

honor and taking part in a great American tradition, which asks you to live with honor and loyalty and act with courage and service.

It is a creed of common purpose and community service based on the Scout oath, ever present in the 12 points of the Scout law.

While each of you as Eagle Scouts will forever be an Eagle Scout, your accomplishments are not easily defined by the number of badges earned but, rather, the character and dignity you show in earning them. For Andrew and Timothy, that dignity has been shaped by your remarkable grandmother, Mrs. Marilyn Roberson. Thank you, Mrs. Roberson, for your dedication to your family and for your service to our great State and for the legacy you have created for so many.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING SANDRA MASON

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I have often talked about the importance of the many professional staff members and various support services that allow for the proper functioning of this great institution, the U.S. Senate. These individuals and offices are rarely mentioned in newspapers or history books, but they work many long hours with great energy, exceptional skill, and admirable adherence to high quality work. As a result, the contribution of such dedicated public servants greatly assists the work we do as Senators; they make our work more pleasant and productive than otherwise would be possible.

An example of the sense of pride and loyalty that Senate employees bring to their daily responsibilities is the career of Mrs. Sandra Mason, who prior to her retirement was the Director of Protocol and Foreign Travel for the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. Mrs. Sandra Mason, who was known to her many friends in the Senate as “Sandy” served on the staff of that committee from 1979 through 2008, when she completed her Federal employment. As one can easily imagine, this is a position of considerable responsibility, which in no small part determines the successful hosting of

high-level foreign dignitaries visiting the Senate, as well as the efficient operation of official Senate delegations traveling abroad. I remember that when I traveled on Senate business accompanied by my dear wife Erma, Sandy Mason’s hard work and expert aplomb made all the difference for a memorable and very positive undertaking.

During her entire extraordinary career, which commenced with employment with Senator Hubert H. Humphrey in 1971, Sandy earned the love, respect, and praise of all those who worked with her and came to know her.

Sandy passed away on Monday, March 8, 2010. She will be greatly missed but certainly not forgotten. I extend warm personal condolences to her husband Ronald, her son Aaron, and all of her beloved family, and offer my sincere wishes that she, and they, receive the Blessings of our Creator.

Let fate do her worst, there are relics of joy, Bright dreams of the past that she cannot destroy,

That come in the night-time of sorrow and care,

And bring back the features that joy used to wear.

Long, long be my heart with such memories filled,

Like the vase in which roses have once been distilled,

You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will,

But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.

Scent of the Roses
—by Thomas Moore

STATE DEPARTMENT HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, this month’s release of the State Department’s annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices shows the value of consistently monitoring human rights around the globe.

As Chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission charged with monitoring international human rights commitments in 56 countries from the U.S. and Canada to Europe and Central Asia, this annual report is a key tool that we, and others, use to track progress being made on universal freedoms.

This year’s reports have increased significance as 2010 is the 35th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act and the 20th anniversary of historic international human rights agreements, the Copenhagen Document, and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe.

In a year commemorating such landmark human rights documents, this month’s State Department reports remind us that many of the commitments countries made in the past still have not been met with meaningful action today.

In Belarus, where I visited last summer, the political space for opposition remains tightly controlled, independent media face continual harassment, and elections are a farce.

The overall situation in Russia remains disturbing as well. There 2009

was a year again filled with mourning the very people who stood for freedom, be they journalists, human rights advocates or lawyers simply trying to present a case against corruption. The country’s harassment of Jehovah’s Witnesses and forceful break up of public demonstrations remain particularly concerning.

I urge Kazakhstan, as the current chair of the OSCE, to lead by example through concrete actions, starting with the release of activist Yevgeny Zhovtis, whom staff from the Helsinki Commission visited this week in prison. Zhovtis at least deserves the same freedoms afforded other prisoners in his facility, including the right to work outside the facility during the day.

In Kosovo, in addition to problems with human trafficking, official corruption and a lack of judicial due process, the State Department notes the lack of progress regarding displaced persons of all ethnicities, politically and ethnically motivated violence, and societal antipathy against Serbs and the Serbian Orthodox Church. The lack of progress regarding the country’s international recognition, while unfortunate, does not absolve Kosovo authorities from their responsibility to ensure greater respect for human rights and adherence to the rule of law.

Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy Human Rights and Labor Michael Posner, who serves as the State Department Commissioner on the U.S. Helsinki Commission, did a superb job of unveiling the report today with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

I was heartened to hear him specifically flag examples of 2009 human rights violations within the OSCE region that drew the attention of the Commission last year. The banning of construction of Muslim minarets in Switzerland, the pervasiveness of discrimination against Roma—Europe’s largest ethnic minority, and the continued rise of anti-Semitism in Europe sadly still remain concerns this year.

While these country reports help to hold all governments—including our own—to account; and while much of their text shows the reality of a world troubled by violent conflicts and the mistreatment of our most vulnerable people; the State Department reports also show the positive that surrounds us.

In this vein, Assistant Secretary Posner was right to mention the fairness of Ukraine’s recent elections, for which my colleague Cochairman HASTINGS led the election observation mission. And the reports are eager to cite progress where appropriate.

