

1-28-2011

Remarks to the 62nd Montana Legislative Assembly (1)

Max S. Baucus

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/baucus_speeches

Recommended Citation

Baucus, Max S., "Remarks to the 62nd Montana Legislative Assembly (1)" (January 28, 2011). *Max S. Baucus Speeches and Remarks*. 887.

https://scholarworks.umt.edu/baucus_speeches/887

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the Max S. Baucus Papers at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Max S. Baucus Speeches and Remarks by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

Printing, Graphics & Direct Mail
Document Archiving
Indexing Form

Senator * or Department*: **BAUCUS**

Instructions:

Prepare one form for insertion at the beginning of each record series.

Prepare and insert additional forms at points that you want to index.

For example: at the beginning of a new folder, briefing book, topic, project, or date sequence.

Record Type*: **Speeches & Remarks**

MONTH/YEAR of Records*: **January-2011**

(Example: JANUARY-2003)

(1) Subject*: **Remarks to the 62nd Montana Legislative Assembly**

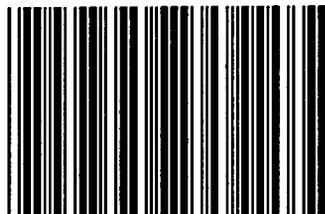
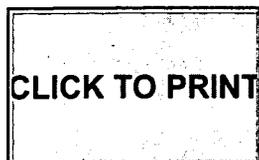
(select subject from controlled vocabulary, if your office has one)

(2) Subject* **none**

DOCUMENT DATE*: **01/28/2011**

(Example: 01/12/1966)

* "required information"



BAUCUS

~~SD~~ 504?

U.S. Senator Max Baucus

Remarks to the 62nd Montana Legislative Assembly

January 28, 2011

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Mr. President. Members of the House and Senate. Those of you who are joining us in the gallery.

Distinguished guests:

(-Governor Brian Schweitzer)

-Lt. Governor Bohlinger

-State Auditor Monica Lindeen

-Superintendent Denise Juneau

-Secretary of State Linda McCullough

-Attorney General Steve Bullock

-Members of the Supreme Court

It's good to be back here with you all. I have fond memories of this chamber and of the work we accomplished. I always like to see who's sitting in my old desk. And today, it's Matt Rosendale from Glendive.

Welcome, Matt
TY for your
service

I remember that being a pretty comfortable chair. Matt, congratulations on your victory, welcome to the Montana legislature, and thank you for your service.

There are a lot of new names and faces around here—(INSERT JOKE) and I want to congratulate you all.

And I'm glad to hear that Representative James Knox is healing up and doing better. I want to wish him a very speedy recovery.

heart attack
week last

OTHER SHOUT OUTS:

woman elected

I want to say a special hello to Carol Williams, who was the first female Senate Majority Leader in this state's history. And I'd like to tip my hat to Sen. Kim Gillan, Senate Minority Whip. Kim and Carol, I know you are serving your last terms in the Senate and I just want to thank you for being great friends over the years. I know how hard you work on behalf of Montana.

Let's also take a moment to remember all of the loyal public servants, and all of our old friends, who aren't with us today. ✓

Finally, please let's take a moment of silence to recognize an amazing young man who gave the ultimate sacrifice serving the people of Montana: keeping us all safe.

(MOMENT OF SILENCE)

David DeLaittre (DUH-LET-truh) of Three Forks was shot and killed in the line of duty during a routine traffic stop.

He was twenty-three years old and for much of his life, his only dream was to be a Montana Highway Patrolman, like his father.

Every day he went to work, he assumed the ~~inherent~~ risk that comes with protecting each of us, every day.

The next time you see a fellow Montanan working as a first responder, please take a few seconds to thank them for what they do. They don't hear it enough.

GLASGOW TOP COPS: A GOOD EXAMPLE

I want to start today by telling you a story about eight extraordinary individuals who set an inspiring example for me personally. It's a story that reminds me how we as humans can overcome difficulty and do what's right when we come together and join forces.

