

commitment and dedication to making America stronger and safer, and I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

RETIREMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise to commend J.B. Hudson, who is retiring after 42 outstanding years of Federal service to the United States Army.

In 1962, Mr. Hudson began his Government career at Fort Eustis, VA, as a management analyst with the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, Comptroller. While pursuing his civilian career, Mr. Hudson also served as an Army reservist, 1963–1969, and continued his post graduate education earning a masters of personnel administration from George Washington University, 1969. In 1966, he accepted a position at Fort Monroe, VA, where he served as a management analyst with the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Comptroller; and later, as chief, Management Improvement Branch, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Resource Management from 1973–1975.

Since 1975, Mr. Hudson has been with the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army serving in a number of senior leadership positions, including deputy director and director, studies and analyses staff, 1975–1977; director, plans and projects, 1977–1979, director, policy and plans/safety, security and support services—Washington, 1979–1995, and deputy administrative assistant, 1995–1996. In over 42 years of Government service, Mr. Hudson has received numerous honors and awards, including the Meritorious Civilian Service Award and the Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service.

Mr. Hudson is an extraordinary leader who recognizes that people are his most important resource. He epitomizes leadership by example, perpetuating a work environment in which harmony, resilience, and productivity reign. In the days following the terrorist attack on the Pentagon, he faced his toughest leadership challenge. Not only did he have to deal with the tragic loss of 40 staff members and the injury of many more, he also had to lead the effort of restoring calm and productivity to the agency, the Army, and the Pentagon, minimizing any disruption of support to the Army and OSD.

As the overseer of the Defense Post Office, Mr. Hudson faced the possibility of receiving mail contaminated with chemical or biological agents since the Pentagon's mail is processed through the same facility where two United States Postal Service workers died from exposure of mail contaminated with anthrax spores. Working in collaboration with Defense Department and White House officials, Mr. Hudson quickly assessed the threat and developed courses of defense.

His reputation for initiating leading-edge business practices is widely recog-

nized. His vision, adaptability, and passion for customer success have enabled him to gain recognition for the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army as a preferred support provider throughout Headquarters, Department of the Army, and Defense Department activities within the Pentagon and the National Capital Area.

Mr. Hudson has been a focused and competent defender of the Army's limited resources and is absolutely committed to achieving operational excellence. In more recent years, he consistently used his keen business acumen, technical expertise, political savvy, and resourcefulness to proficiently position the agency for the best business results.

Mr. Hudson is a superior advisor, astute negotiator, and superb administrator who can operate comfortably in all environments. His ability to bring divergent parties together and forge a common vision to achieve desired outcomes is renowned. His mastery of unique Defense Department and National Capitol Region relationships has enabled him to consistently produce quality results, even on the most contentious and complex issues. Perhaps the best examples of Mr. Hudson's ability to build coalitions and achieve results for the Army and the Department of Defense are evident in his management of the Army's executive aircraft fleet and his championing of the Pentagon Athletic Facility. In the first initiative, Mr. Hudson worked with Defense Department and Congressional representatives to acquire two state-of-the-art executive airplanes. As the overseer of the Pentagon's 55-year old athletic center, Mr. Hudson realized that the aging infrastructure of the current facility and the growing demand for fitness facilities in support of the Army's readiness mission required quick action. Once again, he negotiated prime real estate at the Pentagon for the construction of a new facility and fought for and won funding for the \$19 million project that offers a state-of-the-art facility comparable to well-known commercial fitness facilities.

Mr. Hudson's distinctive accomplishments, selflessness, dedication, commitment to excellence, and willingness to "go the extra mile" in supporting the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense and Joint Service activities in the Pentagon truly set a standard of excellence for others to follow. Mr. Hudson's distinctive accomplishments and selfless service in support of the Defense of our great nation truly set a standard of excellence worthy of emulation. I thank him on behalf of a grateful Nation and wish him well in his retirement.

WORLD AIDS DAY

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise to comment on World AIDS Day, which was on December 1. The global HIV/AIDS pandemic is a humanitarian cri-

sis of horrific proportions. World AIDS Day is a day to remember the millions of lives lost to and devastated by this global pandemic and to strengthen our commitment to fight this disease.

