

REMEMBERING SENATOR CHARLES PERCY

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I rise today with a deep sense of honor and a deep sense of sadness to speak about the late Senator Charles Harting Percy of Illinois who passed away this past Saturday, with his family surrounding him.

Before I begin, though, I also wish to speak about two other losses to the Senate family. One, of course, is Kara Kennedy, the beloved daughter of Senator Ted Kennedy, as well as Eleanor Mondale, the beloved daughter of Vice President and Senator Fritz Mondale. Each of these two wonderful people died at the age of 51 and it is incomprehensible. It is terrible. They were far too young to be taken from us. The Percy and Rockefeller family love flows to their families.

Senator Chuck Percy was blessed to live a long and accomplished life. He lived to be 91 years old. Many of my colleagues know Senator Percy was a distinguished Republican Member of the Senate for 18 years, from 1967 to 1984, which is the year I came to the Senate. He was chairman, as people know, of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and a man with an absolutely vast talent that he poured into every aspect of his public service as well as his private business career. He was extraordinary in that way. He had brains. He had vision. He had stamina. He had energy. He was incredibly athletic. He could do anything for any amount of time and under all of this was built this incredible discipline that made him do it all.

Most importantly to this Senator, Chuck Percy was my father-in-law for more than four decades, since I was lucky enough to marry his unique and beautiful daughter, Sharon Percy, who, I might say, has many of the characteristics, nature and habits of Senator Percy. It just worked out that way. She has those characteristics. He extended to me in every way the great gift of joining the family he nurtured, watched over, cared for, and protected all of his life, and for that, obviously, I am forever grateful.

I wish to share a few remembrances of Senator Percy with my colleagues because many here didn't know him—a few did, but most did not; with the people of Illinois, and with all of the family and friends who are hurting from the news of his loss.

Chuck Percy was absolutely unshakeable in his belief in the future. He believed in our country and he believed in our ability to make this world a better place, if we would only put our minds and will and discipline to it. He was a believer. He always saw not through a glass darkly but through a glass brightly. It was his nature. He was guided more by what was right than by party label.

Interestingly, in a press interview in 2008, then-Senator Barack Obama noted that his hope was that more Republicans would look at members of

their party for inspiration and then compare them to Abraham Lincoln and Chuck Percy, two "pretty good Republicans," he said.

What made Chuck so magnetic and so successful was his determination to share his optimism, to share his sense of promise with everyone around him, even at a very young age.

Chuck Percy began his business career not at Bell & Howell, where in fact at the age of 29 he became the youngest CEO and president of a major American company, but in fact he did it years earlier at the age of 4. His family was impoverished. They had been devastated by the Great Depression. They faced bankruptcy. They shifted from place to place in some of the most difficult parts of Chicago. So Chuck Percy at the age of 4 wanted to help, and he knew how to help: the entrepreneurial instinct. He took cookies, baked presumably at home, and sold them on the streets of Chicago for a very little amount of money, but he made money from that which he then turned over to the family.

He helped his impoverished family weather the Great Depression and pushed himself, by force of will, to get an education, all the way through the University of Chicago, on scholarship.

Before his business career took off, as did many men of his generation, Chuck Percy went off to war serving his country for 3 years as a naval officer during World War II. Upon returning home, he rejoined Bell & Howell and led that company from 1949 to 1964 through an astounding thirty-two fold increase in the expansion of sales, in what were then cutting-edge film products.

He launched his political career in large part to get back into public service because he missed it. He yearned for it. One could argue that business might have been his real calling, or maybe public service was, but to him he was interested in everything and wanted to do everything. So he had a chance to get back into public service, but he had no grand ambition. He simply wanted to find ways to challenge himself and to help make the country better.

Chuck Percy had a seriousness of purpose. As a young man he resolved to read all of the great books of his generation and generations that preceded his, the master works, as well as the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Federalist Papers. He not only read them, but he discussed them all with his professor. It was a stunning emphasis to drive himself to increase his knowledge to the highest level possible.

But Chuck also had a sense of fun and of sport. He loved to be active. He loved to ski, among other things. As fate would have it, he was skiing in Idaho when then-President Eisenhower called him in 1959 to see if he could be persuaded to work on a project to reinvigorate the Republican Party by leading a commission on national goals. It was an ambitious task and rife with po-

litical risk for Chuck, but Chuck didn't hesitate. His work helped pave the way for his election, in fact, to the Senate in 1966.

