

Studies show that 50 percent of pregnancies in the United States are unplanned and many women consume alcohol before they realize they are pregnant, resulting in 40,000 children every year being born with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and subject to a lifetime of cognitive and behavioral impairments. Tragically, Alaska has the highest rate of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders in the Nation. Among Alaskan Native communities, the rate is 15 times higher than non-Native areas in the State. Prenatal alcohol exposure can result in low IQ and difficulties with learning, memory, attention, and problem-solving as well as impairment of mental health and social interactions. Prenatal alcohol exposure can also result in growth retardation, birth defects involving the heart, kidney, vision and hearing, and a characteristic pattern of facial abnormalities. The lifetime health costs for an individual with fetal alcohol syndrome are estimated at \$1.4 million for medical care and treatment interventions. In the United States, approximately \$9.7 billion is spent annually for individuals afflicted with FASD, according to government reports.

There is a great need for research, surveillance, prevention, treatment, and support services for individuals with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and their families. It is for these reasons that I rise today to dedicate this Wednesday, September 9 as National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Day. All Americans are encouraged to promote awareness of the effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol; to increase compassion for individuals affected by prenatal exposure to alcohol; to minimize further effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol; and most importantly to bring greater awareness to a disease that is 100 percent preventable!

On behalf of the millions of individuals suffering from the lasting and detrimental effects of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and advocates for eliminating FASD, I encourage all Americans to observe a moment of reflection on the ninth hour of September 9, to remember that during the 9 months of pregnancy a woman should not consume any alcohol.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize September 9, 2009, as National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, FASD, is an umbrella term describing the varied range of alcohol-related birth defects that may result from the use of alcohol during pregnancy. The effects of this disorder may be mental, behavioral, and/or involve learning disabilities. FASD is the leading known cause of preventable cognitive impairment in America. It is estimated FASD affects 1 in 100 live births each year.

I have great concern about the impact in South Dakota and across the country of FASD. We must move past the stigma of this devastating disease to truly help those and their families

who are affected by FASD get the health, education, counseling and support services they need and deserve. We must also address the tragedy of FASD at the source, by increasing awareness that any amount of alcohol during pregnancy can have heartbreaking, lifelong effects. We must work to ensure this is understood by all women of childbearing age and that treatment and counseling services are available for these women.

One of the most distressing facts regarding FASD is that it is entirely preventable. I have joined several of my colleagues in the Senate to introduce a resolution designating September 9, 2009, as National FASD Awareness Day. It is my hope these efforts progress toward global awareness of FASD and an end to this destructive disease.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF NASCOE

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, this year the National Association of Farm Service Agency County Office Employees, NASCOE, is celebrating its 50th anniversary. NASCOE was founded in Memphis, TN, in 1959 in an effort to provide a nationwide association through which county committee employees of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, ASCS, could render better service to American agriculture by having a national network for the exchange of ideas and information and to facilitate closer cooperation in working toward solution of mutual problems.

In the USDA Reorganization Act of 1994, Congress combined the ASCS, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, and the agricultural lending programs of the Farmers Home Administration into a single Farm Service Agency. Today, NASCOE continues to represent the county office employees of the "new" FSA. In Tennessee last year, 250 NASCOE employees provided valuable assistance to 90,000 producers through a wide range of Federal programs from conservation to price support and helped them cope in times of emergency and disaster.

I think we can all recognize the value of the local Farm Service Agency office to farmers and ranchers, and I commend NASCOE on its dedication to FSA county employees and the farmers they serve. I congratulate NASCOE on its 50th anniversary and hope that they will continue to assist in conserving and improving our Nation's natural resources and agriculture industry. •

REMEMBERING JUDGE ROBERT M. TAKASUGI

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to honor the life of Judge Robert M. Takasugi, the first Japanese American appointed to the Federal bench. Judge Takasugi passed away on August 7, 2009, at the age of 78.

Robert Takasugi was born in Tacoma, WA, on September 12, 1930, to Japanese parents who had immigrated to the United States in search of a better life. His family moved to Los Angeles in 1942 in the wake of anti-Japanese sentiment following the Pearl Harbor attack. That same year, Robert and his parents were sent to an internment camp at Tule Lake, CA, 3 of 130,000 Japanese Americans who were interned during the war. In the years since, Judge Takasugi often called the experience "an education to be fair."