Last year, Congress passed legislation that created the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator and pledged \$15 billion over 5 years to address the HIV/AIDS crisis. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee continues to make HIV/AIDS a priority. Charged with the oversight of the President's initiative, we will continue to hold hearings and briefings on the subject of AIDS and the progress of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Earlier this year, for instance, we held a hearing focused on the intersection of HIV/AIDS and hunger. At this hearing, Ambassador Randall Tobias, the Global AIDS Coordinator, and Jim Morris, Executive Director of the World Food Program, testified about the devastating effects that the HIV/AIDS crisis is having on agricultural workers and the food supply in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, we explored the special nutritional needs of individuals who are taking antiretroviral medication.

The theme of World AIDS Day this year, "Women, Girls, and HIV and AIDS," is an appropriate one. This disease is having a particularly devastating effect on women and girls around the world. We are just beginning to understand how women, and young girls in particular, are especially vulnerable to HIV and AIDS, due to a combination of biological, cultural, economic, social, and legal factors. Young girls constitute 75 percent of new infections in South Africa among individuals between 14 and 25 years of age. In Malawi, the National AIDS Commission has said that HIV and AIDS is killing more women than men, and that HIV-positive girls between 15 and 24 years of age outnumber males in the same age group by a six-to-one margin. Even in the United States, the disease is having a devastating effect on women and is the leading cause of death among African American women ages 25 to 34.

Not only are women and girls more vulnerable to infection, they are also shouldering much of the burden of taking care of sick and dying relatives and friends. In addition, in the vast majority of cases, they are the caretakers of the estimated 14 million children who have been orphaned by this pandemic. Grandmothers often take the responsibility of caring for grandchildren, and older female children often take care of their younger siblings.

One such young girl is Fanny Madanitsa. Fanny is a 16-year-old girl living in Malawi with her two younger sisters and a brother. Life has been difficult for Fanny and her siblings since they lost their parents to AIDS. As the oldest child, Fanny must deal with the stress of taking care of her younger siblings. They live in a modest house and share one bed. Fanny dreams of

being a nurse, but reaching this goal will be a challenge for her. She cannot always attend classes, as she sometimes has to look after her siblings. Because money is scarce, she has a difficult time paying for school materials and other costs of her education.

But Fanny is more fortunate than many girls in similar circumstances. With the help of her Village AIDS Committee, a community-based organization that has organized to take care of the orphans in its village, Fanny and her siblings receive food, soap, school materials, and also medicines. Through the Village AIDS Committee, which receives support from Save the Children, the community assists Fanny in watching her siblings so she can attend school.

This June, I introduced the Assistance for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children in Developing Countries Act of 2004. My bill would require the United States Government to develop a comprehensive strategy for providing assistance to orphans and would authorize the President to support community-based organizations that provide basic care for orphans and vulnerable children.

Furthermore, my bill aims to improve enrollment and access to primary school education for orphans and vulnerable children by supporting programs that reduce the negative impact of school fees and other expenses. It also would reaffirm our commitment to international school lunch programs. School meals provide basic nutrition to children who otherwise do not have access to reliable food. They have been a proven incentive for poor and orphaned children to enroll in school.

In addition, many women and children who lose one or both parents often face difficulty in asserting their inheritance rights. Even when the inheritance rights of women and children are spelled out in law, such rights are difficult to claim and are seldom enforced. In many countries, it is difficult or impossible for a widow—even if she has small children—to claim property after the death of her husband. This often leaves the most vulnerable children impoverished and homeless. My bill seeks to support programs that protect the inheritance rights of orphans and widows with children. Although the legislation will not become law this session, I am hopeful that, with bipartisan support, it will become law early next year.

The AIDS orphans crisis in sub-Saharan Africa has implications for political stability, development, and human welfare that extend far beyond the region. Turning the tide on this crisis will require a coordinated, comprehensive, and swift response. I am hopeful that, with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the Global Fund, and the Congress, we can make great strides in the battle against this pandemic.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, December 1 marked the 17th annual observance of

World AIDS Day. HIV/AIDS is an epidemic that requires a global solution and the United States has a responsibility to lead the world in addressing this horrible disease.

