

1-28-2011

Remarks to the 62nd Montana Legislative Assembly (2)

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 (2)" (January 28, 2011). *Max S. Baucus Speeches and Remarks*. 888.

https://scholarworks.umt.edu/baucus_speeches/888

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
ONBASE SYSTEM
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*: **Federal Issues**

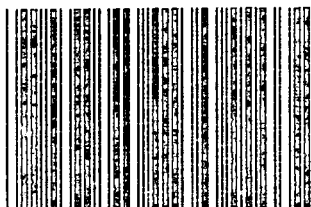
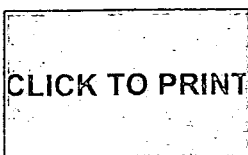
(select subject from controlled vocabulary, if your office has one)

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

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

(Example: 01/12/1966)

* "required information"



BAUCUS

Remarks to the 62nd Montana

Legislative Assembly

Date: January 28, 2011

Location: House Chamber of the Capitol, Helena, MT

Podium: Yes

In attendance: Members of the Legislature, members of the media, general public

Objective of Statement: You will address the 62nd session of the Montana Legislature tomorrow to update members of the Legislature, and the people of Montana, on your work in the U.S. Senate. Main themes of your speech include working to boost Montana jobs, and the importance of working together to accomplish goals.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. Mr. President. Members of the House and Senate. Those of you joining us in the gallery. Distinguished guests:

(-Governor Brian Schweitzer)

-Lt. Governor Bohlinger

-State Insurance Commissioner 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.

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, 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.

OTHER SHOUT OUTS:

I want to say a special hello to Carol Williams, who was the first woman elected as Senate Majority Leader in this state's history. And I'd like to tip my hat to Senator Kim Gillan, Senate Minority Whip. Carol and Kim, I know you are serving your last terms in the Senate and I want to thank you for your tremendous service, leadership in so many capacities, and of course your friendship.

And a special recognition to my mother, who I know is at home thinking of me right now.

Let's also take a moment to remember everyone who has served our great state here in the Legislature, and all of our old friends who aren't with us today.

I'd also like to remember our fallen heroes, who lost their lives serving their country.

And please, let's take a moment of silence to recognize an amazing young man, Trooper David DeLaittre (Duh-LATE) of Three Forks, who gave the ultimate sacrifice serving the people of Montana: keeping us all safe.

(MOMENT OF SILENCE)

David was shot and killed in the line of duty during a routine traffic stop.

Just think of it: He was only 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 that he went to work, he assumed the risk that comes with protecting each of us.

I want to thank you, Senator Wittich, for your bill to create the David DeLaittre (Duh-LATE) Memorial Highway on the four-mile section of U.S. Highway 287 through Three Forks. There's nothing we can give to David, or to his family, that will come close to what he sacrificed. But David is a hero to all of us, and we'll never forget him.

The next time we see a highway patrolman or a police officer, let's 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 Montanans who set an inspiring example. It reminds me how we can overcome difficulty and do what's right when we join forces.

Two years ago, the community of Glasgow united as result of an unthinkable tragedy.

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

That night, the Glasgow community rose to the higher cause. The reservation police force, the Sherriff's office, and the highway patrol all worked together to track down the sniper who fatally shot Melissa and wounded Scott and Suzanne.

And because of their unwavering commitment to keep the folks in their community safe, the President of the United States awarded eight of these men and women—known now as the Elite Eight—one of the nation’s highest law enforcement honors: Something known as the Top Cops Award. I was at the White House that day, and let me tell you, I was so darn proud.

These people are incredible. They answered the call of duty, without fearing for their own safety. They just did what they needed to do.

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

JOBS: MY NUMBER ONE PRIORITY

We need to talk about our very biggest priority: Jobs.

Montanans need our commitment to putting jobs first, every day, as you work here in the legislature and I work in the Senate.

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 of yours, one of your family members, 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 to help businesses 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. And we need to keep making education a priority—because today's students are tomorrow's innovators and business leaders. Our kids are going to lead us into the future.

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—even building guns up in the Flathead. 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.

Montanans work hard. Montanans get a job done, and they do it right the first time. It's in our nature. It's what we were born and bred to do.

When I go back to Washington, it's those hard-working Montanans who inspire me. I see their faces and I remember their stories. For them, 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 them 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.

We passed bills in the Senate 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. It helps businesses increase cash flow and get access to loans they need to grow.

Take Brown's Automotive in Billings. Brown's does transmission repairs that require big investments in equipment, like lifts and scanners. When business is slow, buying heavy equipment can put a major strain on cash flow.

Because of the Small Business Jobs Act, Brown's can now write off a portion of their new equipment costs. That helps them maintain their cash flow. It also encourages them to make more investments.

We also passed the HIRE Act, which will create 5.6 million new jobs—many right here in Montana— by cutting payroll taxes for Montana businesses that hire new workers.

