

Maryland Foster Youth Resource Center, which provides a variety of supportive resources for both youth in foster care and alumni of the foster care system.

I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding the many accomplishments of Jim McComb and in wishing him success in his future endeavors.●

CONGRATULATING THE MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD

● Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Battery D of the 216th Air Defense Artillery on receiving the U.S. Army's Valorous Unit Award for extraordinary heroism against an armed enemy while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

This is the second highest unit decoration in the Army and a proud achievement. Our State and our country are grateful to have these brave men and women serving in the Minnesota National Guard.

America's National Guard and Reserve Forces are playing an increasingly important role in today's military, and time and again the Minnesota National Guard has answered the call of duty. Delta Battery answered the call by serving in Iraq during a time of great need, and their actions helped make the formation of an Iraqi government possible. It is stories like theirs that have made the Minnesota National Guard such a well-known and well-respected organization at the highest levels of our Nation's military and Government.

As Minnesota's Senator, I will continue to do my part to make sure that our Government serves our men and women in uniform as well as they have served our country. This includes doing more to make sure that members of the Guard and Reserve Forces who have been called to Active Duty are not treated any differently than their Active Duty counterparts when they return home. There wasn't a waiting line when our National Guard troops signed up to serve, and there shouldn't be a waiting line when they need access to the services and support they have earned through their service.

Every day I feel honored to represent the members of the Minnesota National Guard in the Senate. We owe our thanks to Adjutant General Larry Shellito for his steady leadership and to our troops for what they do every day. It does not go unnoticed.●

CONGRATULATING THE MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD

● Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate the 1st Battalion, 125th Field Artillery Regiment on receiving the U.S. Army's Meritorious Unit Commendation for exceptionally meritorious conduct while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. I join the U.S. Army in recognizing this unit for their out-

standing devotion and superior performance in military operations against an armed enemy.

Our State and our country are grateful to have these brave men and women serving in the Minnesota National Guard.

America's National Guard and Reserve Forces are playing an increasingly important role in today's military, and time and again the Minnesota National Guard has answered the call of duty. The 1-125th Regiment answered the call by serving in Iraq during a time of great need, and their actions helped reduce violence in that country. It is stories such as theirs that have made the Minnesota National Guard such a well-known and well-respected organization at the highest levels of our Nation's military and Government.

As Minnesota's Senator, I will continue to do my part to make sure that our Government serves our men and women in uniform as well as they have served our country. This includes doing more to make sure that members of the Guard and Reserve Forces who have been called to Active Duty are not treated any differently than their Active-duty counterparts when they return home. There wasn't a waiting line when our National Guard troops signed up to serve, and there shouldn't be a waiting line when they need access to the services and support they have earned through their service.

Every day I feel honored to represent the members of the Minnesota National Guard in the Senate. We owe our thanks to Adjutant General Larry Shellito for his steady leadership and to our troops for what they do every day. It does not go unnoticed.●

REMEMBERING RAMÓN M. BARQUÍN

● Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to honor an individual who lived in pursuit of a free Cuba and a better America—Colonel Ramón M. Barquín, who died at the age of 93 on March 3, 2008. Colonel Barquín was an accomplished military leader, an educator, a diplomat, and an entrepreneur. Although Cuba was his native home, he made our Nation a better place during the years he lived in exile.

Ramón was born in Cienfuegos, Cuba, on May 12, 1914. At the age of 19, he joined the Cuban Army, served his country, and graduated from the Cuban Military Academy in 1941. During his years of military service, Colonel Barquín attended the U.S. Strategic Intelligence School here in the U.S. Following a distinguished career in the military, Colonel Barquín found his passion in teaching. In the classroom, he worked to instill a culture of civic awareness within the military's ranks and eventually was promoted as director of Cuba's military schools.

Following his career in Cuban military education, Barquín was selected to serve as Chief of Intelligence of the

Cuban Army. As an attaché to the United States, Colonel Barquín was honored in 1955 with the Legion of Merit for his military acumen. While serving as an attaché, he learned of the shifting political winds in Cuba and conspired to prevent freedom from losing its foothold in his native home. I can remember as a young boy living through tumultuous times, my father often remarking that in Colonel Barquín, Cuba had the best hope for democracy. His concerns led him to participate in a failed military revolt against the Batista dictatorship and actively work against Castro's totalitarian regime. When Castro came to power, he asked Barquín to serve in the regime's army. Knowing the regime's repressive nature, Colonel Barquín instead chose to serve in an ambassadorial post in Europe, where he was able to flee to the United States to live in exile.

After briefly living in Miami, Barquín rekindled his passion for education by establishing a consortium of schools in Puerto Rico. The consortium consists of several educational institutions, including a K-12 military school, summer camps and an institute for civic education now known as Instituto de Formacion Democratica. He was recognized for his hard work and entrepreneurship by the Puerto Rican government as the 1995 Educator of the Year.

Graduates of the K-12 academy he founded had kind words of appreciation for the Colonel's work and character. According to one student, "with the Colonel, I learned to love my country and he taught me the values that lead my life today."

As a Cuban-American, a Floridian, and a U.S. Senator, it gives me great pleasure to pay tribute to an individual with a legacy as awe-inspiring as that of Colonel Ramón M. Barquín. His unwavering commitment to freedom and democracy, his generosity, and his zeal for serving others is sorely missed.●

SOUTH DAKOTA HONOR FLIGHT

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize a group of 122 South Dakota World War II veterans who traveled to Washington, DC, on May 1 and 2 to visit the World War II Memorial. This trip was made possible by the Honor Flight Network, a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing World War II veterans to Washington, DC, to visit the World War II Memorial at no cost to the veterans.