But these reports affirm something else, and that is the strength of the legislative-executive branch cooperation when it comes to upholding universal standards. The Helsinki Commission is unique among all federal agencies for being comprised of Senate, House and executive branch commissioners, and Assistant Secretary Posner’s activity with the Commission

and the State Department's annual human rights reports mandated by Congress are but two examples of our two branches working together to keep a spotlight on human rights abuses.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF PHARMACIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, today, I am proud to recognize the contributions of our Nation's pharmacies to the American health care system. Over 200 members of the pharmacy community—including practicing pharmacists, pharmacy school faculty and students, state pharmacy leaders, and pharmacy company executives—will come together to highlight the importance of supporting policies that protect access to neighborhood pharmacies and utilizes pharmacists to improve quality and reduce health costs.

Currently, there are over 50,000 community pharmacies operating nationwide. Pharmacists are one of the Nation's most accessible health care providers, and nearly all Americans live within about 2 miles from a community retail pharmacy. Pharmacy has a long history of receiving, filling, billing, and dispensing prescriptions in tandem with counseling. But pharmacists, utilizing their specialized education, also play a major role in medication therapy management, disease state management, immunizations, health care screenings, and other health care services designed to improve patient health and reduce overall health care costs.

Pharmacists help patients adhere to their medications to improve health outcomes and reduce the risks of adverse events and unnecessary costly hospital readmissions and emergency room visits. Pharmacists are uniquely qualified to work with patients to help manage their medications and play an essential role in helping them take their medications as prescribed. Unfortunately, only 50 percent of Americans living with chronic diseases adhere to their drug regimens. Patient nonadherence costs the Nation's economy an estimated \$290 billion each year, not to mention the avoidable loss of quality of life for patients and their loved ones. Congress recognized the important role of local pharmacists when it included a medication therapy management, MTM, benefit in Medicare Part D. As we have seen the increasing power of this benefit in improving patient health outcomes, I support community pharmacy's efforts to strengthen the MTM benefit so it is available for seniors and others struggling with chronic conditions and other illnesses.

As the face of neighborhood health care, pharmacies across the Nation offer these and other cost-saving programs and services to help patients take medicines they need to achieve positive results from appropriate use of their medications. For more than a century, pharmacies and pharmacists have made a difference in the lives of

people in North Carolina and the rest of America. In order to ensure pharmacies continue to exist in our local communities, pharmacists deserve fair reimbursements for the cost effective medications that they dispense.

Today, I celebrate the value of pharmacy and support efforts to protect access to neighborhood pharmacies and utilize pharmacies to improve the quality and reduce the costs of health care. Finally, I would like to congratulate over 200 pharmacy leaders, pharmacists, students, and executives and the pharmacy community for their contributions to the good health of the American people.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO S. MARK MCCURRY

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize S. Mark McCurry, who has served as parish administrator of Calcasieu Parish for more than 20 years. He will retire on April 3, 2010, and I would like to take some time to make a few remarks on his accomplishments and contributions to the Louisiana community.

Mr. McCurry started his career with Calcasieu parish as assistant administrator in 1976. In 1983 he was named Outstanding Young Man of Lake Charles, thus beginning a notable career as a public servant. Furthering his career with Calcasieu parish, in 1988 he became parish administrator, and he continued making great strides for the State of Louisiana. In 1999, Mr. McCurry was named Appointed Public Official of the Year by the Calcasieu Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers and in 2003 he was the recipient of the statewide Public Service Award given by the Louisiana Public Health Association.

In addition to his time as parish administrator, Mr. McCurry served Louisiana in many other arenas. He sat on the board of directors of First Federal Bank of Louisiana and was chair of the Board of Trustees of the United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana. He also presided as president of the Organization of Parish Administrative Officials of the Louisiana Police Jury Association.

Mr. McCurry has been credited with "raising the level of professionalism in police jury affairs," as well as, "making local governments work together more effectively." He has been a great asset for the State of Louisiana.

Thus, today, I am proud to honor a fellow Louisianian, Mr. S. Mark McCurry, for his distinguished service to Calcasieu Parish and to the State of Louisiana. •

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:11 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, 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. 3650. An act to establish a National Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Program, to develop and coordinate a comprehensive and integrated strategy to address harmful algal blooms and hypoxia, and to provide for the development and implementation of comprehensive regional action plans to reduce harmful algal blooms and hypoxia.

H.R. 4506. An act to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges, and for other purposes.

At 3:08 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN, of California, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. GOODLATTE, and Mr. SEN-SENBERNER are appointed managers on the part of the House to conduct the trial of impeachment of G. Thomas Porteous, Jr., a Judge for the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, that a message be sent to the Senate to inform the Senate of these appointments, and that the managers on the part of the House may exhibit the articles of impeachment to the Senate and take all other actions necessary in connection with preparation for, and conduct of, the trial, which may include the following: (1) Employing legal, clerical, and other necessary assistants and incurring such other expenses as may be necessary, to be paid from amounts available to the Committee on the Judiciary under House Resolution 15, One Hundred Eleventh Congress, agreed to January 13, 2009, or any other applicable expense resolution on vouchers approved by the Chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary. (2) Sending for persons and papers, and filing with the Secretary of the Senate, on the part of the House of Representatives, any subsequent pleadings which they consider necessary.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 4506. An act to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 3650. An act to establish a National Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Program, to develop and coordinate a comprehensive and integrated strategy to address harmful algal blooms and hypoxia, and to provide for the development and implementation of comprehensive regional action plans to reduce harmful algal blooms and hypoxia.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time: