

the U.S.S. *Eisenhower* after a flight mission over Afghanistan, Lieutenant Zilberman's plane crashed into the North Arabian Sea, approximately 5 miles from the aircraft carrier. One of the plane's dual engines lost oil and eventually failed. When it became clear to Lieutenant Zilberman that there was no way to safely land the plane on the flight deck, he ordered his crew to bail out. Lieutenant Zilberman fought valiantly to keep his plane steady long enough for his crew members to escape. He went down with his plane into the North Arabian Sea. Lieutenant Zilberman's crew members were rescued shortly after the crash, and the search and rescue effort salvaged portions of the aircraft. However, after searching more than 5,300 square miles for Lieutenant Zilberman, the search was called off and he was pronounced dead.

Each day our servicemembers, like Lieutenant Zilberman, sacrifice their lives defending our Nation. Their acts of heroism are derived from a sense of duty, an obligation taken from the belief in the greatness of our Nation. But beyond their courage and bravery, our servicemembers are also husbands and wives, sons and daughters, and friends and neighbors. In addition to being a highly capable and daring pilot, Lieutenant Zilberman was known by his family and friends as someone with an infectious personality, as Commander Mundy has said, someone who could walk into a room and reduce any tension or stress.

While on board the *Ike*, Lieutenant Zilberman stayed in touch with his family via video chat, where he read and danced for his children. Lieutenant Zilberman was a dedicated husband to his wife Karen, who was also his high-school sweetheart. He was a loving father to his son Daniel and daughter Sarah. And he was the loving son—and only child—of devoted parents Anna Sokolov and Boris Zilberman.

Today marks the 1-year anniversary since Lieutenant Miroslav "Steve" Zilberman's life was taken while serving our Nation. On behalf of a grateful State, I thank him for his service—and his family and friends for keeping his memory alive through their thoughts and actions that remind us of his sacrifice.

#### JUSTICE AND POLICE REFORM IN GUATEMALA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to speak briefly on a subject that I have discussed before concerning Guatemala's struggling justice system.

In a country facing a growing threat from Mexican drug cartels and other criminal organizations that have infiltrated every facet of society, a police force that is notoriously corrupt and ineffective at investigating crime, a military hierarchy that continues to obstruct justice, and a conviction rate in the courts of 2 percent, the situation could hardly be grimmer.

Violent crime and smuggling have skyrocketed, impunity is the norm, and reports indicate that many people in Guatemala feel less safe today than even during the 30-year internal armed conflict. There are credible reports of police collusion with the drug cartels, and threats and assassinations of indigenous activists who have petitioned for land reform. And a decade and a half after the signing of the Peace Accords, the military hierarchy, current and former, uses threats and intimidation of victims, witnesses, judges and prosecutors to avoid accountability for past crimes against humanity.

I and others were encouraged last year when President Colom appointed respected human rights activist Helen Mack to assess the weaknesses of the police and to recommend reforms. Ms. Mack has widespread credibility and could be relied on to conduct a fair, thorough review.

But any recommendations for reform are only as good as the funding and political will to implement them, which is too often lacking in Guatemala. Presidential elections are scheduled for September. Unless the current government or its successor is prepared to carry the police reform process forward, not only will a critical opportunity have been missed but the security challenges facing Guatemala will worsen further.

Helen Mack accepted her assignment knowing it would be dangerous. Her sister Myrna, an anthropologist who had documented the horrific abuses of Mayan peasants by the Guatemalan army, was assassinated by the army in 1990. Helen also knew that trying to reform the police would ultimately be a wasted exercise if her recommendations end up collecting dust on a shelf. Yet she has persevered, and it is for the good of all Guatemalans.

Other victims of torture, disappearance, and murder during the internal armed conflict are still waiting for justice. When successive governments failed to hold the military accountable, some victims or their families turned to the courts, only to be stymied at every turn. The courts have issued contradictory rulings, reversed themselves and each other, and cases have dragged on for years. It makes a mockery of justice and of officials who are responsible for upholding the rule of law.

No democracy can survive without a functioning justice system, including a professional, trusted, well financed police force. The effectiveness of the police in preventing and controlling crime depends on the relationship between the police and the public. If the police force is to regain the confidence and trust of Guatemalans, particularly Guatemala's indigenous population which has traditionally been the target of discrimination and abuse, a concerted and unwavering effort must be made to ensure the professionalism, transparency and accountability of the police. It should be a priority.

