

easier to create jobs? Will raising taxes on the businesses that Democrats refer to as “millionaires” allow those businesses to expand? Across the board, the answer is no. Instead, these tax increases will kill jobs in every district, State, and industry in the country. Regardless of the rhetoric coming from Washington politicians, these taxes will also have a mathematically insignificant effect on deficit reduction.

I proudly support a “balanced approach” in the context of debt reduction that grows the economy and boosts tax revenues in the process, but when presented with the option of choking our weak economy with yet another tax increase, I will oppose it. Our country needs new taxpayers, not new taxes.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS TERRY L. PASKER

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, the State of Iowa has lost one of its native sons, and the Nation has lost a true patriot. SFC Terryl L. Pasker from Cedar Rapids, IA, was shot and killed in Panjshir Province, Afghanistan, while serving with the Iowa National Guard in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He was 39 years old and was just completing his second tour in Afghanistan. My thoughts and prayers are with his wife Erica, his parents Mary and David, and those who knew him and cared about him. Terryl Pasker is described as an upbeat, religious man. He was known as a hard worker and he owned a contracting business in his civilian life. The loss of someone in their prime, with a bright future and a whole life left to live is a tragic thing. It gives us pause to reflect on the tremendous sacrifice we ask of our servicemembers, and have since the first minutemen rallied at Lexington and Concord. I would like to pay tribute to the life and service of SFC Terryl Pasker and ask that my colleagues join me in honoring his memory.

#### VIOLENCE AGAINST ANTIMINING ACTIVISTS IN EL SALVADOR

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I want to speak briefly about some troubling developments in El Salvador, which should concern us all.

On June 14, 2011, the body of Juan Francisco Duran Ayala was found with a gunshot wound to the head in the Soyapango Municipality of San Salvador. He was reportedly last seen alive on June 2 in Ilobasco, Cabanas, posting flyers critical of gold mining in that area, the day before he disappeared. In addition to studying at the Technological University in San Salvador, Mr. Duran had volunteered for the Environmental Committee of Cabañas in Defense of Water and Culture. His death is one of a shocking number of instances of violence against antiminining activists in Cabañas.

In 2009, Gustavo Marcelo Rivera went missing for nearly 2 weeks before his body was found on June 30 in a well with signs of torture. Mr. Rivera was the cofounder of the Asociación Amigos de San Isidro Cabañas, and was a vocal leader in the anti-mining campaign in San Isidro, Cabañas. Since Mr. Rivera's death, at least eight other members of the antiminining community in Cabañas have reportedly been killed, including Mr. Duran, and yet it is still unclear who is behind this pattern of deadly violence.

There have also been recurrent threats against the lives of journalists at Radio Victoria, which broadcasts in that area.

Cabañas is located in the north central part of El Salvador and has a long history of gold mining. Pacific Rim Mining, a Canadian company that acquired a large mine named El Dorado, was the subject of Mr. Rivera's and Mr. Duran's protests. Now that their voices have been silenced, people in that community are demanding thorough, credible investigations of these crimes, both to obtain justice for their families and in order that future activists can exercise their right to speak out peacefully without losing their lives.

Unfortunately, El Salvador is a country where criminal investigations rarely result in arrests, and those that do almost never result in convictions. Impunity and corruption within the police are common, as in many other countries of the region. Some accuse local police and municipal officials of complicity in the harassment and threats against antiminining activists and the radio station, and point to the fact that no one has been punished for these crimes.

To compound the problem, judicial independence, already fragile, is under threat in El Salvador. On June 2 the Salvadoran Legislative Assembly approved a decree which requires the five members of the Constitutional Court to rule unanimously instead of with the previous four person majority. The law was approved with the support of a broad spectrum of political parties.

The vote was reportedly in response to a number of unpopular decisions by the Court over the past 2 years. The passage of the decree threatens judicial independence in a country where the Court has only recently demonstrated a willingness to act as a check on executive and legislative power. That is the role of the judiciary in a democracy, and the outcome of this impasse will have profound implications for the country.

