

Senator Richard J. Durbin
Statement for the Congressional Record
40th Anniversary—Chicago Tonight: The Week in Review
Joel Weisman's Final Appearance—January 19, 2018

MR. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I want to say a few words about a Chicago icon—and one of the most admired journalists on television—Joel Weisman. This Friday will be the 40th anniversary of WTTW-Channel 11's longest running show: "Chicago Tonight: The Week in Review" and it will be Joel's farewell broadcast.

Since 1978, Joel has beamed into Chicago's living rooms to help us all digest the news of the week. Throughout the series' four decades, Joel was there every step of the way. Joel has been with WTTW since 1973, starting as its political editor and commentator on "The Public News Center." A lifelong Chicagoan and graduate of the University of Illinois and Chicago-Kent College of Law, Joel has dedicated his career to informing the people of Chicago.

Every Friday night, Joel has welcomed fellow journalists to a roundtable discussion on the critical topics of the week. Often times with humor, Joel has been Chicago's self-described "reporter, editor, traffic cop, and referee." He just has one simple rule, the panelists have to be nonpartisan and diverse. Today—unfortunately—this is hard to find on television. But as he said in his retirement announcement, "No one in journalism has been given the trust and editorial control of a show for that length of time." There is a reason he's been in that chair for 40 years. Joel Weisman has class and is a man of integrity. He insists the show represent just that. Well, I'm here today to say, it absolutely does. Joel Weisman is a true newsman.

Joel Weisman has had an amazing career. Prior to joining WTTW, Joel worked for the Gary Post-Tribune, the former Chicago American, Chicago Sun-Times, and was a Midwest correspondent for the Washington Post. His work earned him Emmy, Peter Lisagor, Jacob Scher, and Associated Press awards. He's been inducted into the Silver Circle of the Chicago/Midwest chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. And that's not all. Joel Weisman also has been nominated twice for the Pulitzer Prize for his investigative reporting. And if you think there's nothing more Joel can fit into his incredibly busy schedule—you're wrong. In addition to being a full-time journalist, he also runs a full-time law practice that specializes in media talent representation.

Mr. President, I want to congratulate Joel Weisman on his distinguished career and thank him on behalf of the city he loves for his outstanding work and service to the Chicagoland area. He loves Chicago and Chicagoans love him. Although he's retiring, Joel is not staying out of the political conversation. He'll continue his service to his community and work as an attorney, focusing on media law. I'm heartened that Joel will remain a powerful voice in the community. And I wish him and his family all the best.

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