

made new friends among those who'd lingered to absorb the joy of the Elite Eight to Final Four pathway. With tears in their eyes and joy shining from their countenance, three women introduced themselves to the BCS fans, saying "that's our Coach, that's our Coach" about Blair. Turns out they'd been his players at South Oak Cliff High School. And, true to form, Coach Blair had mentioned each and every team he'd been a part of in his thank-you speech following the game. A man who's never forgotten who brung him to the dance, was now "going to the dance" in Indianapolis.

Though the distance was longer, those who could afford the charter planes, the buses, or the time and gas to drive made their plans to attend the Final Four in Indianapolis. The Final Four was in store, and all eyes were only on the prize of eliminating the Stanford Cardinal. No other goal was announced. Stanford was considered in the same light as the Aggies. A number 2 seed. Overlooked. Relegated to the category of "nice, but not a contender".

How wrong the rankings can be in predicting who is the champion of the day. The oft-used expression, "any given day" was never more true than when the Lady Aggies went back to work, and walked out of Conesco Field House with a 63 to 62 win, thanks to Sydney Colson's pass to Tyra White for the layup, and 39 minutes and 45 seconds of defense, defense, defense, and the hot shooting arms of every player who made their play a key play. Fans were stunned. It seemed too good to be true.

The Championship game was in sight, and the Championship title was at stake. Could it be, that same team, who 16 short weeks ago couldn't find a crowd had emerged as a national powerhouse, a force to be reckoned with, was now the darling of ESPN up-close interviews, sound bytes by Blair, and the contemplation of Vic Schaefer's 'drawing board' where he'd drive that defense to excellence each and every game of the way. Blair and Schaefer, together with Associate Head Coach Kelly Bond and Assistant Head Coach, Johnnie Harris, are not to be overlooked. Team. Family. United. Aggies. Spirit personified filled each player with a sense of family such that even the motto printed on the tickets at the beginning of the season read, "This is Home".

So, tonight, as Texas A&M set out to prove their worth outside the walls of their hometown, they were taking on a first-class team with a second-tier rating in Notre Dame. It was the Fighting Texas Aggies vs. the Fighting Irish. How appropriate. For 40 minutes of regulation play, all these players did was fight, not against each other as much as against misperceptions, being overlooked, disregarded, and essentially underappreciated as the true champions each team came to be realized before the game started.

Aggie fans throughout the Brazos Valley jammed the restaurants, bars, and homes of their friends, anywhere there was a TV powered 'on', it was tuned to ESPN from 6 p.m. central until at least midnight, as the Women's Basketball team pulled out all the stops on offense and defense.

With a "never-say-die" spirit, the can-do Aggies, led by America's favorite new coach, Gary Blair, and King of Defense, Vic Schaefer, let loose and held forth as the Aggies pulled out a 76-70 victory that still seems unreal, unless you saw it yourself. Never. Say. Die. The Lady Aggies, per Coach Blair's pre-game speech, stayed on the bus, to come out winners. Said Blair, "if you don't plan on winning tonight, then get off the bus. There's only one thing that counts. Winning". Taking his words to heed, each team member committed to that outcome, and emerged the first national champions in

Texas A&M Women's basketball. History was made.

Throughout the NCAA series the team: MVP Danielle Adams, Tyra White, Sydney Carter, Sydney Colson, Adora Elonu, Maryann Baker, Adrienne Pratcher, Kelsey Assarian, Karla Gilbert, Kristi Bellock—battered, bruised, in visible pain, tossed and slammed onto the floors of field houses, arenas, and stadiums, play after play, time after time, just got back up and showed America what it meant to be a proud 'Fightin' Texas Aggie'.

"Some may boast of prowess bold, of the school they think so grand, but there's a spirit that's ne'er been told. It's the Spirit of Aggieland. We are the Aggies, the Aggies are we, true to each other as Aggies can be. We've got to fight boys (old traditions die hard), we've got to fight, we've got to fight for maroon and white. After they've boosted all the rest, they will come and join the best, for we are the Aggies, the Aggies are we. We're from Texas AMC". The words to the school song never sounded sweeter as they did to those who witnessed history in the making, in a fieldhouse in Indianapolis.

