

Finally, as his colleague on the Finance Committee, I had the opportunity to work with FRED to address the challenges facing Social Security and Medicare. Among the efforts we jointly supported, a primary concern we have shared is improving the long-term solvency of these important social programs. As a Finance Committee member, as well as in the other roles he has served, Senator THOMPSON's work has been thoughtful, and our Nation is a better place because of his efforts.

Most of all, I will miss Senator THOMPSON's unfailing good humor. We shared many laughs as we bantered back and forth about his future in film and television. I will really miss his sense of humor and basic decency.

Mr. President, for these and many other reasons, I have been honored to serve with FRED THOMPSON. I would like to join my colleagues in wishing the Senator and his family the best in the future and in paying tribute to his contributions to the Senate and our Nation. I wish him well.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO VASHON HIGH SCHOOL

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to the 75th anniversary of Vashon High School. In the early quarter of the 20th century, the high school that most African-American students attended in St. Louis was overcrowded and quite a distance from their homes. Consequently, in 1922, a citizens group called the Central School Patron Association led by Reverend George Stevens and other community alliances began formulating plans for a second high school designated for African-American students. On September 6, 1927, Vashon High School opened and has been educating and changing the lives of students since. Over time, Vashon High School has established itself as a premier educational institute, known for its athletics as well as academics.

There are several outstanding individuals who have contributed to the founding and success of Vashon High School. The school was named for a family with a long tradition of struggle and sacrifice dedicated to the importance of education while battling to secure civil and human rights for African-Americans. Specifically, the school was named for George B. Vashon, 1824–1878, the first African-American graduate of Oberlin College, OH in 1844, and his son John B. Vashon, 1859–1924, an outstanding educator in the city of St. Louis for 34 years, James W. Meyers served as the first principal of Vashon from 1927–1932 and Otto Bohanan, a member of the faculty, composed the school song, "Vashon We Love". Many students honed their talents, skills, and abilities to become future educators and community leaders from the positive influence and support of these and other influential faculty members.

Over the past 75 years, Vashon High School has undergone changes and relocated to several different locations, but irrespective of physical location, the spirit of Vashon High School continues to inspire students to pursue their dreams and achieve their goals. Congratulations to the students, faculty, and alumni of Vashon High School.●

#### NEAL GONZALES

• Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to say a few words about Neal Gonzales, a prominent new Mexico labor leader who died in late October.

In the early 1970's when I became acquainted with the working of the new Mexico Legislature, I also became acquainted with Neal Gonzales, a powerful presence in the halls of power in our state. He was the representative of labor and as such his influence was felt in most of the important legislative battles that were waged.

Neal was a true professional at his job. Liked and respected by all, he was a formidable adversary as those who found themselves opposing him soon learned.

I learned much from watching Neal Gonzales work as the advocate for the working people of New Mexico. He kept his focus on the impact of legislation on the lives of those he represented. He did his homework and, more often than not, he prevailed.

With his death, many of us in New Mexico have lost not only a valued friend, but the working families of our State have lost a tireless champion.●

#### TRIBUTE TO DR. LURA POWELL

• Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise today to say thank you to one of the true leaders in the Washington state science community, who has recently announced that she will be stepping down from her position at the end of the year. I am speaking of Dr. Lura Powell, vice president of Battelle and Director of the Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, PNNL, in Richland, WA.

During the past 2 years, Dr. Powell has developed a bold strategy to ensure that the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory will play a significant role in carrying out the missions of the Department of Energy as we move forward into the 21st century. The recent installation of two major pieces of equipment will position the laboratory to be a leader in molecular research—research that reaches across many disciplines, including environmental cleanup, national security, and the life sciences. The new 9.2 teraflops supercomputer and the 900-megahertz nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometer, both of which are part of PNNL's Environmental Molecular Sciences Laboratory, will attract academia, industry, and other Government researchers to the lab in an atmosphere of collaboration and discovery. I had

the opportunity to attend the dedication of the NMR spectrometer on March 28, 2002. This equipment is poised to play a central role in the fast-approaching revolution in systems biology, the seeds for which were sown by the amazing success of the Human Genome Project.

