NASS
National Association of Secretaries of State

2012 MARGARET CHASE SMITH AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AWARD NOMINATION FORM

Deadline for Submitting Nominations: Friday, May 11, 2012

NOMINEE INFORMATION

Name of Nominee: *Olympia J. Snowe*

Job Title (if applicable): *United States Senator (Maine)*

Address: *337 Foreside Road, Falmouth, Maine 04105*

Telephone (202) 224-5344

Email Address: n/a

Short Description of Specific Acts of Courage/Reason for Nomination:

An outstanding public servant who built a reputation as an informed, thoughtful and effective legislator. Olympia Snowe is an effective senator who has tirelessly advocated for Maine, small businesses, and our men and women in uniform. Respected by those on both sides of the aisle as a legislator who seeks solutions, senator Snowe has served Maine and America with great distinction and brought decency, principle, and honor to our nation's body politic.

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nomination Submitted By: Charles E. Summers, Jr., Maine Secretary of State

Address: 148 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333

Telephone: (207) 626-8400

Email Address: charles.summers@maine.gov

In addition to this form, please provide a separate statement or letter (approximately 600-1200 words) explaining your reason(s) for nominating this individual, including a detailed description of how the nominee has demonstrated uncommon courage and/or exceptional character in pursuit of the common good. Emphasis should be placed on contemporary acts of courage, rather than examples from the distant past.

Please submit completed form and supporting nomination materials to the NASS office no later than Friday, May 11, 2012 via mail, e-mail, or fax to:

Stacy Dodd, NASS Executive Assistant
National Association of Secretaries of State
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Washington DC 20001
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Statement from Maine Secretary of State Charles E. Summers, Jr. in support of the Nomination of Senator Olympia Snowe for the 2012 Margaret Chase Smith American Democracy Award

May 8, 2012

U. S. Senator Olympia J. Snowe demonstrates the courage, uncommon character and selflessness worthy of the Margaret Chase Smith American Democracy Award.

As the senior United States Senator from Maine and a member of the Republican Party, Snowe is widely known for her ability to influence the outcome of close votes. She is regarded as a leading moderate within her party and in 2006, was named one of America's Best Senators by *Time* Magazine. She was the only woman so recognized. *Time* praised Snowe for her sensitivity to her constituents, also noting that: "Because of her centrist views and eagerness to get beyond partisan point scoring, Maine Republican Olympia Snowe is in the center of every policy debate in Washington."

While Senator Snowe's decisions are not always embraced by her party, she votes her conscience and does what she feels is best for our Country. She was an important voice during the Senate's 1999 impeachment trial of then-President Bill Clinton. She and fellow Maine Senator Susan Collins sponsored a motion that would have allowed the Senate to vote separately on the charges and the remedy — a "finding of fact" resolution. When the motion failed, Snowe and Collins voted to acquit, arguing that Clinton's perjury did not warrant his removal from office.

In 2005, Snowe was one of fourteen senators dubbed the Gang of 14, who defused a confrontation between Senate Democrats (who were filibustering several judicial nominees) and the Senate Republican leadership (who wanted to use the nominations as a flashpoint to eliminate filibusters on nominees through the so-called nuclear option). The Gang-brokered compromise precluded further filibusters and the implementation of the nuclear option for the remainder of the 109th Congress; under its terms, the Democrats retained the power to filibuster a Bush judicial nominee in an "extraordinary circumstance," and nominees (Janice Rogers Brown, Priscilla Owen and William Pryor) received a simple majority vote by the full Senate.

The Gang later played an important role in the confirmation of Chief Justice John Roberts and Associate Justice Samuel Alito, as they asserted that neither met the "extraordinary circumstances" provision outlined in their agreement. Snowe ultimately voted for both Roberts and Alito.

Snowe entered politics at the age of 26 when her husband was killed in an an automobile accident. At the urging of family, friends, neighbors and local leaders, Snowe ran for her husband's seat in the Maine House of Representatives and won. She was re-elected to the House in 1974, and, in 1976, won election to the Maine Senate, representing Androscoggin County.

Snowe was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1978, and represented Maine's 2nd Congressional District from 1979 to 1995. She married John "Jock" McKernan, then Governor of Maine, in February 1989 and was First Lady of Maine from 1989 to 1995, while served as a U.S. Representative. She was elected and sworn in as a United States Senator in 1994, carrying every county in the state. She has never lost an election in 35 years as an elected official, and in the 2006 midterm senatorial elections, Snowe won with a reported 73.99% of votes.

She received a degree in political science from the University of Maine in 1969. She also received an honorary degree from Bates College in 1998, and another from the University of Delaware in 2008.