Ms. Mack's courageous efforts, and the efforts of others who have risked

their lives in support of justice and a better life for the millions of Guatemalans living in poverty, deserve the unequivocal support of the Guatemalan Government and the Government of the United States.

#### TIK ROOT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to say a few words about a situation in Syria that is of particular concern to me and people of my State.

Going on 2 weeks ago, a young Middlebury College student, Pathik "Tik" Root, disappeared in Damascus, Syria, where he was studying Arabic.

As anyone who is following recent events in Syria knows, there have been large public demonstrations, some of which have resulted in arrests and casualties.

Thanks to the efforts of U.S. Embassy Damascus and the Syrian Ambassador to the United States, Imad Moustapha, it was determined that Tik had been arrested and is being held in a Syrian jail.

By all accounts, it appears that Tik was arrested simply because he was taking photographs at one of the demonstrations.

As an avid photographer myself, I would hope that the Syrian Government recognizes the innocent conduct of a young, curious American student who is fascinated, as we all are, by the extraordinary events taking place across North Africa and the Middle East.

I and my staff have had multiple conversations with Tik's father, with Ambassador Moustapha, with U.S. Ambassador Robert Ford, and other State Department officials about Tik's situation.

We are optimistic that he will be released, because he was doing nothing wrong and at most he was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

But so far, no one from the American consulate in Damascus has been allowed to see Tik, which is unacceptable. Our representatives in Damascus should be given immediate access to him—today—to ensure that he is in good health and being treated humanely.

I know I speak not only for myself but also for Senator BERNIE SANDERS and Congressman PETER WELCH, in urging the Syrian authorities to release Tik and allow him to return home.

This is not a time to be confusing a young American college student with the popular forces that are calling for political change in Syria.

Tik is an innocent 21-year-old who poses no threat whatsoever to the Syrian Government, but his continued detention will only further complicate our already difficult relations with Syria.

#### REMEMBERING ELIZABETH TAYLOR

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I would like to recognize and honor the

incredible life of Elizabeth Taylor, a true Hollywood movie star, a dedicated social activist, and a legendary figure in American history.

Elizabeth Taylor was born on February 27, 1932, in Hampstead, London, England, to Americans Francis Lenn Taylor and Sara Viola Warmbrodt. In a career that spanned 70 years, Elizabeth Taylor remarkably appeared in over 50 films. However, it was her philanthropy and dedication to her fellow humankind that have earned my deepest gratitude.

Many will remember Elizabeth Taylor for her film career, with overwhelming hits such as "National Velvet," which catapulted her to stardom and solidified her as Hollywood's newest star. I personally recall this film as one of my childhood treasures, and it remains a classic to this day. Ms. Taylor was a pioneer for women, in film and in society. When she signed a \$1 million contract for the film "Cleopatra," it boldly declared her status to Hollywood and the world. She also expanded her body of work to include Broadway, where she debuted in the revival of Lillian Hellman's 1939 play "The Little Foxes" and returned in the revival of Noël Coward's 1930 comedy "Private Lives."

Though Elizabeth Taylor earned her household name through her accomplishments in the film industry, it was her charitable work to combat AIDS that was truly outstanding. Never one to shy away from opposition or controversy, Ms. Taylor wholeheartedly fundraised, supported, and raised awareness for AIDS. Her ability to mobilize a new audience was remarkable. In addition to fundraising and contributing millions of dollars to addressing AIDS, Ms. Taylor was a principal founder in the American Foundation for AIDS Research, amfAR, and the Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation.

Elizabeth Taylor received many accolades throughout her career, including her appointment as a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire for her illustrious film career and humanitarian work. Ms. Taylor received two Academy Awards for best actress for her performances in "Butterfield 8" and "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf." Later, she was inducted into the California Hall of Fame at the California Museum for History, Women, and the Arts, by former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. While these honors are notable, it was Ms. Taylor's intangible qualities of perseverance, altruism, and grace that were even more remarkable.

Beyond her film career and role as an activist, Elizabeth Taylor was an individual with an entrepreneurial spirit. She authored a self-help book, designed jewelry for The Elizabeth Collection by Piranesi, and created the popular perfumes "Passion," "White Diamonds," and "Black Pearls." As a reflection of herself, Ms. Taylor's ventures always evoked a sense of class, eternal elegance, and beauty.

