

Microsoft, Cisco, Hewlett Packard, Dell, Intel, Corning, Motorola, and NCR have weighed in, saying it is critically important for the United States to adopt a national broadband policy that encourages investment in new broadband infrastructure, applications, and services.

Broadband deployment should be a national priority in the 21st century. In order to be competitive, educate our workforce, and increase productivity, the United States must have universal broadband. Millions of Americans in rural areas and inner cities are impeded in accessing the full range of services available from the Internet because they do not have access to broadband service. We should strive to connect all Americans to the Internet through broadband technology. I will work with my colleagues to find a way to accomplish this goal in a fair manner that supports broadband deployment throughout all of our Nation.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

• Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, every year the Congress designates the September 15–October 15 period as Hispanic Heritage Month, but even as we do so we know that the contributions Hispanic Americans make to our national life are much greater than the modest tribute we pay them. Of all the varied cultures and traditions that are woven together into the distinctive fabric of American life, Hispanic Americans have some of the most distinctive, vigorous, and sustained culture and traditions.

In recent years the Hispanic American population in the United States has grown very rapidly. According to the 2000 census it stands at 35 million, which represents an increase of 58 percent in the previous decade alone. Projections show that by mid-century Hispanic Americans will make up 24 percent of the population; put another way, just about one in every four Americans will be of Hispanic-American origin. We have seen this trend very clearly in my own State of Maryland, where the Hispanic American population has grown more than 82 percent since 1990, and now makes up more than 4 percent of the population statewide. But numbers and percentages, while impressive, only hint at the vigor and the variety of the Hispanic contribution to Maryland's culture and economy.

Just as the U.S. population is diverse, so is the Hispanic American community itself. There have long been established Puerto Rican and Dominican communities in New York City, Central American communities in the Washington metropolitan area, Cuban Americans in Florida, Mexican Americans in California and the Southwest; but Hispanics from many different countries now live in cities and

towns and villages in every corner of the Nation, and they bring to the communities in which they settle the rich cultures of the nations from which they have come. They are moving forward to take their place in community and political institutions at every level. They are changing the face of America, and changing the way we see America. As Hispanic Americans participate increasingly in every aspect of our national life grows, they bring a new dimension to ethnic diversity; with their presence they challenge the old, corrosive assumptions that divided the world into black and white.

We must see to it that Hispanic Americans, like all others Americans, have access to all the opportunities that make our society stronger, opportunities for education, employment, health care and housing. We must also see that language barriers do not create unnecessary and unproductive impediments to participation. Sensitivity to cultural differences is important in our schools and clinics, our financial institutions, government offices and courts; appropriate bilingual materials can often solve problems of communication. Hispanic Americans have given much to our national life, and with adequate opportunities they will give much more.

Succeeding generations of immigrants have come to this country in search of a better life. They have worked hard, often against the most difficult odds, to make a place for themselves and their families, and to realize fully the promise this Nation offers. Diversity has always been the hallmark of the Republic; the attacks of September 11 a year ago have brought home to us, perhaps more so than ever in the past, that in the diversity of our people lies one of our greatest strengths. Hispanic Americans are now helping to write an important new chapter in our history, and I am pleased and proud to offer this tribute to Hispanic Heritage Month, which recognized and celebrates their accomplishments.●

##### HONORING FRED ABRAHAM

• Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate and honor an outstanding Ohioan, Fred Abraham, on his upcoming retirement. Fred is retiring from Ducks Unlimited, DU, where he has become widely recognized as the expert on wetlands restoration and protection. During his time at Ducks Unlimited, he has been an incredibly valuable resource to my staff and to me. We have relied on him for accurate information and clear advice on countless occasions.

Fred has dedicated more than three decades of his life to the preservation and restoration of wetlands. Through his work at Ducks Unlimited, Fred has advocated on behalf of wetlands across the country, working on projects in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and California. Today, thanks to Fred's tireless ef-

forts, America's wetlands are in great shape and have ample resources.

