

American women to gold at the 1988 Seoul Olympics; from Eliza Jane Pratt, the first woman to represent North Carolina in the United States Congress to Elizabeth Dole, the first female U.S. Senator from North Carolina and dedicated public servant, the history of North Carolina's women is America's history, and it is truly remarkable.

During Women's History Month, we honor the generations of women who have achieved notoriety in the past, however, we must do more than remember. It is imperative that we reflect on the present and prepare for the future. It is the hardworking North Carolina women who are continuing to serve our society as parents, doctors, teachers, nurses, businesswomen, soldiers, marines, and in countless other capacities that will impact our Nation's history in a powerful and positive way. We must build on the legacy of these great North Carolina women, especially those who serve anonymously and who have preserved the American way of life while contributing so much to the strength and character of our Nation. The women of our great State have triumphed throughout our history, and I know that they will play a leading role in our future.

CLOSING THE GUN SHOW LOOPHOLE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, on March 4, 2010, John Patrick Bedell, a 36-year-old Californian with a history of mental illness, arrived at the Pentagon after a manic, cross-country journey. At 6:40 pm, Mr. Bedell, armed with two 9mm handguns, walked to the security checkpoint at the Pentagon entrance and started shooting. Three Pentagon security officers, Colin Richards, Jeffrey Amos and Marvin Carraway, returned fire and brought down Mr. Bedell, who later died from his injuries. Mr. Amos and Mr. Carraway were wounded in the exchange, but thankfully have fully recovered. If not for the decisive action taken by these brave officers, this apparently random attack could have claimed more victims. And while I am pleased the Pentagon's security system worked in this instance, I remain deeply troubled by the fact that Mr. Bedell was able to acquire firearms in the first place.

Since the shooting, law enforcement officials have been able to partially trace the firearms used by Mr. Bedell. One handgun was sold last year to a private individual at a Las Vegas gun show, and that person later resold the gun to a third person. At that point, according to authorities, they were not able to further trace the gun's ownership history until Mr. Bedell opened fire on March 4. This murky trail perfectly illustrates the danger of unregulated, private firearm transactions.

Under the Brady Law, before an individual can purchase a gun from a licensed dealer, they must pass a background check to ensure they are not le-

gally prohibited from purchasing a firearm. In 2008, 9.9 million background checks were conducted for firearm purchases, 147,000 of which were rejected. The majority of these denials were the consequence of a prior conviction, indictment or a history of mental illness. However, when an individual purchases a handgun from a private citizen, who is not a licensed gun dealer, there are no requirements to ensure that the purchaser is not in a prohibited category. Neither the Las Vegas gun show sale, nor the subsequent private transactions that ultimately resulted in Mr. Bedell acquiring the firearm, were regulated. Due to this "gun show loophole" in federal law, authorities were not aware of, or able to block this string of private sales, which led to Mr. Bedell purchasing the weapon and using it to attack the Pentagon. In fact, according to news reports, Mr. Bedell attempted to buy a gun from a licensed firearm dealer in California, but the sale was blocked because he fell into a prohibited category.

Because private party transactions account for approximately 40 percent of all gun sales, current Federal background check requirements have a limited impact on the overall rates of gun related violent crime. To better protect our communities from gun related violence, background checks should be required for all prospective firearm transactions, including private transactions. To that end, I am a cosponsor of the Gun Show Background Check Act of 2009, S.843, which was introduced by Senator FRANK LAUTENBERG. This bill would extend the protections of the Brady Law to purchases made at gun shows, thereby closing the loophole that currently permits gun sales without criminal background checks. I urge my colleagues to take up and pass this commonsense legislation.