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.

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, and 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 when we think about 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 100 employees. Now that's Montana innovation. That's Montana drive. Because Montana can compete.

POLITICAL DIVIDES/HEALTH CARE:

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

See, I thought I'd take a break. You know, get away from it all. Escape the big health care debate in Washington. So I came home to Montana to spend a little time with you all.

(LAUGHTER)

In all seriousness, I know there are a lot of strong feelings in this room about health care. And I feel pretty strongly that we can work together to improve this bill. To make it fit just right for Montana.

Look at the 1099 reporting provision. Small business owners and folks across the state said it would make their lives harder—and as a result, I introduced an amendment to get rid of that provision. We'll get it fixed, because it's the right thing to do.

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

Last year the cost of paying for folks without health insurance in Montana totaled \$220 million. That means every Montana family with insurance had to pay an additional twenty-one hundred dollars on their premiums to cover the cost. That's money out of Montanans' pockets. That's just unacceptable.

Independent, nonpartisan economists have determined that repealing the health care law would add more than \$1 trillion to our debt over the next 20 years and take away \$460 billion in tax cuts for middle class folks, families and small businesses.

The health care law is already helping Montanans.

26,000 Montana small businesses already qualify for tax cuts on the tax returns they're filing right now. And the health care law enables folks to find quality health insurance they can actually afford.

Parents can now keep their kids on their health insurance up to age 26, which means a lot for college grads struggling to find work in today's economy. And about 8,000 Montana seniors on Medicare are getting much-needed help to cover the cost of expensive prescription drugs.

Insurance companies can no longer deny coverage to children who are sick, and eventually every Montanan will have this same protection. That means peace of mind for more than 426,000 Montanans with pre-existing conditions. That means parents like David Hutchins in Missoula can sleep easier at night.

David's young son Elijah has leukemia and down syndrome. Before the health care law, he couldn't get coverage under private insurance. Luckily, Elijah qualifies for Medicaid because his dad only works part-time while attending school. But if David's income were to increase, Elijah would lose coverage.

The day this protection kicked in, David said: "By requiring health insurance companies to do the right thing and guarantee coverage for kids like my son, the new health care law has lifted a huge burden from my family."

Our own Monica Lindeen has a good view of what's happening on the ground. She's been hard at work building a more competitive marketplace for health insurance in Montana. This marketplace means small businesses and people without coverage can pool together with others and get a group discount. It means folks can compare plans and choose what works best for them.

This law is about lowering costs, improving choice and putting patients back in control. It'll reduce our deficit. It'll make the entire health care system stronger.

Let's rise above the rhetoric, look at the challenges and imperfections before us, and move forward together.

MORE MONTANA ISSUES

And we'd better work together. Look at some of the challenges we face. Take the North Fork. We returned more than 80 percent of leased acreage up there. And we did it 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'm working to put wolves back under Montana's control, because Montanans—not Washington bureaucrats—know best how to manage wolves. We need to come up with a solution that works for our farmers and ranchers.

I'm working to pass a program called the Freedom Fuels Act, which will use Montana-grown camelina and Montana coal to help us become less dependent on foreign oil and create jobs in our state.

So many of the commodities that people all over the world use, come from Montana. Coal, oil and gas. And it isn't just energy.

Our ag community really drives this economy. Our wheat, our livestock. Our hard-working farmers and ranchers.

This spring I'm going to hold listening sessions around the state to gather input as we write the next Farm Bill.

As the only member of Montana's delegation on the Senate Ag Committee, I'm going to make sure our producers get a fair shake.

We truly have it all here.

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.

That's why I made sure the tax cuts we passed last year included a provision to provide renewable energy companies with money up front to cover 30 percent of the costs of renewable power facilities, like wind farms and solar projects.

We have 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'll smile, knowing Montana ingenuity has transformed a hindrance into a life-giving resource.

We have an abundance of another very different, very unique asset. Our service members and veterans are, and have always been, bright stars in this state. 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.

I put together something called the VETs Jobs Act, which will help more of our vets get good-paying jobs when they come home from serving abroad. I know we can agree that taking care of these men and women who have sacrificed for our country isn't just the right thing to do, it's the only thing to do.

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

WORKING TOGETHER

We live up to the example of our veterans when we act civilly toward each other. 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.

I'm talking about how 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 for the last few years, you know what I'm talking about. Name-calling. Cheap shots. Personal attacks. On both ends of the spectrum.

We don't do that in Montana. We just don't wear it well. It's 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...Just don't tell the governor.

I've seen both parties control the U.S. Senate plenty of times. 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.

A lot of folks have made this point over the years and they're right.

Helen Keller once said: “Alone we can do little; together we can do so much.”

And 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 wide-eyed 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 to a bright future for Montana—we must create it. We will build it, and we will do it together.

It won't be easy, but in Montana, "can't" isn't in our vocabulary.

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, which 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.