

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR MIKE
DEWINE

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I rise to speak about our senior Senator from Ohio, MIKE DEWINE. Let me begin by saying this is a speech I hoped I would never have to give. For many in this Chamber, winter came a little early this year. A blizzard of political change swept through the country and, unfortunately, many were unable to weather the storm; in my particular case, in our State, through no fault of their own.

MIKE DEWINE was one of the most effective legislators we have in the U.S. Senate. He was a victim of this storm. I am deeply saddened that our respective colleagues will not be joining us when we congregate again for the 110th Congress. MIKE's tireless commitment to legislating, his willingness and ability to work with both parties, and his ingenuity will be sorely missed by everyone in the Senate and the State of Ohio.

MIKE has served the people of Ohio for more than 30 years, beginning as an assistant county prosecutor in 1992. He served as Green County prosecutor for 4 years, State senator for 2 years, Congressman for 8 years, and he was my Lieutenant Governor for 4 years when I was Governor of Ohio. And, of course, he has served us for 12 years as our U.S. Senator. He is one of the most effective and least partisan Members in this body.

During campaign season, some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle kept asking me: How is MIKE doing, how is he doing? Frankly, I think they were secretly hoping his poll numbers would be strong enough that he would not become a target. Unfortunately, those numbers never got up to that place, and he ended up being a target.

Far too many Members see differences between Republicans and Democrats as an unsurpassable deep divide. Not MIKE DEWINE. Over and over again, MIKE built bridges between our parties, and he got things done for America and for Ohio. Janet and I feel like MIKE and his wonderful wife Fran are part of our family. After working with MIKE for the past 16 years, I can tell you that there is something special about him. In fact, right from the start, I knew there was something refreshingly different about MIKE DEWINE.

The inception of our friendship came in 1990, when MIKE and I were both running in the Republican primary for Governor of Ohio. It was a crowded field with MIKE, Bob Taft, and I vying for the Governor's slot. It was then we really got to know each other. We talked about what would be the best for Ohio and for the Republican Party and, quite frankly, for our respective political futures. We decided to combine our efforts as running mates, and MIKE agreed to run as my Lieutenant Governor.

I knew this was a very tough decision for MIKE because he wanted to be Governor and was giving up a very safe congressional seat to run for State office. At that moment, I knew I had a first-rate partner, a man with great character and humility as well as unique political poise and promise. Both of us knew we had a long, tough race ahead of us with no guarantees. This was not a layup shot. There was a real question of whether we were going to be successful. He had given up a safe seat in the U.S. Congress, with a big family. But we had a great time running for State office. MIKE had an opportunity to connect with the State as a whole. I remember when he and Fran packed the kids in the van and traveled every inch of Ohio, becoming intimate with the Appalachian east, its manufacturing north, and its interior farmland.

We went on to win the general election and, as I like to say, together we did it. Together we won the election, and together we charted a new course for Ohio.

As Lieutenant Governor, MIKE took over the State's criminal justice agencies, where he led the fight against crime and illegal drugs. It was a relief to have MIKE as my partner when we had the Lucasville riots which broke out on Easter Sunday in 1993. It was the largest prison disturbance in the history of the United States, generating a great deal of national tension. MIKE's background in criminal justice and his close relationship with law enforcement helped us respond quickly and effectively. It could have been a tragedy, but fortunately, together, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, we made it through.

In 1992, when the Ohio Republican Party needed a challenger to run against the famous astronaut and giant in Ohio politics, John Glenn, MIKE was the obvious choice. He and Fran worked tirelessly to win that seat. Unfortunately, victory was not in the cards that year but triumph was imminent. Two years later, MIKE became a U.S. Senator and our party swept the State, just as the Democrats did this year in Ohio. MIKE returned to Washington as a U.S. Senator with more perspective, more experience, and more insight into the challenges facing Ohio than when he left the Congress as a Member of the House of Representatives. Without a lot of fanfare, he quietly went to work.

Of course, MIKE has been shaped by many things. It is impossible to talk about his achievements in public service without mentioning the terrible misfortune he and Fran experienced back in 1994. I will never forget the day MIKE and Fran lost their daughter Becky. I am familiar with the tremendous pain they suffered. The day that changed their lives sticks in my memory, much like the day Janet and I lost

our daughter Molly. MIKE translated the love he and Fran had for Becky into his work in the Senate. He became a champion for our youth and for those who cannot represent themselves. That is why today I am hard pressed to think of anyone who has not been helped by MIKE DEWINE.