El Salvador has been through a difficult history. The 1980s civil war polarized the country and those who suffered most, the rural poor, are still struggling to recover. The country's democratic institutions are weak, particularly the judiciary. The country is coping with rampant violent crime, and the infiltration of well financed criminal gangs into all sectors of society.

In the midst of this, the brutal slayings of people like Juan Francisco Duran Ayala and Gustavo Marcelo Rivera might be regarded as little more than a grim statistic, soon to be forgotten. But we have not forgotten them. All indications are that they did nothing more than act as the voices of people in their communities who are concerned that their way of life, and the land they depend on, is being destroyed.

We know the Funes Government is coping with many problems. We are helping, by providing tens of millions of dollars to support programs in health, education, economic development, and to strengthen law enforcement. We provided additional funding to help the country rebuild from the devastating floods in November 2009. But there is no more important responsibility of government than upholding the rule of law. The urgent necessity of the message that would be sent to all the people of El Salvador by bringing the perpetrators of these crimes to justice cannot be overstated.

#### VA INFECTION CONTROL PRACTICES

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I would like to take a moment today to recognize the success of recent efforts at the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA, to reduce Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, MRSA, infections by more than 60 percent in intensive care units. This initiative by VA was highlighted in a New England Journal of Medicine article this year.

MRSA is a nationwide problem. It is estimated that it kills 20,000 U.S. residents a year and hospitals remain an important source of this infection. Three years ago, VA launched this initiative to ensure that it leads the way on eradicating MRSA infections from their facilities. The success of this initiative has created a culture that promotes infection prevention by adding patient screening programs for MRSA, precautions for hospitalized patients found to have MRSA, and hand hygiene reminders with readily available hand sanitizer stations throughout VA medical centers.

Every day thousands of veterans visit VA health facilities to receive care. VA provides care for more than 6 million veterans each year. In the first 3 years of this initiative, more than 1.7 million screening tests for MRSA were given to veteran patients at VA medical facilities throughout the United States. Screening tests such as these help our veterans stay safe from deadly antibiotic-resistant infections, a threat no American should face when they visit a hospital.

Since the initiative's start in 2007, VA has increased the amount of MRSA screenings to 96 percent of all admitted patients. This newly instituted culture that promotes infection prevention has been so successful that infection rates for MRSA have decreased by 62 percent

over the past 3 years within VA intensive care units and by 45 percent in other areas of the hospital. The success of VA's work on MRSA prevention is proof that with dedication and strong leadership, VA can make significant improvements in their ability to control infections and deliver high quality health care. It is my hope that these results will be replicated across the healthcare system nationwide and that success achieved by VA in improving the safe delivery of care through the reduction in MRSA infections will be mirrored in their efforts in other areas, like the sterilization and reprocessing of reusable medical equipment.

As the chairman of Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the daughter of a disabled World War II veteran, I know firsthand the need for quality health care for our veterans. No one who has made sacrifices to serve our Nation should ever struggle to find quality, timely health care, which is why I am so pleased today to highlight this successful initiative and commend VA on their efforts to eradicate MRSA from their health care facilities and continue to provide care for our Nation's heroes.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO FATHER WILLIAM HULTBERG

• Mr. CASEY. Madam President, today I wish to honor Father William Hultberg, a very special priest from my home State of Pennsylvania. Known to many simply as "Father Bill," he is a member of the Oblates of St. Francis DeSales and has provided both his country and his Pennsylvania community with a lifetime of service as a spiritual and religious counselor. Saturday, July 16, 2011, will mark his 80th birthday.

To those who know him, Father Bill is a man whose commitment to spirituality, concern for his fellow man, and sense of service is virtually unparalleled. After earning his bachelor's degree in education and Spanish from LaSalle University and his master's degree in education and guidance from Niagara University, Father Bill began his lifelong commitment to country and community with his chaplain service in both the U.S. Army and U.S. Navy. He retired as a lieutenant colonel in 1991 after 35 years of exemplary service. During his time as a Navy Chaplain with the Marines, he received the Bronze Star Medal with a "Combat V" for valor. As an Active-Duty chaplain with the U.S. Army, he was awarded four Meritorious Service Medals for his efforts in developing and implementing alcohol and drug prevention programs for servicemembers.