Fred was born in Canton, OH, and served time in the Air Force during the Korean War. He then returned to Ohio, where he worked in the steel mills and began a career marketing baked goods. His passion for conservation grew as he started organizing sportsmen's clubs throughout Ohio to voice their concerns on wildlife and conservation issues. Fred was one of the early advocates of fostering industrial responsibility as acid-mine runoff and other pollutants threatened wildlife and their habitat.

He developed such a talent for conservation advocacy that he was recruited by the Ohio Division of Wildlife and took a position as a District Supervisor. While there, he helped resolve many of the challenging habitat and conservation issues facing Ohio in the 1970s and 1980s, and solidified his status as a leader on wetland and wildlife issues.

Fred then went on to work for one of the most influential conservation organizations in the country, Ducks Unlimited. At DU, he built strong coalitions and made countless friends, advocating on behalf of sportsmen at the national level. After 16 years at DU, where he engaged in fundraising and grassroots advocacy, Fred came to Washington as DU's Director of Conservation Policy.

Fred was the force behind some of the most important conservation legislation that has been signed into law. His accomplishments on behalf of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, the Wetlands Reserve Program, and the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act have had a profound effect on wetlands, waterfowl, and wildlife across the country. Under his leadership and advocacy, the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund has increased dramatically, rising to \$43,500,000 in 2002.

I first met Fred several years ago on a trip to the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge and Metzger March in Northwest Ohio. I immediately could sense his passion for wetlands and his motivation to preserve these areas for us now and for generations in the future. There is no question that Fred Abraham is "the Man" when it comes to wetlands. Both in Washington and around the country, he is widely recognized as the foremost advocate on wetland restoration.

Everyone who has had the opportunity to work with Fred is proud to call him a friend. We admire his energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to the conservation cause. I am sure that he will spend his retirement enjoying some of the wetlands areas he has helped preserve, and I am confident that we will still hear his voice on many conservation issues. I ask my colleagues in the Senate to join me in congratulating Fred Abraham on his retirement and wish him the best of luck in the future.●

## A TRIBUTE TO MR. RALPH PAIGE

• Mr. MILLER. Mr. President, it is a pleasure for me to recognize Ralph Paige, executive director of the Southern Federation of Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, or LAF, as the recipient for the National Cooperative Month Economic Freedom Award.

For the past 14 years, under Mr. Paige's direction, the Federation/LAF has aided the underserved communities in the great State of Georgia, and the rural South, by creating credit unions, farmer-owned cooperatives, and new sources of affordable housing for low-income people. He has also been a leading advocate for fair treatment and land retention for African-Americans and other minority farmers. The Federation/LAF has created more than 70 cooperative member groups with a membership of more than 20,000 families across 10 Southern States, 200 units of affordable housing, and 19 credit unions with more than 10,000 members.

Under Mr. Paige's leadership, the Federation/LAF has been a frontrunner in not just developing new rural businesses and cooperatives but also provides the training and resources necessary so that they may continue to thrive. The Federation/LAF continues to also advance forestry cooperatives, providing special landowner training programs to advance their development.

Mr. Paige has given selflessly of his time to promote and enhance cooperative business. He serves on the boards of the National Cooperative Business Association, Nationwide Insurance, and the Cooperative Development Foundation. He has served as an appointee to several USDA advisory committees, including the 21st Century Production Agriculture Commission, the Agriculture Policy Advisory Committee for Trade, and the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education and Economics Advisory Board.

Mr. Paige is a past member of the boards for the Georgia Advisory Board on Small and Minority Business, Cooperative Business International, and Cooperative Works, which is a national network of cooperative development centers.

His achievements have been noted by national and international organizations. The Congressional Black Caucus recognized Mr. Paige's contributions to rural communities with the 2001 George Collins Rural Agriculture Advocacy Award. He is also an entrant into the George Washington Carver Public Service Hall of Fame, and has received the Georgia Distinguished Cooperator Award from the Georgia Cooperative Council. Under Mr. Paige's direction, the Federation/LAF received the Humanitarian Award from the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Non-violent Social Change and an award from the United Nations for "significant contributions of adequate shelter to the poorer segments of the community."

