

Executive Service and is a recipient of GSA's Meritorious Service Award. David also served as acting regional administrator for GSA's Great Lakes Region from January 2009 until January 2011.

In a sense, David is the landlord for my State offices in Chicago and Carbondale. In that capacity, I saw firsthand David's commitment to the Federal Government and wise use of taxpayer money. Last year, my Chicago office in the Kluczynski Federal Building was in need of repair and re-configuration. David and his team completed what would normally be a year-long project in just 4 months, and stayed within budget. In addition to meeting the operational needs of my Chicago staff so that they can best serve the people of Illinois, the renovation also produced considerable cost-and energy-savings.

As David's storied career in public service comes to a close, I rise to thank him for his hard work on behalf of the American people, and in particular the people of Illinois. David is an exemplary civil servant, and while his retirement is well-deserved, his service to the Federal Government will be missed.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

LANCE CORPORAL SEAN MICHAEL NICHOLAS O'CONNOR

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and express our Nation's deepest thanks to a brave young man and his family. On Monday, I received word that LCpl Sean M.N. O'Connor of Douglas, WY, had fallen on June 12, 2011, in the line of duty in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Lance Corporal O'Connor was killed while supporting combat operations in Helmand Province in southern Afghanistan.

Lance Corporal O'Connor was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 8, II Marine Expeditionary Force FWD, 1st Marine Division, out of Camp Pendleton, CA. Sean's roots in the Marine Corps run deep. He was born at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. Like his father, Lance Corporal O'Connor joined the U.S. Marine Corps in 2007 soon after graduating from Douglas High School. Sean was an avid reader, swimmer and shooter. He will be remembered as a fun loving son and friend who could always be counted on to lend a hand to those in need.

It is because of individuals like Sean O'Connor that all Americans are able to live our daily lives as free people. They put their very lives on the line every day, and because of their bravery and their families, our Nation remains free and strong. Freedom is not free. It carries a very high price. And that price has been paid over and over by many generations of men and women who answered the call to arms and willingly bear the burdens of defending our Nation. They deserve our deepest respect and gratitude.

The motto of the U.S. Marine Corps is "Semper Fidelis." It means "Always Faithful." LCpl Sean O'Connor lived up to these words with great honor. He made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of freedom for you and I to enjoy. He gave his life, that last full measure of devotion, for you, me, and every single American. Today we thank Lance Corporal O'Connor for serving and defending our country. He was always faithful to our country and its citizens, and to his fellow marines.

Lance Corporal O'Connor is survived by his parents Daniel and Dee O'Connor and his Aunt Sarah O'Connor. He is also survived by his brothers and sisters in arms of the U.S. Marine Corps. We say goodbye to a son, friend, neighbor, and a marine. The United States of America pays its deepest respect to LCpl Sean O'Connor for his sacrifice, so that we may remain free. Sean was the embodiment of honor, courage and commitment. All of Wyoming, and indeed the entire Nation, is proud of him. May God bless him and his family. Lance Corporal O'Connor, Semper Fi.

AMERICA INVENTS ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I was pleased that the Chamber of Commerce today wrote to Members of the House of Representatives in support of the America Invents Act. The Senate-passed companion legislation was approved in March in a 95-5 vote. This bill will create jobs and grow the economy without adding a penny to the deficit. Today's announcement by the Chamber of Commerce is a strong indication of a growing consensus that this legislation is what America needs to win the future through innovation. I applaud the work that Chairman SMITH, Mr. WATT, and others have done to move the legislation forward in the House, and I encourage the full House to act swiftly.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a full copy of the Chamber's letter.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Washington, DC, June 14, 2011.

To the Members of the U.S. House of Representatives:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, supports H.R. 1249, the "America Invents Act," which would encourage innovation and bolster the U.S. economy. The Chamber believes this legislation is crucial for American economic growth, jobs, and the future of U.S. competitiveness.

A key component of H.R. 1249 is section 22, which would ensure that fees collected by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) fund the office and its administration of the patent system. PTO faces significant challenges, including a massive backlog of pending applications, and this backlog is stifling domestic innovators. The fees that PTO col-

lects to review and approve patent application are supposed to be dedicated to PTO operation. However, fee diversion by Congress has hampered PTO's efforts to hire and retain a sufficient number of qualified examiners and implement technological improvements necessary to ensure expeditious issuance of high quality patents. Providing PTO with full access to the user fees it collects is an important first step toward reducing the current backlog of 1.2 million applications waiting for a final determination and pendency time of 3 years, as well as to improve patent quality.

