

this during the break. I think that is very important.

We have the opportunity to work together on legislation—I don't mean he and I, I mean Democrats and Republicans in the Senate. Earlier this week, the House voted to expand the President's stem cell research policy. Passage of the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act was a victory for millions of Americans who suffer from deadly diseases and for their families. It was also a victory for bipartisanship. This bill shares the same level of bipartisanship and support here in the Senate that it did in the House.

Senators HARKIN and SPECTER, who are champions of medical research, have worked hard on this issue. Senators FEINSTEIN, HATCH, KENNEDY, and SMITH have also been leaders on this bill.

I hope when we return from recess, the distinguished majority leader will have had an opportunity to look at this and we can take some time to do this. What I do not want on this bill is to have it offered to Defense authorization or something such as that. I think it would be better if we had free-standing legislation on this. It can be done in a relatively short period of time. I certainly hope so. When we come back, we have a 4-week work period and we can work it in during that period of time.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

#### SENATOR AND MRS. BYRD'S 68TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, it is not often we get the time to just come to the floor to talk about friendships and about what it means to be friends in the Senate. I wish to take some time today to talk about my friend, the former majority leader, former chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and longtime friend, Senator BYRD.

It just so happens that we have spent a lot of time together. I remember so well one great trip to London when we went there for the British-American Parliamentary Conference where we had a great deal of time to talk about the past and our own personal lives.

But I have come to the floor today to ask the Senate to join me in offering

congratulations to my good friend and colleague, Senator ROBERT BYRD, and his wife Erma, who, on Sunday, will celebrate 68 years of marriage. This is an anniversary few of us will ever see, and as far as I can tell—I have checked with the Historian—no Senator has ever had the opportunity to celebrate 68 years of marriage. As a matter of fact, my oldest son Walter and his wife Debbie will celebrate 23 years of marriage on the same day, this Sunday.

Those of us in the Senate have relied greatly upon Senator BYRD's knowledge and love of history. With just a few short days remaining before their anniversary and because we will probably not be in session tomorrow, I think it is appropriate to return the favor and ask the Senate to reflect a moment on ROBERT and Erma's history together as husband and wife.

ROBERT BYRD and Erma James grew up together on the schoolyard of Mark Twain High School in West Virginia. They were high school sweethearts, although Senator BYRD has said himself he is "not sure if [Erma] knew she was my sweetheart." They were. And they were married on May 29, 1937.

Over the years, their family has grown, as Senator BYRD likes to say, "into a brood of fine people." Today, they are proud parents of two daughters and have known the joy of six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

For 68 years, Senator and Mrs. Byrd have shown us what it means to "love, comfort, honor, and keep for better or worse, richer or poorer, in sickness and in health." Their story has been called "one of the great American romances."

Every year, in May, Senator BYRD comes to the floor to reflect on the meaning of Mother's Day and honor the Nation's mothers. His great speeches often mention Erma, the wonderful home she has made for him and their children, and the joy he takes in his family.

Two years ago, when Erma was sick, Senator BYRD stood up during an appropriations debate and told us he was going home. And I quote what he said at that time:

There are only two duties that will exceed my duties in the Senate, one is my duty to God and the second is to my family. I think my duty is to my wife.

Now, these moments are a great reminder to those of us who are married. We have married in this life, and we must do our best to keep the promises we made long ago.

I have had the honor to be married twice myself. One of the reasons I am here today is I remember the great comfort Senator BYRD gave to me when I lost my first wife. He has assisted me and my family in many ways. I also remember when he came to the floor and spoke of my first child in my second marriage and really extolled the concept of marriage at that time.

After 68 years, Erma and ROBERT still have the deep and abiding friendship

that began in Beckley, WV; the love of their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren; and the respect of all of us in the Senate. I know of no other Senator who has celebrated over 50 years of service in Congress, and as I said before, there is no other Senator who could say he celebrated 68 years of marriage. It is an overwhelming accomplishment and really a credit to both ROBERT and Erma.

Earlier this month, in his annual Mother's Day address, Senator BYRD reflected on the early days of his marriage to Erma. He said:

Nearly seven decades ago, we were the rankest of amateurs at marriage and parenthood.

This Sunday, our good friend and his wife will have proven they are now experts in both categories. My wife Catherine and I wish them the best.

