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TRIBUTE TO ROBERT HOFFMAN

Mr. DeWINE. Mr. President, I rise today to say thank you—thank you to my legislative director for the past four years, Mr. Robert Hoffman. Robert—my right-hand man—will be leaving Capitol Hill to pursue another promising career in the private sector.

But I speak for a lot of people on the Hill—Members and staffers, alike—when I say that although we are very happy for Robert and we wish him well, we are saddened by his upcoming departure and will miss him dearly.

We will miss Robert's dedication to this institution.

We will miss his optimism and his sense of humor.

We will miss his indomitable work ethic.

But most of all, we will just miss him.


Robert, a California native, didn't start off Senator Wilson's legislative directors. Oh no! He was in the mailroom. His dogged determination and his amazing ability to absorb issues quickly propelled him upward within the Wilson operation. In less than a year, Robert had become a legislative correspondent. And within another year, he was working in Sacramento as deputy speech writer after Senator Wilson became Governor of California.

Robert, though, missed Capitol Hill— and Capitol Hill missed him. By May 1991, he was back in Washington, this time working as a legislative assistant for another former California Senator, John Seymour. Robert thrived as a legislative assistant, handling complex issues ranging from crime to immigration.

In practically no time, Robert was ready for a managerial role. In December 1992, he started a long tenure with our former colleague from South Dakota, Senator Larry Pressler.

By the young age of only 27, Robert was serving as Senator Pressler's legislative director. Though Robert's loyalty to Governor Wilson called him back for slightly over a year to work as the Governor's Deputy Director of his Washington office, Robert stayed with the Pressler organization until January 1997. To this day, Senator Pressler is thankful for having had Robert at the helm of his legislative operation.

The Senator has described Robert as one of the “all time finest legislative assistants and legislative directors on Capitol Hill. He is a man of great personal values and decency—a decency that is contagious.”

Senator Pressler said it well.

I know, too, that Senator Pressler greatly valued—and still values, as I do—Robert's deep grasp and understanding of foreign policy and national security matters. Robert accompanied Senator Pressler and Senator Specter on a trip to Africa. Senator Pressler spoke fondly of that trip and of Robert's “superb job of managing it.” According to Senator Pressler: “Robert made that trip. He got us there and back in one piece, which was no easy feat! He managed the whole thing, dealt with heads of state, and knew all the issues—forward and back.”

Robert came to my office in February 1997. He's been my legislative director for over four years now. And, during that time, I have learned a great deal about this fine man. I have learned that he is loyal to a fault.

I have learned that he is a workhorse.

I have learned that he is an incredible strategist, manager, teacher, thinker, leader, and friend.

I have also learned that there is nothing Robert Hoffman can't do. To use one of Robert's favorite phrases: "He just gets it. He just gets the joke."

Robert is one of the best “big picture” thinkers I have ever encountered. He gets the whole scene; he understands it. He can put things in their proper perspective. He takes the better job in taking complex issues, simplifying them and explaining them. He understands how all the pieces in a legislative operation fit together.

He understands politics.

He understands policy.

He understands press.

That combination of skills—that kind of raw talent and intuitive intelligence—is a true rarity here in Washington or anywhere, for that matter.

As anyone who has worked with Robert knows, he always gets the job done. No ifs. No buts. No excuses. He just gets the job done. He is a fair and tempered negotiator. Certainly, I have seen that. I have seen him in situations where I didn't think we would be successful, and he went into negotiation and came out with a lot better deal than I imagined we could achieve. He gets it done in a quiet, thoughtful, professional way. Robert Hoffman knows how to get bills passed into law. He knows the ins and outs of the legislative process. And, he has the ability to bring sides together to reach consensus and build bipartisan relationships.

While Robert's professionalism and work ethic are second to none, I would be remiss to not mention Robert's strength of character and personal integrity.

He is a gentleman—a kind man, a sincere man, and a man who cares about people. He cares about every single person in my office.

He cares about them on a professional level, and he cares about them on a personal level. He cares about them as people.