PASSAGE OF S. 3186

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased that the Senate acted to pass legislation that will extend key provisions of the Satellite Home Viewer Act through the end of April. The statutory licenses and Communications Act authorizations that are contained in this act allow consumers to receive broadcast network stations by satellite. These consumers are otherwise unable to receive these signals over-the-air, and ensuring that they continue to have access to network programming is critical. I understand that the House of Representatives also took up and passed the Senate measure last night. By passing this short-term extension, we can be sure that nobody will be left in the dark while Congress is away. I look forward to a full reauthorization of this act being signed into law once we return from Easter recess.

RED CROSS MONTH

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I wish today to join with the American

Red Cross and celebrate March as American Red Cross Month. Throughout the history of this organization, the American Red Cross has demonstrated not only their fierce and patriotic loyalty to this country and our needs but to those abroad as well.

This year, many of our brothers and sisters worldwide have experienced extreme devastation. The earthquakes in Haiti and Chile showed us not only how fragile life can be but the importance of humanitarian response to those in need.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, a Russian novelist, historian, and Nobel Laureate for literature knew the power of our interconnectedness as it relates to our own humanity. He said, "The salvation of mankind lies only in making everything the concern of all."

No other organization embodies this philosophy more than the American Red Cross and of the vision articulated by Clara Barton, founder of this wonderful organization that has helped countless individuals—both domestic and abroad—in times of crisis.

Whether comforting a wounded soldier during battle, assisting those who are recovering from a natural disaster, or administering life-saving blood to a sick patient, the American Red Cross is there, never wavering but standing steadfast in the service to humanity.

This year especially, they have been ever vigilant in remaining true to the humanitarian nature of their organization. In Haiti, the Red Cross distributions of food and relief supplies continue throughout urban settlements and are reaching approximately 12,500 people each day. To date, nearly 27,000 people have been vaccinated in the coordinated immunization campaign, in which the Red Cross health care units and the Haitian National Red Cross Society are participating. The American Red Cross has provided approximately \$375,000 in operational funding for this campaign.

In Chile, the American Red Cross has increased the funds committed from its International Response Fund to \$250,000 in support of Red Cross response operations. It will be contributing these funds toward the International Federation's emergency appeal. Additionally, the International Federation has announced a disaster plan of action and funding in the amount of \$6.4 million to support Chilean Red Cross relief operations to assist 75,000 people for 6 months in the areas of shelter, water and sanitation, health and telecommunications. This is in addition to \$280,000 released from its Disaster Response Emergency Fund.

Like the national headquarters of the American Red Cross, I am extremely proud of our Kansas chapters of the American Red Cross organizations and volunteers. From responding to our own State's natural disasters, to providing programs to our troops such as the Holiday Mail for Heroes Program to providing much needed health and wellness courses—these individuals are

the bedrock upon our local Kansas communities.

Since 1943, every President of the United States has proclaimed March as American Red Cross Month and in turn, the organization uses this month to promote the services provided to the public each and every day. Communities depend on the Red Cross in times of need, the Red Cross depends on the support of the public to achieve its mission.

I am pleased to join with the Red Cross and highlight the courageous work that this organization has accomplished for more than 128 years and continues to accomplish this day. I would also like to take this opportunity to salute all of the tireless volunteers of this organization known as "Red Crossers" who for many, have been involved in their communities for 10, 20, even 80 years.

It is very fitting that we celebrate March as American Red Cross Month and continue to advance the principles of this very essential organization.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR J. BENNETT JOHNSTON

• Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate the former senior Senator from Louisiana, Senator J. Bennett Johnston, on receiving the prestigious Centennial Leadership Award. As chairman and ranking member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Senator Johnston oversaw the enactment of two decades' worth of legislation involving our Nation's national parks. It is most appropriate that my former colleague is being honored with this award, and I congratulate him on receiving it.

The Centennial Leadership Award is an appreciation of Senator Johnston's leadership in advancing the National Parks Second Century Commission. In 2008, the National Parks and Conservation Association established an independent commission to develop a 21st century vision for the National Park Service. This Commission was comprised of over 30 national leaders and experts with substantial knowledge of the Nation's National Park System. This Commission met several times, held public meetings, and produced a report recommending expansion of the National Park idea through educational opportunities, community conservation, and local partnerships to preserve our national heritage.

