

including doubling the number of adoptions from foster care over the decade. This means that 443,000 children from foster care have a permanent home and a family, and 3,600 are West Virginia children. A family and a permanent home makes all the difference for a child. The 1997 act also changed the reasonable efforts provisions to restore balance and help focus on the best interest of a child, and providing a safe, stable and permanent home.

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 is a historic initiative to further promote adoption and permanency for children. It will eliminate, over time, the outdated connection between adoption assistance eligibility with the broken Aid To Families with Dependent Children, AFDC, a program that was terminated in 1996. The new Adoption Assistance Program is phased in over 10 years, starting with the oldest children or children who have been in care for over 5 years. The package also updates the adoption incentive program.

The bill gives States the option to invest in relative guardianship, a program that was tested and found very successful during the child welfare waivers. Children in relative placement tend to move less and get better reports from the teachers. The package also makes a special investment to promote the promising kinship navigator program to provide support and referrals to the millions of grandparents and relatives raising their kin. It provides new tools and direction to locate relatives as possible care providers. This is an important option that will lead to more permanency for children.

The bill also requires States to do more on educational stability and directs that each child has a coordinated health plan that includes dental and mental health care. This is fundamental for each child. To help staff do a better job serving children, the bill also invests in training programs.

The legislation will also invest in the more than 20,000 young people who age out of foster care, each year. First, it requires that the youth have full support in developing a transition plan 90 days before leaving care. It is not right or appropriate for a foster teen to leave care and move into a homeless shelter. The legislation also encourages States to extend foster care beyond the age of 18 if the young person is engaged in education, job training, employment, or has a disability that prevents such engagement. Young people need and deserve support, and we know that it makes a positive difference.

Finally, for the first time, thanks to Chairman BAUCUS' leadership, the Tribes and Tribal organization will have the option of direct access to Federal foster care to serve Native American children directly.

Many of the provisions in this package, particularly improvements in adoption assistance, have been among my priorities for years. It is exciting to

work with colleagues on a success, and it will be even more rewarding to work on its implementation for children and families in West Virginia and nationwide.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MEDIA CONSOLIDATION

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I wish today to recognize the Department of Defense for its successful, BRAC-directed consolidation of the Army, Navy, and Air Force media activities into the new Defense Media Activity on October 1, 2008. The Department of Defense has greatly enhanced the consolidation by including the Marine Corps component and the American Forces Information Service in the new Defense Media Activity.

The consolidation will improve the effectiveness and efficiency with which the Department of Defense media operations provides critical news and information to our Armed Forces around the world. In the summer of 2011, the Defense Media Activity will locate its headquarters to a state-of-the-art facility at Fort Meade, MD.

The Defense Media Activity is staffed by about 1,700 dedicated military and civilian employees who work in 15 countries. I wish the Defense Media Activity continued success in their support of the men and women of our military services and their families.

TRIBUTE TO JIM MILLER

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to honor my former budget analyst for agriculture, Jim Miller, for his exemplary service. For the last 4 years, Jim has served me as my lead agriculture adviser. His efforts have helped produce great legislative successes for our Nation's farmers and ranchers.

Jim's knowledge of agriculture is extraordinary. His encyclopedic familiarity with Federal agriculture policy allowed him to know the answer to any question I would ask about agriculture. Throughout his service, he garnered the respect and admiration of his colleagues as well as other Senators for his intelligence and his good nature. His wise counsel will be missed.

Jim came to my office in August 2004 after working for the National Farmers Union. Even though Jim had 20 years of agriculture policy expertise and had farmed in his native Washington State for over 20 years before coming to Washington, he had never worked on Capitol Hill.

But he hit the ground running. Shortly after Jim joined my staff, he helped me pass an agriculture disaster assistance package for North Dakota farmers and ranchers in 2004. He also worked for 3 long years to secure additional disaster assistance for North Dakota farmers stricken with flooding in 2005 and severe drought in 2006.

I will always remember Jim for his work during the 2008 farm bill. Jim was

my lead negotiator and captain of my farm bill team. Without his leadership and dedication, this most recent farm bill would not be as strong as it is. He gave this effort thousands upon thousands of hours of his time, working with people on both sides of the aisle and in both Houses of Congress to get a fantastic end result. He was responsible for helping me deliver the top priorities for North Dakota producers: increased farm program support levels and a standing disaster program.

I thank him for helping this Congress produce what I think is the best farm bill we have ever had. And it isn't just me that thinks this—it is reflected in the recordbreaking votes we had in the Senate and the large margin of victory we had on overriding the President's two vetoes.

Since Jim left my office, he has re-joined the National Farmers Union. I will forever be grateful for his tireless efforts, his creative thinking, his coalition building, and friendship. I wish him all the best in his new endeavor.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING ROY SILVERSTEIN, M.D.

• Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I would like to take a few moments to recognize the achievements of Dr. Roy Silverstein, an Ohioan who has dedicated his professional life to biomedical research and medicine.