Robert Hoffman is a good man, and I am privileged to have had the extraordinary opportunity to work with him and call him my friend.

As he departs Capitol Hill after twelve fruitful, fearless, and fun years, I wish him and his lovely new wife, Andrea, all the best in the world. Thank you, Robert.

Mr. President, those in the Chamber and on Capitol Hill who will miss Robert Hoffman will still be able to see
CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME WOMEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM FOR THEIR CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. DeWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 69, submitted earlier today by Senators BAYH and LUGAR.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. This bill will be placed on the calendar.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 69) congratulating the Fighting Irish of the University of Notre Dame for winning the 2001 women’s basketball championship.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleague from Indiana as a cosponsor of this resolution congratulating the women’s basketball team of the University of Notre Dame for winning the 2001 women’s basketball championship.

This remarkable achievement by the Fighting Irish’s women’s basketball team culminates a season in which Coach Muffet McGraw and her team achieved an outstanding 34-2 record. Player Ruth Riley, an Indiana native, earned the titles Big East Player of the Year and Outstanding Player of the Final Four. Her teammate, Niele Ivey, suffered a sprained ankle during the semifinal game but persevered to help the Fighting Irish win their first 68-66 final game victory over the determined Purdue University Lady Boilermakers.

The women basketball players of Notre Dame offer an example of dedication, skill, and sportsmanship as they bring Notre Dame its first national basketball title.

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, it is with great pride that I rise today with my colleague Senator RICHARD LUGAR to introduce a bipartisan resolution honoring the University of Notre Dame women’s basketball team for winning the school’s first ever National Collegiate Athletic Association, NCAA, Division I basketball championship.

On April 1, 2001, this remarkable group of young women—led by senior All-American and native Hoosier Ruth Riley, have taken their place in Notre Dame’s long and storied tradition of academic and athletic excellence with a victory over the Purdue University Boilermakers.

This match-up made NCAA history, as it was the first time two teams from the same state appeared in the NCAA women’s basketball championship game. I cannot think of a more fitting place from which these two special teams could hail than from Indiana, basketball’s heartland. It is a wonderful tribute to these two teams and their fine universities, and an honor for the state of Indiana to gain that distinction.

As Hoosiers across our state and basketball fans around the nation watched with excitement and anticipation, both teams put forth a tremendous effort that made for a spectacular game. These true competitors displayed immense talent and ability as they engaged each other relentlessly throughout the forty minute championship game. The determination and commitment of both the Fighting Irish and the Boilermakers exemplifies our Hoosier values and serves as a tremendous source of pride for the state of Indiana. Behind every great team is a great coach, and Notre Dame’s Muffet McGraw is no exception. Coach McGraw provided the Fighting Irish with the stewardship needed for an outstanding record of thirty-four wins and only two losses during the 2000-2001 season, en route to the national championship. The Notre Dame community should be very proud of both Coach McGraw’s leadership and her team’s outstanding accomplishments as student athletes.

In dramatic fashion, the Fighting Irish turned around a twelve point deficit and tied the game with one minute remaining. With 5.8 seconds remaining, Ms. Riley made two free throws to complete the comeback and secure a 68-66 victory for the Fighting Irish. Ms. Riley, who earned the tournament’s Most Outstanding Player honors, was also named national Player of the Year and was a unanimous selection as first team All-American. Through hard work and determination, Ruth Riley and her teammates advanced the sport of women’s basketball and provided inspiration for future generations of young female athletes.

Mr. DeWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, that any statements relating thereto be placed in the RECORD at the appropriate place as if read, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 69) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The text of the resolution is printed in Today’s RECORD under “Statements on Submitted Resolutions.”

HONORING THE SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS FOR 135 YEARS OF SERVICE

Mr. DeWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 70, submitted earlier today by Senator DURBIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 70) honoring the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for its 135 years of service to the people of the United States and their animals.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DeWINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, that any statements relating thereto be placed in the RECORD at the appropriate place as if read, with no intervening action or debate.