Please join me in expressing the sympathies of this body to Elizabeth Taylor's family, including her children, Michael Howard and Christopher Edward Wilding, Elizabeth "Liza" Todd, and Maria Burton, 10 grandchildren, and 4 great-grandchildren. I have no doubt she will be so dearly missed by the many friends, family, and countless individuals whose lives she touched. On this day, we celebrate her, her life, her legacy, and her extraordinary contributions to our Nation and the world as a whole.

Elizabeth Taylor will be remembered as a dazzling actress, a friend, a noble philanthropist, and as Hollywood's ultimate leading lady.

#### REMEMBERING W.R. "WILLIE" JONES

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. W.R. "Willie" Jones, who passed away on Friday, March 25, 2011. Willie was dedicated to providing hope for a better life for underprivileged children in Montgomery, AL, and he was a personal friend. Along with the children and families whose lives Willie helped to change, I mourn his passing.

Willie Jones was born on April 3, 1955, and was an alumnus of Alabama State University. He began his life of dedication to the YMCA by participating in the organization's programs as a youth. Starting in 1968, he worked part time as an aquatic instructor at the Cleveland Avenue YMCA in Montgomery, where he would later become the executive director. His involvement didn't stop there; Willie also served as a senior vice president of the Montgomery YMCA. He held famous father/son banquets that attracted top sports talent to the Cleveland Avenue YMCA and provided inspiration for young boys and their fathers.

I have always recognized the Cleveland Avenue YMCA as an important place for the advancement of underprivileged youth. The facility opened in 1960 in conjunction with Martin Luther King's efforts to obtain equal opportunities for all people, including children. Willie and I worked together to fund and open the Cleveland Avenue Cultural Arts and Education Center, CAEC, in 2000. The CAEC is the largest YMCA facility in the country that is entirely dedicated to the arts. It is a true testament to Willie's commitment to helping America's youth through creative and educational initiatives.

In addition to his work for the YMCA, Willie served as the chairman of the Montgomery County Community Punishment and Corrections Authority and advocated for prison alternatives for nonviolent offenders, another passion of his. He also served on the Montgomery Housing Authority board of directors and the Montgomery County Recreation Commission.

Willie's advocacy extended beyond the boardroom and into city and county meetings, which he regularly at-

tended. He was often spotted around the community networking with nearly everyone he met. Willie was a great friend to me and to all people, young and old. His selfless life's mantra was, "This isn't about Willie Jones, it's about the kids at the YMCA." I am honored to have assisted with obtaining Federal funding for the Cleveland Avenue YMCA and to have known this man who was so committed to his community and to the greater world around him.

Willie is loved and will be missed by his wife Versie and two children, Jeff and Jennifer. My thoughts and prayers are with them as they struggle with Willie's premature and unexpected death. A tireless advocate for underprivileged children and nonviolent offenders, Willie championed the notion of a "second chance" for kids throughout the community and will be fondly remembered for the legacy of service he left behind him.

#### TRIBUTE TO ALEX HECHT

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, today I wish to honor one of my Small Business Committee staff members and trusted advisers, Alex Hecht, as he prepares to depart Capitol Hill for the private sector. Alex joined my office in March 2005—6 years ago—as regulatory counsel for the committee, after serving as a legislative analyst for the National Multi Housing Council. Since then, Alex has taken on a host of issues vital to our Nation's small businesses and has been at the forefront of helping me craft critical legislation to assist these job generators.

As regulatory counsel, Alex helped me develop an agenda to help small businesses fight the onerous regulations they face. And he has continued his work to this day. As has been noted frequently, our current Federal regulatory situation is outrageous. Small firms—our Nation's primary job creators—with fewer than 20 employees bear a disproportionate burden of complying with Federal regulations, paying an annual regulatory cost of \$10,585 per employee, which is 36 percent higher than the regulatory cost facing large firms.

To reduce the burdensome task of complying with excessive Federal regulations, Alex helped me draft an amendment to the Dodd-Frank Wall Street reform bill that created small business advocacy review panels within the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, or CFPB, through the Regulatory Flexibility Act so that the CFPB fully considers small business economic effects when it promulgates new regulations. Alex also helped me move the Small Business Compliance Assistance Enhancement Act over the finish line in 2007 to ensure that agencies publish small business compliance guides for regulations in plain English and in a timely manner.

Alex was also instrumental in helping me introduce the Small Business