

As a Vermonter who has been married for 47 years, I am a great fan of the institution of marriage. I believe it is important to encourage and to sanction committed relationships, and to provide for stable, supportive families. When Vermont passed legislation on same-sex marriage, it reaffirmed my fundamental belief we should not create second-class families who do not enjoy the protections other families have. Unfortunately this is still not the case in our Federal Government. With laws like the Defense of Marriage Act in effect, Vermont same-sex marriages are still treated differently. I believe it is time to repeal it, so that all Vermonters can be treated equally under the law.

Vermont's State motto is depicted clearly on our State flag: "Freedom and Unity." Today, same-sex couples in Vermont are now able to enjoy the same freedoms that opposite sex couples in Vermont enjoy. Same-sex couples now have the freedom to create and to preserve family unity, and to bring happiness and stability to their children and loved ones. I am proud to represent the people of Vermont and I commend them for having reached yet another milestone in the march toward equality.

RECOGNIZING THE CAPITOL HILL SCREENING OF "THE WAY WE GET BY"

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, today I commemorate the Capitol Hill screening of "The Way We Get By", a deeply moving and powerful documentary film about the iconic Troop Greeters of Bangor in my home State of Maine. On this wonderful occasion, I join with my colleagues in the Maine Delegation—Senator COLLINS, and Representatives MICHAUD and PINGREE—in expressing my tremendous gratitude not only to the USO—the indispensable "home-away-from-home" for our more than 2.5 million men and women exceptional enough to wear our Nation's uniform, so admirably led by USO president and CEO Sloan Gibson—but also to Operation Homefront as well as HandsOn Network—cofounded by Michelle Nunn—who is forging her own path within the longstanding, Nunn family history of commitment to service as CEO of Points of Light Institute.

A part of President Obama's United We Serve initiative, all three of these stellar organizations are presenting this magnificent film in the U.S. Capitol at the wonderful Capitol Visitor Center, and we couldn't be more grateful to them—as well as to the Professional Services Council and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting—and others too numerous to mention for helping bring this documentary to fruition. And I would like to especially thank Simon Kilmurry, executive director of American Documentary, and Aron Gaudet, the film's director, for their stalwart leadership and dedication on this exemplary project.

And it couldn't be more fitting to have Dr. Jill Biden, the wife of Vice President BIDEN, introduce this well-deserved tribute to the Bangor Troop Greeters at today's screening—especially as Beau, the Vice President's son and Delaware's attorney general, has just returned from his deployment in Iraq as a member of the Delaware Army National Guard's 261st Signal Brigade. We commend Beau and all of those returning in his brigade, and we cannot thank them enough for their courageous service and heroic sacrifice to our Nation.

And of course, expressing our admiration and thankfulness to those who have placed themselves in harm's way on our behalf is the driving impetus behind this superb endeavor to capture on film the incredible generosity of spirit and good will unflaggingly exemplified by the Bangor Troop Greeters. For these extraordinary individuals, three of whom are showcased in the movie and attended today's screening, meeting our service men and women at the Bangor International Airport is an undeniable labor of love and a heartfelt expression of their devotion to our country and all who defend her.

In chronicling the selfless, patriotic and frankly larger-than-life actions of three amazing Mainers—Bill Knight, Joan Gaudet, and Jerry Mundy, director and Old Town native, Aron Gaudet—in tandem with Gita Pullapilly, the film's producer and interviewer, deftly brings to this undertaking the venerable tradition of extending handshakes and hugs to our brave soldiers, dating back to the first Gulf War and Operation Desert Storm. And to document the humanity underpinning this monumental outpouring of support for our troops—which occurs 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, rain or shine—is a marvelous achievement and one which instills enormous pride in us all.

On a personal note, I can't tell you how many of our soldiers I have encountered who have expressed their immense appreciation to the world-renowned Bangor Troop Greeters. In fact, I well recall one soldier coming up to me specifically to convey just how remarkable the troop greeters were and that fellow soldiers shared the same sentiment. We echo that very sensibility today.

Congratulations to all who have been involved in the continuing success of this highly-acclaimed film documenting a phenomenal story of giving back to those who have given us all so much—our service men and women!

