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TRIBUTES

The Honourable Suzanne Fortin-Duplessis

Statement by:

The Honourable Diane Bellemare

Wednesday, June 3, 2015

THE SENATE

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[*Translation*]

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THE HONOURABLE SUZANNE FORTIN-DUPLESSIS

Hon. Diane Bellemare: Madam Speaker, dear colleagues, it is a pleasure today to rise to pay tribute to Senator Suzanne Fortin-Duplessis.

Having studied fine arts, Senator Fortin-Duplessis could have been an artist and earned a living as such. She is a visual artist who sometimes makes art in her leisure time, and she will undoubtedly take up her art again in the years to come.

She is also a skilled teacher, and she put those skills to good use in service to children and later to Canadians. As you know, dear colleagues, a parliamentarian must be something of a teacher if he or she wants people to listen.

However, after art and teaching, her passion for politics changed her life. From municipal politics to federal politics, she rose through the ranks, from municipal councillor to parliamentary secretary for various ministers and departments.

As many others have pointed out, she was elected twice as a Progressive Conservative MP in 1984 and 1988. She later worked within the party and became involved in volunteer work and parish activities in the greater Quebec City area, for which she was awarded many official accolades. For instance, she was named Chevalier de l'Ordre de la Pléiade by the Assemblée internationale des parlementaires de langue française.

Suzanne came to the Senate in 2008. Appointed by the Right Honourable Stephen Harper, she already had a long political career as a Progressive Conservative behind her. I had the pleasure of meeting her in September 2012 when I came to the Senate. She helped me find my place in the caucus with a dash of feminine complicity. I will always remember Senator Fortin-Duplessis as a great lady of politics. She always worked with finesse and diplomacy in order to avoid a scene, and she was always willing to listen. I'll remember her kindness, her calm demeanor and her elegance. She is a truly honourable senator.

My dear Suzanne, I wish you all the best in your well-deserved retirement, and I hope you will be able to enjoy doing whatever makes you happy.