South Dakota's veterans have played an important role in making our Nation great. Through their sacrifices, America has triumphed, remained a free and vibrant nation, and helped others obtain their own freedom. I was honored to welcome these American heroes to our Nation's Capital to see the symbols of the freedoms they have protected around the world. I am humbled by their sacrifice and appreciated the opportunity to meet with them and

thank them for their service. We cannot thank our veterans enough for putting their lives on the line when America's security demanded it.

The Honor Flight veterans, in alphabetical order, are as follows: Robert Anderson, Ray Anderson, Arlie Asmussen, Robert Bailey, Albert Barber, Raymond Baumgart, Rudolph Becker, Robert Benz, Edmund Bouvette, Tom Brady, Mark Breuer, Thomas Briggs, Don Brommer, Robert Camp, Robert Carlson, Ralph Christensen, Maynard Christiansen, Elmer Cohlman, Hobart Cole, Leonard Conrad, Cloyd Conroy, Burdell Coplan, Stanley Dahl, Earl Dains, Harland Danielsen, Howard Daugaard, Lyle Davis, Charles Dawes, William Degler, Mildred Diekman, Dale Dieltz, Delmer Dooley, Merle Driggs, Clair Ellingson, Harry Erickson, Edward Erlandson, Gerald Erlandson, John Erlandson, Orwin Fodness, Howard Franey, Kenneth Freeman, Harvey Glover, Fred Gorter, Peter Gortmaker, Kenneth Gregersen, Emmett Guthmiller, Donald Haan, Keith Hagerman, Glen Hansen, Paul Harris, James Harris, Kenneth Harthoorn, Harold Hatting, Raymond Heger, Richard Hempel, Dale Hendricks, Fay Hendricks, Noel Henrichs, Orville Hill, Verlyn Hill, Eugene Hoekman, Walter Holtkamp, Claude Hone, George Huizenga, Harry Irwin, Albert Jager, Louis Jarding, Roland Jensen, Arden Jensen, Ervin Jensen, Ralph Johnshoy, Billy Jones, Erland Juntunen, John Kagel, William Kerr, Alfred Knaack, Ralph Kock, Hampton Lane, Fred Lassle, Cleone Lauer, Eugene Lauer, Howard Lee, John Lewis, Howard Livingston, Richard Luther, Duane Lyman, Morris Magnuson, William Merrill, Norbert Miles, Quentin Miles, Duane Miller, John Miller, Kareen Millis, David Moore, James Moore, James Morton, Harold Muetzel, Howard Opheim, Arnold Pederson, Delbert Petersen, Wayne Pool, Wade Pringle, Roy Radloff, Vernon Ramesbotham, Carl Renz, Kenneth Salisbury, Gerald Sanborn, Ray Schmitz, Ronald Scott, Lloyd Seger, Thomas Simpson, Lowell Stagebert, Herman Ulrich, Robert Van Ningen, Frances Vanderbush, Ivan Vitek, Steven Wachtel, George Wagner, Eugene Weidenbach, John Wilds, Robert Williams, and Ernest Zimbelman.

It gives me great pleasure to honor those who have defended our freedom and to recognize the service and sacrifice of these courageous South Dakotans who served during World War II. I am proud that they were able to see the memorial that was built in their honor.●

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.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:33 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Zapata, 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. 1728. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to reform consumer mortgage practices and provide accountability for such practices, to provide certain minimum standards for consumer mortgage loans, 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. 1728. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to reform consumer mortgage practices and provide accountability for such practices, to provide certain minimum standards for consumer mortgage loans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. LEAHY, from the Committee on the Judiciary:

Report to accompany S. 515, a bill to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide for patent reform (Rept. No. 111-18).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. BAUCUS for the Committee on Finance.

*Neal S. Wolin, of Illinois, to be Deputy Secretary of the Treasury.

By Mr. AKAKA for the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

*John U. Sepulveda, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Human Resources).

*Jose D. Riojas, of Texas, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Operations, Security, and Preparedness).

*William A. Gunn, of Virginia, to be General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs.

*Roger W. Baker, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Information and Technology).

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 1020. A bill to optimize the delivery of critical care medicine and expand the critical care workforce; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. LINCOLN:

S. 1021. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an enhanced credit for research and development by companies that manufacture products in the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BAYH (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. INOUE, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. WARNER, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. BURRIS, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 1022. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a graduate degree loan repayment program for nurses who become nursing school faculty members; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. INOUE, Mr. MARTINEZ, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BEGICH, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. BENNET, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. VITTER, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, and Mr. REID):

S. 1023. A bill to establish a non-profit corporation to communicate United States entry policies and otherwise promote leisure, business, and scholarly travel to the United States; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. VOINOVICH, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 1024. A bill to authorize appropriations for the design, acquisition, and construction of a combined buoy tender-icebreaker to replace icebreaking capacity on the Great Lakes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CARPER (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 1025. A bill to prohibit termination of employment of volunteer firefighters and emergency medical personnel responding to emergencies or major disasters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. HUTCHISON, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 1026. A bill to amend the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act to improve procedures for the collection and delivery of marked absentee ballots of absent overseas uniformed service voters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. COBURN, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. REID):

S. Res. 142. A resolution designating July 25, 2009, as "National Day of the American Cowboy"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.