But even more than that, his report served as a template for the reflection and soul searching that went on in this country ahead of that 1976 bicentennial. He cared about the 200th anniversary of America. Everybody did, but he really did, and he wanted to know what we could do better, what we could do more of, and that is what he used that commission for. He wanted America to be a better nation.

As a Senator, Chuck Percy took a strong interest in the economy and international affairs. As chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee he traveled the globe, going to countries whose names were hardly known at a time when very few Senators were even traveling at all. He could do that as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, but he wanted to do that and he was good at it. He would get into the tiniest track of a small village to try and meet people, maybe even breaking cultural habits by trying to shake hands with people who were not allowed to shake hands because they were considered too impoverished. Nothing discouraged him, and he wanted to make himself a better person and a better Senator.

Chuck was on a trip to inspect the battlefields of Vietnam, even though he was very skeptical of that war. He was on a helicopter when his aircraft took fire from the Vietcong in a hamlet about 90 miles north of Saigon.

The helicopter lifted off for safety, but left Chuck with four other men and two guns between them to huddle against the ground as mortar shells exploded 15 feet away and small arms fire whizzed overhead. Additional U.S. helicopters soon arrived and rescued the men, and the story went on. He was fearless.

When he came to the Senate, Chuck took on the culture of the Senate. He didn't like a lot of what he saw. I am looking, as I speak now, at Senate pages. He thought there was no reason why girls could not be Senate pages as easily as boys, but that was the custom then. Girls were not deemed to be able to do the work. There was an attitude here in the Senate then that the opportunity of being a page was suited for boys, and during the debate, interestingly, some Senators worried about girl pages not being able to carry copies of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to the Senate desks.

He cosponsored the Equal Rights Amendment and spent the better part of his career arguing that women should have the same opportunities as men. Senator Percy knew firsthand from the remarkable women in his own life, his own family, and the remarkable women in his office that women can do anything men can do, and perhaps better. In fact, Senator Percy was furious when he found out that textbooks paid for by the Federal Government included sentences such as "girls

should be nurses and secretaries, while boys should be doctors and businessmen."

Chuck Percy also cared deeply about helping less fortunate Americans. People think of him as always having been very rich. No. He was very poor and his family was even poorer. He struggled for a long time. He is rightly credited for authoring and pushing the first-ever legislation to create opportunities for home ownership for low-income Americans.

He focused on older Americans. He wrote a book back in 1974 about the daunting process of growing old in America. This is back in 1974, 9 years after Medicare, and the shameful living conditions and hospital conditions the elder poor had to face. His book was a call to action and a moral imperative to restore dignity to aging.

Chuck favored open government and sunshine laws at a time when it was not popular. He felt strongly that in a democracy, the military establishment should be held accountable and answer specifically to civilian leaders.

He also opposed, for the most part, war and took many positions that undoubtedly hurt him within his party.

But, in fact, he defied party labels, describing himself as "fervently moderate." So aggressively did he seek out evenhandedness that it was known by those who knew him that at his dinner parties at his house, they were always equally divided between Democrats and Republicans; specifically, one Republican, one Democrat, and different parts of the government and business. It was a matter of principle to him.

He wanted to hear all sides, though he was absolutely resolute when he made up his mind. One of the things I thought was most captivating about Chuck was the fervor with which he held his beliefs.

Senator Percy's desire to be President came to be well known—and he wrote about it publicly—but the timing was never quite right so that did not happen.

He lost his race for a fourth Senate term in 1984, just when this Senator was coming into the Senate, and it was one of several very difficult times Chuck Percy faced in his life with courage and with grace.

Early in his life, his family was literally penniless when his father lost his job and all their savings. Then later, at the midpoint of his career, he lost a beloved daughter, Sharon's twin sister Valerie, in an unspeakable and lethal crime that still tears at the soul of our family. Then, in his final years, he was struck down by Alzheimer's for a decade or more. There is no cure for Alzheimer's. The end was fated.

He was never downcast. He was always—until he no longer could—trying to read, walk, play tennis, have meals outdoors, and do something. But it was through the whole of his dynamic and full life that Chuck Percy steadily became the great man whom I have been privileged to know, admire, and love deeply.

