

Remarks of Senator Chuck Grassley
On Casting His 12,000th Senate Vote
Tuesday, November 3, 2015

I'm honored to serve the people of Iowa as their elected representative. It almost feels as if I know each Iowan personally at this point. I know that's technically impossible, but the benefit of a state that is not especially big, geographically, is that with enough planning, I can get to every one of the 99 counties every year. I always have since I was first elected to the Senate.

Every year, Iowans in each county host me for a Q and A at their factory, school or service club or I hold my own town meeting. I might get a dozen or so questions at each stop on any topic under the sun and that's just as it should be.

Representative government is a two-way street. The electorate's job is to ask the questions, and my job is to answer them. If people are satisfied that I've answered their questions, or at least tried to answer, I hope I've demonstrated how much their participation means to the process.

When I cast a vote in Washington, I'm bringing the benefit of every comment, question and criticism heard from Iowans to the vote. With 12,000 votes, I think of the many conversations and pieces of correspondence behind those votes.

Whether I'm meeting with Iowans in the Hart Building in Washington or at the University of Northern Iowa volleyball matches near my farm in New Hartford, the time people take to visit with me is time well-spent for me and I hope they consider it time well-spent for them.

People ask me if I have any hobbies and I can't say that I do, at least not in the way people usually think of hobbies. My time spent with the people of Iowa is in one way my work and what I get paid to do.

In another way, my time with Iowans is my pleasure and my relaxation. If someone stops me at the Village Inn in Cedar Falls, where I go for Sunday lunch, to talk about cybersecurity or sentencing reform, I'm glad to do it. What's important to the people of Iowa is my vocation.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to cast 12,000 votes, thanks to the people of Iowa, and thanks to my wife Barbara and the rest of my family who share my regard for what's important – representing the people of Iowa.