In addition, the legislation would help ensure that the U.S. remains at the forefront of innovation by enhancing the PTO process and ensuring that all inventors secure the exclusive right to their inventions and discoveries. The bill shifts the U.S. to a first-inventor-to-file system that we believe is both constitutional and wise, ending expensive interference proceedings. H.R. 1249 also contains important legal reforms that would help reduce unnecessary litigation against American businesses and innovators. Among the bill's provisions, Section 16 would put an end to frivolous false patent marking cases, while still preserving the right of those who suffered actual harm to bring actions. Section 5 would create a prior user right for those who first commercially use inventions, protecting the rights of early inventors and giving manufacturers a powerful incentive to build new factories in the United States, while at the same time fully protecting universities. Section 19 also restricts joinder of defendants who have tenuous connections to the underlying disputes in patent infringement suits. Section 18 of H.R. 1249 provides for a tailored pilot program which would allow patent office experts to help the court review the validity of certain business method patents using the best available prior art as an alternative to costly litigation.

The Chamber strongly opposes any amendments to H.R. 1249 that would strike or weaken any of the important legal reform measures in this legislation, including those found in Sections 16, 5, 19 and 18. The Chamber supports H.R. 1249 and urges the House to expeditiously approve this necessary legislation.

Sincerely,

R. BRUCE JOSTEN,
Executive Vice President, Government Affairs.

REMEMBERING PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JOHN T. MARR

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Mr. President, on this day in 1777, the Second Continental Congress adopted the flag of the United States. At that time, American colonists were just 2 years into their long and bloody struggle for independence and only a year earlier had declared independence from the British throne. Since that time, our flag has been carried into countless battles and has been proudly worn on the uniforms of millions of American servicemen and women.

I rise today to tell the story of one such American, US Army PFC John T. Marr of Dorchester, MA. Private Marr was mortally wounded in combat on a hill on the other side of the globe. The hill happened to be in Korea in 1953. It could have been so many other places where Americans fought and died: Bunker Hill in Boston, Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg, the cliffs of Normandy, Kakazu Ridge on Okinawa, Hamburger

Hill in Vietnam or the Tora Bora region of Afghanistan.

Private First Class Marr could have been so many other people's husband, son or brother throughout our nation's history.

John Marr, "Jack" to his family and friends, was among thousands of Massachusetts residents to serve our Nation in Korea and among the hundreds to die there. Korea has been referred to as the "forgotten war." By the early 1950s, our Nation had grown war weary, having so recently endured a global war in which more than 400,000 American servicemen died and far more than a half million were wounded. Yet while the Greatest Generation returned from Europe, Africa, and the South Pacific to build modern America, hundreds of thousands of their younger brothers were fighting and dying on the Korean Peninsula. The Korean war was never forgotten by people like the Marr family of Dorchester who on a hot summer day in 1953 received word that their middle child had died in the service of his Nation.

By all accounts, Jack Marr was a young man with a promising life ahead of him. He was an outstanding athlete, well-liked by all, newly married, and worked for his family's successful South Boston contracting business. Yet like millions before and after, Jack answered his Nation's call to serve.

In Korea, Jack was communications chief of Company D, 179th Infantry Regiment of the 45th Infantry Division. On July 19, 1953, his unit came under heavy mortar attack, wounding several members who were caught in the open. With no thought for his own safety, Jack Marr left the cover of his bunker to pull wounded comrades to safety and was mortally wounded by an exploding mortar round. Private First Class Marr was among the last Americans to die in the Korean war, and succumbed to his injuries just 2 days before the Armistice went into effect. Jack left behind his wife Mary, loving parents, brothers Daniel, Jr. and Robert, and a sister Judith Marie.

The Marr family will honor Jack this Flag Day by dedicating a flagpole on the grounds of their family business on D Street in South Boston. I join the Marr family in honoring the service and sacrifice of PFC John T. Marr and will close with words engraved on the plaque they will unveil today. "This flagpole is dedicated to the courageous military service of John T. Marr. Jack answered the call to defend the people of South Korea. His sacrifice will forever be an example of hope, conviction and the unconquerable American spirit in the pursuit of freedom."