Chuck warmed to a challenge. He leaned into life in every way—insisting for himself, his children, and his grandchildren that the best part of living consists of learning, improving, and trying to do better each day. His energy and his focus on this process, fueled in part by Christian Science, was amazing and unmatched, as far as I am concerned.

He was an incomparable father to Sharon and to her siblings. He lived what he believed—very simple—never wavered in his unconditional support and love, and sought and created truth.

America benefitted greatly from his life and from his service. The entire Percy and Rockefeller families have been incredibly and indelibly shaped by his legacy and by his love.

I ask unanimous consent that a statement from the Percy and Rockefeller families be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATEMENT FROM THE PERCY AND ROCKEFELLER FAMILIES ON THE PASSING OF SENATOR CHARLES H. PERCY

It is with a profound sense of personal loss that the family of former Senator Charles H. Percy announces his death on Saturday, September 17, 2011, at the age of 91.

He loomed as large in his private life as he did in his public one.

His determination—to overcome odds, to help others, to persuade decision-makers to actions he believed were important—showed us how much can be achieved through the inspiration of a single man.

The energy and enthusiasm he brought to everything in his many-faceted life encouraged us to rise early and to embrace each day's opportunities for work and fun until late at night, and buoyed us up when we flagged. His courage in the face of devastating adversity made us braver and taught us resilience. His insistence on a balanced perspective in his public life, (calling himself "fervently moderate"), helped us understand it is both possible and preferable to live in a world without partisanship.

He led by example with his self-confidence, relishing the company of people who challenged and informed his thinking, including his outstanding business and Senate staff. He provoked animated discussions around the dinner table and roared with laughter at Capitol Steps skits at his expense. His voice was strong and deep, and it filled and warmed a room.

He taught us humility and respectfulness as, win or lose, he would show up at the Chicago Loop the day after each election to thank the voters. He taught us generosity, as he tried to help others as he'd been helped along the way. He taught us how powerful unconditional love can be.

He went through life with his arms flung wide. He welcomed all who wanted to accompany him on his journey, celebrated the victories with them, and supported and comforted them through his own difficult times.

He unreservedly believed he would be joining the loved ones who had gone before him, and in the face of such conviction we cannot but believe he is having the joyous reunion he had longed for.

We also believe he would want to thank extended family, friends, colleagues, and compatriots for so enriching his life. We will all miss him.

The family will be holding a private service. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in the name of Charles H. Percy to The Friends of Georgetown Waterfront Park (P.O. Box 3653, Washington, D.C. 20027) or WETA (3939 Campbell Avenue, Arlington, VA 22206).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, first, let me extend my sympathy to my colleague, JAY ROCKEFELLER from West Virginia, son-in-law of the late Senator Chuck Percy, and, of course, his wife, Senator Percy's daughter, Sharon. They are great friends, and I know this loss, though they all found it inevitable, still brings pain to their lives. I hope the reflections of so many people in the greatness of Chuck Percy and his contribution to Illinois and to America will help to, in some ways, alleviate the pain they are going through.

I join my colleague, Senator KIRK, today in paying tribute to our fallen colleague and friend, Senator Charles Percy, who died on Saturday. He served Illinois and our Nation for 18 years here in the Senate.

Although he ran against the two men who were my greatest political inspirations—Senator Paul Douglas and Senator Paul Simon—I always regarded Senator Percy as a friend and as an honest and honorable representative of our State of Illinois.

It is a little known fact about Chuck Percy that he was nearsighted in one eye and farsighted in the other. That unusual vision was a good metaphor for his politics as well. He described himself as "fervently moderate." A progressive Republican, he said he was "a conservative on money issues but a liberal on people issues." He used the word "liberal" in the days when you could get away with it.

Charles Harting Percy was born in 1919 in Pensacola, FL. His family moved to Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood when he was a baby. His father worked as a bank clerk. His mother taught violin for 25 cents a lesson. The bank at which his father worked failed in the Depression and the Percy family was forced into bankruptcy and onto relief.

Chuck Percy got his first job at the age of 5, selling magazines, to help his family along. He sold his mother's homemade cookies door to door, rose at 3:30 in the morning to deliver newspapers and parked cars and worked as a janitor—all while he was in high school.

