

childcare, dealing with their jobs, dealing with pay equity at work, dealing with all of these other issues that women are struggling with, that they don't have to be a pawn in the debate on the budget. That there are people who believe just like the majority of Americans do that we should move forward with this kind of preventive health care for women in America.

REMEMBERING MAX VAN DER STOEL

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, as the Senate chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission, I rise today to pay tribute to Max van der Stoel, the first High Commissioner on National Minorities at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, OSCE, who died last week at his home in The Hague at the age of 86. Van der Stoel, a two-time Dutch foreign minister, worked tirelessly throughout the OSCE region as High Commissioner from 1992 to 2001 to prevent crises involving minority issues.

Max van der Stoel had a life-long commitment to human rights. From his early life in Nazi-occupied Netherlands to defining moments spent with Soviet-era dissidents, van der Stoel was deeply affected by the abuses he witnessed. He described one such encounter, in then-Czechoslovakia in 1977, when as foreign minister he met with Charter 77 activist, Jan Patocka in full view of Czechoslovak authorities. Van der Stoel commented that, "This support was of great concern to the Communist authorities. After our short meeting, Professor Patocka was arrested and rigorously interrogated. He died of a heart attack the next day."

Following the first gulf war, van der Stoel was appointed U.N. Human Rights Representative for Iraq, and he continued to raise human rights concerns in Iraq throughout the 1990s.

In 1992, he was appointed as the OSCE's first High Commissioner on National Minorities, HCNM, with a mandate aimed at preventing conflict through quiet diplomacy and early warning to the OSCE countries. His successes in that role are largely unrecognized, as they lie in what did not happen rather than in what did. He traveled to countries where tensions were rising, encouraged dialogue, and made practical recommendations to address underlying issues related to ethnic tension.

He worked in Estonia and Latvia in the early 1990s to address the processing for acquiring citizenship—which at the time disadvantaged particularly ethnic Russians in the newly independent states because of stringent language testing. He was the OSCE Chairmanship's Personal Representative on Kosovo—although unfortunately his early warnings in 1997 and 1998 went unheeded by policymakers. His work on inter-ethnic relations and education in Macedonia resulted in the

establishment of the South Eastern European University in Tetovo in 2001, which is still a model for integrated education. Throughout his time as HCNM, he promoted rights for Roma, the single largest minority in the OSCE region as a whole.

His job was not easy, but his integrity, commitment, and diplomatic skills paved the way for his successors and built the position of the HCNM into one of the most effective OSCE tools for conflict prevention. His legacy to the OSCE is not only the work he did as HCNM, but the advice he left behind on the importance of early action to prevent conflict.

In his last statement to the OSCE Permanent Council in 2001, he said:

Governments should see the self-interest in protecting minority rights and living in peaceful and prosperous multi-ethnic states. The only people who profit from inter-ethnic conflict are nationalist entrepreneurs. That is not a business that reaps long term profits. In the end, intolerance, violence and instability hurt us all.

I maintain that preventing inter-ethnic conflict will continue to be one of the organization's biggest challenges in the near future. Despite improvements in many OSCE states, conflicts still rage and tensions boil below the surface. We have to sharpen our tools and invest sufficient resources to ensure that we remain on the cutting edge of conflict prevention. . . . Collectively, we must do more to act in response to the warning signs. It is not enough to admonish States for falling short of their commitments. A concerted response by the international community must be resolute, targeted, and timely.

. . . When a crisis becomes acute, everyone wonders what went wrong or what steps should be taken to contain the situation. Things do not need to get to that point. While Foreign Ministries seem to be increasingly sensitive to the benefits of relatively limited funding, treasuries are still hesitant to invest in preventing the conflicts of tomorrow. We need to put our money where our mouth is. It makes political and financial sense to put resources into keeping multi-ethnic states together, rather than bailing them out after they have fallen apart.

His words are as timely and relevant today as they were 10 years ago. It is my hope that, inspired by the dedication and accomplishments of Max van der Stoel, the United States and its allies will strive to ensure that ethnic tension and human rights violations are not allowed to fester until they erupt into conflict.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT MCCARTHY

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Madam President, today I wish to recognize Robert McCarthy of Watertown, MA, who is retiring after 23 years as president of the Professional Fire Fighters of Massachusetts. As a fire fighter, Bob McCarthy fought to save lives and property from fires and accidents. As head of the PFFM, Bob fought to protect and defend his 12,000 PFFM brothers and sisters.

