

take them across the finish line. He was the kind of person you would want to have on your team at all times.

PAUL was the kind of person who really added a lot to this institution. It makes me proud to say he was my colleague. He contributed so much in so many ways. His death is an almost unspeakable loss for us, for the State of Georgia, and for the country.

He showed great leadership on a lot of issues, with a hallmark brand of analysis and execution that identified a challenge for our conference, pulled out all the views among our colleagues, and built consensus and success to the betterment of not just our party, but our country. For example, take primary and secondary education—something overlooked for many years. He focused on that in the last few years, and headed up a task force that cut across committee lines, seniority lines, and philosophical lines, to bring us together. He wanted us to do positive things to improve education across the nation. He successfully blended our different viewpoints together, and together we painted a vision on education that not only do many Americans support, but holds out real hope for change and improvement when it comes to educating our kids for the challenges of the 21st century. Further, many elements of his efforts brought along our colleagues across the aisle.

Or, take our war on drugs. Senator COVERDELL has worked hard with colleagues to address this challenge, here in the United States, and with the House and the administration to carry the fight overseas. In waging those battles, we came to realize that he was intense, he was serious, dedicated, and sincere. He was also successful, and many families today and in the future should be gratified in his success.

And these are just a few examples of the many areas where PAUL placed his tremendous energies. He was so involved in so many different issues, I even teased him last year. I said, "We are enacting all Coverdell legislation, all the time" because he had his name and fingerprints all over so many things we were doing, because he was so proactive in trying to come up with positive solutions to challenging problems in education, or fighting the war on drugs here and overseas, or spending the country's money wisely, or returning the tax surplus to the people.

PAUL also didn't hesitate to join us in standing up on behalf of the Constitution, our system of checks and balances, of keeping the order we stand to defend. From the beginning to the end of his time in the Senate, rarely a day went by when he did not cast a thoughtful eye on the activism and activities of the executive, cognizant of the vision of our Founders who believed in a limited central government.

When you got to know him, you would discover that he had a real intensity, a keen curiosity to learn, understand, grapple with issues great and small. And he had such a great, conge-

nial working spirit that made all of us better, that built us all up. His personality was infectious, his energy was admirable, his thoughtfulness was considerable, and his friendship was valuable.

We want to let PAUL's wife Nancy know that she is very much in our thoughts and prayers. We are comforted by the fact and have great confidence in the fact that PAUL COVERDELL now resides in a wonderful mansion, eternally. Our sympathies and prayers go with Nancy, and to the Coverdell family.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Oklahoma for his comments. We celebrate the wonderful life of PAUL COVERDELL. I have a heavy heart, and I miss him. He was a great Senator. He contributed to this Nation in extraordinary ways.

He was a good friend to me, and a good friend to many others.

Yes, he was modest, self-effacing, encouraging, positive, and unifying—all of those things. But he was a courageous and positive leader for values that this Nation holds dear. He advocated them with such a winsome and effective way. We will miss him. I will miss him.

I say to the family and to Nancy particularly how sorry we are, and I express my sympathy. Maybe next week I will be better able to express my admiration and feelings for PAUL COVERDELL. I feel his loss deeply. So many of us do. I wanted to share those thoughts at this time.

I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001—Continued

Mr. REID. Mr. President, what is the legislative business now before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. H.R. 4461, the Agriculture appropriations bill.

Mr. REID. Is there an amendment pending?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is none.

AMENDMENT NO. 3938

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], for Mr. HARKIN, proposes an amendment numbered 3938.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To prohibit the use of appropriated funds to label, mark, stamp, or tag as "inspected and passed" meat, meat products, poultry, or poultry products that do not meet microbiological performance standards established by the Secretary of Agriculture)

On page 25, line 11, before the period, insert the following: "": *Provided further*, That none of the funds made available under this heading may be used by the Secretary of Agriculture to label, mark, stamp, or tag as "inspected and passed" meat, meat products, poultry, or poultry products, under the Poultry Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 451 et seq.) or the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), that do not meet microbiological performance standards established by the Secretary".

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this amendment clarifies USDA's authority to enforce standards for pathogens in meat and poultry products. These standards are essential to ensuring continued progress in producing safer products by reducing these pathogen levels in meat and poultry products. They are an important part of the new meat and poultry inspection system adopted in 1996.

This amendment only clarifies USDA's authority to enforce pathogen standards. It will not codify existing salmonella performance standards.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SMITH of Oregon). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TAX RELIEF FOR MARRIED COUPLES

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, yesterday the Senate passed legislation providing tax relief for married couples. We passed a bill that basically eliminates the marriage penalty tax for most married couples. The cost of the bill was \$55.6 billion over 5 years and over ten years. The cost of the bill was incorrectly reported in several newspapers despite the fact that on the floor of the Senate and in a press conference later, we stated clearly that the bill that we passed was a 5-year bill, and the cost of the bill was estimated by the Joint Committee on Taxation to be \$56 billion. You wouldn't know that if you read the New York Times.

In today's paper: "Senate Approves Tax Cut To Help Married Couples. Clinton Threatens Veto." That much is correct, but the next line says, "\$248 billion measure would aid even those who do not pay marriage penalty." I