

pledge you my support in this Herculean effort if you so choose to fully engage yourself in it.

KEITH, *Rigby*.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO PETER FITHIAN

• Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, as Hawaii celebrates its 50th anniversary of statehood, I would like to recognize Mr. Peter Fithian for his illustrious career of 50 years and invaluable service as founder and director of the Hawaiian International Billfish Tournament.

Peter has been a dear friend of mine for many years, and I am honored to have this opportunity to share with you the profound impact he has had on my home State of Hawaii. His tremendous commitment to the people of Hawaii has led to the establishment of the internationally renowned Billfish Tournament, which truly put Hawaii on the map of sport fishing, drawing both spectators and competitors from all over the world. I commend him for his tireless efforts in building a long-standing tradition while promoting tourism and marine conservation in our island community. Through Peter's unwavering passion in cultivating Hawaii's proud heritage of recreational fishing, he has founded not only an event that encourages warm fellowship, but has created an educational opportunity that deserves our highest praise.

Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in acknowledging the great service and accomplishments of Mr. Peter Fithian.●

BOSTON AREA RAPE CRISIS CENTER

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, next week is National Crime Victims' Rights Week when our country honors the heroism of crime victims and shows our gratitude to advocates who work to protect those who have been victimized. I am proud to say that as part of this commemoration Attorney General Eric Holder will be honoring the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, BARCC. I would like to add my congratulations and sincerest thanks for the important work that is done at BARCC.

BARCC has been helping victims of rape and sexual assault in Boston since 1973, making it one of the first such centers of its kind. Highly trained counselors and advocates team with volunteers from the area to create a nurturing, and supportive, environment for these victims. Through their hard work and selfless dedication, they serve over 4,000 victims a year providing critical services to the people of Boston. Additionally, they participate in statewide and national training in best practices and education sharing their knowledge and experiences. BARCC is also committed to preventing future victims by doing out-

reach in the community on sexual assault awareness, particularly on the many college and university campuses in Boston. Their comprehensive expertise in violence prevention, victims' rights, and victims support is what makes BARCC such an exceptional facility.

I join Attorney General Holder, the people of Boston, and Janet Yassen, director of the Victims of Violence Program, Cambridge Health Alliance, who nominated BARCC for this honor, in expressing our gratitude to the staff and volunteers at BARCC for the incredible service they provide.●

TRIBUTE TO LOUISIANA WWII VETERANS

• Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I am proud to honor a group of 98 World War II veterans from all over Louisiana who will travel to Washington, DC, on April 25 to visit the various memorials and monuments that recognize the sacrifices of our Nation's invaluable service members.

Louisiana HonorAir, a group based in Lafayette, LA, sponsored this trip to the Nation's Capital. The organization is honoring each surviving World War II Louisiana veteran by giving them an opportunity to see the memorials dedicated to their service. The veterans visited the World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and Iwo Jima memorials. They also traveled to Arlington National Cemetery to lay a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknowns.

This is the second of four flights Louisiana HonorAir is making to Washington, DC, this spring. It is the 15th flight to depart from Louisiana, which has sent more HonorAir flights than any other State to the Nation's Capital.

World War II was one of America's greatest triumphs but was also a conflict rife with individual sacrifice and tragedy. More than 60 million people worldwide were killed, including 40 million civilians, and more than 400,000 American service members were slain during the long war. The ultimate victory over enemies in the Pacific and in Europe is a testament to the valor of American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines. The years 1941 to 1945 also witnessed an unprecedented mobilization of domestic industry, which supplied our military on two distant fronts.

In Louisiana, there remain today more than 33,000 living WWII veterans, and each one has a heroic tale of achieving the noble victory of freedom over tyranny. This group had 31 veterans who served in the U.S. Army, 23 in the U.S. Air Force, 35 in the Navy, 1 in the WAVES—Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service—7 in the Marines, and 1 in the Merchant Marines.

Our heroes trekked the world for their country. Their journeys spanned Europe, the Utah and Omaha Beaches, France, the Rhineland, Central Europe,

Holland, Italy and North Africa. They fought in the Pacific as well—at Russell Island, Gilbert Island, the Philippines, Tarawa, Luzon, New Guinea, Tinian, Guam, Okinawa, Iwo Jima, Guadalcanal, New Hebrides, Saipan and Bougainville. Their fight for freedom extended to Alaska, Azores, Iceland, and the Aleutian Islands.