His legislative achievements, which span both domestic and foreign policy, reflect his effectual and compassionate nature. MIKE has shown tremendous dedication toward improving the safety of our highway system. He not only amended the 2005 highway bill to make preferences for highways noted as being unsafe, but he also allocated more than \$56 million of SAFETEA-LU, intended for improving highway safety.

He succeeded in getting further testing and approval of medications for children. He helped establish a national toll-free poison control hotline. He acted on behalf of the children of U.S. servicemembers to make sure they had access to affordable health care. And he has stood up for foster children to make sure they are protected and to help them find adoptive parents.

Time after time, Senator DEWINE has protected Ohio. He was a critical voice in passing the Senate pension bill which helped ensure that workers' futures in Ohio are on better footing. He is a cosponsor of the Health Partnership Act because he understands how important health care reform is to Ohioans and to this country. He helped ensure that our fire departments are better equipped to fulfill their missions as first responders.

During the BRAC process, he worked to keep Federal facilities, such as Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton and the Defense Finance and Accounting Center in Cleveland and Columbus, open and operating. And he led a new mission for Ohio's NASA-Glenn in Cleveland. Today these facilities are thriving and contributing to Ohio's aerospace industry and national defense. I don't think there was a State in the country that benefited more from the BRAC process than Ohio, and it is attributable to the outstanding leadership MIKE DEWINE gave all of us in terms of that BRAC process.

MIKE has also been a friend of the Jewish community and has made it a priority to help stamp out anti-semitism and intolerance in America. He played a pivotal role in helping disclose previously classified documents about Nazi aggression, legislation that made those records available to the public through the National Archives and Records Administration. Today, thanks to MIKE, doctors, nurses, and aid workers are more prepared to confront the global AIDS epidemic.

MIKE has carried a heavy burden while he has been in the Senate. He sits on the Judiciary Committee, the HELP Committee, and the Intelligence Committee. He also sits on one the most

prestigious committees in the Senate, Appropriations. In fact, MIKE was the first Ohioan in 50 years to sit on Appropriations. His position of leadership—and the resources he has been able to bring back to Ohio—has made a tremendous difference for our State and a tremendous difference in the lives of the people of our State. I used to joke with MIKE that my job as the debt hawk was to make sure we didn't spend the money. But once we decided we were going to spend it, his job was to make sure Ohio got its fair share. And boy, did he do a good job.

These are just a handful of examples where my close friend and colleague MIKE DEWINE has made a difference. His legislative accomplishments and his legacy of principled public service have had a deep impact on all of our lives. The Senate will suffer a loss without MIKE. But he will not slip out of the Senate. He will walk out these doors with his head held high because he can feel good about all he has given to the people of Ohio and to the United States of America. He has truly made a difference in their lives.

Married for more than 39 years, MIKE and Fran are parents to 8 children and grandparents to 10. They have been blessed with much happiness and success, and they have carved out many meaningful paths during their life together.

While MIKE will be missed, I am confident that he and Fran will begin something new in this next chapter of their lives. We have both been given so much. I believe that God does have a plan. Sometimes we are not sure about what it is, but God does have a plan.

I am reminded of one of my favorite verses from the Bible, Proverbs chapter 3, verses 5 and 6:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and learn not unto your own understandings. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your path.

MIKE will be missed. But I know the Holy Spirit will continue to inspire MIKE and Fran as they embark on a new journey together.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THUNE). The Senator from Ohio, Mr. DEWINE, is recognized.

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I thank my dear friend—the now junior Senator from Ohio, who in January will become the senior Senator from Ohio—for those very generous and kind comments.