TRIBUTE TO FRANK D. STELLA

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to a pillar of my community, Detroit businessman and philanthropist Frank D. Stella.

Born in Pennsylvania, the son of Italian immigrants, he founded the F.D. Stella Products Company in Detroit in 1946, shortly after he returned

from military service during World War II. Frank has built the company into a nationwide network of food-service suppliers, forming the backbone of his business and civic involvement in Michigan. And that involvement is extensive. From business to health care to the arts to charity work, there is little that happens in Detroit that doesn't involve Frank Stella in some way. Frank has long been active in the city's most important business groups, including the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce and Detroit Economic Club. A patron of the arts, he has served on governing boards for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Michigan Opera Theatre, and Detroit Discovery Museum. He has demonstrated a long-time commitment to health care, serving on the boards of the Detroit Medical Center, Mount Carmel Mercy Hospital, Sacred Heart Rehabilitation Center, and Grace Hospital of Detroit. Education has been another focus: He has served on the boards of the University of Detroit-Mercy, his alma mater, as well as the Wayne County Community College Foundation.

The breadth and depth of his accomplishments and involvement has drawn the notice of many. Organizations as diverse as the Detroit Urban League, the Rehabilitation Institute of Michigan, and the American Institute of Architects have honored him for his contributions. In 1995, he received an Ellis Island Medal of Honor, an award recognizing the importance of the immigrant experience in American life. The Italian Government has bestowed numerous awards upon him, as have four U.S. Presidents. His support of his Roman Catholic faith has earned the thanks of popes.

On Oct. 30, many of Frank's friends will gather to honor his 90th birthday. Fittingly, the celebration will serve as a fundraiser for four more of Frank's causes: the National Italian American Foundation Scholarship Fund, Orders of the Sons of Italy in America, Italian Language Inter-Cultural Alliance, and Boys' Town of Italy. I thank him for his years of service to our city and State and wish him continued health and success in his many community endeavors.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE PARKS AND PEOPLE FOUNDATION

● Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I congratulate the Parks and People Foundation of Baltimore, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary. Community activist Sally Michel founded Parks and People in 1984. Since then, Parks and People has grown from Sally's kitchen counter to a planned, eco-friendly, LEED Platinum-certified headquarters.

Today, Parks and People Foundation, under the leadership of Jackie Carrerra and the creative energy and advocacy

of Sally Michel, is working hard to make Baltimore green, to educate and enable our communities to get involved in that effort, and to make sure that our children grow up knowing about the importance of the environment and their role in protecting it, whether as a landscaper, arborist, scientist, a business owner, or homeowner.

Parks and People also has become a leader in enriching the lives of Baltimore-area children. Its Kids Grow program provides afterschool environmental curriculum and instruction. SuperKids Camp has become a national model for summer learning, providing rising 2nd and 3rd graders in the public schools an opportunity to sharpen reading and math skills as well as experience the cultural and academic resources in the Baltimore area. Sports Leagues provide coaches, equipment, transportation, and referees for volleyball, lacrosse, soccer, and baseball teams in public middle schools without athletic programs. Participants are required to have good school attendance and grades.

In the 1980s, when support for Baltimore's parks was waning due to budget cuts and lack of leadership, the Parks and People Foundation took up the challenge and worked to establish and financially support groups interested in maintaining and creating parks throughout the city. Partnership for Parks provides grants for projects ranging from garden bed improvement and planting to new fences and benches. Watershed 263 is an ambitious experiment to improve the quality of surface water runoff on 930 acres in 13 urban communities. Parks and People works with residents to reduce litter, clean streets, increase recycling, create community gardens, install storm water management facilities and clean and green vacant lots and plant trees. Improvement here will lead to a cleaner, healthier Chesapeake Bay and serve as a model for other urban watershed areas.

I know the entire Senate will join me in congratulating the Parks and People Foundation on celebrating its 25th anniversary and in thanking the foundation for its work to improve the quality of life in Baltimore for future generations.●

TRIBUTE TO VIRGINIA SCOTTY GOUGH

● Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I honor a group of women who have made a lasting contribution to American history. They are the Women Airforce Service Pilots, or WASP.