He worked his way through the University of Chicago on a half-tuition scholarship. Along the way, he had an economics professor, Dr. Paul Douglas.

In 1936, while Chuck Percy was still in college, his Sunday school teacher encouraged him to enter a training program at the man's company. The company was Bell & Howell, near Skokie, IL, a very small manufacturer, at the time, of home movie cameras.

After graduating from the University of Illinois with a degree in economics,

Chuck Percy went to work full time at Bell & Howell. At 23, he was elected to the board of directors. At age 29, he was named Bell & Howell president and chief executive officer, the youngest person to head a major American corporation up to that time.

In 14 years, under Chuck Percy's leadership, Bell & Howell extended its reach in the consumer electronics market. Its number of employees increased twelvefold, and its annual sales climbed from \$13 million to \$160 million.

In 1964, Chuck Percy was a delegate to the Republican National Convention. It was the same year he ran unsuccessfully for Governor of Illinois against Otto Kerner.

Two years later, Chuck Percy challenged that former University of Chicago professor, Paul Douglas, for his seat in the Senate. I knew all about that campaign. It was my first. I was a college student and an intern to Senator Douglas and went back to work on his campaign in Illinois when Chuck Percy challenged him.

In the final weeks of that campaign, I was with Senator Douglas in my hometown of East St. Louis, IL. He was staying at the Holiday Inn, and he received word, early in the morning, that Chuck Percy's daughter, Valerie, had been murdered in their home.

Senator Douglas—I remember this to this day—saw a church across the street from that Holiday Inn—it was Saint Henry Catholic Church—and though Douglas was a Quaker and later a Unitarian, he said: I am going to that church to pray. He went in and he prayed for the Percy family. He walked out the door and he said, in quiet tones to his staff: This campaign is over until Chuck Percy announces it will resume, and we will say nothing about this tragedy other than to express our sympathy to his family. What a different day in American politics.

Both candidates declared a halt to the campaign. It lasted nearly 1 month. It was the month of September. That decision showed a humanity and a respect which is missing on too many occasions from today's politics.

Chuck Percy went on to win that campaign. In the Senate, he backed consumer protection and environmental efforts and supported international nuclear nonproliferation. When you listen to his agenda of priorities, you find it hard to place it in today's very conservative Republican agenda.

A Navy veteran, he was an outspoken opponent of the war in Vietnam. It was an act of political courage that earned him a place on Richard Nixon's infamous enemies list.

He was the first Senator to call for an independent prosecutor to investigate Watergate.

In 1970, he joined the Foreign Relations Committee. One decade later, when he rose to chair that committee, he explained his views on foreign policy this way:

I don't want foreign policy developed just by one party and ride roughshod over the other party. I'd much more value a bill that has bipartisan support. That's what this committee achieved in World War II, achieved in the Marshall Plan.

Chuck Percy was reelected to the Senate in 1972 by more than 1 million votes, the largest plurality of any Senate candidate in the Nation that year. He won a third term in 1978.

Running for a fourth term in 1984, he was challenged in a bitter primary by an archconservative—a man whose money came from out of State and was never traced. Although he won that primary, he would go on to lose the general election to my friend, Senator Paul Simon, who won with 50.1 percent of the vote.

That same year, Senator Percy's son-in-law, our colleague, Senator ROCKEFELLER, was elected to the Senate from West Virginia.

After leaving the Senate, Senator Percy said his proudest accomplishment in office had been pushing for more opportunity for women in the Federal Government. His lasting legacy goes way beyond that.

In 1970, it was Senator Chuck Percy who persuaded Richard Nixon to nominate one of Senator Percy's former classmates for a spot on the Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. Five years later, that former University of Chicago classmate, John Paul Stevens, was elevated to the U.S. Supreme Court, where he served with distinction until his retirement last year.

I can recall when Senator Percy was in office. I had backed his opponent, Senator Douglas, whom he defeated in 1966. I contacted his office. I was a student at Georgetown Law School. We had a group of Democrats, and I thought: I will just take a flier here. Let me call his office and see if he will meet with us. Of course, he said yes. The next thing you know, 10 Georgetown University Law Center young Democrats were sitting in Chuck Percy's office. He knew it, and we had a good time, a good exchange. That is the kind of person he was. That is the kind of politics he practiced. That is a reminder of what life was like not that long ago.