Dr. Powell has set out to establish a systems biology program for PNNL that will position the laboratory to play a significant role in the Department of Energy's Genomes to Life initiative and to participate in the National Institutes of Health biomedical mission. Congress has consistently supported increased funding for scientific research in the biomedical sciences at NIH, and there is an equally important role for the Department of Energy to play in this field. Genomics research holds great promise for unraveling many previously intractable scientific problems, and will one day lead to the development of technologies that will help address some of our nation's most pressing challenges: carbon sequestration and climate change, the national security risks posed by bioterrorism, even clean and sustainable energy production. The Genomes to Life program will indeed enhance the Department of Energy's ability to fulfill its many diverse missions, and PNNL—thanks in large part to Dr. Powell—is poised to be a prime contributor to this initiative.

In her term as Director of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Dr. Powell has reached out to create new partnerships within Washington State to support this agenda. They include the University of Washington, Washington State University, the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, and the Institute of Systems Biology. Meanwhile, conversations are ongoing with still other institutions in the Pacific Northwest that will further expand PNNL's collaborations. These efforts will bring a strong bioscience presence to the State of Washington, provide economic sustainability to the Tri-Cities area and lead to scientific discoveries that will ultimately benefit this Nation as a whole. I want to recognize Dr. Powell for her vision and commitment to public service and wish her much success in her future endeavors.●

#### TRIBUTE TO DR. VINCENT ZECCHINO

• Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, it is with great honor that I recognize Dr. Vincent Zecchino and his wife, Julia, for the numerous contributions they have made to the field of medicine in Rhode Island and throughout the world. I am pleased to say that after a lifetime of achievement, Rhode Island Hospital dedicated their newest facility as the Julia and Vincent Zecchino Pavilion on October 18, 2002.

After graduating from the University of Bologna Medical School in 1936 and completing his internship at the Long Island College Hospital in 1938, Dr.

Zecchino served his orthopedic and fracture residency at Rhode Island Hospital, which he completed in 1940. Subsequently, Dr. Zecchino continued his medical training as a fellow at Harvard Medical School and as a resident at Boston's Children Hospital and Mass General until entering the United States Army in 1942. Dr. Zecchino served the United States in the China Burma-India Theatre as Chief of Orthopedic Surgery until his discharge as Lieutenant Colonel in 1946.

Upon completion of his military service, Dr. Zecchino returned to Rhode Island where he joined the orthopedic staff at Rhode Island Hospital and Miriam Hospital and the faculty of Brown Medical School. During his illustrious career, Dr. Zecchino also served as Chief of Orthopedics at the Veterans Hospital, worked and taught at Project Hope medical schools in Columbia, Tunisia and Sri Lanka, and was a member of the Tufts Medical School faculty.

Dr. Zecchino has authored and co-authored numerous articles in medical journals and textbooks. He was critically important in the development of knee prosthesis and its instrumentation, and invented the double-edged bone cutting "Z" blade bone saw. After such a long and distinguished career, it is especially noteworthy that Dr. Zecchino founded an orthopedic clinic for people in need after his retirement in 1982.

Throughout his medical career, Dr. Zecchino has benefited from the love, compassion and commitment of his wife, Julia, who was in a nurse-training program when they met. Together, Dr. and Mrs. Zecchino have improved the lives of thousands of people and with the dedication of the Julia and Vincent Zecchino Pavilion, future generations will continue to benefit from the Zecchino's goodwill, dedication and tireless effort to improve the world around them.●

#### IN RECOGNITION OF HARTFORD MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR 85TH ANNIVERSARY

● Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to recognize the members of the Hartford Memorial Baptist Church for 85 years of dedication and service to the Detroit community.

Since 1917, Hartford Memorial Baptist Church has established an environment of strength within the parish walls as well as throughout the surrounding community. Through commitment to social change, they welcomed the nonconformist insights of W.E.B. DuBois and Paul Robeson during the Civil Rights Movement and continue to make significant contributions to social development through extensive community outreach programs.