GEORGE VOINOVICH and I first got to know each other in 1989. I will not repeat the story the Senator recounted, but we got together and formed a partnership that has lasted until today. I gave up my run for Governor and joined with GEORGE as his Lieutenant Governor candidate. We won and, as they say, the rest is history. GEORGE was a great Governor for 8 years. I was his Lieutenant Governor for the first 4 of those years. We worked very closely

during that period of time, of course, and after I went to the Senate, when he was still Governor. We have worked even closer since he has been a Senator from Ohio. So I thank him. GEORGE VOINOVICH and Janet are dear friends. They are people whom we care very much about. GEORGE is a great public servant, and I appreciate him very much and am touched, frankly, by his very kind comments.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SPECIALIST ALLEN JAMES KNOP

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I come to the Senate floor today in remembrance of a brave Ohioan from Willowick—Army SPC Allen James Knop. On November 23, 2005, Specialist Knop died while serving our Nation in Iraq. He was serving with the 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, based at Fort Campbell, KY. He was 22 years old.

Specialist Knop is survived by his mother Eileen D'Ercole, his father William Knop, and his siblings Brandon, Rachel, Max, Natalie, and Alison.

Allen graduated from North High School in Eastlake, OH, in 2002. He loved sports—especially golf. His mother Eileen remembers that Allen was extremely charismatic and that he willingly would make sacrifices that helped others. She said, "Blessings come from the heart, and my son had the most wonderful heart of anyone I know."

As a high school student, Allen developed a strong work ethic. He relished responsibility. His father William does masonry work and often would hire Allen during his summer vacations. William said, "[Al] would work with me in the summer. He was strong. He was thin. And, he was fast. Sometimes my guys would come up to me and say, 'Hey! That kid works harder than we do!'"

Allen's father remembers that it was the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, that motivated his son to enlist in the Army immediately after high school. William worried about the decision, but was deeply impressed by Allen's responses to his questions. This is what Allen said: "Just think, Dad. If everyone thought like you, there wouldn't be anybody over there fighting now." Recalling this conversation, William said, "That's probably the bravest thing I've ever heard anybody say."

Al's mother Eileen remembers how proud her son was to be in the Army. She said, "He could have gone to any college in the country, but he chose to join for a cause he truly believed in."

His father also recalls that Allen didn't have any delusions about war. He understood the danger of combat, but willingly enlisted because he felt such pride in our country. That is simply the kind of person he was.

Allen spent 13 months on combat duty in Iraq—and then reenlisted. His second tour began in August of 2005. His father said that "that tour was hard on him, but he was so proud to serve that he re-enlisted to go back. It meant everything to him. He was a true patriot."

Still though, Allen knew that re-enlisting worried his family—and nothing meant more to him than his family. So he decided to use a family golfing trip to get a few laughs with them before he left. He showed up dressed in a light-blue leisure suit and talked his younger brother Max into dressing up like Johnny Cash, the Man in Black. William always laughs at the memory. "It's Al," he said. "Always goofing around. . . . That's one of the best memories I'll have of him."

It was during this same golf outing that Allen gave his brother Max a special gift. Even though Allen was careful with money and didn't like to spend it freely, he had recently bought an expensive new golf set and driver for himself. William remembers, however, that when Allen said goodbye and went to drive away, he stopped, turned around, and summoned his brother Max. This is how William describes what happened next:

So he got out of the car and walked over to [me]. He had that driver with him and he said, "Here, Max. Keep an eye on this until I get back."

Allen's family and friends will always remember him as someone who was extremely generous, caring, and selfless. Once, during his first tour of Iraq, Allen got a pass to come home for a visit. But he didn't use it for himself. Instead, he gave it to a fellow soldier whose wife and children were eager to see him. His mother Eileen remembers, "It broke my heart, but he did what was right. How could you argue with that?"

Hundreds of friends, colleagues, and family members attended Allen's funeral, which took place on a snowy day in Ohio. U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Christopher Davis, Allen's squad leader during his 2003 tour of duty in Iraq, spoke at the service. This is what he said of Allen:

Rest assured, he will live forever in the tales of heroism that we brothers will tell. . . . Today, Al's band of brothers are here to pay tribute to one of our own.

Staff Sergeant Davis also recalled that while Allen exhibited tremendous leadership abilities, he also had the ability to make his fellow soldiers laugh and possessed a unique "lightheartedness and boundless energy." He said this of Allen:

He was a fierce fighter, and he was quick with a joke. Our unit suffered some very difficult times, but Al was like a beacon. He was the only one that could make me laugh.

During the funeral, Pastor Larry Bogenrief spoke of Allen's strong faith in God and his commitment to military