

when people live free of government coercion and control. In America, individuals can practice any faith or no faith. This is true religious freedom—having the freedom to practice a faith or to have no faith at all and to have that choice not only be respected, but protected.

Respecting and protecting this fundamental human right means that we cannot diminish it. The constitutional guarantee of the free exercise of religion means that people have a right to live their faith in public. Saying someone has the right to worship freely at the place of their choosing is not the same thing. Additionally, while one faith group should not be favored over another, so too should we not err on the side of removing faith from the public sphere and opting for no religion at all.

Thomas Jefferson left explicit instructions that his authorship of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom be included on his gravestone as one of only three things for which he wanted “most to be remembered.”

As we celebrate the 230th anniversary of the passage of this statute, what will we be most remembered for? I hope that we can be remembered for not only honoring this legacy of Thomas Jefferson, but for upholding a right that is fundamental to the core of this nation and to human dignity—religious freedom.

#### REMEMBERING OFFICER RICARDO GALVEZ

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Downey police officer Ricardo Galvez, a devoted son and brother who was tragically killed in the line of duty on November 19, 2015.

Officer Galvez was born on April 2, 1986, and grew up in Whittier, CA. In 2006, he joined the Downey Police Department as a police aide and 2 years later decided to serve his country by joining the U.S. Marine Corps as a Reservist. After bravely serving in Iraq, Officer Galvez returned to Downey and became a police officer in 2010. He deployed again in December 2012 to Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Those who knew Officer Galvez fondly remember him as a caring man with an infectious smile, a person of great humility and kindness, and a trusted colleague and friend who was committed to his family and career.

The U.S. Marine Corps’ motto, *Semper Fidelis*, is Latin for “always faithful” and truly embodied Officer Ricardo Galvez. He dedicated his entire adult life to public service, unwavering in his commitment to defend Americans abroad and safeguard his community at home. His devoted and courageous service earned the respect and affection of the colleagues he worked alongside, the community he served, and the family and friends he loved. He will be deeply missed.

On behalf of the people of California, for whom he served so bravely, I extend my gratitude and deepest sympathies to Ricardo’s mother, Margarita; brother, Pedro; sisters, Nancy and Sandra; and his entire extended family.

#### TRIBUTE TO DIANNE BEECHER

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I wish to commend Dianne Beecher who has honorably served the people of Pennsylvania for over 28 years, most recently as senior constituent advocate for my Senate office. Dianne has been a trusted member of my staff and a loyal friend over the 11 years we have worked together.

Before her years in public service, Dianne had already proven herself to be a kind of “Renaissance woman.” She dabbled in entrepreneurship, worked as an entertainment promoter, and spent a period of time as a race car driver. While creating this unique resume, Dianne’s most important and dearest role was that of a devoted mother to five children—Sharryl, Aileen, Jodi, Bradley, and Brandee. Carrying her compassion for people into her professional life, Dianne found her niche in the pursuit of helping others. She began her career in public service with the Democratic State Committee for Pennsylvania as its political director, eventually joining the Pennsylvania chapter of the AFL-CIO, serving as its political education coordinator.

Dianne originally joined my staff in the auditor general’s office in 2004; when I became State treasurer, she moved with me. In that office, she assisted in creating one of the first constituent services operations within the treasury department. When I was later elected to the U.S. Senate, Dianne continued her dedication to the people of Pennsylvania as the senior constituent advocate on my constituent services team.

Early in my first term as a U.S. Senator, Dianne became a vital component in the establishment of my office’s constituent services operation. Through her role as senior constituent advocate, Dianne has literally saved the lives of countless Pennsylvanians. Over the years, she managed hundreds of cases, specializing in Social Security and Medicare, while maintaining a genuine and unfailing commitment to each constituent she encountered. Dianne has saved the health insurance coverage for individuals suffering from serious illnesses, allowing them to continue care and maintain their medications.

She is responsible for the financial stability of countless people unable to work due to their medical conditions. In one instance, Dianne’s work was recognized by National Public Radio when she saved a family in the midst of the 2008 housing crisis by helping them finally receive retroactive benefits due from Social Security. Most constituent services work goes unacknowledged by the press; however, Dianne’s commit-

ment and compassion remains the same for every case in her portfolio. She works meticulously and regularly goes beyond the call of duty to provide the resources and support needed for the people of the Commonwealth.

Throughout her career, Dianne has served the people of Pennsylvania with distinction and diligence. Her compassion and commitment to helping others left a lasting impression not only within my office, but in the lives she touched through her good work. I wish her well in her retirement and hope she will have the opportunity to enjoy more time with her children, 10 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### REMEMBERING CARL SHARIF

● Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the life and legacy of New Jersey and proud Newarker Carl Sharif, who passed away on September 30 at the age of 72. Carl was a dear friend and mentor to me at the dawn of my career in public service. He will be greatly missed by the city of Newark and by all who knew him.

A son of Newark, Carl began his career as an aide to Mayor Hugh Addonizio in the 1960s, and he remained a dedicated public servant for the rest of his life. During times of great tumult and change, Carl was a steady presence in Newark, working from within its government to strengthen the city’s spirit and foundation. In 1970, Carl helped to lead the campaign to elect Kenneth Gibson, the first Black mayor of Newark. He served as an aide to Mayor Gibson and as a member of Newark’s school board, quickly becoming its president.

Carl was incredibly generous with his time and with his tremendous political and institutional knowledge. He served as one of my earliest mentors in professional politics, and he led me through my first campaign for city council and my second campaign for mayor. It was Carl who insisted that the key to significant and lasting change in our city was through walking every street, knocking on every door, and talking with every Newarker. Carl reminded all of us that we were never to forget the people we were elected to serve, and I will be forever grateful for his wisdom, support, and advice through the years. I cherish all that he taught me, and I will do everything I can to honor his legacy through my work and life.

Carl was committed to ensuring the best for Newark and all of its people. He devoted himself wholly to our city and its people, and they loved him in return. For his family, friends, our city, and our State, Carl leaves a legacy of public service and unwavering faith in the goodness of our community. As we reflect on this inheritance, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Carl Sharif’s love for and service to his city and its people and in remembering his extraordinary life.●