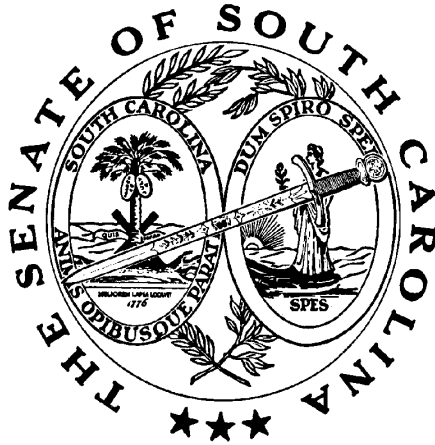


NO. 12

JOURNAL
OF THE
SENATE
OF THE
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA



REGULAR SESSION BEGINNING TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2023

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2024

Friday, January 26, 2024
(Local Session)

~~Indicates Matter Stricken~~

Indicates New Matter

The Senate assembled at 11:00 A.M., the hour to which it stood adjourned, and was called to order by the ACTING PRESIDENT, Senator HARPOOTLIAN.

ADDENDUM TO THE JOURNAL

The following remarks by Senator GOLDFINCH were ordered printed in the Journal of January 10, 2024:

Remarks by Senator GOLDFINCH

Thank you, PRESIDENT ALEXANDER. I want to take just a minute to come to the well and thank all of you. I don't even know how to begin. I was deployed to Africa in June, I was injured August 1st. For those of you who do not know, I fell in a bunker and hyperextended my shoulder, tearing my pectoral muscle and rotator cuff off of my right shoulder. It was not pleasant, as you can imagine. I was in the middle of nowhere in Djibouti, Africa, in the horn of Africa. I was medevacked out on August 7th. I was picked up in a C17 and met by two pilots and a nurse on an airfield outside of Djibouti. As they were taking my vitals, I noticed the accent of my pilot. I asked him if he was from South Carolina and sure enough he was from Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. We began talking and eventually he figured out I was in politics and he said he couldn't remember the name of his Senator, but it was a really good-looking guy with good hair. I said, "That has to be Senator CAMPSSEN." I knew it right off the bat, it's a small world.

I want to thank you so much for your thoughts, prayers, emails and texts. This experience has truly given me a new purpose for my life, in addition to my role as husband and father. The execution of the mission of the Army and the National Guard, all the way through from pre-deployment to deployment was fantastic. And I couldn't be prouder of what this Nation and our servicemen and women do. But when you come home -- and this has nothing to do with the National Guard, but it has everything to do with active duty and the medical military complex around active duty -- it's a totally different story. In fact, it is a horrible story and I hope one day to share it with you. It is a story of trying to get home -- to actually get home.

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Once my surgery and my rehab were completed, there was no exit. There was no exit for me. I was stationed with soldiers in this recovery unit -- in fact, a number of soldiers from the South Carolina National Guard who were also injured, some of whom have been there since 2019. My neighbor, who was an army reservist from South Carolina stationed at Fort Stewart, had been stuck at the soldier recovery unit at Fort Stewart for two years. Two years after his surgery and his rehab and his recovery he is still there. The medical military complex that's been built for this system does not work for National Guardsmen or Reservists, period -- it doesn't work. It is a broken system. And I intend to go to work to try to help fix it. It has been a full-time job for me since I was at Fort Stewart helping soldiers try to transition out of active duty and back to South Carolina. I held multiple town halls, helped everybody figure out who their Congressperson was, file their Congressional paperwork, get their stamps and notaries and how to write everything legibly. But at the end of the day, you as Senators know this better than most, we're used to being able to make a phone call and get something done for our constituents. I felt totally helpless in this system. And I have more influence than any one of them did and I felt completely helpless. Just imagine how they feel, sitting alone in a soldier recovery unit at Fort Stewart, waiting to go home to their families and their jobs and they can't get there.

I would like to conclude by saying I have found another purpose for my life, and it is to help those soldiers figure out how to get home. I'm going to be working on that and I may require your assistance at some point in time. I don't know how, and I don't know when, and I don't know where but I'm going to work on this problem. I have committed to the National Guard and to those soldiers that I am going to work on this problem and I would appreciate your help. If you haven't noticed, my voice is a little off. When I had surgery they gave me too much nerve block and paralyzed my diaphragm then they damaged my vocal cords trying to get me to breathe again. I am never going to be able to speak the same. They have told me it is probably a permanent loss of voice. So I have to speak at this tone from now on but I intend to use my voice to speak loudly in the halls of Congress to try to get them to remedy this problem and I want you to help me if you would. That is all I have PRESIDENT ALEXANDER, thank you all so much.

On motion of Senator CAMPSER, with unanimous consent, the remarks of Senator GOLDFINCH were ordered printed in the Journal.

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ADDENDUM TO THE JOURNAL

The following remarks by Senator ADAMS were ordered printed in the Journal of January 16, 2024:

Remarks by Senator ADAMS

Good morning everybody. I just wanted to bring this to your attention. About thirty-four years ago, on March 3, 1989, there was a young boy, five-year-old Justin Turner, who was reported missing. During the time that the parents reported him missing, he supposedly went to school and didn't return home. The investigation was done by the Berkeley County Sheriff's Office, and approximately a few days after he was reported missing, the father found his body in a camper on the property. The case went cold and was stagnant for about twenty-seven to twenty-eight years. Then Berkeley County Sheriff's Office reopened the case. The detectives started working the cold evidence and looking for new technology to apply to their investigation. They soon found DNA evidence, which led them back to the parents. I'm mentioning this because I want to congratulate the Berkeley County Sheriff's Office and those who assisted in this investigation, Sheriff Dwayne Lewis, Detective Lewis and Detective Plitch. After thirty years, they made the arrest, and it turned out to be the parents. So, thank you to the Berkeley County Sheriff's Office.

On motion of Senator STEPHENS, with unanimous consent, the remarks of Senator ADAMS were ordered printed in the Journal.

MOTION ADOPTED

On motion of Senator BENNETT, with unanimous consent, the Senate stood adjourned out of respect to the memory of Ms. Eunice Carmichael Stephens of Dillon, S.C. Eunice was a graduate of Newberry College where she received her degree in education. She taught English at Lake View and Dillon High Schools for thirty-four years and received numerous awards. She was a tremendous influence on her students, friends, family and community. Eunice was a loving wife, devoted mother and doting grandmother who will be dearly missed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11:05 A.M., on motion of Senator JACKSON, the Senate adjourned to meet next Tuesday, January 30, 2024, at 12:00 P.M.

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