



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 158

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2012

No. 128

Senate

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise today to express my gratitude to Leader Reid and to Chaplain Black, to all of us in the Chamber, and my gratitude to the Reverend Dr. Douglas Gerdts. It is my honor and privilege to welcome him to our Chamber this morning as one of Delaware's strongest and finest faith leaders.

Reverend Gerdts leads the congregation at First and Central Presbyterian Church in Wilmington. Each time I join with him on Sunday mornings, I am uplifted by the stirring music, I am challenged by his passionate sermons, and I leave engaged for the week, rooted in my faith and moved forward by his words and by his leadership.

But Reverend Gerdts' leadership extends far beyond the walls of his church. It touches those most in need in our community. The church literally opens its doors every Saturday, welcoming in homeless Delawareans as well as welcoming in schoolchildren who need smaller class sizes and better instruction to succeed.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Reverend Gerdts for more than a dozen years. In my own service in county government I knew him as chair of the Diversity Commission, and he helped lead the charge for equality and civil unions in Delaware last year. He has made a real and lasting contribution to our community. He and his wonderful wife Walle are part of what makes Delaware a great place.

As he shared with us in his prayer, he is exactly the sort of person who, through a listening heart, has become a powerful and effective servant leader of faith in my home community.

My thanks to the Chaplain for allowing guest Chaplains, and my thanks to Rev. Doug Gerdts for his friendship, his faith, and his leadership.

I yield the floor.