The establishment of the Hartford Agape House is one of their current initiatives dedicated toward an urban mission that provides needed social

services to the local community. Widely respected among the Michigan faith-based organizations, their exemplary programs take on the issues of poverty through hunger initiatives and free clothing; medical necessities through a public health consortium, Alcoholics Anonymous, and AIDS awareness; as well as educational assistance that provides both college preparation and scholarship programs.

I take great pride in recognizing the efforts of the Hartford Memorial Baptist Church throughout their 85-year history in the Detroit community. Their ministry attends to the entire person: mind, body and soul. I know my Senate colleagues will join me in saluting their contributions to society and wish them continued success in the future.●

#### SPINA BIFIDA AWARENESS MONTH

● Mrs. HUTCHISON. I rise today to let my colleagues know that October is National Spina Bifida Awareness Month and to pay tribute to the more than 70,000 Americans—and their family members—who are currently affected by spina bifida—the Nation's most common, permanently disabling birth defect. The Spina Bifida Association of America—SBAA—an organization that has helped people with spina bifida and their families for nearly 30 years, works every day—not just in the month of October—to prevent and reduce suffering from this devastating birth defect.

The SBAA was founded in 1973 to address the needs of the individuals and families affected by and is currently the only national organization solely dedicated to advocating on behalf of the spina bifida community. As part of its service through 60 chapters in more than 100 communities across the country, the SBAA puts expecting parents in touch with families who have a child with spina bifida. These families answer questions and concerns and help guide expecting parents. The SBAA then works to provide lifelong support and assistance for affected children and their families.

Together the SBAA and the Spina Bifida Association of Texas work tirelessly to help families meet the challenges and enjoy the rewards of raising their child. I would like to acknowledge and thank SBAA and the Spina Bifida Association of Texas for all that they have done for the families affected by this birth defect, especially those living in my State.

Spina bifida is a neural tube defect that occurs when the central nervous system does not properly close during the early stages of pregnancy. Spina bifida affects more than 4,000 pregnancies each year, with more than half ending tragically in abortion. There are three different forms of spina bifida with the most severe being myelomeningocele spina bifida, which causes nerve damage and severe disabilities. This severe form of spina

bifida is diagnosed in 96 percent of children born with this condition. Between 70 to 90 percent of the children born with spina bifida are at risk of mental retardation when spinal fluid collects around the brain.

We must do more to ensure a high quality of life for people with spina bifida so more families choose the blessing and joy of having a child with this condition. Fortunately, spina bifida is no longer the death sentence it once was and now people born with spina bifida will likely have a normal or near normal life expectancy. The challenge now is to ensure that these individuals have the highest quality of life possible.

Today, approximately 90 percent of all babies diagnosed with this birth defect live into adulthood, approximately 80 percent have normal IQs, and approximately 75 percent participate in sports and other recreational activities. With proper medical care, people who suffer from spina bifida can lead full and productive lives. However, they must learn how to move around using braces, crutches, or wheelchairs, and how to function independently. They also must be careful to avoid a host of secondary health problems ranging from depression and learning disabilities to skin problems and latex allergies.

The Spina Bifida Association of Texas has four chapters in San Antonio, Austin, Dallas, and Houston. These chapters serve the individuals and their families with spina bifida in the great state of Texas through a number of programs and services including providing emergency assistance; running a summer camp for children and a weekend retreat for adults; scholarships; and medical seminars. In addition, the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital is the largest single-site interdisciplinary center for the treatment of spina bifida in the United States and provides ongoing treatment for more than 13,000 children annually, without charge.

During the month of October, the SBAA and its chapters make a special push to increase public awareness about spina bifida and teach prospective parents about prevention. Simply by taking a daily dose of the B vitamin, folic acid, found in most multivitamins, women of child-bearing age have the power to reduce the incidence of spina bifida by up to 75 percent. That such a simple change in habit can have such a profound effect should leave no question as to the importance of awareness and the impact of prevention.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I am pleased that we provided \$2 million in much-needed funding to establish a National Spina Bifida Program at the National Center for Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities—NCBDDD—at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—CDC—to ensure that those individuals living with spina bifida can live active, productive, and meaningful lives. In