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IN RECOGNITION OF SCOTT GUDES

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Scott Gudes, who leaves his post at the helm of my Budget Committee staff this week. After 29 years of loyal service to the Federal Government, Scott has chosen to become vice president for government relations for the National Marine Manufacturers Association--a job well suited for a man who loves the sea as much as he does.

When I became chair of the Senate Budget Committee in 2005, I asked Scott if he would serve as my staff director. In under a year, under Scott's stewardship, we passed both a budget for the first time in 2 years, specifically the fiscal year 2006 budget resolution, and a reconciliation bill, the Deficit Reduction Act, DRA--marking the first time in 10 years Congress had passed a reconciliation bill to reduce spending.

The DRA was a notable achievement in that it saved \$39 billion, a feat which is practically unheard of around here, as the last time it was done was in 1997. These accomplishments could not have been done without Scott, who worked tirelessly to shepherd each authorizing committee through the often confusing reconciliation process. His unique combination of intellect, humor, and humbleness was a key component in navigating the complex waters of the compromise that was necessary to pass the first substantive deficit reduction legislation in 10 years.

Scott followed up his initial year of success by spearheading efforts to develop a more comprehensive approach to restraining spending. His efforts contributed to the introduction of the Stop Over-Spending Act, a budget process reform bill that helped focus the national debate on solutions to our long-term fiscal challenges. Just this year, Scott helped structure the Conrad/Gregg Bipartisan Task Force for Responsible Fiscal Action Act of 2007, legislation that will encourage bipartisan action to put our fiscal house back in order. At heart, Scott is a true nonpartisan who recognizes that the best policy is made when both sides of the aisle work together, and his first instinct is to seek out common ground rather than partisan differences.

However, much like Thomas Jefferson chose to be remembered as author of the Declaration of Independence rather than various elected offices he held, including President, I expect that Scott would rather be remembered for spearheading efforts to write, edit, and publish the "Budget Committee History" rather than his impressive legislative credentials. Scott took it upon himself to initiate a historic accounting of the Senate Budget Committee. This labor of love reflects countless interviews and hours chronicling the birth, history, and importance the committee has held in shaping the Federal budget and fiscal policy. His devotion to this project is an example of Scott's love of history and respect for the institution of the Senate.

The handful of aforementioned achievements merely reflects Scott's latest accomplishments in an achievement-filled career. It would be nearly impossible to chronicle the numerous programs and projects he created, funded, and oversaw--programs that improved and enriched both individual lives and the environment.

In addition to his tour of duty at the Senate Budget Committee, Scott has held key positions on both sides of the Capitol, both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue, and a point I like to forget, Scott has even worked on both sides of the aisle. Included in this impressive list are stints as the clerk of the Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations Subcommittee, professional staff on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, and **Acting NOAA Administrator, where he championed science, service, and environmental stewardship programs and greatly improved agency morale. In NOAA circles, Scott is a virtual god--king of satellites, staunch advocate of the NOAA Corps and its ships and planes, and an addict of the NOAA label, which I understand is plastered on literally everything under and around his home, car, and office.**

But the true bearing of Scott's 29 years of Federal service is not the remarkable list of the jobs he has held, although the list is long and distinguished, but the manner in which Scott has approached these positions and the people he has touched along the way. Those who know Scott best describe him as a loyal, encouraging, and creative boss, who supports and celebrates those who work with him. Everything Scott does is done in an "all hands on deck" manner that gives everyone an opportunity to pitch in and support the common goal.

One cannot talk about Scott without recognizing his acumen for all things trivia--Scott is a virtual trivia savant. He knows the answer to nearly every trivia question, regardless of topic, and can somehow relate every event back to an old movie or seventies rock song. He will search to the end of the Internet to find a historic or comic analogy to make a point about fiscal responsibility, or often the lack of it. He is equally conversant on the latest entertainment news and military strategies of ancient times. The influence of his crosscutting interest and knowledge has occasionally found its way to the Senate floor, where both the Geico Caveman and a Rube Goldberg cartoon have been used to drive home a point.

As a lifelong boater, fisherman, and lover of all things relating to the ocean, Scott reminds me of the remarks that President Kennedy made at the 1962 America's Cup sailing race. He said, "All of us have in our veins the exact same percentage of salt in our blood that exists in the ocean, and, therefore, we have salt in our blood, in our sweat, in our tears. We are tied to the ocean. And when we go back to the sea--whether it is to sail or to watch it--we are going back from whence we came."

Kathy joins me in wishing Scott well as he joins the National Marine Manufacturers Association, to "go back from whence he came" and advocate on behalf of issues he is most passionate about. As he sets off for new adventures with his wife Ann, and, of course, Buddy the Budget beagle dog by his side, Scott leaves in his wake a nation that is better off for his service, and colleagues that will miss him dearly.