

REMEMBERING GREG HERNANDEZ

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the memory of a dedicated public servant, SGT Greg Hernandez of the Tulare County Sheriff's Department. Sergeant Hernandez's life was tragically cut short on February 6, 2009, as a result of injuries from a vehicle accident that occurred while he was on duty.

Sergeant Hernandez dutifully served the citizens and communities for 24 years as a valued member of the Tulare County Sheriff's Department. Sergeant Hernandez demonstrated a passion for law enforcement and commitment to helping others, qualities that earned him the respect of his colleagues at the Tulare County Sheriff's Department. Sergeant Hernandez shall always be remembered for his devotion to serving the public and his friendly nature.

Sergeant Hernandez is survived by his mother Rosa Hernandez of Farmersville and his daughter Kristina Marie Hernandez of Porterville. When he was not spending time with his family and friends, Sergeant Hernandez was a devoted sportsman who enjoyed fishing, softball, and golf.

Sergeant Hernandez served the county of Tulare with honor and distinction, and fulfilled his oath as an officer of the law. His selfless contributions and dedication to law enforcement are greatly appreciated and will serve as an example of his legacy.

We shall always be grateful for Sergeant Hernandez's service and the sacrifices he made while serving and protecting the people of Tulare County. •

TRIBUTE TO SUSAN AXELROD

• Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I wish to acknowledge and honor the work of Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy, CURE, and its founder, Susan Axelrod. I have known Susan personally for many years and can attest to her tireless work on behalf of her daughter, Lauren, and of other children and families affected by epilepsy. Epilepsy often begins in childhood and even in its mildest forms can modify brain development, with lifelong effects on cognition ranging from learning disabilities to severe developmental disabilities. In 1998, a small group of families whose children were suffering from epilepsy joined in recognizing the need for an increased commitment to research. Together, they formed the nonprofit, volunteer-based CURE. Led by Susan, they have become tireless advocates for epilepsy awareness and have grown into one of the foremost organizations in funding cutting-edge epilepsy research. To date, CURE has raised over \$9 million in its crusade toward eliminating seizures, reducing the side effects of currently available treatments, and ultimately toward finding a cure for epilepsy. I commend CURE for its unrelenting commitment to this worthy cause but underscore the fact that they

cannot work alone. Epilepsy affects over 3 million patients nationwide, and the need for adequate funding for research on a Federal level is imperative if a cure is to be found. At a time when the Nation is confronted with serious health challenges like epilepsy, we must not diminish our commitment to medical research.

Please join me in honoring Susan Axelrod and CURE for their years of vision, leadership, and commitment.

I would ask to have the following Parade Magazine article highlighting the work of Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy printed in the RECORD. The material follows:

[From Parade Magazine, Feb. 15, 2009]

I MUST SAVE MY CHILD
(By Melissa Fay Greene)

When Susan Axelrod tells the story of her daughter, she begins like most parents of children with epilepsy: The baby was adorable, healthy, perfect. Lauren arrived in June 1981, a treasured first-born. Susan Landau had married David Axelrod in 1979, and they lived in Chicago, where Susan pursued an MBA at the University of Chicago and David worked as a political reporter for the Chicago Tribune. (He later would become chief strategist for Barack Obama's Presidential campaign and now is a senior White House adviser.) They were busy and happy. Susan attended classes while her mother babysat. Then, when Lauren was 7 months old, their lives changed overnight.

"She had a cold," Susan tells me as we huddle in the warmth of a coffee shop in Washington, D.C., on a day of sleet and rain. Susan is 55, fine-boned, lovely, and fit. She has light-blue eyes, a runner's tan, and a casual fall of silver and ash-blond hair. When her voice trembles or tears threaten, she lifts her chin and pushes on. "The baby was so congested, it was impossible for her to sleep. Our pediatrician said to give her one-quarter of an adult dose of a cold medication, and it knocked her out immediately. I didn't hear from Lauren the rest of the night. In the morning, I found her gray and limp in her crib. I thought she was dead.

"In shock, I picked her up, and she went into a seizure—arms extended, eyes rolling back in her head. I realized she'd most likely been having seizures all night long. I phoned my mother and cried, 'This is normal, right? Babies do this?' She said, 'No, they don't.'"

The Axelrods raced Lauren to the hospital. They stayed for a month, entering a parallel universe of sleeplessness and despair under fluorescent lights. No medicine relieved the baby. She interacted with her parents one moment, bright-eyed and friendly, only to be grabbed away from them the next, shaken by inner storms, starting and stiffening, hands clenched and eyes rolling. Unable to stop Lauren's seizures, doctors sent the family home.