After leaving office, Senator Percy became an international relations and trade consultant and board chairman of an organization that administers education and cultural exchange programs.

Two years ago, his daughter, Sharon Percy Rockefeller, announced that her father had Alzheimer's. Senator Percy had been struggling with the disease for more than a decade.

Even out of office, he would call me from time to time, usually with a request about Washington, DC. Illinois was his love and the Chicago area always his hometown. But he had a passion and love for Washington too and he worked hard to make this a better city.

I wish to offer my deepest condolences to Senator Percy's wife of more

than 60 years, Loraine, to Sharon and JAY ROCKEFELLER and all the Percy children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

I feel honored to have been schooled in politics in Illinois during this era, to have known such extraordinary men when I was just a youngster, a college student starting out. Knowing all of them and watching them in public service gave me an impression and an ideal of what this job should be all about.

When I heard of Senator Percy's death—I know his family had anticipated it—it brought back many memories of the fine contribution he made to Illinois and to the Nation. We are lucky to have had men like him, successful in so many ways, devoting a major part of their lives to public service. We are also fortunate they did it with such a feeling of responsibility, not only to their State and Nation but also to be public servants in the best sense of the word, working with everyone to try to find solutions to problems. It is a lesson we need to relearn today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to suspend the time limitation and continue for 8 minutes to eulogize Senator Percy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, I rise along with my colleague from Illinois, our senior Senator, Mr. DURBIN, and, of course, Senator ROCKEFELLER, related to the Percy family, to eulogize Senator Percy, whom we lost on Saturday—a great and one of the most successful Illinois Senators.

Senator Percy dedicated much of his life to serving our Nation, first in the U.S. Navy and then for 18 years in the Senate.

I think I am the only Member of the Senate who actually voted for Senator Percy and volunteered in his campaign, along with my mom, when I was only 12 years old. Senator Percy, we knew, was a focused and disciplined leader, who succeeded at nearly everything he put his mind to.

He graduated from my alma mater, New Trier High School, and also lived in Kenilworth, IL, my hometown. He later, after graduating from New Trier, went to the University of Chicago. After getting a bachelor's degree in economics, he joined a small camera company called Bell & Howell.

He then led Bell & Howell, starting at the age of only 29, into making military cameras and movie projectors and then a new product called microfilm. As the leader of Bell & Howell, he was one of our greatest job engines of the State of Illinois. Employment grew 12 times under his leadership and earnings 32 times. But Charles Percy wanted to do more for his country.

As we heard, at the request of President Eisenhower, he helped write "Better Decisions For America" as part of

the Republican platform of 1960. Charles Percy ran for Governor in 1964, but he lost that election. In the not-so-proud tradition of Illinois, that Governor then went to jail and Percy became seen as a corruption fighter in our State. Just 2 years after that defeat, Charles Percy was elected by the people of Illinois to represent them in the Senate, defeating Paul Douglas.

During that campaign, his daughter Valerie was murdered in my hometown and his hometown, Kenilworth—one of our town's only murders. It was through this tragedy that we saw so clearly Charles Percy's quiet dignity.

In the Senate, Chuck Percy was first known as a proponent of a foundation to back home ownership for low-income families. He was the toast of this town in the 1960s, described by the *New York Times* as "the hottest political article in the Republican Party." He even led in polls for the 1968 Republican nomination for President.

Senator Percy, though, was at heart an independent who took on corruption in his own State, and especially his own party. He moved the first resolution calling for an independent prosecutor on the Watergate scandal. The *New York Times* reported:

Nixon fumed to his cabinet that he would do all he could to make sure that Mr. Percy, who already voted against two Nixon nominees for the Supreme Court, would never become President.

Senator Percy fought corruption wherever he saw it. In 1977, he took on White House Budget Director Bert Lance for backdating checks to gain tax deductions. Lance later resigned.

Senator Percy was best known for his work as chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during historic times, when the United States recovered its nerve and stared down the Soviet Union, and it won the Cold War outright.

He was a gentle man, disciplined in swimming every day, and a devout Christian Scientist who read the Bible each evening.

Senator Percy was a strong, honest, and principled man whose integrity remained uncompromised in his nearly 20 years in the Senate. He believed that accountability, checks and balances, and transparency should be the driving forces of government.