A little over two years ago, the community of Glasgow was brought together by an unthinkable tragedy.

A man shot and killed mother of three and part-time emergency medical technician, Melissa Greenhagen. Scott Billingsley and his wife Suzanne, a nurse, ran to help her. The gunman shot and wounded them both.

That night, members of the reservation police, the Sherriff's office, and the highway patrol all worked together to track down the sniper who killed and injured these innocent Montanans.

And because of their unwavering commitment to keep the folks in their community safe, eight of these men and women—known now as the Elite Eight— received one of the nation’s highest law enforcement honors: something known as the Top Cops Award.

These are incredible people who never forgot their sense of duty to those they serve, even in the face of difficulty and danger. They were public servants who came together to do a hard thing. They did not waver.

All of us are public servants who owe the same dedication to the people of our Montana communities. And it’s our obligation to look each other in the eye, work together, and do the very best we can to make life better for the people we serve.

POLITICAL DIVIDES/HEALTH CARE:

Now, since we’re here today in the same chamber, it’s my opportunity to look all of you in the eye and talk about something that’s on all of our minds.

I want to address health care reform head on, and right off the bat. (INSERT HUMOR HERE?)

➤ I know there is an effort to defy, weaken or outright stop this bill before you leave here at the end of April.

But I'm asking you to forgo winning a few easy political points in favor of a much more difficult discussion about where we agree, how we can improve the bill, and even how we can work together—even when we disagree.

We need to give the health care law a chance to work.

Last year uncompensated care in Montana totaled \$220 million. (LOOKING FOR PER FAMILY NUMBER) That's money out of Montanans' pockets. That's just unacceptable. *Don't make*

➤ Repealing health care reform would add more than \$1 trillion to our debt over the next 20 years and take away \$460 billion in tax cuts.

Health reform is helping Montanans. —

26,000 Montana small businesses are now eligible for tax credits. And Montana can now build a health insurance exchange where folks can find quality health insurance they can actually afford.

Insurance companies can no longer deny coverage to children who are sick, older kids can now stay on their parents' health insurance up to age 26, and seniors are getting much-needed help to cover the cost of expensive prescription medicines.

Reform means Karen Moses in Billings, a proud mother of three, can keep her son insured under her health plan until age 26. Her son recently graduated from college and has been coping with type-one diabetes since he was ten years old.

Like many recent college grads these days, Karen's son is looking for work in a tough economy. Every day her son has access to insulin, needles and test strips, he lives. As Karen says, "Each additional day is a blessing and this new law will help our family breathe easier, knowing my son will be able to keep his insurance coverage for the care he needs."

This law is about holding insurance companies accountable.

Does this law need to be tightened up? Yes. Does it need to work better for people? Yes. That's why I'm listening to Montanans and responding.

Take the 1099 tax form provision as an example. Small business owners and folks across the state said they didn't like it—and as a result, I introduced an amendment to get rid of that provision. And we'll get it done, because it's what's right.

If instead of being immovable, we begin our debates begin by finding common ground, we have already come a long way in the journey of working toward real solutions, together, across the aisle.

Let's rise above the rhetoric, look at the challenges and imperfections before us, and move forward together, not back.

JOBS: MY NUMBER ONE PRIORITY

Moving forward together means we do it across the board, not just when it comes to health care.

My very most important priority is jobs, and Montanans need *your* commitment to making jobs the top priority, every day, as you work here in the legislature.

There's an old saying: "When the guy in Havre's out of work, it's an economic slowdown. When your brother-in-law's out of work, it's a recession. When *you're* out of work, it's a depression."

It doesn't matter what you call it, we are emerging from the greatest economic decline in 80 years. Companies that have been the backbone of America's economy have cut jobs in record numbers.

But think for a moment about a friend, a family member, or a neighbor who lost their job. Think about how hard it must be, knowing you just cashed your last paycheck – with a family at home depending on you.

It's our job

~~As public servants, we must try~~ to help change that. Montana is strong, and we have so much to be proud of. But we can do even better. We must continue to do all we can to help build a stronger economy.