The Axelrods didn't know anything about epilepsy. They didn't know that seizures were the body's manifestation of abnormal electrical activity in the brain or that the excessive neuronal activity could cause brain damage. They didn't know that two-thirds of those diagnosed with epilepsy had seizures defined as "idiopathic," of unexplained origin, as would be the case with Lauren. They didn't know that a person could, on rare occasions, die from a seizure. They didn't know that, for about half of sufferers, no drugs could halt the seizures or that, if they did, the side effects were often brutal. This mysterious disorder attacked 50 million people worldwide yet attracted little public attention or research funding. No one

spoke to the Axelrods of the remotest chance of a cure.

At home, life shakily returned to a new normal, interrupted by Lauren's convulsions and hospitalizations. Exhausted, Susan fought on toward her MBA; David became a political consultant. Money was tight and medical bills stacked up, but the Axelrods had hope. Wouldn't the doctors find the right drugs or procedures? "We thought maybe it was a passing thing," David says. "We didn't realize that this would define her whole life, that she would have thousands of these afterward, that they would eat away at her brain."

"I had a class one night, I was late, there was an important test," Susan recalls. "I'd been sitting by Lauren at the hospital. When she fell asleep, I left to run to class. I got as far as the double doors into the parking lot when it hit me: 'What are you doing?'" She returned to her baby's bedside. From then on, though she would continue to build her family (the Axelrods also have two sons) and support her husband's career, Susan's chief role in life would be to keep Lauren alive and functioning.

The little girl was at risk of falling, of drowning in the bathtub, of dying of a seizure. Despite dozens of drug trials, special diets, and experimental therapies, Lauren suffered as many as 25 seizures a day. In between each, she would cry, "Mommy, make it stop!"

While some of Lauren's cognitive skills were nearly on target, she lagged in abstract thinking and interpersonal skills. Her childhood was nearly friendless. The drugs Lauren took made her by turns hyperactive, listless, irritable, dazed, even physically aggressive. "We hardly knew who she was," Susan says. When she acted out in public, the family felt the judgment of onlookers. "Sometimes," Susan says, "I wished I could put a sign on her back that said: 'Epilepsy. Heavily Medicated.'"

At 17, Lauren underwent what her mother describes as "a horrific surgical procedure." Holes were drilled in her skull, electrodes implanted, and seizures provoked in an attempt to isolate their location in the brain. It was a failure. "We brought home a 17-year-old girl who had been shaved and scalped, drilled, put on steroids, and given two black eyes," Susan says quietly. "We put her through hell without result. I wept for 24 hours."

The failure of surgery proved another turning point for Susan. "Finally, I thought, 'Well, I can cry forever, or I can try to make a change.'"

Susan began to meet other parents living through similar hells. They agreed that no federal agency or private foundation was acting with the sense of urgency they felt, leaving 3 million American families to suffer in near-silence. In 1998, Susan and a few other mothers founded a nonprofit organization to increase public awareness of the realities of epilepsy and to raise money for research. They named it after the one thing no one offered them: CURE—Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy.

"Epilepsy is not benign and far too often is not treatable," Susan says. "We wanted the public to be aware of the death and destruction. We wanted the brightest minds to engage with the search for a cure."

Then-First Lady Hillary Clinton signed on to help; so did other politicians and celebrities. Later, veterans back from Iraq with seizures caused by traumatic brain injuries demanded answers, too. In its first decade, CURE raised \$9 million, funded about 75 research projects, and inspired a change in the scientific dialogue about epilepsy.

"CURE evolved from a small group of concerned parents into a major force in our research and clinical communities," says Dr.

Frances E. Jensen, a professor of neurology at Harvard Medical School. "It becomes more and more evident that it won't be just the doctors, researchers, and scientists pushing the field forward. There's an active role for parents and patients. They tell us when the drugs aren't working."

The future holds promise for unlocking the mysteries of what some experts now call Epilepsy Spectrum Disorder. "Basic neuroscience, electrophysiological studies, gene studies, and new brain-imaging technologies are generating a huge body of knowledge," Dr. Jensen says.

Lauren Axelrod, now 27, is cute and petite, with short black hair and her mother's pale eyes. She speaks slowly, with evident impairment but a strong Chicago accent. "Things would be better for me if I wouldn't have seizures," she says. "They make me have problems with reading and math. They make me hard with everything."

By 2000, the savagery and relentlessness of Lauren's seizures seemed unstoppable. "I thought we were about to lose her," Susan says. "Her doctor said, 'I don't know what else we can do.'" Then, through CURE, Susan learned of a new anti-convulsant drug called Keppra and obtained a sample. "The first day we started Lauren on the medication," Susan says, "her seizures subsided. It's been almost nine years, and she hasn't had a seizure since. This drug won't work for everyone, but it has been a magic bullet for Lauren. She is blooming."