Since the beginning of the HIV/AIDS epidemic more than two decades ago, over 21 million people have died as a result of this disease. Worldwide, more than 42 million people are living with HIV/AIDS. It is estimated that AIDS claims the lives of over 8,000 people per day and 5 million more people are infected with HIV/AIDS each year.

This year's theme for Global AIDS Day is "Women, Girls, HIV and AIDS" to recognize and call attention to the rapidly growing number of females with HIV/AIDS. Women, and especially young women, are almost two and a half times more vulnerable to the disease than men because of the social and educational inequalities they face in many areas of the world. Women are much more likely to be sexually abused and are less likely to be aware of the risks associated with unprotected sex and IV drug use. Women also risk passing the disease on to their newborn children. It is estimated that over 19 million women currently live with HIV/AIDS, of which 2 million will pass the disease on to over 700,000 newborn children worldwide this year alone.

Tragically, more Americans lost their lives to AIDS in the 1990s than in all wars in U.S. history. Currently it is estimated that there are nearly 950,000 Americans living with HIV/AIDS, nearly one-third of which do not know they are infected. The disease continues to spread throughout the country and we have seen infection rates among women and minorities rise at alarming rates over the last few years.

The vast majority of deaths from HIV/AIDS occur in the developing world, most notably in Africa where AIDS is the leading cause of death. While Africa accounts for only 10 percent of the world's population, approximately two-thirds of the world's HIV/AIDS cases occur there. There are an estimated 11,000 new infections per day in Africa and 57 percent of all women living with HIV/AIDS live in sub-Saharan Africa.

In addition, there have been dramatic increases in HIV/AIDS cases in Asia, Eastern Europe, and the Caribbean. This is clearly not a regional issue. The disease is spreading in every corner of the globe. The industrialized world has benefited greatly from new medicines that help people live with HIV/AIDS, but most developing countries still lack access to them in sufficient quantities. In many areas, non-governmental organizations are operating small-scale pilot programs that clearly are not adequate to meet the needs of the millions who are living with the disease. In order to successfully combat HIV/AIDS on a global scale, resources must continue to be made available to developing countries to assist in integrating prevention, treat-

ment, and education programs into a national health care system.

There are no easy solutions to the problems associated with this epidemic. Researchers are continuing to work hard to find new treatments and ultimately a cure for this devastating disease. Halting the spread of the epidemic requires prevention and a commitment to supporting organizations that are vigorously working to defeat HIV/AIDS through education, humanitarian relief, and public awareness.

We must recognize the sobering reality that this disease continues to spread and infect people around the globe regardless of race, gender, age, or income. Remembering those who have already lost their lives to HIV/AIDS requires us to redouble our efforts to defeat the disease and prevent its spread to new members of our communities.

NORTHERN ARIZONA FOREST LANDS EXCHANGE AND VERDE RIVER BASIN PARTNERSHIP ACT

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, after several years of negotiation and compromise, I am pleased that the Northern Arizona Forest Lands Exchange and Verde River Basin Partnership Act of 2004 was approved by the Senate today. Through the dedicated efforts of all parties, this bipartisan agreement provides a sound framework for a fair and equal value exchange of 50,000 acres of private and public land in Northern Arizona. The bill also addresses the water issues raised by the exchange of lands located within the Verde River Basin watershed by limiting water usage on certain exchanged lands and by supporting the development of a collaborative science based water resource planning and management entity for the Verde River Basin watershed.

It is gratifying that the compromise reached on the bill, after countless hours of deliberation and discussion, is both balanced and foresighted in terms of addressing the various issues raised by the exchange. I want to thank Senator KYL and his staff, as well as Senators DOMENICI and BINGAMAN, and their staffs on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, for their tireless efforts in reaching this agreement. I also want to recognize the work of Congressmen RENZI and HAYWORTH who have championed this legislation in the House of Representatives.

The bill sets forth a sound process for the achievement of a fair market value exchange which is expected to offer significant benefits for all parties. Benefits will accrue to the U.S. Forest Service and the public with the consolidation of checkerboard lands and the protection and enhanced management of extensive forest and grasslands. The communities of Flagstaff, Williams, and Camp Verde also will benefit in terms of economic development, water supply, and other important purposes.

Since introducing this legislation in April 2003, I have heard from hundreds