

Video & Transcript: Governor Christie On Senator Lautenberg: I Give Him Praise On A Life Well Lived

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Governor Christie On Senator Lautenberg: I Give Him Praise On A Life Well Lived

from Gov Chris Christie

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05:59



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Transcript:

Governor Christie: I had remarks that I was going to share with all of you this morning about the role of women in government and all the rest, but it seems to me to be inappropriate to do that at this point. I think most of you may know but if you don't, our United States Senator, Frank Lautenberg, passed away this morning. Senator Lautenberg was 89 years old and first elected to the United States Senate in 1982. Before that, had a distinguished career as the founder of ADP, one of the true New Jersey business success stories. And after a career of building that company and creating tens of thousands of jobs in the private sector, Senator Lautenberg then decided to turn his attention to public service and in 1982 was elected to the United States Senate and served there until the year 2000 when he decided to retire. For any of you who know Senator Lautenberg, it was no great surprise that retirement did not agree with him. And so in 2002 when the opportunity presented itself because of the withdrawal of Senator Torricelli from the Senate race, Senator Lautenberg stepped forward to offer himself once again for public service to the people of New Jersey and the people of our country. And he served from 2002 when he was re-elected to the United States Senate after a two-year break and served until today when he passed.

It's no mystery that Senator Lautenberg and I didn't always agree. In fact, it probably is more honest to say we very often didn't agree, and we had some pretty good fights between us over time – battles on philosophy and the role of government, but never was Senator Lautenberg to be underestimated as an advocate for the causes that he believed in and as an adversary in the political world.

I think the best way to describe Frank Lautenberg in the way he would probably want to be described to all of you today is as a fighter. Senator Lautenberg fought for the things he believed in and sometimes he just fought because he liked to. He always reminded me that he was a kid from Paterson whose father died at a very young age, who served in the military and served his country, and then built a business which he was extraordinarily proud of, just as proud of his time at ADP as he was of his many years, nearly thirty years, in the United States Senate, and so today is a sad day for the people of New Jersey.

Whenever we lose someone who's committed to public service and has been an honest and dedicated public servant as Senator Lautenberg was it's a loss for everyone. Most particularly it's a loss for his wife Bonnie and his family, and so our thoughts and prayers are with them today because whatever loss we feel as New Jerseyans and whatever loss his colleagues feel in the United States Senate is minuscule compared to the loss that his family feels, his loved ones, and so I think it would be inappropriate for me to give any other speech today except to ask all of you to pray for the

Lautenberg family today, to pray for the soul of Senator Lautenberg, and to give a prayer of thanks for his service to individual New Jerseyans and to our country.

And in the end, all of you who decide to get involved in public service, should aspire to have the same things said about you in whatever role that you play. That you were honest, that you were a fighter for the things that you believe in, and that you gave as good as you got. All those things can be said about Frank Lautenberg. And so I'm sure we're going to have a number of times over the course of the next few days to reflect upon his life and to pay him tribute in even a more public way. But for this morning, as the leader of this state and our people, I extend to the Lautenberg family and to his staff and friends, our deepest condolences.

And to Senator Lautenberg, I give him praise on a life well lived. I think we'd all signed up today for a life like Frank Lautenberg had of 89 years of fighting and fighting hard. And he's been a great example for the people of our state and we will certainly miss him. You're going to have a lot of other things to discuss today at the conference and I look forward to getting reports back on how things went and how they were received. I'm as committed today as I've always been to making sure that everybody who can make a positive contribution to government will be given the opportunity to do so and to help to make a difference in our state and our country the way Senator Lautenberg did. So thank you all very much for having me this morning and all the best to you for the rest of the conference. And I look forward to seeing you all very, very soon.

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