Wednesday, April 6th at 2 p.m., history will be made once again. The Lady Aggies will be at Reed Arena to be greeted by their Texas Aggie family, the Aggie Nation, and at last their time has come. Word to the wise: get there early if you're going. For the first time in the history of Women's basketball, there's going to be a parking problem to welcome home the champions.

The Lady Aggies have brought honor, dignity, and joy to those who call TAMU their team. Sunday night, TV audiences were treated to a one-shot of a little fellow holding up a cardboard sign saying, "Coach Blair is my hero". That went viral across Facebook and Twitter. Turns out, it was the coach's grandson, Logan. His sign tonight, shown to the nation, said, "after we win Coach Blair is taking me to Disneyland". That only seems fair, as Coach Blair took Aggies everywhere to the top of the college sports world tonight. And it was the ride of a lifetime, and sheer joy every minute of every game of every season. Gig em, Aggies, for tonight you are indeed the NCAA Champions.

NONPROLIFERATION BUDGET

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the proposed cuts to nuclear nonproliferation programs in the continuing resolution, which I believe seriously endangers our Nation's security. When the Senate was presented with H.R. 1, the House's fiscal year 2011 appropriations bill, we all knew that sacrifices were needed. We knew that we needed to examine programs and determine which were broken, which were redundant, and which needed to be eliminated. Likewise, we also had a responsibility to determine which programs worked and provided positive returns on investments for our security and economic stability.

I would assert that the National Nuclear Security Administration's, NNSA, nonproliferation programs fall into this category. For the past decade, one threat has dominated our national security agenda: the threat of a nuclear weapon in the hands of a terrorist.

Yet when H.R. 1 passed in February, the House proposed a 24-percent cut to the President's request for NNSA non-

proliferation programs. These cuts would endanger programs that have removed a total of 120 bombs' worth of highly enriched uranium, HEU, and nuclear material from six countries since April 2009. This past November, enough HEU to make 775 nuclear weapons was removed from Kazakhstan. I would consider these outcomes an under-reported, yet remarkable success. I question why such highly effective programs, vital to our national security interests, were targeted in the first place.

I would contend that should a terrorist set off a nuclear or radiological explosion, the physical, psychological and economic consequences would far exceed the money saved by these short-sighted cuts.

The Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States stated that "the surest way to prevent nuclear terrorism is to deny acquisitions of nuclear weapons or fissile material," and that the United States should "accelerate" not decelerate the process of securing nuclear material. In the Commission's opinion this should be "the top priority" for the United States, especially in light of al-Qaida's expressed desire to obtain nuclear material or weapons.

H.R. 1 cuts more than \$600 million from the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, which seeks to secure nuclear material before it ends up in terrorist hands. These program cuts are not only irresponsible, they are negligent.

Nonproliferation programs are a vital part of our Nation's security and should be treated as such. This view is shared by former Presidents and national security experts and has been included in our National Security Strategy that was developed by various agencies, including the Departments of Defense, State and Energy, as well as the National Security Council. In a July 14, 2010 letter to the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, former Secretary of State George Shultz and former Chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee Sam Nunn wrote that they "believe the threat of nuclear terrorism remains urgent, fueled by the spread of nuclear weapons, materials and technology around the world." They further concluded that it "is absolutely essential" for the United States and Russia to lead these efforts.

I urge my colleagues today for their support in ensuring that we do all we can to limit the ability of terrorists to get their hands on fissile material. We all recognize and have referred to this threat. And now we have an opportunity to do something about it. Nuclear proliferation is a top concern and we as a nation can effectively lead the world in nuclear security and decrease the threat posed by nuclear terrorism.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

FREDDIE AND ERNEST TAVARES

• Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I congratulate Hawaiian music legends Frederick "Freddie" and Ernest Tavares for receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Hawaii Academy of Recording Arts in recognition of their contributions to the music industry.

Born and raised on the island of Maui, Freddie and Ernest Tavares exhibited musical talent at an early age. Both men enjoyed long careers in music and played important roles in popularizing Hawaiian music across the United States.

