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twenty-first century. We will carefully assign the proper level of care for those currently held at our regional centers. Under your watchful eye, we will accomplish what this state has long promised to do with mental illness. We will bring...we will bring them closer to their families and support systems through partnerships with hospitals, nursing homes, and other community-based providers. Your actions during the 2004 Session will long be remembered for a much-needed measure, one that ensures the wise stewardship of a vital natural resource--water. I want to commend Senator Ed Schrock and Elaine Stuhr for leading the way to a new water policy. This bill acknowledges the need for a delicate balance between conservation and consumption by our citizens and by the ag industry that drives our economy. Water is the lifeblood of agriculture and, for that matter, our entire state, and a central ingredient that will now be managed in a way that recognizes its importance as recommended by the Water Policy Task Force. Your passage of this new water policy will help to protect this essential resource for generations to come. The accomplishments of this session include another reform initiative that will benefit future generations in an even more profound way by protecting vulnerable children. You recognized the need to do more to rescue innocent children from hands that would harm them, and you invested scarce resources to meet that need. Your actions will set in motion the most sweeping reform of our child protective efforts this state has ever known. We prepare to begin this enormous undertaking knowing that all of the resources in the world cannot guarantee the protection of every child at every moment in time. However, our state has an obligation to critique itself and move forward more swiftly to improve our intervention efforts knowing that precious lives are on the line. I want to offer a special word of thanks to Senator Roger Wehrbein and the Appropriations Committee for recognizing the importance of these three major reform initiatives during difficult economic times. I identified them as priorities and I want you to know how grateful I am for their passage. I could go on this morning and recite a list of other noteworthy accomplishments of this session, many of which passed with no fanfare, but instead I would like to take a moment to salute seven senators whose legacies take final form with the close of this session. Their combined 75 years of service as