Who are the WASP?

They were the first women trained in American military aircraft. They were trailblazers and true patriots. They are women like Virginia Scotty Gough. They came from all walks of life. They were students, secretaries, nurses, daughters, wives. One was a nun. They shared the same goal: to contribute to the American war effort.

Between 1942 and 1944, the 1,102 WASP trained in Texas, then went on to fly noncombat military missions so that all their male counterparts could be deployed to combat. These women piloted every kind of military aircraft, and logged 60 million miles flying missions across the United States. Thirty-eight of them died in the line of duty.

These intrepid women served their country with courage and valor. But for too long, their country did not serve them. They were never awarded full military status and were ineligible for officer status. They faced strong cultural and gender bias and received unequal pay. Following the war, they were told to pay their own way home. It was not until 1977—more than 30 years later—that the WASP were granted veterans' status.

Thirteen of these brave women hail from Maryland. Four are still alive today: Virginia Scotty Gough, Florence Marston, Elaine Harmon, and Nancy Magruder. I am proud to honor them today.

Virginia Bradley Gough, known as Scotty, grew up in California. She learned to fly at age 16 and has avidly pursued that dream for many years. In 1943, when she learned about the WASP program, she was eager to join. But her young age prevented her from immediately enrolling in the training. As is so indicative of the WASP, she didn't waste the year. Instead, she earned money to continue flying by making parachute jumps to attract people to the airport.

After completing her WASP training as part of the class of 44-7, Scotty was stationed in the engineering department at Williams Army Air Base in Chandler, AZ. There she served as an engineering test pilot, testing aircraft after major engine overhauls and other major repairs. She served as a check pilot to the aircraft, ensuring repairs and fixes were safe before an aircraft was released to combat. It was dangerous work, requiring a devoted and precise pilot.

After the WASP were unceremoniously disbanded in December 1944, Scotty Gough returned to Los Angeles and flew Luscombe aircraft from the factory to west coast distributors, making the most of her well-honed piloting skills.

Many years later, Scotty Gough and another WASP established the WASP exhibit at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware. I am proud that Virginia "Scotty" Gough now calls Maryland home.

Like the other WASP, Scotty Gough was a trailblazer and true patriot. She paved the way for the armed services to lift the ban on women attending military flight training in the 1970s, and eventually led to women being fully integrated as pilots in the U.S. military. We owe her our "thank you"—not in words, but in deeds. Her story should have never been a forgotten chapter in American history. It will no longer be.

I was proud to fight for legislation to award the WASP the most distinguished honor Congress can give: the Congressional Gold Medal. I am proud the bill passed quickly and has now been signed into law. The process of designing, casting, and presenting these medals has begun. I look forward to the day, very soon, when I can present Scotty Gough and all the other WASP this medal they have earned and so long deserved.●

TRIBUTE TO ELAINE HARMON

● Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I honor a group of women who have made a lasting contribution to American history. They are the Women Airforce Service Pilots, or WASP.

Who are the WASP?

They were the first women trained in American military aircraft. They were trailblazers and true patriots. They are women like Elaine Harmon, from Baltimore. They came from all walks of life. They were students, secretaries, nurses, daughters, wives. One was a nun. They shared the same goal: to contribute to the American war effort.

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Thirteen of these brave women hail from Maryland. Four are still alive today: Elaine Harmon, Nancy Magruder, Florence Marston, and V. Scotty Gough. I am proud to honor them today.

Born in Baltimore, Elaine Harmon began flying at College Park Airport while attending University of Maryland. An ad in the local college newspaper for the Civilian Pilot Training Program piqued her interest. The program required a parent's consent. Knowing her mother would never agree to it, she sent the form to her father instead. He signed it and mailed it back to her with the \$40 tuition fee. The family never spoke of it again.

After Pearl Harbor, Elaine and her husband supported the war efforts in ways they could. Her husband desperately wanted to join the Army Air Force, but wasn't able to due to a constriction in his aorta. He learned to repair aircraft instruments and moved to Biak Island, West Papua, to locally repair the instruments, thus saving several weeks in repair for transit.