In 2016, this country will celebrate the centennial of the National Park Service. As we get ready to celebrate these breathtaking landscapes and historic treasures, I am especially grateful to Senator Johnston for his leadership over the years in preserving these areas. Senator Johnston's leadership created the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, the Cane River Creole National Historical Park and National

Heritage Area, and the New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park. In addition, he also championed passage of the National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1990, the California Desert Protection Act, and has always been a staunch advocate of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Without his forethought and perseverance, Americans might not have many of these magnificent parks to visit and recreate with their families each year.

Again, I congratulate the former Senator from Louisiana on receiving this award. I think Senator Johnston said it best: "The national parks truly are America's best idea." I couldn't agree more. •

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN'S MEN'S GLEE CLUB

• Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I would like to call attention to the 150th anniversary of the Men's Glee Club at the University of Michigan, the second oldest collegiate chorus in the Nation. Long recognized as one of the world's best male choruses, the Men's Glee Club is a talented and highly entertaining group. This impressive milestone will be marked by a series of events in early April. Alumni from across the Nation will gather in Ann Arbor to commemorate this occasion, celebrating 150 years of outstanding musical achievement.

The Men's Glee Club, which currently numbers more than 100 and is led by director Paul Rardin, was started by a handful of students in 1859. This chorus has evolved from its early years when it was divided into groups by academic year and some of those groups were accompanied by instruments. Ultimately, these groups would unite, and ever since, the chorus has enjoyed steady and growing success.

In the 1920s, the Glee Club began to venture beyond Michigan's border to tour the Nation, often by train. After World War II, the Glee Club sought to widen its audience through the use of radio, television and recordings. In 1955, the Glee Club decided to venture internationally, touring Western Europe. In 1959, the chorus won its first international competition, the International Musical Eisteddfod in Llangollen, Wales. This accomplishment was especially gratifying because the Glee Club was the first American group to do so. Since then, the Men's Glee Club has won this prestigious competition on three more occasions.

In the ensuing years, the U-M Men's Glee Club has continued to travel internationally, cementing an international reputation for excellence. In 1967, the Glee Club embarked on an 8-week, around the world tour to mark the University of Michigan's 150th anniversary of its founding. In the 1980s, the Glee Club performed at Avery Fisher Hall in New York and at Tiger Stadium in Detroit prior to a World Series game.

Among the group's notable alumni are individuals such as former New

York governor Thomas Dewey, Metropolitan Opera star Russell Christopher, CNN medical reporter Sanjay Gupta, and Bob McGrath, a tenor who sang on the Mitch Miller Show before becoming a star on Sesame Street.

The University of Michigan is renowned for excellence across many disciplines, so it is no surprise the Men's Glee Club has had such a rich history. I know my colleagues join me in paying tribute to the University of Michigan Men's Glee Club on their 150th anniversary. I look forward to another 150 years of harmony and outreach. •

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 9:38 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, 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. 1612. An act to amend the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 to expand the authorization of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, and the Interior to provide service opportunities for young Americans; help restore the nation's natural, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational and scenic resources; train a new generation of public land managers and enthusiasts; and promote the value of public service.

H.R. 4360. An act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs blind rehabilitation center in Long Beach, California, as the "Major Charles Robert Soltes, Jr., O.D. Department of Veterans Affairs Blind Rehabilitation Center".

H.R. 4957. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 3186. An act to reauthorize the Satellite Home Viewer Extension and Reauthorization Act of 2004 through April 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the title of the bill (H.R. 1586) to impose an additional tax on bonuses received from certain TARP recipients, and that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the text of the aforesaid bill, with an amendment, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 10:54 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 4872. An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to Title II of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010 (S. Con. Res. 13).

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. REID).

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 11:11 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by