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL JAMES C. McCONVILLE

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize MG James C. McConville for his professional dedication and service as the Army's Chief of Legislative Liaison,

from January 6, 2010, to July 5, 2011. In this capacity, Major General McConville was responsible for advising the Secretary of the Army, the Chief of Staff of the Army and other Army senior leadership on all legislative and congressional matters. During this period of extraordinary change and challenge for the Army, he masterfully led the Army's outreach to Congress.

It is an honor and a pleasure to recognize my good friend Jim McConville who is a native of Quincy, MA. He received his nomination to the U.S. Military Academy from the late senior Senator from Massachusetts, Senator Edward M. Kennedy. Upon graduation from West Point, he was commissioned as an infantry officer. He was also a 2002 national security fellow at Harvard University. He has had an exemplary military career culminating in his recent selection as the commanding general of the 101st Airborne Division, Air Assault, at Fort Campbell, KY.

Major General McConville clearly understood the importance of fostering a strong relationship with the Congress. He worked tirelessly on behalf of the Army to earn the trust and confidence of Members of Congress and their staffs and his candor and availability ensured continuous support for the Army.

Major General McConville handled some of the most complex and sensitive issues our Army has ever faced through two legislative cycles with unparalleled results. His service assisted the Army in its efforts to restore balance to a force stretched and stressed by the demands of the longest war our Nation has fought. His efforts greatly contributed to the Army's transformation by building versatile, modular units and improving the capabilities of individual soldiers.

Major General McConville's career includes key command and staff assignments. He was deployed as the Commander of 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Based on the heroism of his aviators and courageous efforts of his soldiers, his brigade was selected as the 2004 Aviation Unit of the Year. Major General McConville also served as Deputy Commanding General for the 101st Airborne Division, Air Assault, in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. His key staff assignments include executive officer to the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army and deputy chief of the Office of Congressional Liaison.

I thank Jim for his tremendous service to our Nation. I know that his wife Maria, their children Michael, Jessica, and Ryan, and the people of Massachusetts are extremely proud of his service. I wish him the utmost success as he continues to serve our great Nation at the 101st Airborne Division, Air Assault.

WOLF KAHN AND EMILY MASON GALLERY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is a delight to call the attention of the Sen-

ate to the generosity and vision of Wolf Kahn and Emily Mason, whose long-standing commitment to the communities of southern Vermont is being commemorated with the dedication of the Wolf Kahn and Emily Mason Gallery at the Brattleboro Museum and Art Center. While nationally and internationally recognized as accomplished artists, it is Wolf's and Emily's selfless contributions to their neighbors and their community that makes me the most proud to call them Vermonters.

The works of local painters, sculptors, musicians, photographers, and authors enrich Vermont's culture throughout the beautiful Green Mountain State. Displaying their creations in community venues, from libraries to coffee shops, artists working in all mediums enrich our lives, deepen our pride in our communities and strengthen our bond with Vermont, its landscape, its beauty and its cultural heritage. Anyone who has contemplated a painting in a museum or examined an original manuscript or composition, and has gained a greater understanding of both the artist and the subject as a result, knows the power and importance of these works in our lives.

Since 1968, Wolf and Emily have spent the summers and autumns in West Brattleboro, VT, where the landscape provides them inspiration for countless paintings and drawings. Wolf and Emily's love of Vermont, however, does not end with the environment our State offers to create their work. They carry their passion into the community, to create equally rich experiences for other artists and the general public. Forty years ago, Wolf and Emily were instrumental in the formation of the Brattleboro Museum and Art Center. Over the ensuing decades, they have offered invaluable guidance and advice, and helped the Museum and Art Center establish important connections with the broader art world. They have also played a crucial role and offered the same unwavering support in the creation of the Vermont Studio Center—a working studio space where artists and writers from across the country and the world descend upon Johnson, VT, to immerse themselves in their work. Today these two organizations are not only flourishing, but they are also firmly embedded in Vermont's rich participation in the arts. The success of these programs is a true credit to Wolf and Emily's continued support throughout the years. They truly are energy givers, infusing all around them with their enthusiasm and sense of possibility.

Wolf and Emily have lived in Vermont, but they also have enriched the quality of life for all Vermonters by generously lending their hands and their talent to a number of institutions in Vermont—from cultural experiences, to supporting the basic needs of our most vulnerable community members. Their positive impact will be felt in Vermont for generations to come.