We will miss his moderate, fiscally conservative brand of politics. His legacy is one of genteel, thoughtful leadership, and his fight against corruption in Illinois is sorely missed today.

I send my sincere condolences to Senator Percy's wife Loraine and his children, Sharon, Roger, Gail, and Mark, and their spouses—including our colleague Senator ROCKEFELLER—and to the grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and many friends and family who will mark his passing at the funeral on Wednesday.

Senator Percy was one of the best-remembered Illinois Senators. He represents a tradition, in some sense followed by me. As a former volunteer for

his campaign and one who voted for him, we mark his loss today.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXTENDING THE GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 2832, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to the bill (H.R. 2832) to extend the Generalized System of Preferences, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. will be divided and controlled between the Senator from Montana, Mr. BAUCUS, and the Senator from Utah, Mr. HATCH, or their designees.

The Senator from Montana is recognized.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I say to my friend from Alabama, I don't plan to take a lot of time—maybe 10 minutes total.

Mr. President, in 1934, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said:

No country, however rich, can afford the waste of its human resources. Demoralization caused by vast unemployment is our greatest extravagance.

President Roosevelt said these words at a fireside chat nearly 80 years ago. Our economy was slowly on the path of recovery after suffering the worst financial crash in American history. Roosevelt had turned his focus to helping the "permanent army of unemployed" Americans—those Americans who didn't have jobs. His resulting investment in America's human resources put millions of people back to work.

Today, we face a similar situation. After a significant financial crisis, our economy is in tough shape. Our economic recovery is fragile but improving. Housing foreclosures have slowed and investors are looking for new opportunities. We have a long way to go. But 14 million Americans are still looking for work—and that is just unemployed. If you add the underemployed, it is probably closer to 20 million, and maybe more than that. Like President Roosevelt, we must bolster our investment in American human resources because, as in 1934, America's strength is in its people.

When people are denied the opportunity to work, they are denied the dignity that comes with that work—let alone the income, let alone providing for their families. Trade adjustment assistance, or TAA, is the right investment in America's workers. TAA pro-

vides training and income support to thousands of Americans so they can get a good-paying job right here in our own country. TAA helps them earn the dignity that comes from putting in a good day of work.

I worked with my friend, Ways and Means Chairman DAVE CAMP, from Michigan, who is a good man. We worked together on a TAA agreement that improves the efficiency, accessibility, and effectiveness of the program. I highly commend Representative DAVID CAMP. Our staffs have worked very closely over and over to try to find a common agreement for reauthorizing trade adjustment assistance. We worked to scale back the cost of the program, while maintaining the importance of training that helps workers secure good-paying jobs here at home.

The amendment we are offering today is one I made with Chairman CAMP on TAA. It extends coverage to workers in the services sector, which makes up 80 percent of our economy. It wasn't there before, at least not before 2009. Extending this coverage means manufacturing workers, as well as computer programmers and airline maintenance technicians will have equal access to the TAA Program.

It also extends TAA to all workers. Current law does not cover 8 of our top 10 trade partners, including China, Japan, and Korea. Our amendment removes this geographic limitation and expands TAA's benefits to cover trade with all countries.

Job retraining is the heart of TAA. This training has a proven track record of providing workers the skills they need to secure their next job. We know it works—and it works well—in my State of Montana and across the country.

Al Drebes worked at Plum Creek Lumber Mill in Pablo, MT. In January 2009, Al was laid off. With a young family, he needed to quickly find a new job. But after he spent months sending his resume around, he realized he needed to update his skills.

What did he do? Al signed up for TAA and began training in recreation power equipment repair. Following his classroom training, TAA partnered him with a local employer, S&S Sports, which specializes in all-terrain motor vehicles, jet skis, and other such things that are so important to so many people in our country—and, I might add, they are a lot of fun. Al began on-the-job training with S&S and did such a great job that the company hired him full time. Because of TAA job training, Al now has the security and dignity that comes with a full day's work, and he continues supporting his family.

In addition to providing essential job training, our TAA amendment also helps American workers maintain health insurance for themselves and their families. TAA-eligible workers have access to the health coverage tax credit, which provides a 72.5-percent tax credit subsidy to make health care