Senator BYRD has often marked significant events by submitting works of poetry for the RECORD. I wish I had his capability for remembering poems and works of great art. But today, I offer a poem by the great Alaskan poet, Robert Service, and I offer it in honor of Senator and Mrs. Byrd's 68 years together. Robert Service's poem is entitled "Home and Love," and it goes like this:

Just home and love! The words are small  
Four little letters unto each;  
And yet you will not find in all  
The wide and gracious range of speech  
Two more so tenderly complete:  
When angels talk in heaven above,  
I'm sure they have no words more sweet  
Than home and love.

Just home and love! It's hard to guess  
Which of the two were best to gain;  
Home without love is bitterness:  
Love without home is often pain.  
No! Each alone will seldom do;  
Somehow they travel hand and glove:  
If you win one you must have two,  
Both home and love.

And if you've both, well then I'm sure  
You ought to sing the whole day long:  
It doesn't matter if you're poor  
With these to make divine your song.  
And so I praisefully repeat,  
When angels talk in heaven above,  
There are no words more simply sweet  
Than home and love.

I ask the Senate to remember to congratulate my good friend on 68 years of marriage.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate a member of our Senate family who is nearing an amazing milestone in life—68 years of marriage.

On My 29, 1937, the Valedictorian of Mark Twain High School married his sweetheart—a coal miner's daughter—in West Virginia. That valedictorian was Senator ROBERT BYRD. The coal miner's daughter was Erma Ora James. On Sunday, they will mark 68 years together.

It is an incredible achievement and a testament to their love and commitment.

Look how far they've come. They have seen their lives move from the hills of West Virginia to the highest levels of government. Senator BYRD has gone from gas station attendant to

meat cutter to welder to United States Senator.

But—it's important to note—Senator BYRD has never hidden the secret of his success. If you talk to him, he will give credit to whom credit is due.

He said it right here on the Senate floor in May of 2000 days before his 63rd anniversary. He said: "I have to frankly say that what little I have amounted, if it is anything much, I owe for the most part to [Erma]."

Well Erma, the people of West Virginia and the United States owe you a debt of gratitude for all you've done for your husband and for giving us his time for so many years.

I've said before, Senator BYRD is a mentor of mine.

I have had the good fortunate of serving with him in the Senate since 1986. In these 19 years, I've gotten to know Senator BYRD and Erma well. They are a wonderful couple, delightful individuals, and I am honored to call them both friends.

Senator BYRD and Erma have no doubt seen many changes over their 68 years of marriage—none bigger than the size of their family. They have two daughters—Mona and Marjorie—and over a dozen grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Of course, no one can talk about Mr. and Mrs. ROBERT BYRD without recalling how they came to be together. He used sweets to get to her heart.

In school, a young ROBERT BYRD used to take sweets from a fellow classmate but he wouldn't eat them. He would store them up and give them to Erma when he met her in the hall. Years later he would say: "That's the way you court a girl—with another boy's bubble gum."

I have said many times that the Members of this Chamber are a family. And what an amazing example of family we have in Senator BYRD and Erma.

For 68 years of marriage, they have set a high standard for us all. It is a tribute to their love for each other, and for the rich, productive life they have enjoyed.

I congratulate them once again and pray for many more years of happiness together.

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#### MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, this coming Monday, Americans across the Nation will hang flags at their doors and place small flags and flowers on the gravesites of loved ones and soldiers in a tradition that stretches deep into history, perhaps back to the advent of warfare.

The selection of the last Monday in May is unique to the United States, but remembering and honoring those fallen in battle is deeply ingrained in the human heart. On this day, these sons and fathers, uncles and brothers and, more recently, daughters and mothers, aunts and nieces are family members to us all. Lost to us too early, their images remain frozen in time,

young faces trying to look stern in crisp uniforms. Their sacrifices on battlefields from the Argonne to Tripoli, Pearl Harbor to Iwo Jima, Porkchop Hill to Hamburger Hill, Kabul to Baghdad have kept the Nation safe and carried the American ideals of liberty and democracy across the surface of the globe.

This week, as the Senate struggled and ultimately overcame an arcane but fundamental challenge to our constitutional system of checks and balances, we have, I believe, honored the memory of all of those soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines. They defended the Nation and the Constitution from without; a bipartisan group of Senators this week defended it from within, thank God.