Thanks to his leadership, the Commonwealth's professional fire fighters

are healthier, safer, better equipped and better trained. And of course, better equipped, better trained fire fighters mean increased public safety.

For Bob McCarthy, fire fighting came naturally; you might say it was in his blood. Like his father and grandfather before him, Bob was a Watertown fireman, rising through the ranks to become captain of the Watertown Fire Department. When he retired from actively fighting fires, he dedicated his life to fighting for his fellow firemen.

Bob McCarthy served as the union's legislative agent for 2 years before being elected president of the PFFM in 1987. As president, Bob was a highly effective advocate for Massachusetts' professional fire fighters. Believe me; as soon as an issue arose that impacted his members, it was usually about thirty seconds before my office phone rang.

I would like to note just a few of Bob McCarthy's many accomplishments as president of the PFFM. Bob McCarthy was a major force in the passage of a cancer presumption law which protects firefighters for 5 additional years after they retire. He worked diligently to maintain laws pertaining to fire fighters' heart and lung health and to preserve grants for better safety gear. He played a major role in funding critical incident stress management for the fire service. And one of his greatest legacies are the biennial educational seminars which play a vital role in ensuring that Massachusetts' professional fire fighters receive ongoing education on the latest safety issues.

Bob McCarthy hasn't limited his service to fire fighters; he was also a valued member of numerous boards of directors of leading firms and organizations in my State. It is hard to gauge just how many people's lives he has not only impacted but actually saved. All too often the focus is on what is lost in fires. What goes unreported is what professional firefighters save. Not only thousands of lives and homes, but pets and items of sentimental value.

Bob leaves the PFFM in the very able hands of Mr. Ed Kelly who was sworn in as president last month. This evening, the Professional Firefighters of Massachusetts will celebrate Bob's 26 years of service to his community at their annual dinner. I join their 12,000 members in honoring Bob McCarthy for his service to the PFFM and my Commonwealth, and wish Bob and his wife Dorothy all the very best in the years ahead.

FRATERNAL BENEFIT SOCIETIES

Mr. KOHL. Madam President, I rise today to praise the work of fraternal benefit societies, little-known but critical nonprofit organizations that meet the needs of millions of Americans day in and day out. There are over 9 million fraternal members across the country.

Every day, their volunteers supplement the social services provided by overburdened government agencies—

servicing children, the elderly, veterans, and others who need help. In the past year alone, fraternal members invested 91 million hours in community service and contributed \$400 million to charitable programs. In the State of Wisconsin, there are 252,232 fraternal members, and in the last year, these members spent over 4 million hours volunteering and donated over \$25 million throughout the state.

Fraternal benefit societies are tax-exempt organizations that sell financial products such as life insurance and annuities, and use the profits to meet community needs. From a small Federal investment of \$50 million a year, over \$400 million is put back directly into communities. A recent study found that fraternal benefit societies contribute more than \$3 billion annually to society. The fraternal benefit societies leverage additional community resources through fund matching programs and by bringing people together to do good. These community needs would not be met without fraternal benefit societies, especially at this time of shrinking federal, state and local resources.

From acting as a first-response network in the face of natural disasters, to building homes for families in need, to assisting families struggling with overwhelming medical bills, to providing scholarships to deserving students, fraternal members are dedicated to improving the lives of their members, families, and communities.

Many of these societies have been around for over a century. They began, in large part to meet needs of immigrant populations that could not otherwise be met—helping families when a breadwinner got sick or died; helping a community member find a place to stay or meet medical needs. While the organizations have evolved, today they still meet needs that are otherwise not met. They help pay for medical bills, have scholarship funds, assist in neighborhood playground builds, clean up after disasters, stock food pantries and bring meals to seniors.

I want to honor these groups during their annual meeting. I want to take the opportunity to thank the 9 million fraternal members for all of the great work they do around the country.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL ALLEN E. TACKETT

• Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to MG Allen E. Tackett, a great West Virginian who shepherded an evolutionary change in the role of the West Virginia National Guard during his 15-year tenure as adjutant general.

