefitted from the University.

I congratulate him on his retirement and thank him for his decades of service to one of Alabama's great educational institutions.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN

● Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I rise in support of Friends of the Children, FOTC, a revolutionary organization founded and based in my hometown of Portland, OR, that provides intensive, long-term mentors to highly vulnerable kids in need. FOTC takes a preventive, early intervention approach that breaks the cycle of poverty and helps children grow up to be productive citizens.

The key to FOTC's success is its mentors, called Friends. Each Friend is full time, paid and professionally trained. The Friends are matched with the most severely at-risk children at an early age—selected in kindergarten—and make a 12½ year commitment to each child, guiding them through high school graduation.

Friends of the Children was founded in 1993 and is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. My friend Duncan Campbell, founder of FOTC, grew up in poverty himself, and his persistence, hard work and entrepreneurial spirit continue to be a driving force behind FOTC's success.

The goals for FOTC's children are both simple and profound: success in school with a minimum of a high school diploma or GED; avoid involvement in the juvenile justice system, and avoid early parenting. And independent research has shown that Friends of the Children is achieving those goals: 85 percent of FOTC graduates have completed high school, despite 54 percent having a parent who did not graduate; 97 percent of FOTC youth are not involved in the juvenile justice system despite 60 percent having a parent who has been incarcerated; and 98 percent of FOTC adolescents avoid early parenting despite 60 percent having been born to a teen mother.

Friends of the Children works because it treats every child as an individual facing a set of unique circumstances, and takes a committed, hands-on approach to improving those circumstances. It works because it focuses on one-on-one relationships using a rational, intelligent and proven system.

While headquartered in Portland, Friends of the Children now has chapters in four additional cities: Klamath Falls, Seattle, Boston and New York. Today, I am proud to congratulate this remarkable program on its 20th anniversary, and look forward to celebrating many more years of its continued success.●

BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014—PM 7

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying