

## IN MEMORIAM: SEN. ORRIN HATCH

SEN. MIKE LEE\*

Mr./Madam President,

Orrin G. Hatch will be remembered for many things. His forty-two years of service in this body are marked by successes, historic legislation, and statesmanship. He served longer as a U.S. Senator than any other in the history of the State of Utah or the Republican Party. At his retirement, he had passed more bills into law than any other legislator alive, an astounding seven-hundred-and-fifty. While the record of his service is remarkable and memorable, I invite the Senate and the nation to remember Senator Orrin Hatch by the things that he remembered, every day, here in the Senate and in his private life.

Every day upon entering his Senate Office, Orrin Hatch would look upon a prominently hung painting depicting his Utah pioneer grandfather and great-grandfather fording a stream on horseback. This image, like so much else in his life was a reminder of his pioneer legacy, ancestry, and destiny. In Utah, there is almost no more honorable title than that of pioneer. In the particular parlance of our state, a pioneer is not merely someone who goes where others haven't before. A pioneer looks toward the future without forgetting who he or she is. A pioneer, like those who settled the Salt Lake Valley and much of the Western United States, does so, not out of conquest or in search of glory, a pioneer goes and works out of duty, responsibility, and faith.

Orrin Hatch always remembered his roots. Raised the son of a mechanical laborer, he grew up in a family of little means. Orrin

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was one of nine children raised in a cramped depression-era home without indoor plumbing. Two of Orrin's siblings died young. Another -- his older brother Jesse -- made the ultimate sacrifice as a turret gunner flying over Austria mere months before the allied victory in Europe.

Orrin always remembered this example of work and sacrifice from his parents and brother. The sense of duty to God, family, and nation was the primary driver throughout his life. He served a two-year mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Ohio. He became the first in his family to graduate from college, attending Brigham Young University. He met Elaine Hansen, and the couple married in 1957. They later returned to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Orrin completed law school at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law while living in what used to be a chicken coop in his parents' backyard. He worked as a metalworker and a janitor to provide for his family while attending school.

Never one to make much of a fuss about it, Orrin Hatch just did the work that was expected of him. He knew that life was not easy and that he could not expect handouts. He developed the reputation of a fighter, and while a dedicated friend with an inviting laugh, he would never forget the lessons he learned young while in the amateur boxing ring.

After moving back to Utah and running a successful law practice, Orrin ran for Senate to fight for the moral fiber and everyday work ethic of Americans that he felt was not being represented in Washington. He won and set out to defend family values and constitutional principles. He would remember to do so throughout his career, pioneering the Hatch Amendment, a proposed Constitutional Amendment which would correct the erroneous claim that there is a constitutional right to abortion, and steadfastly advocating for a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution.

Orrin Hatch defended life, religious liberty, economic responsibility, and personal freedom throughout his time in the Senate. His seven-hundred-and-fifty proposals that became law cover everything from welfare reform, regulatory restructuring, laws adjusting

the federal judiciary, to hallmark tax cuts. Hatch's tenure in the Senate was marked by his chairmanship of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Finance Committee before serving as President Pro Tempore.

Senator Hatch helped rein in an activist federal judiciary and helped restore the true meaning of the Constitution to our courts.

Senator Hatch played a prime roll in the nomination of every Supreme Court justice for decades. He defended the Court and the honor of Justices with differing judicial philosophies.

Beyond his countless political accomplishments, Orrin Hatch was a dedicated father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and man of faith. He always remembered the most important things in life. He composed countless songs of praise and patriotism. He served as a volunteer leader in his church congregations and his communities. He founded the Orrin G. Hatch Foundation to carry on and remember his work and advocacy for collegiality and bipartisanship after his retirement from the Senate.

Orrin Hatch always remembered Utah. On weekends you would find him at the grocery store and his church congregation rubbing elbows with the people he knew and loved. He would talk about the politics of the day, but also the news affecting communities and families he cared for.

Those who knew him felt the care and interest he had. After I served as his Senate page as a high-school student, there were two photos on my bedroom wall: one of Karl Malone in his Utah Jazz jersey, and one of me with Senator Orrin Hatch.

Later, when I was serving as a missionary in Texas, Senator Hatch sent me a note and a \$10 check telling me to get a good lunch. I cherished the note -- and never could cash the check. The memory and memento were worth much more.

Orrin Hatch also always remembered to work. He would come to the Senate early and stay late. He would think years ahead and persistently pursue his plans. He would take the time to build coalitions behind ideas and bring about needed reforms. Senator

Hatch knew that the Senate was designed to be the cooling saucer where ideas would steep and percolate often over the course of years and decades.

Yet, Orrin always remembered the people behind the politics. He was a mentor and friend to Senators from both sides of the aisle and built deep friendships with those of all political backgrounds. He cherished a friendship with Senator Ted Kennedy and called the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg a dear friend. He instilled his hallmark good humor and sense of duty on the newer members of the Senate. I was one of them. He greeted and accepted me warmly, only mentioning a few times the fact that I had, decades before, served as his Senate page. He was a force for collegiality and cooperation. While he remained dedicated to the principles and people that brought him to the Senate, he would work with anyone and everyone to get the job done.

Orrin Hatch was a giant of the Senate and a pillar in Utah. His influence, hearty laugh, and powerful advice are missed by us here and by millions in Utah. I know I speak for the entire Senate in sending our deep condolence and appreciation to Elaine; their children Brent, Marcia, Scott, Kimberly, Alysa, and Jess; as well as their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The gift of Senator Hatch's life of service has made our State and our nation better.

As I said, Mr./Madam President, there is perhaps no more noble title in Utah than that of pioneer. Orrin Hatch was a pioneer, through and through. He followed in the footsteps of his forebearers, and he left a legacy of dedication, service, and truth. I commend his memory to the history of our republic in the words of a beloved hymn fittingly entitled, "They the Builders of the Nation"<sup>1</sup>:

They, the builders of the nation,  
Blazing trails along the way;  
Stepping-stones for generations  
Were their deeds of every day.

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<sup>1</sup> Ida R. Alldredge, *They, the Builders of the Nation*.

Building new and firm foundations,  
Pushing on the wild frontier,  
Forging onward, ever onward,  
Blessed, honored Pioneer!

I bid my friend Senator Hatch onward, ever onward. May we as  
a nation forever remember his legacy is my prayer.