Across our Nation, the Guard mission has been synonymous with being the first on the scene for disaster relief and keeping the peace at home—that mis-

sion remains true today. However, since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the members of the National Guard have pulled double duty, becoming the essential soldiers in our military missions overseas.

This new role for the Guard often means long and frequent deployments away from home, disruption to civilian careers, and new readiness challenges for the Guard's leadership. For global peacekeeping missions in Bosnia, Kosovo, and for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Guard leadership has to ensure their troops have the right equipment at the right time, the proper training for uncommon dangers, and as needed, be the glue that mends and holds together the families of Guard members. Under General Tackett's leadership, the West Virginia National Guard has received all this and more. With tenacious grace, the General asked for—and received—new training facilities, planes, new runways, and congressional backing for family support programs.

Under General Tackett's leadership, the readiness of the West Virginia National Guard skyrocketed to the best in the Nation.

Under General Tackett's leadership, the soldier, especially the new and uninitiated, took center stage. General Tackett believes a soldier's success depends on higher education, the best training, and personal initiative.

Under General Tackett's guidance, future leaders of the West Virginia National Guard have a head start because of his dogged support for the National Guard Youth Challenge Program, the Guard's Tuition Assistance Program, and the technical skills program known as Helmets to Hard Hats.

And, under General Tackett's leadership and vision, our Nation's Guard and Reserve components, Active-Duty servicemembers, and our first responders use state-of-the-art training resources at the Memorial Tunnel and Camp Dawson to prepare defenses in response to 21st century national security threats.

Like other Golden Gloves champions, General Tackett struck his own path in his youth; he honed his individual athletic skills and refined the meaning of a disciplined work ethic. His pride in his home State of West Virginia kept him giving back to the Mountaineer State with years of civilian successes while rising in the ranks of the Special Forces.

His stellar leadership as Adjutant General for the West Virginia National Guard began on September 11, 1995, under Governor Gaston Caperton. I would like to recall a list of his accomplishments in order to recognize the contributions of MG Allen E. Tackett.

Upon his retirement on January 31, 2011, MG Allen E. Tackett remains the longest serving Adjutant General in the history of the State of West Virginia and the United States.

As Adjutant General of the West Virginia National Guard, General Tackett

commanded more than 6,000 soldiers and airmen, including more than 10,000 West Virginia National Guard, soldiers, and airmen that have deployed since September 11, 2001 in support of the global war on terrorism.

General Tackett directed the West Virginia National Guard in response to more than 80 emergencies in the State of West Virginia.

General Tackett has served five Governors of the State of West Virginia, representing both political parties.

The West Virginia National Guard, under the leadership of General Tackett, rose from the rank of 24th in the United States in readiness to first in an 18-month period, has continued to demonstrate its superior level of readiness as judged by the Army readiness criteria, and has remained at or near the top rank in readiness for 15 years.

Under the leadership of General Tackett, the West Virginia National Guard undertook a significant modernization program to ensure that modern facilities are constructed to meet the demands placed upon soldiers and airmen in the 21st century, including projects to replace outdated armories, build new hangars, acquire ramp space to protect the 130th Airlift Wing from the base realignment and closure process, and to convert the Martinsburg Air National Guard base for a fleet of C-5s.

Under the leadership of General Tackett, the Joint Interagency Training and Education Center was built to provide homeland security training to Department of Defense assets, other Federal agencies, and first responders at Camp Dawson and the Memorial Tunnel. As a result, he was described in a 2001 U.S. News & World Report article as someone who could soon be "the nation's defacto chief of anti-terror preparedness."

Under the leadership of General Tackett, the West Virginia National Guard maintained 36 armories and was present in 34 communities.

Under the leadership of General Tackett, the West Virginia National Guard has had a significant positive economic impact across the State of West Virginia, including the addition of nearly 1,500 full-time jobs.

Under the leadership of Major General Tackett, the West Virginia National Guard sponsored and operated the Mountaineer Challenge Academy, which provides at-risk youth with an opportunity to earn a general education diploma.

And, under the leadership of Major General Tackett, 43 percent of the members of the West Virginia National Guard have earned a degree from an institution of higher education or are enrolled in an institution of higher education and participate in the State of West Virginia tuition assistance program.

As his one-time commander, I am proud to share with the American people General Tackett's distinguished and exemplary career, to take this opportunity to publicly thank him, and