



# DEBATES OF THE SENATE

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## TRIBUTES

THE HONOURABLE DENNIS DAWSON

Statement by:  
The Honourable Patricia Bovey

Wednesday, February 8, 2023

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**Hon. Patricia Bovey:** Honourable senators, we all know the depth, breadth and long extent of Senator Dawson's service to Canadians in the House of Commons, as a government relations consultant and especially for us here as a senator. How many of us has he assisted and educated on how the Hill works and the importance of our work, how the legislative process works, and more? He always did so with his strong principles and his senses of purpose and humour.

I didn't know about that at first. Dennis had not yet returned from his successful fight with cancer when I arrived in this place, and I was told to make sure I introduced myself to him as soon as he came back. I was on the Transport and Communications Committee and was daunted because we were studying autonomous vehicles. What did I know about them? But I did soon get hooked. I was told Dennis would help me not only with that, but with the cultural issues on my plate. I was truly daunted talking to him the first time about him and his legacies — legacies from wherever he went. How wrong I was — not about the legacies, but I should have had absolutely no trepidation about his willingness to assist this neophyte. Thank you, Dennis.

Rather than repeat all of Senator Dawson's accomplishments, I thought I would dig to the foundation of those achievements — his name, attitudes and principles. First, "Dennis" is a name with

deep historical and international roots that can be traced to France and back to the Greco-Roman era. Dennis is drawn from Greek mythology — from Dionysus, the god of fertility and wine. While I'm not going to talk about his choices of wine, I do congratulate you, senator, on your wonderful, beautiful three-month-old granddaughter. It's clear she already has you around her baby finger. No wonder you are retiring now.

The name Dennis also conveys a highly charged personality that attracts powerful ideas. It carries the virtue of diplomacy, gentleness, cooperativeness, being a gifted storyteller and perhaps even verges on the psychic. It's true, right?

Now to the meaning of the senator's key principle — progressive — which means one believing in moderate political change, especially social improvement, and the implementing of social reform to advance the human condition based on purported advancement in science, technology, economic development and social organization. Think of the Transport Committee's work on autonomous vehicles, the CBC reports and Bill C-11 — I could go on, but you know his history here.

Dennis, in my view, you have epitomized all those dimensions and more through your dedicated service, accomplishments and guidance to others on the Hill, in this chamber, to the Progressive Senate Group and to me personally. I applaud your unwavering focus based on your principles. Thank you. Enjoy your little one, and come back and be with us. I know you have not finished your work for Canadians. Thank you.

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