After being released from the internment camp in 1945, Robert returned to Los Angeles where he resumed his studies and graduated from Belmont High School. He went on to earn a bachelor's degree from UCLA in 1953. Robert was then drafted into the U.S. Army during the Korean War, where he served as a criminal investigator. Upon discharge, he went on to earn a law degree from USC in 1959 with the aid of the G.I. bill.

After graduating from USC, Robert joined his only Latino classmate, future Superior Court Judge Carlos Velarde, and together they opened a law practice in East Los Angeles. The firm represented many indigent minorities, including arrestees from the 1965 Watts riots, East Los Angeles riots, and other civil rights demonstrators in the 1960s.

Robert's first judicial appointment, by then-Governor Ronald Reagan, landed him on the Los Angeles Municipal Court in 1973. Two years later, then-Governor Jerry Brown promoted him to the Los Angeles County Superior Court and in 1976, Judge Takasugi became the first Japanese American to be appointed to the Federal bench after being named by President Gerald Ford.

Throughout his career, Judge Takasugi was known for his fairness and compassion. In his spare time, he served as a mentor to thousands of young lawyers. He founded a free bar review course, which he taught from his living room for many years, for students who were having trouble passing the bar exam. In 1999, the Robert M. Takasugi Public Interest Fellowship was created by his colleague to honor Judge Takasugi and ensure that his courage and vision of equal justice are carried out by generations to come.

Judge Takasugi was a trailblazer for Asian Americans in the field of law. His dedication to justice and equality was evident in everything that he did throughout his 36-year judicial career on the Federal bench. His many years of service to the City and County of Los Angeles, to the State of California, and to our Nation will not be forgotten.

Judge Takasugi is survived by his wife Dorothy; his son Jon; his daughter Lesli; and his two grandchildren. I extend my deepest sympathies to his family.

Whether he was fighting for our country or fighting for integrity and equality under the law, Judge Robert

Takasugi was undeterred in his efforts to make America a better place to live. He will be missed by all who knew him. We take comfort in knowing that future generations will benefit from his passion and dedication to justice.●

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SAN FRANCISCO VA MEDICAL CENTER

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring the San Francisco VA Medical Center, SFVAMC, on the occasion of its 75th anniversary. Since its official dedication on November 11, 1934, the SFVAMC has been honoring America's veterans by providing them with accessible, quality health care. Today the center provides state-of-the-art medical, neurological, surgical, and psychiatric care for the more than 310,000 veterans living in northern California.

Were it not for the leadership and persistence of Congresswoman Florence P. Kahn, the SFVAMC might never have come to be. Congresswoman Kahn was the first Jewish woman to serve in the U.S. Congress, and the fifth woman ever to serve in Congress. She was also the first woman to serve on the House Military Affairs Committee. In 1930, Congresswoman Kahn made an appeal to the Federal Board of Hospitalization—the precursor to the Veterans Administration—to build a veterans hospital in San Francisco. At the time, the only facility for veterans in California was in Los Angeles. Congresswoman Kahn recognized that veterans in the northern part of the state were in dire need of services, and worked tirelessly to garner support for building a medical center in San Francisco. I would like to acknowledge and honor the work of Congresswoman Kahn, as her efforts have ultimately improved the lives of countless American veterans.

Today the SFVAMC serves veterans in Marin, Napa, Sonoma, Lake, Mendocino, Humboldt, San Mateo, and San Francisco counties. The center operates five community-based outpatient clinics that provide primary and mental health care. These clinics offer a variety of services, including those that place veterans in supportive housing, provide case management, and offer individual and vocational counseling.

In addition to providing direct care, the SFVAMC hosts some of the largest funded research programs in the Veterans Health Administration. The Center for Imaging of Neurodegenerative Diseases, for example, works to develop treatments to prevent the development and slow the progression of neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, vascular dementia, post traumatic stress disorder, gulf war illness, depression, and other conditions associated with nerve loss in the brain.

Thanks to the Center for Imaging Neurodegenerative Diseases, the SFVAMC's three Medical Science Re-

search Enhancement Award Programs, and partners such as the Veterans Health Research Institute, the SFVAMC is at the forefront of medical research and is working to extend and improve the lives of veterans across the country.

