

VERMONT'S CHAMPLAIN HOUSING TRUST

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, It is with great pleasure that I inform you, my colleagues, and the Nation that Vermont's Champlain Housing Trust was selected as one of two recipients of the 2008 World Habitat Award, an honor presented annually by the United Nations.

Each year on World Habitat Day, the United Nations Agency for Human Settlements, which promotes socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all, presents these awards. Established in 1985, the World Habitat Awards are bestowed on projects that provide practical and innovative solutions to current housing needs and problems. One award is for a project in the global north and the other for a project in the global south.

I have a particularly deep and lengthy interest in the Champlain Housing Trust. It was established as the Nation's first municipally funded community land trust in 1984, when I was mayor of Burlington, VT. It has grown substantially, and today it is not only the first but the largest, community land trust in the country. It has provided a model for securing perpetually affordable housing that has been adopted by many other cities and municipalities across the Nation.

The program came into being because, in the 1980s, Burlington faced a number of housing challenges—and we were looking for innovative solutions. Among other issues that we faced was the reality that low and moderate income households, in the face of rapidly rising and fluctuating house prices, were threatened with displacement. We also believed that decent and affordable housing was a right of all people and not just a commodity for financial gain by a select few. As mayor of Burlington, I was very fortunate to have an outstanding staff as well as strong community input in helping to formulate this concept. Among many others who played an active role in developing what was initially called the Burlington Community Land Trust were Terry Bouricius, John Davis, Peter Clavelle, Michael Monte, Brenda Torpy, and Amy Wright.

When I entered the House of Representatives, my interest in land trusts did not abate. Encouraged by the growing land trust community across the Nation, I successfully introduced legislation that encouraged the use of the land trust model the Burlington community land trust had helped establish so that this model could be expanded to communities across the country.

Meanwhile, ably directed by Brenda Torpy and a legion of committed staff and volunteers over the past two and a half decades, the Champlain Housing Trust has continued to grow and expand its geographic reach, and has been met with unparalleled success. Thou-

sands of low and moderate income families have been able to experience homeownership, while the trust has made great strides both toward revitalizing Burlington's historical Old North End neighborhood and expanding to three different counties in northwestern Vermont.

The Champlain Housing Trust is a model of democracy at the grassroots, involving homeowners, as well as government officials and members of the larger community, in its governance.

It has been a successful experiment that has revealed to the nation and, as this U.N. award demonstrates, to the world as well, how through the land trust concept, home ownership can be combined with making housing perpetually affordable.

The 2008 World Habitat Award is in recognition of all who have worked on establishing and expanding land trusts, all who have bought land trust homes, and all who have helped disseminate the land trust concept. And, in particular, it is a celebration of the wonderful work done by the Champlain Housing Trust.●

HONORING SIMONES' HOT DOG STAND

• Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I wish to celebrate the centennial of a treasured institution within Maine's Lewiston-Auburn community. Simones' Hot Dog Stand has been located on Chestnut Street in Lewiston since 1908, and by the looks of things, it will be there for at least another hundred years.

A third- and fourth-generation family-owned small business, Simones' Hot Dog Stand has been immensely popular since its founding. Back then, Simones' was truly a "small" business, constructed of wooden soda crates with just four stools for customers. Luckily, Simones' had a walk up take out window as well. Hot dogs at the time cost a nickel, with the bargain price of a quarter for six hotdogs. Over the years, various members of the Simones family have operated and worked at the stand, and its present proprietor, Jimmy Simones, has been a steadfast employee since 1973.

With time, the hotdog stand has faced challenges and undergone changes. During the Great Depression, with the price of meat skyrocketing, Simones' turned to chopped bologna as a substitute for hotdogs. During World War II, when meat became scarce on the homefront, SPAM was used in its place until the daily ration was employed. In 1966, realizing the need for additional space, Simones' moved across the street, from 98 Chestnut Street to No. 99, where it has been since. Over the years, Simones' menu has expanded to include other lunch items, such as subs, salads, and even homemade soups from scratch during the cold winter months. It is also open for breakfast.

But what will catch the visitor's eye most, aside from the fast and friendly service, is its signature bright neon red hotdog. Simones' famed hotdogs are truly unique, with a complement of red food coloring in their casings. Many customers prefer the traditional presentation of a steamed hotdog in a steamed bun topped with mustard, ketchup, or relish. For those of different culinary persuasion, Simones' offers chili, cheese, and sauerkraut to top their hotdogs.

Simones family members are also charitable neighbors, helping to make Lewiston a better place to live. Simones' donates their hotdogs to the scholarship foundation of the MAINEiacs, Lewiston's junior ice hockey team, as well as Leavitt Area High School's Project Graduation and other local nonprofit groups. Current owner Jimmy Simones serves on the Central Maine Community College Foundation board of directors and has volunteered at Lewiston's Sexual Assault Crisis Center. Additionally, Jimmy's wife Linda is a member of the St. Mary's Hospital Federally Qualified Health Care Board in Lewiston and a graduate of the hospital's nursing school. The Simones family is also active in the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church parish. Jimmy is a past president of the church, and son George, who works at the stand, serves as a chanter for services. And all three Simones are familiar faces during the church's annual Greek Festival, volunteering their time to enhance the experience of the hundreds who attend.

From the regulars who come in daily for a hotdog, to Maine's political figures who make it a must-stop on the campaign trail, Simones' is truly the place to take the local pulse of the Lewiston-Auburn community. It is no wonder that Simones' has established itself as a pillar in central Maine. I wish Jimmy, Linda, George, and everyone at Simones' a wonderful celebration of 100 successful years and look forward to many more years—and hotdogs.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)