As often as I can, I spend a day working at a Montana business.

I've had some great days driving trucks, paving roads, building houses. Last week I was in Hamilton serving lunch, making coffee and scrubbing tables at the River Rising bakery and deli. I've had a lot of rewarding days working alongside Montanans.

If there's one thing I've learned, it's that Montanans work hard. Montanans get a job done, and they do it right the first time. It's in our nature. It's just what we were born and bred to do.

When I go back to Washington, it's ~~those folks~~ ^{those} who inspire me. I see their faces and I remember their stories. It's for those hard-working people that I make a promise to myself every day: I say, "Max, do the best job you can do. And remember who you serve."

It's because of those people that I work every day to help our small businesses get the tools they need to grow and thrive. Montana's a small business state—and if our small businesses succeed, that means our economy is moving in the right direction. It means more good-paying jobs for hard-working folks.

Last year in the Senate, we passed several bills to do just that: to cut taxes and help small businesses create jobs. We did that with my Small Business Jobs Act, which is already giving some gas to the engines that will make our economy stronger and more vibrant.

The bill includes \$12-billion dollars in tax cuts for small businesses (MONTANA NUMBER), and it's already inspiring entrepreneurs to start new businesses in Montana. It's already giving established small businesses the incentives they need to grow and hire more workers.

We did it with the HIRE Act, which will create 5.6 million new jobs nationwide and (MONTANA NUMBER).

And we did it when we passed the bipartisan tax cut compromise, which cut taxes for all Montanans and provides estate tax relief that works for Montana ranchers and farmers.

We held our 5th Economic Development Summit in Butte last September. The summit brought business leaders from across the country together with Montana entrepreneurs to create jobs. We've seen real results from the connections made in Butte.

 Thanks to the summit, a home-grown, Butte family company called Seacast is partnering with GE to build high-tech parts for jet engines at its new Butte facility. That's more Montana jobs.

And it's just one example of real results from the Summit. It's also an example of how research and innovation, as well as the ability to sell to markets worldwide, are key to the future of the American economy.

When Warren Buffett kicked off the summit, he said: "I am a huge bull on this country. We will not have a double-dip recession at all. I see our businesses coming back almost across the board."

Warren's a smart guy. And that's the attitude we need to grab onto when we look at moving Montana forward.

There are great things happening in Montana. Thirteen years ago, right here in Helena, Tom Hoffman, an entrepreneur with nothing but big dreams, started a little company called Summit Aeronautics. Before he sold his business to Boeing this past December, he had ~~gotten up~~ to 100 employees. Now that's Montana innovation. That's Montana drive.

Because Montana can compete.

MORE MONTANA ISSUES

I've worked hard to make sure our most special places in Montana stay that way when we returned more than 80 percent of leased acreage near the North Fork. We did that at no cost to taxpayers.

Because this land, it's ours— and it's our job to make sure our children, grandchildren and their children get to see it, and truly love it, the way we do.

I introduced legislation to put wolves back under Montana's control last Congress, because Montanans—not Washington bureaucrats—know best how to manage wolves. I'll keep working until we come up with a solution that works for the folks who are the backbone of Montana's economy—our farmers and ranchers.

I reintroduced the Freedom Fuels Act this week. It's a program that will use Montana-grown camelina to help us become less dependent on foreign oil and create jobs in our state.

We believe in the future of Montana's energy potential. The Montana wind blowing across the plains—which was once a scourge to our ancestors, now holds great potential for our future.

We have the wind, we have the potential – now we need the infrastructure to export it. Last October I went to Shelby to celebrate the construction of the MATL transmission line. This line will be the first to connect electricity from Montana into Alberta and beyond. It's a new chapter in creating good-paying jobs and securing our energy future.

The difference is not only in our attitudes, but our sense of innovation. The next time the wind in Great Falls, Judith Gap or Livingston nearly blows us over, maybe we should smile, knowing Montana ingenuity has transformed a hindrance into a life-giving resource.

