

**Remarks by Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle
Honoring Senator Fritz Hollings' Lifetime of Public Service
Monday, Sept. 13, 2004**

I am honored to join in praising our friend, Fritz Hollings, on his extraordinary, 56-year career in public service – especially his 38 years of service to the United States Senate. I also join in thanking Fritz's extraordinary partner in life – one of the most gracious, beautiful, and politically savvy women in Washington: Peatsy Hollings.

With or without the closed captions, I'm one of the many people who loves listening to Fritz Hollings on the Senate floor and I am going to miss hearing him in the Senate more than I like to think about.

Recently, I heard a story about Fritz. Jack probably knows this story but it was new to me. One of Fritz's dear friends was Bobby Kennedy. In 1968, Fritz was just starting his first Senate re-election campaign. Bobby Kennedy told him he wanted to include South Carolina on his tour across Appalachia and the Deep South to raise awareness of rural poverty in America. Now, Fritz loved Bobby Kennedy and he was deeply committed himself to ending rural poverty; he was the first governor in the Deep South to acknowledge the existence of widespread hunger in his state. But he figured one of the last things he needed during his re-election campaign was for a liberal Democrat from New York coming down to talk about how dirt-poor people in South Carolina were. So he asked Bobby to skip South Carolina. Bobby said no. Fritz asked again. Same answer. So Fritz said, "*Fine*. Tell me what day you plan to be in South Carolina. I'll be in *Harlem* that day." Bobby re-routed his trip.

When you're a progressive Senator from the Deep South – and you remain the junior senator for 40 years – you learn to use every bit of leverage you have. And no Senator has used his considerable leverage to do more good for his state than my friend, Fritz Hollings.

When you look inside Fritz Hollings' desk on the Senate floor, you see the names of giants: John Calhoun. Huey Long. Russell Long. Wayne Morse. Courageous men who never hesitated to speak their minds. Fritz has earned the right to stand with those legends. He was 36 years old when he was elected Governor of South Carolina. As Governor, he wrote the book on governing in the New South. He raised teacher salaries, invested in education and training and laid the foundation for South Carolina's economic transformation from an agrarian state to a high-tech, high-wage state.

He used his farewell speech as Governor to help steer South Carolina towards a new era of social justice. That very same month, George Wallace had declared in Alabama, "segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever." In his farewell speech, Fritz Hollings told South Carolina, The era of segregation is coming to an end and we are going to accept the future. We are a nation ruled by laws, not men, and we are going to accept integration peacefully, and with dignity.

There he was: 40 years old, with his whole political life ahead of him. And he took a moral risk that could have ended his career right then and there. One week later, a young black man enrolled in Clemson University – the first peaceable integration of a state university in the South. His name was Harvey Gantt.

It was not the first time – and certainly not the last time – that Fritz Hollings helped shape history. One of the amazing things about Fritz Hollings is how often he has been able to see the future before others – not just on matters of race, but on issue after issue.

He was the first southern Governor to understand that you can't create a modern economy simply by cutting taxes; you also have to invest in education and training. More than 30 years ago, he warned that cutting federal nutrition programs for poor women and children would cost America far more in the long-run in increased health-care costs.

He's been a fierce proponent of balanced budgets and fiscal discipline since long before they became political buzzwords. As Governor, he gave South Carolina its first balanced budget in decades, and its first Triple-A bond rating ever. In 1984 – years before Ross Perot uttered the words – Fritz Hollings made deficit reduction a central plank in his Presidential bid. He's been fighting for fair trade, and against the export of American jobs, his entire career.

He's been calling for a long-term, comprehensive energy plan since before the first OPEC oil crisis in 1973. He wrote America's first fuel-efficiency standards – in 1975. He was in the forefront of the movement to protect America's oceans in the early 1970s. He saw the future of telecommunications before a lot of Americans knew what "surfing the Internet" meant. He was pushing for increased port and air security before September 11.

Far more than his amazing "Low Country" accent, I think the reason people sometimes have to work a little to understand Fritz is because he has so often been years ahead of most of the rest of us in recognizing essential issues, and seeing solutions. He is a political leader in the best and fullest sense of the term.

Today, Fritz's vision, and his and Peatsy's long-standing commitment to better health care for the people of South Carolina, is finding a new outlet in the extraordinary work of the Hollings Cancer Center. I visited the Center about four years ago with Fritz and Peatsie and I can tell you, it truly does set a gold standard, – just like Fritz and Peatsy themselves.

If Fritz had decided to run for an eighth term, I have no doubt we would all be celebrating his re-election on November 2. I'm sorry we won't have that toast. But I am honored to raise this toast: to Fritz Hollings: a man of courage, compassion and vision. A true leader, a dear friend, a Senator's Senator.

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