Susan and David see their daughter regaining some lost ground: social intuition, emotional responses, humor. "It's like little areas of her brain are waking up," Susan says. "She never has a harsh word for anyone, though she did think the Presidential campaign went on a little too long. The Thanksgiving before last, she asked David, 'When is this running-for-President thing going to be finished?'"

CURE is run by parents. Susan has worked for more than a decade without pay, pushing back at the monster robbing Lauren of a normal life. "Nothing can match the anguish of the mom of a chronically ill child," David says, "but Susan turned that anguish into action. She's devoted her life to saving other kids and families from the pain Lauren and our family have known. What she's done is amazing."

"Complete freedom from seizures—without side effects—is what we want," Susan says. "It's too late for us, so we committed ourselves to the hope that we can protect future generations from having their lives defined and devastated by this disorder."●

HONORING GROVER GUNDRILLING INC.

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, this week marks the Consortium of Entrepreneurship Education's 3rd Annual National Entrepreneurship Week, a time to celebrate the history of American entrepreneurship and to highlight new and upcoming entrepreneurs and small business owners. As ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am all the more aware of the countless contributions entrepreneurs have made to the success of this Nation. In that vein, I rise today to recognize Grover Gundrilling Inc., a small business in my home State of Maine that brings a very unique and critical skill to the Northeast.

A second generation family-owned small business, Grover Gundrilling, or

GGI, specializes in precision deephole drilling. With nearly 60 skilled employees, GGI has developed the capability to drill smooth, finished holes ranging from .045 of an inch to 2 inches in diameter, from 1 ounce to 6,000 pounds, at a depth of 1 inch to 10 feet in every material from Teflon to mold steels to exotic high-temperature alloys. Founded in 1983 by Rupert and Suzanne Grover, Grover Gundrilling now has three facilities in Oxford County, including a 40,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in the town of Norway. And as former teachers, the Grovers like to hire employees with no background as machinists, but with strong math and science skills, to train them in their own particular fashion.

Given its remarkable growth, considerable capacity, and small company size, GGI prides itself on being "small enough to listen and large enough to handle production." Grover Gundrilling has become a critical supplier for industries as diverse as aerospace engineering and nuclear power, and its components are used in products as varied as medical devices and semiconductors.

To care for its staff, Grover Gundrilling generously provides its employees with full family medical coverage, flexible scheduling, and the company encourages its workers to pursue higher learning by offering educational reimbursement. And the company offers a multitude of incentives to stellar employees, including family snowmobiling trips and tickets to a variety of area events.

GGI is also dedicated to supporting its community in a variety of ways. The Grovers donate significant time and energy to the Oxford County Fair, a fun-filled annual tradition for the families of Oxford County and western Maine. They also created the Boxberry School, a nonprofit independent elementary school for K through sixth graders that combines multiage classes, individual attention, and an integrated art curriculum with the Maine Learning Results standards. The Grovers also volunteer in various capacities with the 4-H Club, Androscoggin Home Health, the Oxford Food Pantry, and Aspire Higher, and Suzanne Grover serves on the board of directors of the Growth Council.

Carving out a niche in the machine tool world, Grover Gundrilling has excelled as a leader in precision deephole drilling. It is entrepreneurs like Suzanne and Rupert Grover who are going to revitalize our economy, and I am proud to call them constituents. I wish Rupert and Suzanne Grover, as well as Garth, their son, and GGI's president, their daughter Jessica, and everyone at Grover Gundrilling Inc. a successful year.●

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 which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

A message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Zapata, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 80. An act to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to treat nonhuman primates as prohibited wildlife species under that Act, to make corrections in the provisions relating to captive wildlife offenses under that Act, and for other purposes.

H.R. 637. An act to authorize the Secretary, in cooperation with the City of San Juan Capistrano, California, to participate in the design, planning, and construction of an advanced water treatment plant facility and recycled water system, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the bill (S. 234) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2105 East Cook Street in Springfield, Illinois, as the "Colonel John H. Wilson, Jr. Post Office Building", without amendment.

At 4:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1105. An act making omnibus appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2009, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 637. An act to authorize the Secretary, in cooperation with the City of San Juan Capistrano, California, to participate in the design, planning, and construction of an advanced water treatment plant facility and recycled water system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 1105. An act making omnibus appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2009, and for other purposes.

S. 478. A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to ensure the right of employees to a secret-ballot election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board.

S. 482. A bill to require Senate candidates to file designations, statements, and reports in electronic form.