There's another, very different, and even more unique asset we have in abundance in Montana. Our service members and veterans are, and have always been, bright, shining stars within the Montana community. One in ten Montanans is a vet.

Just think about that. We have over 100,000 vets in Montana. I'm so proud of these men and women, and I will never, ever stop working in their best interest.

This past week I reintroduced my VETs Jobs Act, which will help more of our vets get good-paying jobs when they come home from serving our country. I know we agree that's not just the right thing to do—it's the only thing to do--- to take good care of these men and women who have made so many sacrifices for our country when they come back home.

There's a lot more work to get done. And we're just getting started. But we can't do it all alone.

TUSCON TRAGEDY, WORKING TOGETHER

I don't want to dwell on tragedy today; I want to focus on the opportunities we have to get to work for, and do right by, the people of this state. But I think sometimes we best learn from hardship—because tough times require us to come together, to find solutions, compassion and common ground.

As you all know, almost two weeks ago, a shooting in Tucson left six dead and thirteen wounded, including Congresswoman Gabby Giffords, who was hosting a question and answer session with constituents. It's something each of you has done, some of you more times than you can count.

I think you all agree with me when I say we cannot let violence keep us from doing our jobs.

Like each of you, I'll continue meeting with Montanans, hearing their ideas and concerns and fighting for them in Washington.

The safety and security of Montanans I meet with and my staff has been and will remain a top priority to me. We do everything we can to make sure we can have safe, meaningful and open exchanges.

In the wake of Tucson, there's been a lot of discussion in Washington and around the country about our political discourse. So far, there's been no evidence whatsoever to suggest this shooting was politically motivated. Still, I think that discussion is an important one to have.

I've been in Washington long enough to know the environment hasn't been this toxic in a generation. I'm not talking about disagreeing about policy, or even politics. That's all part of the job.

I'm talking about how lately it seems we've gone past policy disagreements, past political disagreements, and started to make it personal.

Unless you've been lucky enough to avoid cable TV altogether for the last few years, you know what I'm talking about. Name-calling, bickering and personal attacks.

Out here in the wheat, we're not used to that kind of rancor. It doesn't suit us. We don't wear mean and nasty very well at all. It's just not our style.

Senate President Jim Peterson's got it right. It makes more sense, and it's just plain simpler, to live by the code of the West.

Because in Montana, we may disagree here in this Chamber during the day, but in the evening we still sit down together and laugh about it over a beer... whether the Governor likes it or not.

I implore each of you to continue to serve as an example to your constituents, to your counterparts in other states, to your families and to each other. We don't just get more done when we work together; it's the ONLY way we get anything done.

I've seen both parties control the U.S. Senate plenty of times each. And here's what I've learned: not a lick of work gets done until we decide to work together, regardless of who's in charge.

As my mentor and friend Mike Mansfield said:

"We'll have to set examples for those who will follow us, and recognize that we don't know it all. So we should listen to the other person. And that other person sometimes is right and sometimes we are wrong. It will be a matter of accommodation and compromise, knowledge and understanding."

These were Mike's words of advice in November, 1989, to a group of young people as they looked ahead to bright futures, wondering who they'd become and how they would change the world. But his words couldn't be more true to all of us here today—grown men and women charged with a momentous task. For us, it is not an option to simply look ahead, wide-eyed, to a bright future of this state—we must create it. We will build it, and we will do it together.

It won't be easy, but failure is not our option.

CLOSING:

It has been a great honor to speak to you today. It's also a great honor to speak in the shadow of Charlie Russell's largest painting, called "*Lewis and Clark Meeting the Flathead Indians*." That painting will be 100 years old next year.

I'd like to leave you some of C.M. Russell's words that never fail to remind me how blessed I am to be a Montanan. He said:

"Guard, protect and cherish your land, for there is no afterlife for a place that started out as Heaven."

As we look forward, I remind you that in your hands, more than in mine, rests the future of our state. Be wise. Be prudent. Serve those who have entrusted you. Together, we can make Montana an even better place than it is today.

Thank you.