

SHELDON COMMUNITY EDUCATION

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Sheldon Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Sheldon Community School District received a 2001 Harkin grant totaling \$500,000 which was used to help build a new middle school. This school is a modern, state-of-the-art facility that befits the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. Indeed, it is the kind of school facility that every child in America deserves. The district also received two fire safety grants totaling \$75,000 to improve their alarms, smoke detectors and fire safety doors. The Federal grants have made it possible for the district to provide quality and safe schools for their students.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Sheldon Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education Dan Van Gorp, Gary Ihnen, Kecia Hickman, Glen Goedken and Harlan Bousema and former board members Linda Porter, John Boender and Tom Whorley. I would also like to recognize superintendent Robin Spears, middle school principal Cindy Barwick and Gene Den Hartog.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin school grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be up-

graded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

Too often, our children visit ultra modern shopping malls and gleaming sports arenas on weekends, but during the week go to school in rundown or antiquated facilities. This sends exactly the wrong message to our young people about our priorities. We have do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Sheldon Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in that community. I salute them, and wish them a very successful new school year.●

SPENCER COMMUNITY EDUCATION

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes today to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Spencer Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Spencer Community School District received a 2003 Harkin grant totaling \$500,000 which it used to help build a science classroom addition to the high school and remodel family and consumer science classrooms. The district also received two fire safety grants totaling \$200,000 for a new fire alarm system at the high school and other improvements in schools throughout the district. The Federal grants have made it possible for the district to provide quality and safe schools for their students.

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in the Spencer Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—Edward Ver Steeg, Barb Van Wyk, Dean Mechler, Dave Schlichtemeier and Les Zobrist and former board members Ross Brockshus, Randy Van Dyke, Sue Harman and Scott De Geest. I would also like to recognize superintendent Greg Ebeling, former superintendent Glen Lohman, assistant superintendent Kathy Elliott, former high school principal Mike Healy and grant writer Mary Maly.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin school grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

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VINTON-SHELLSBURG COMMUNITY EDUCATION

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or

or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District received a 2005 Harkin grant totaling \$400,000 to renovate two schools. The grant enabled the school district to build a new commons area and to add an elevator at the building in Shellsburg. The district also made renovations, installed air-conditioning and built additional classrooms and restrooms at Tilford Elementary School.

This project was part of a comprehensive multimillion dollar plan to provide the modern, state-of-the-art facilities that befit the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. The United 4 Kids campaign committee worked tirelessly to pass a \$15.1 million bond issue to build a new high school and make improvements throughout the district.

Excellent new schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize John Anderson for his involvement with the United 4 Kids committee and generously donating 35 acres for the new high school. I would also like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—Brad Allyn, Patrick Lyons, Kathy Tranel, Gerald Horst, Jo Sainbury, Todd Wiley and Tim Bird as well as superintendent Randy Braden, high school principal Jay Pedersen, Shellsburg principal Shelly Petersen and Tilford principal Jim Murray.

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That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in that community. I salute them, and wish them a very successful new school year.●

TRIBUTE TO SKIP CARAY

● Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, today I mourn the passing and pay tribute to a great Georgian. Broadcaster Skip Caray passed away in his suburban Atlanta home on August 3, 2008, leaving a tremendous void in the hearts of Atlanta Braves fans nationwide.

After years of calling basketball and hockey games in St. Louis and Atlanta, Skip Caray began broadcasting for the Braves in 1976. Baseball was in his blood, and while their styles were different, Skip brought the same warmth and humor to his calls as his famous father, Harry, delivered to the Chicago Cubs for years. Skip Caray passed his love for the game on to his sons, Chip and Josh, both of whom found careers in the same profession as their father.

As a broadcaster for TBS, Skip Caray's voice was not only familiar to baseball fans in the South, but millions around the country. Whether it was the many years that the Braves spent in the depths of their division or the 14 consecutive seasons at the top, Caray provided the voice of a friend who shared the same passion for "America's Team" that the fans did. No Braves fan will ever forget Skip urging Sid Bream around third base and into the World Series in 1992 or his elation as the Braves won it all in 1995.

In 2004, Caray was elected to the Atlanta Braves Hall of Fame. At his induction, his mentor, Ernie Johnson, Sr., said that Caray "had a bigger heart than anyone can imagine." Skip Caray will be sorely missed and will remain in Atlanta Braves fans' hearts forever.●

HONORING CONGDON'S DOUGHNUTS

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, as our Nation and our world become increasingly complex and fast paced, it may seem easy to lose track of the simple but essential ties that bind us to those in our communities. It is with pleasure that I recognize a small family business from my home State of Maine that has succeeded in ushering a timeless classic into the modern world. Congdon's Doughnuts in Wells has been a York County institution for well over 50 years, providing tasty treats and community support for generations of locals and tourists.

For the early riser among us, few indulgences are more appealing than a sticky sweet doughnut and a fresh-brewed cup of coffee. Congdon's Doughnuts has provided just that to thousands of customers as it has churned out up to 10,000 homemade doughnuts a day for three generations. Founded in 1945, and located at its current site since 1955, the company has undergone many of the trials and tribulations that often challenge America's small businesses. Yet through the hard work and unwavering dedication of the Congdon family and their employees,

the business has transformed itself from a small wholesale doughnut operation to a three-meal-a-day restaurant and bakery. Under present managers Gary Leech, son of Eleanor Congdon, and his wife Diane Leech, Congdon's also added a convenient drive-thru in 2002 for those on the go. The firm has been so successful that this past March, the Best Independent Restaurants Association awarded Congdon's Doughnuts its highest level of recognition, the prestigious Best Family Restaurant Platinum Plate Award.

While known for providing plentiful options for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, the centerpiece of the Congdon enterprise remains its timeless and highly acclaimed doughnuts. With dozens of tempting and delicious varieties of the traditional breakfast morsels, from cinnamon and coconut to chocolate honey and apple fritter, Congdon's has something to satisfy any doughnut eater and has garnered acclaim both locally and nationally. Indeed, Portland Magazine, a regional publication, has placed Congdon's doughnuts on its list of "101 of Maine's Guiltiest Guilty Pleasures," and in 2007 Congdon's was included on the Doughnut Honor Roll of seriouseats.com, the Web site of famed food critic Ed Levin.

While Congdon's has long been involved in local charitable and community efforts, for the last 2 years it has institutionalized the commitment to its neighbors by joining other local businesses to host weekly benefit barbecues. Every Wednesday in July and August, community members come together for fun-filled tropical-themed parties. Ticket sales for these popular events have raised money for local and national charities and organizations including the American Heart Association, Southern Maine Parent Awareness, and Trolley for Togus, which provides transportation for York County veterans to Maine's VA hospital. Additionally, last December Congdon's offered its guests holiday cards to sign for our Nation's soldiers, and then sent over 500 of them to men and women serving in Iraq.

Congdon's Doughnuts exemplifies the best qualities of being both a prosperous business and a caring neighbor. It is with great pride that I congratulate Congdon's on its decades of successes and I wish them the best of luck for the future as they continue to reach new heights as a purveyor of delectable treats and old-fashioned American cuisine.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 11:24 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker signed the following enrolled bill: