

successfully championed a bill to permanently protect 25,000 acres of the Sierra National Forest known as Kaiser Ridge, saving this beautiful area above Huntington Lake from logging. Then, in 1978, Congressman Krebs took on an even greater challenge: fighting for legislation to transfer Mineral King Valley from the Sequoia National Forest to Sequoia National Park, thereby blocking plans to build a ski resort that would have destroyed this pristine alpine valley in the southern Sierra Nevada. Facing significant opposition, this was the toughest fight of his political career—one that may have cost him his seat in Congress—but John was proud of what he accomplished in preserving this natural treasure for future generations to enjoy.

Years later, I was honored to introduce legislation designating 40,000 acres of land, including the Mineral King Valley, as the John Krebs Wilderness. President Obama signed it into law in 2009, and that summer some 200 friends, family and admirers gathered in Mineral King Valley to dedicate this worthy tribute to John's courage and vision.

On Friday, November 14, more than 250 of John's friends and family joined together at Temple Beth Israel in Fresno to share memories and honor this remarkable man's amazing legacy. John Krebs's extraordinary life was a uniquely American story, and he will be truly missed. I extend my deepest sympathies to his wife and partner of 58 years, Hanna, children Daniel and Karen, and their families.

#### VOICE OF AMERICA UKRAINIAN SERVICE'S 65TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, today I honor Voice of America's Ukrainian Service as it celebrates its 65th anniversary this week. VOA has distinguished itself among the very best news organizations in the world. For over 65 years, from the dark days of Stalin's rule to the regime of Vladimir Putin, VOA has served as a beacon of truth for Ukrainian citizens. Throughout the Cold War, VOA supported the struggle for freedom and gave hope to citizens living under repressive rule in Soviet Ukraine. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, VOA was the first to pick up the call of independence and take advantage of new opportunities to speak freely to the Ukrainian people.

The organization's long history of comprehensive reporting and objective, reliable coverage proved ever more important in November 2013 when demonstrations broke out against then-President Yanukovich's decision not to sign an association agreement with Europe. Through all of this, VOA provided live video streaming and multimedia reporting from the center of the EuroMaidan demonstrations and was one of the few news outlets fully covering Russia's annexation of Crimea. In its coverage, the world saw the spirit of

the Ukrainian people and stood with them in their struggle for democracy, human rights, and the values of the transatlantic community. Through its continued coverage today, the world is now witness to Russia's aggression and invasion.

More recently, VOA has been a critical source of information for the Ukrainian people as Russia continues to advance its propaganda campaign across the region, spreading disinformation and undermining the efforts of Ukraine's EuroMaidan reformers. Putin's control of information is a key part of his strategy to rebuild post-Soviet Russia through aggression, and he uses disinformation as a tool to complement his transnational military campaigns and subvert democratic growth and development in Ukraine and across Eastern Europe. At a time when Putin's propaganda machine is working to deny reality and distort perceptions, Ukrainians rely heavily on VOA's credibility and accuracy, and its message of freedom, hope and human dignity.

VOA's reporters have worked under difficult and at times dangerous conditions. Previous governments have attempted to manipulate the media through repression and intimidation, and journalists were often arrested or detained. Today, journalists attempting to report on the conflict in eastern Ukraine are being harassed, intimidated, and physically attacked, constantly under threat of Russian thuggery. But this has not stopped the brave men and women working for VOA Ukrainian Service. They have worked through trying times, but have always maintained the integrity and professionalism to which all journalists can aspire.

Over the last 65 years, VOA has delivered thoughtful, comprehensive, and honest reporting when the Ukrainian people needed it most. I thank all members of VOA Ukrainian Service, past and present, for their tireless efforts and congratulate the organization on its 65th anniversary. Thank you for the work you do in service to the people of Ukraine and the shared values we hold dear. Together, and with the information you provide, we can achieve the democratic aspirations of our people and make the world a better, safer place for all citizens.

#### TRIBUTE TO ROBERT F. HEIL, JR.

• Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I salute an unsung hero in our government, Mr. Robert F. Heil, Jr. Bob, as he is known to his friends, is retiring as the budget director at the Health Resources Services Administration after 42 years of service to the Federal Government.

To be honest, I don't know Bob Heil but I have heard about him and his work for years. Bob isn't the guy who stands up and gives speeches, he's the guy that quietly makes things happen. Whenever there was a problem with

one of the community health centers in my State, my staff would say "I'll call Bob" and I knew it would get straightened out. Bob would always call to let us know when something good might happen, and if something bad was coming, he would call with a solution before we knew there was a problem. He's a man you can trust.

In a town where political winds blow, Bob has won universal praise from both sides of the aisle for years. That's because he always answers the phone, if he knows the answer he gives it, and he treats everyone with the same respect—no matter who is in the White House or who is in control of Congress.

As Bob moves into another phase of his life, I thank him for his years of work expanding access to health care for the least fortunate among us. Hubert Humphrey once said, "the moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; those who are in the shadows of life; the sick, the needy and the handicapped."

By that measure, Bob has made our society and our government a much better one. Thank you Bob, on behalf of myself, my staff, and all those who will never know who to thank. I wish you all the best.●

#### REMEMBERING BOB BENNETT

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I wish to talk about a friend, a mentor, a public servant, a husband, father, and son of Ohio, Bob Bennett, who passed away at his home in Cleveland last Saturday. I was sorry to miss the funeral service in Ohio today for Bob because we are still in session, but I did want to pay tribute to him in a lasting way through the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Bob was a lawyer and a CPA, a man who loved sailing and giving back to the people of Ohio through his many charitable works such as his time serving on the Board of University Hospitals in Cleveland. He was a legend in Ohio and a giant of Ohio politics. He became chairman of the Ohio Republican Party in 1988 and remained actively involved in politics until his death last week. He was one of the longest serving State chairs of either party, was viewed as a true professional, and gained the respect of political leaders in both parties.

He was certainly successful in the world of politics. When he was first elected chairman, there were no statewide Republican office holders in Ohio. He went to work with the passion, the dedication, the commitment that would become his trademark. He was a happy warrior, beloved by those in his party and respected by his political rivals. He had a vision not only for what the Republican Party could become but for what it could accomplish for the people of Ohio.

Within a decade, under his leadership, Republicans controlled all three