As a musician, Ernest did it all. He was a singer-songwriter, arranger, and inventor. His innovations led to the creation of the modern pedal steel guitar, which he played with the Harry Owens Royal Hawaiian Orchestra, Paul Page's South Sea Serenade, and T. Texas Tyler & His Western Dance Band. He also played the electric bass, ukulele, flute, clarinet, saxophone, piano, and Hawaiian & Tahitian drums.

Freddie Tavares, Ernest's younger brother, shared this love of music and innovation. Collaborating with guitar legend Leo Fender, Freddie played an important role in designing the Fender Stratocaster, a guitar that is the standard for many rock musicians. His work and dedication earned him induction into the Steel Guitar Hall of Fame and the Fender Hall of Fame. Freddie also performed with many notable artists, such as Bing Crosby, Elvis Presley, Dean Martin, the Andrews Sisters, and Henry Mancini.

Throughout their musical careers, Freddie and Ernest Tavares performed in many record albums and movie soundtracks. Both brothers also collaborated in numerous performances and shows. Their many talents and innovations had a great impact on the music industry and made Hawaii proud.

Long before being elected to Congress, I taught music and band in Hawaii's schools, and I am honored to recognize Freddie and Ernest for their numerous and invaluable accomplishments in the music business. Although both brothers are no longer with us, I extend my aloha and sincere thanks to the Tavares family for keeping the legacy of Freddie and Ernest Tavares alive. •

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United

States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 10:09 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. 4. An act to repeal the expansion of information reporting requirements for payments of \$600 or more to corporations, and for other purposes.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. STABENOW:

S. 734. A bill to provide for a program of research, development, demonstration, and commercial application in vehicle technologies at the Department of Education; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. KERRY:

S. 735. A bill to reauthorize the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. BROWN of Ohio:

S. 736. A bill to improve the Fugitive Safe Surrender Program; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 737. A bill to replace the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection with a 5-person Commission, to bring the Bureau into the regular appropriations process, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 738. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of comprehensive Alzheimer's disease and related dementia diagnosis and services in order to improve care and outcomes for Americans living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias by improving detection, diagnosis, and care planning; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. KERRY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. MERKLEY, and Ms. STABENOW):

S. 739. A bill to authorize the Architect of the Capitol to establish battery recharging stations for privately owned vehicles in parking areas under the jurisdiction of the Senate at no net cost to the Federal Government; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. UDALL of New Mexico):

S. 740. A bill to revise and extend provisions under the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. UDALL of New Mexico (for himself, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr.

BENNET, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 741. A bill to amend the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to establish a renewable electricity standard, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BROWN of Ohio:

S. 742. A bill to amend chapters 83 and 84 of title 5, United States Code, to set the age at which Members of Congress are eligible for an annuity to the same age as the retirement age under the Social Security Act; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. AKAKA (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. PRYOR, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mrs. McCASKILL, Mr. TESTER, Mr. BEGICH, and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 743. A bill to amend chapter 23 of title 5, United States Code, to clarify the disclosures of information protected from prohibited personnel practices, require a statement in nondisclosure policies, forms, and agreements that such policies, forms, and agreements conform with certain disclosure protections, provide certain authority for the Special Counsel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, and Mr. KERRY):

S. 744. A bill to authorize certain Department of State personnel, who are responsible for examining and processing United States passport applications, to access relevant information in Federal, State, and other records and databases, for the purpose of verifying the identity of a passport applicant and detecting passport fraud, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 745. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to protect certain veterans who would otherwise be subject to a reduction in educational assistance benefits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SHELBY (for himself, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. COBURN, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. ENSIGN, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNIS, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. KIRK, Mr. KYL, Mr. LEE, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. MORAN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. RISCH, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 746. A bill to repeal provisions of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. KOHL, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 747. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to vehicle weight limitations applicable to the Interstate System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, and Mr. KERRY):

S. 748. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the definition of cellulosic biofuel to include algae-based biofuel for purposes of the cellulosic biofuel producer credit and the special allowance for cellulosic biofuel plant property; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. KERRY, Ms.