I applaud the staff and volunteers at the SFVAMC for the tremendous service they have provided to our veterans since 1934, and offer my best wishes for many more successful years of delivering care and advancing medical research. Please join me in celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the SFVAMC.●

REMEMBERING KENNETH BACON

● Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, as an accomplished journalist who served as spokesman for two Secretaries of Defense, Ken Bacon crafted a unique and forceful voice.

Then, as President of Refugees International, he lent that voice to those who needed it most.

When he died last month, the powerful and the destitute alike lost a trusted and beloved friend.

Ken Bacon was famously bespectacled, bow-tied, warm and whip-smart. He was someone who commanded your respect and won your affection in equal measure.

As a young intern, Bacon launched his journalistic career with a front-page Wall Street Journal story about a new car repair system that one mechanic had called "the greatest thing since girls." In the decades that followed, he went on to cover the Federal Reserve, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Pentagon. Bacon was also a talented editor who never stopped writing on a dazzlingly wide array of topics, from banking reform to a crack addict's rehabilitation. In the last months of his life, he also wrote movingly and pointedly about health care reform and his struggles with the melanoma that eventually took his life.

Bacon's conscientious work earned the admiration of those he reported on. Defense Secretary William Perry finally convinced him to work from the other side of the podium. Bacon was unfailingly well-prepared, using the same skills that made him a standout reporter to anticipate reporters' questions and offer satisfyingly detailed answers.

He excelled as a spokesman because he never lost his respect for his former colleagues or for the truth. When things got tough, he did not revert to hollow spin or talking points designed to misdirect. He was not interested in "gotcha games." Ken Bacon became a Pentagon spokesman because he believed he had an obligation to inform the public, and he took that duty seriously.

It was as Pentagon spokesman that Ken first encountered the problem that would become his defining passion and the capstone on his life's work. In 1999, he visited a refugee camp during a trip

to the Balkans with Defense Secretary William Cohen. What he saw changed the last decade of his life—not to mention the lives of the countless refugees he helped.

Ken Bacon was transformed by the plight of those who had lost their homes to war. When he left the Pentagon, he became President of Refugees International in 2001.

Beneath his intellectual demeanor, Ken Bacon always had a sweet side. He fought for people displaced from their homes by war, civil conflict, famine, and drought. This mission gave Bacon's life new meaning, and it gave the refugee community a very powerful champion.

Ken Bacon's stellar reputation, his influence in a city that depends on known commodities, and his Pentagon credentials proved to be enormously helpful in calling attention to the plight of the powerless—including the humanitarian advocates who struggled to be heard in official Washington. Bacon's name and his voice lent legitimacy to causes too easily overlooked by those accustomed to defining America's mission abroad based on a very narrow definition of our security and our interests. Ken understood that our shared humanity belonged at the very center of that conversation—and he used his unique talents and energy to ensure that it was.

He saw the impressive effort to care for European refugees in the former Yugoslavia, and he wanted to ensure that it became the rule worldwide—not the exception. Ken visited refugee camps in forgotten corners of the world, from Cambodia to Colombia. He wanted to make sure that no refugee—anywhere slipped through the cracks.

Ken Bacon was tireless. Essays, speeches, press conferences, advocacy he threw himself into his work and refugees everywhere benefitted.

Ken's newsroom training and strategic thinking often put him ahead of the curve. He sounded an early alarm about the genocide in Darfur. He was also a forceful champion for Iraqi refugees—first decrying our neglect, and then urging on our actions as the State Department's funding for Iraqi refugees increased tenfold between 2006 and 2008.

Our sympathies are with Darcy, Ken's wife of 43 years; with his daughters Sarah and Katherine, to whom he was absolutely devoted, and with his father, brother and two grandchildren. Ken Bacon gave voice to the voiceless. All who were fortunate enough to know him will miss him greatly. Many who never met him have benefitted from his work, and many more will continue to do so.

Recently, Ken and his wife Darcy raised the seed money for a new Refugees International center to address "the needs of the tens of millions expected to be displaced by climate change." The Ken and Darcy Bacon Center for the Study of Climate Displacement will undoubtedly be a valuable voice in raising attention to what