Dr. Silverstein is currently chairman of the Department of Cell Biology and vice chair for translational research at the Lerner Research Institute, as well as professor of molecular medicine at the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine at Case Western Reserve University.

Having chaired multiple grant review panels and published over 100 articles in various publications and scientific journals, Dr. Silverstein has accomplished an extraordinary number of professional milestones and achievements.

As committee chair for the American Society of Hematology, ASH, for the past 4 years, Dr. Silverstein has led the society's efforts to educate Members of Congress about hematology and the importance of Federal research funding. In this capacity, Dr. Silverstein has visited with me and my staff to educate us about the critical issues facing hematologists.

The skilled advocacy and research of Dr. Silverstein remind many of us in Congress of how crucial it is to keep NIH funding strong. His work demonstrates that NIH funding truly is a vehicle for enhancing the health and wellbeing of Americans. In addition to continuing his own research in blood clotting and bleeding disorders, Dr. Silverstein has also shown great commitment to educating our next generation of physicians and researchers. Dr. Silverstein is a superb advocate for his

profession, and I am grateful for his lifetime contribution to treating blood diseases and advocating for biomedical research.●

RECOGNIZING HUSSON UNIVERSITY

● Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I recognize a landmark event at one of our Nation's great success stories in higher education. On October 11, 2008, Husson College in my home State of Maine will become Husson University.

This designation is but the latest chapter in a history that is truly inspiring. It began more than a century ago, in 1898, when Chesley Husson founded the Shaw School of Business on the second floor of a building in downtown Bangor, offering instruction in such cutting-edge technologies of the day as typing and telegraphy. From the very start, Husson has remained a private school with an entrepreneurial approach and a commitment to educating young people of limited means.

Since then, Husson has grown tremendously, both in the size of its beautiful campus and in the range of the courses and degrees offered. It has grown because, through all those years, Husson has remained true to its founding principles of responding to needs, recognizing opportunities, and delivering real value.

Today, Husson offers a university-caliber range of both undergraduate and graduate degrees, including graduate professional degrees in business, health and education. It is home to the New England School of Communications, which offers audio, video, Web and computer programs, marketing, theater, and both print and broadcast journalism, and to the Bangor Theological Seminary, the only accredited graduate school of religion in Northern New England. In addition to its main campus in Bangor, Husson has developed a statewide reach with education centers in South Portland and Presque Isle, the Boat School in Eastport, and Unobskey College in Calais.

The Husson story is, however, about more than growth in enrollment, degree offerings, and campus locations. It also is a story of fostering personal growth, of preparing graduates for successful professional careers, and of promoting in each student the development of individual self-worth.

Before coming to the Senate, I had the honor of serving as the founding director of the Dyke Center for Family Business. I have never known a school, a faculty, or a student body more focused on preparing for a professional career than at Husson. Husson truly is remarkable in its dedication to this aspiration and its clear sense of purpose.

I saw in Husson students an emerging sense of personal pride, a sense of self-worth grounded in knowledge and confidence. This wonderful combination of hands-on learning, personal attention from the faculty, friendships that de-

velop with other students, and self-discovery is the Husson spirit. As I travel throughout Maine and across the Nation I find Husson alumni from every walk of life who possess that invaluable sense of self-worth.

Husson is more than a pretty campus in a small city that shines, as Thoreau put it, "like a star on the edge of night." Husson is a network. It is a network that includes teachers, architects, bankers, nurses and therapists, counselors, criminal justice administrators, hospital CEOs and doctors, corporate executives and entrepreneurs, heads of architectural firms, senior law partners and entrepreneurs. It is a network that reaches across the State of Maine and around the world.

If there is one thing today's college students do not need to be told, it is that the world is changing every day. A big part of the Husson spirit is anticipating change. Among Husson alumni there are business graduates who have become architects and attorneys, nurses who are hospital CEOs, and teachers who have become ministers. A Husson degree is more than proof that a student can do one thing well. By developing the skills to perfect one profession, Husson graduates learn the discipline, leadership skills, and problem-solving capabilities to change with the times. The Husson spirit is not just about being part of change, but of leading it.

The change I recognize today is evidence of that spirit. I congratulate Husson College as it becomes Husson University. The Husson story is remarkable, but I know that the most remarkable chapters have yet to be written.●

CHARLES CITY 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 Charles City 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 Charles City Community School District received several fire safety grants totaling \$377,303. The 2001, 2003 and 2005 grants were used to upgrade fire safety systems at the high school, the middle school and Washington Elementary. The 2002 grant was used to upgrade the electrical system at the high school. 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 Charles City Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—Mark Miller, Ralph Smith, Matt Spading, Bill Fenholt and Randy Heitz, and former board members, Sam Offerman, Dean Tjaden, Susan Ayers, Patti Emmel, Scott Dight, Virginia Ruzicka and DeLaine Freeseaman. I would also like to recognize superintendent Andy Pattee, former superintendents David Bradley and Marty Lucas, buildings and grounds director Steve Otto and business manager Terri O'Brien.

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.

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 to do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Charles City 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.●

LOGAN-MAGNOLIA 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.