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Farewell to Sen. Dodd

Michael Sean Winters | Dec. 1, 2010 Distinctly Catholic

Yesterday, Senator Chris Dodd of Connecticut gave his final speech [1]on the floor of the Senate, where he has served for thirty years, following his father who served Connecticut as its senator for twelve years.
Dodd's storied career included principal authorship of such important pieces of legislation as the Family and Medical Leave Act, permitting family members to take time off after the birth of a child or during a major illness without fear of losing their job. He helped shepherd the health care reform law through the Senate after his great friend Sen. Ted Kennedy took ill and died. He has been a champion of aid to our brothers and sisters in Latin America throughout his career, starting with hiw own service in the Peace Corps.
It is worth taking a moment to watch Dodd's speech. At its conclusion, many of his colleagues gathered around to embrace him. One of the first was Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, leader of the Republicans in the Senate, who also got choked up when he addressed the chamber to praise Dodd. These two men could not always transcend their political differences. I fear greatly that the absence of men and women who have served long and well, on both sides of the aisle, and who have come to appreciate their partisan opponents as people first and politicians second, will make it even more difficult to accomplish anything in the upper chamber of our national legislature. Dodd's departure will make the necessary compromises needed to get laws passed even harder to achieve.
Sen. Dodd returns to his home in East Haddam, Connecticut, an old school house right down the street from the Goodspeed Opera House, a Connecticut cultural institution for more than a century. Located along the Connecticut River, in the geographic center of the state, East Haddam is smack dab in the heart of Connecticut. So is its most famous and beloved citizen smack dab in the heart of Connecticut. He will be missed.

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[1] http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1110/45765.html