Ralph Paige epitomizes cooperation. Since 1967, the Federation/LAF has

worked on behalf of some of the most disadvantaged citizens of our Nation to enable them to do two of the things most basic to economic freedom: own land and operate businesses. For these reasons, it is my honor to recognize Ralph for his work to advance cooperatives and serve disadvantaged communities. I congratulate you on receiving the 2002 Cooperative Month Economic Freedom Award.●

## IN MEMORY OF HOLLY J. RICHARDSON

• Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, this week my colleague, the senior Senator from South Carolina, had a great loss on his staff with the passing of Mrs. Holly J. Richardson, after a battle with cancer. She was Senator THURMOND's executive assistant and personal secretary, having worked for him for half of his career in this body.

But Holly also was a part of the entire Senate family from South Carolina, being as kind and accommodating to my office in the many dealings that we have together as she was to Senator THURMOND. She was the most efficient, conscientious person you'll ever want to meet, always doing her job with the gracious attitude of the fine southern lady she was. We will miss her.

We extend our deepest sympathies to her husband, Phil, and to her children, Anne and Emmett.●

## TRIBUTE TO ANNIE REINHARDT LORITTS

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to an outstanding citizen of the great State of Alabama, Mrs. Annie Loritts. Mrs. Loritts will celebrate her 100th birthday on December 15, 2002.

Over the past 100 years Mrs. Loritts has displayed a dedication to her family, her friends, her students, and her community. As a young woman in Lincolnton, North Carolina, in the 1920's, she pursued a teaching certificate from the Livingstone Normal Teachers School and taught under the supervision of her father, for a year. She then married Emory Loritts and went on to become very active in her community. Mrs. Loritts was involved with the Arts Council of Lincoln County, the Lincoln County Library, and the Seniors Center. However, Mrs. Loritts still had a desire to work with the young people of Lincoln County and returned to college to earn her Bachelor of Science and Masters of Science. She went on to teach in Lincoln County Schools for the next fifty years and was instrumental in shaping the minds and lives of thousands of American citizens.

Mrs. Loritts, who now resides in Huntsville, AL, is an example of the dedicated professionals that teach our young people every day. Her commitment to improving the lives of children and producing solid citizens should serve as an example to each of us. I ap-

plaud her tireless efforts on the behalf of others and would like to take this opportunity to thank her for all that she has contributed to her community and the impact she has made on the lives of others.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Mrs. Annie Loritts for her outstanding achievements and in wishing her a happy upcoming birthday.●

## TRIBUTE TO TECHNICAL SERGEANT CAESAR KELLUM

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, it has come to my attention that Technical Sergeant Caesar Kellum has been recognized as one of 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year by the United States Air Force. Technical Sergeant Kellum is the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Airspace Division, Southeast Air Defense Sector, SEADS, Florida Air National Guard FLANG, Tyndall AFB, FL.

Caesar has excelled as a member of the United States Air Force. For example, he maintained a 100 percent academic average on all written evaluations; unprecedented in his unit's history. Out of 36 weapons directors, he is the only one to earn an "exceptionally qualified" rating on back-to-back evaluations. Additionally, he is a key member of an evaluation team to assess operations control center's readiness to help detect and identify 800,000 aircraft annually.

In addition to his excellent work with the U.S. Air Force, TSgt Kellum has exhibited a great deal of involvement within the local community. He orchestrated the sector's participation in the American Cancer Society's Annual Relay for Life event and served as team captain for the Millennium Cure Walkers. He raised \$5,061.56 for the American Cancer Society, exceeding the goal by 237 percent. As a result of his performance, he was awarded the highly coveted "Team Spirit" award, which is extended to the team with the best overall effort and attitude.

Caesar Kellum was raised in Athens, AL and, after graduating from West Limestone High School in Salem, AL, enlisted in the United States Air Force in August of 1990. Since arriving at Tyndall AFB, FL, Technical Sergeant Kellum has completed all the requirements and received his associate of science degree in Instructor of Technology from the Community College of the Air Force. Currently, he is in his junior year at the American Military University working on a bachelor of science degree in Management.

SGT Kellum's military decorations include the Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Air Force Achievement Medal, Combat Readiness Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Organizational Excellence Award, Humanitarian Service Medal, National Defense Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal, and the Air Force Professional Military Education Graduate Ribbon.