One of our Army Air Corps veterans received the Croix de Guerre Avec Palm and the Bronze Service Star for campaigns in Northern France, Central Europe, and the Rhineland. He also fought at Utah Beach on D-day. Another of our Army Air Corps veterans fought in the Mediterranean Theater and completed 50 missions as a ball turret gunner.

One of our marines received the South Pacific Purple Heart, and an Army veteran fought at Omaha Beach with GEN George Patton. Yet another Army veteran was on GEN Douglas McArthur's staff.

I ask the Senate to join me in honoring these 98 veterans, all Louisiana heroes, who will visit Washington, and Louisiana HonorAir for making these trips a reality.●

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL ELDER GRANGER, M.D.

• Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the outstanding service that MG Elder Granger has given to Arkansas and our great Nation through his work in the military medical services.

Since 2005, MG Elder Granger, M.D., has served his country as the deputy director of the TRICARE Management Activity in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs. Prior to joining TRICARE, Major General Granger led the largest U.S. and multinational battlefield health system in our Nation's recent history as Commander of the Task Force 44th Medical Command and Command Surgeon for the Multinational Corps in Iraq.

Major General Granger also brilliantly implemented TRICARE's \$22.5 billion Defense Health Program that benefitted over 9.2 million people worldwide. With his compassion and dedication, Major General Granger improved patient care for the entire military health system by managing the TRICARE benefits for an international network of 75 military hospitals, 461 service clinics, and a network of civilian providers and hospitals. An enthusiastic advocate for the military health system, Major General Granger directed the launch of a TRICARE Web portal which improved communications between beneficiaries and enhanced health benefits information services. This technology is projected to reach 23 million individuals by 2009.

Through the TRICARE's mail order pharmacy program, Major General Granger increased the number of users utilizing mail-order pharmacy prescriptions by 16 percent, as well as increasing total prescription volume by

21 percent. In addition, he established a Web/call-in center which handled 21,412 beneficiary requests for 47,213 prescription conversions as of November 2008, which amounts to an estimated cost avoidance of \$3.2 million to date. Major General Granger also oversaw the establishment of the voluntary agreement for retail rebates, which has resulted in a pharmaceutical industry rebate of \$28 million since the beginning of 2007. Further, he established electronic claims processing which has already saved \$1.6 million in administrative fees in addition to \$105 million in overhead savings.

A native of West Memphis, AR, MG Elder Granger has played an active role in veterans' medical services since the beginning of his career. He represents the great progress that has and will continue to occur within the military health system. He is a mentor to his staff, a leader in his field, and a soldier ready for any mission.

I am honored to recognize his service.●

TRIBUTE TO HAROLD "BUDDY" BROWN

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today the people of Interior Alaska—our Native people and the entire Fairbanks community—mourn the loss of one of the most promising Native leaders of this generation.

Harold "Buddy" Brown died yesterday of cancer at the age of 39. Buddy is survived by his wife Patti and two children, Xavier, age 7, and Alana, age 3.

Throughout Indian Country we are witnessing the generational shift in leadership to young people who have mastered the challenge of living in two worlds. They have completed college, gone on to obtain graduate and professional degrees, and returned to serve their people. One foot in the traditional world of their Native communities, the other in the modern worlds of business, finance, management and law.

Within the Alaska Native community, Buddy Brown stood at the vanguard of this generational shift. After graduating from the University of New Mexico Law School in 1997, he immediately went to work for the Tanana Chiefs Conference, the consortium of 42 tribes in Interior Alaska. He was hired on as associate counsel.

Five years later, Buddy was elected President of the Tanana Chiefs Conference. In this role he led a region which encompasses about 235,000 square miles, an area equal to about 37 percent of the State of Alaska and just slightly smaller than the state of Texas. In 2006, Buddy retired from this position to heal and to spend time with his family.

The Tanana Chiefs region is known throughout the State of Alaska for producing leaders of statewide and national repute—Bridge builders who have a particular talent for engaging the broader community to support the

causes and concerns of our Native people.