I rejoice that 14 Senators could rise above partisan politics to understand and preserve the carefully crafted balance of powers inscribed in our Constitution. Without the Constitution, the millions of lives and billions of dollars spent over the years on our Nation's defense, the flower of our youth and our hard-earned treasure, would have gone for naught. Our form of Government, acknowledging the might of the majority but protecting the rights of the minority, balancing populous States against States with smaller populations, preserving the voice and will of the people as the ultimate check against the rise of a tyrant king, that is our greatest treasure. It is the preservation of our form of Government that merits committing our young to the bloody horrors of battle.

It is perhaps appropriate, in this context, that the Senate's battle is concluded just before Memorial Day, which originated after our Nation's most divisive and bloody war ever fought on our home soil. The Civil War pit over 2.2 million Union soldiers against just over 1 million Confederate soldiers, resulting in almost 600,000 deaths, a third in battle and the rest from war's accompanying furies of disease and privation. It is a tribute to the heart's powers of healing that soon after the war, individuals and communities could put aside their differences in the graveyard and simply mourn their losses together.

Over 42 million American patriots have risked their lives for our Nation since the Revolutionary War. Over 17 million war veterans, of among over 25 million veterans of military service, live among us still. I salute them all, and thank them and their families for their bravery and their patriotism.

Of the 42 million Americans who saw battle during their military service, over 650,000 died in battle. That is 650,000 families who received the terrible news that their loved one had been killed. In World War II, the tragic news often came by telegram, and Americans learned to dread the sight of those envelopes.

As of May 23, 2005, in connection with Operation Iraqi Freedom, 1,623 families have answered the door to the solemn faces of two officers whose hard duty it

is to report the tragic news that another life has been lost. Another 186 families have gotten the same sad news coming from Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. My prayers go out to these families. There are no words that can console the grieving heart at times like these. The widow's flag, folded with care after a military ceremony, offers little comfort. But these brave men and women, and the families they leave behind, are part of a long chain of sacrifice and grief that firm the resolve of the Nation. Never should we forget their service to the Nation and the Constitution. Never should we squander their sacrifice on momentary partisan advantages that erode the integrity of the Constitution and, in turn, the continued health and vitality of our form of government.

On this Memorial Day, and on every Memorial Day, I urge Americans to put out their flags and to honor the fallen. I further urge them, in the spirit of those first Memorial Days, to put aside partisanship in favor of true patriotism, and to love and preserve our Nation and our Constitution in a lasting tribute to those who have given their lives in its defense.

As is my custom on these occasions, I would like to close with a poem. This piece is by Edgar Guest, and is called, "Memorial Day."

#### MEMORIAL DAY

The finest tribute we can pay  
 Unto our hero dead today,  
 Is not a rose wreath, white and red,  
 In memory of the blood they shed;  
 It is to stand beside each mound,  
 Each couch of consecrated ground,  
 And pledge ourselves as warriors true  
 Unto the work they died to do.  
 Into God's valleys where they lie  
 At rest, beneath the open sky,  
 Triumphant now o'er every foe,  
 As living tributes let us go.  
 No wreath of rose or immortelles  
 Or spoken word or tolling bells  
 Will do today, unless we give  
 Our pledge that liberty shall live.  
 Our hearts must be the roses red  
 We place above our hero dead;  
 Today beside their graves we must  
 Renew allegiance to their trust;  
 Must bare our heads and humbly say  
 We hold the Flag as dear as they,  
 And stand, as once they stood, to die  
 To keep the Stars and Stripes on high.  
 The finest tribute we can pay  
 Unto our hero dead today  
 Is not of speech or roses red,  
 But living, throbbing hearts instead,  
 That shall renew the pledge they sealed  
 With death upon the battlefield;  
 That freedom's flag shall bear no stain  
 And free men wear no tyrant's chain.  
 "No Tyrant's Chain."  
 I yield the floor.

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#### CONGRATULATIONS TO BETTY SIEGEL

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I rise to memorialize in the RECORD of the Senate the name of a great educator in the State of Georgia. Two weeks ago at the commencement exercises of Kennesaw State University in Kennesaw,