The late Morris Thompson, who tragically died in the 2000 crash of Alaska Airlines Flight 261, is the best known Native leader to come from this region, beloved throughout the State for his talent in building bridges.

Morris Thompson was Buddy Brown's mentor and friend, and I am told that he expected Buddy Brown would grow to become a leader whose accomplishments would exceed Morris's own. Buddy was widely regarded in Alaska as the best and brightest of this new generation. He reached great heights in a few short years, but I am saddened that Alaska will never realize the true potential of this truly extraordinary individual.

There is little I can say to console our grieving community today but I do have a few words for Xavier and Alana and the Native youth of Interior Alaska. Buddy Brown appreciated that youth is no impediment to leadership, that the energy and new ideas of the youth are desperately needed to keep our Native institutions thriving. Buddy devoted his life to preparing to undertake this leadership role.

Take inspiration from Buddy's life and become the leader that each of you has the potential to be. I want to help you to achieve this goal for yourself, for your people, and for all of Alaska.●

REMEMBERING MORRIS O'QUIN

● Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, today I honor the life and work of Morris O'Quin of Harrison, AR. Morris passed away unexpectedly on April 19, 2009, due to a sudden respiratory illness. I know the thoughts of many Arkansans and others around the country are with the O'Quin family, especially his wife of 21 years, Dana, and their children, Marrick and Morgan.

Morris devoted his life to public service and Arkansas agriculture. He most recently served as a Farm Service Agency—FSA—county director in Boone County, AR. In this capacity, he also served as a national board member for the National Association of Farm Service Agency State and County Office Employees—NASCOE—where he advocated on behalf of other employees and volunteers who served similar roles as public servants in the agricultural sector in Arkansas and throughout the country. He has been a lifelong advocate for agriculture.

Since coming to the Senate in 2003, I have had the benefit of getting to know Morris well during his frequent trips to Washington to meet with other leaders of the Farm Service Agency, advancing the mission and purpose of the Agency. He was an ambassador for the State of Arkansas and a tireless advocate for the FSA, its mission, and its employees. He understood Arkansas agriculture and the importance of the Agency in supporting continued production of agricultural products. His duty to the Farm Service Agency and

the promotion of its mission were his passions.

I vividly remember working closely with Morris in 2005 to ensure that the Department of Agriculture did not irresponsibly move to reduce the essential services that the Farm Service Agency provides to farmers and ranchers through the county office structure. He explained to me that the county offices provide essential services to the farmer through face-to-face interactions and that shutting down multiple county offices without making needed technology upgrades and providing technical assistance for this transition would cause significant harm to our nation's farmers and ranchers.

His advocacy for FSA workers and the farm community in Arkansas along with his leadership within NASCOE helped me pass a critical amendment to 2006 Agriculture appropriations bill to prevent FSA county office closures and further consolidations. This amendment prevented the administration from closing over 700 county offices nationwide and ensured that the critical services provided by these offices would continue until the USDA developed technology upgrades needed to make such a transition, and until the USDA clearly explained the needs and benefits for making such drastic reforms. This was a tremendous accomplishment that would not have been possible without Morris's focus and leadership.

Morris understood that without the hard work and sacrifice of local FSA employees, many family farms would not have the resources necessary to make a living and provide America a safe and affordable food supply that we all too often take for granted. This understanding was behind his drive to convince me and other lawmakers of the importance of stopping the USDA initiative to diminish the role of FSA offices and employees.

Morris's most recent accomplishment revealed his care for the community. After the devastating Arkansas ice storms that hit in January of this year, Morris spent hours working to deliver essential FSA services to neighbors, farmers, and ranchers in Boone County and other parts of northern Arkansas. The 2009 ice storm caused extreme damage to northern Arkansas, and Morris stepped up to provide much needed assistance. Under much pressure, he was doing a tremendous job of providing Environmental Conservation Program funds to help get impacted farmers back on their feet and producing again. This is just one other example of his exemplary work in his capacity as a public servant.

While I will remember Morris for his work as a county director and a NASCOE advocate, I will remember him most for his kind and calm demeanor, his concern for the well-being of those around him, his tireless work on behalf of those who depended on him, and his character and integrity in all of his endeavors. He was a relatively quiet person, not a personality