Father Bill's commitment to providing spiritual and religious counseling to those suffering from alcohol and drug addictions continues to this day. As a certified pastoral and drug

addiction counselor at Caron Treatment Center in Wernersville, PA, Father Bill has offered spiritual guidance and an understanding of the 12-step spirituality of recovery to addicts and their families. His efforts over his 24 years of service to Caron have been central in providing those who suffer from addiction with the necessary tools to achieve sobriety and have truly left their mark on the Caron community. To this point, his unique Sunday services have become an honored, albeit mandatory, tradition at Caron. Described by some as an "evangelical rally," Father Bill integrates 12-step traditions, elements of Christian worship, and other material at these services to provide opportunities for those in recovery and their families to share their pain and hope with one another as they struggle with addiction.

Throughout his career, Father Bill has also been a beacon of hope to those suffering from HIV/AIDS. His development and implementation of a spiritual program for those afflicted with the disease and his contribution to Caron's HIV retreat weekends have provided comfort and guidance to many. Not only have these efforts had an immeasurable impact in Pennsylvania, but they have also garnered Father Bill national recognition in the form of the Ryan White Youth Service Award, a national awards program recognizing leaders for reaching out to support youth in the prevention of HIV.

I would like to join the Caron Treatment Center's community in wishing Father Bill a very happy 80th birthday this weekend and to thank him for his lifetime of service to both the Commonwealth and the country. I, and many others, wish him many more years of health and happiness as he celebrates this milestone.●

##### 29TH METRO DETROIT YOUTH DAY

• Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, it is with pride that I recognize the 29th Annual Metro Detroit Youth Day, which will take place tomorrow on Belle Isle in Detroit. This engaging and family-oriented event is a herculean undertaking, bringing together more than 1,600 volunteers to welcome more than 37,000 young people within the Greater Detroit community. This day-long event, which is sponsored by a multitude of businesses and more than 320 community and youth organizations across Michigan, provides a wonderful platform to bring the community together to award scholarships and recognize outstanding community service for and by young people.

From sports clinics to motivational talks to entertainment, this event has grown to become the largest youth event in Michigan, with a mission of promoting community service and the need for physical education and fitness. This event also seeks to inspire young people to strive to better themselves

through education, good deeds and other positive means.

Through the years, Youth Day has been recognized by many on the State and national level. In 1991, Metro Youth Day was recognized by President George H.W. Bush as the 477th Point of Light, and in 1999, the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness, Health and Sports named Metro Youth Day the top youth event in Michigan. These honors are the direct result of the hard work and dedication of the many individuals, organizations and businesses that team up to make sure this event is rewarding and memorable for the many youth across the Detroit metro area that participate.

Inspiring young people to better themselves and fostering stronger community bonds are noble pursuits that reap rewards far into the future. I salute all those who have played a role in making this year's Metro Detroit Youth Day a tremendous success. This event has become a tradition in southeast Michigan over the last 28 years, and I look forward to hearing about this exciting celebration for many years to come.●

##### PARKSTON, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Parkston, SD. This year the town of Parkston will commemorate the 125th anniversary of its founding.

Located in Hutchinson County, Parkston was originally known as Dakota City and was located southeast of what is now Parkston. When the railroad was built, it did not run through Dakota City as expected. So the residents of Dakota City moved their buildings with teams of horses to where Parkston is currently located. Today Parkston is a growing community with many local shops and excellent health care and education facilities. It is also home to the Parkston Classic, a high school basketball tradition.

Parkston has been a successful and thriving community for the past 125 years, and I am confident that it will continue to serve as an example of South Dakota values and traditions. I would like to extend my congratulations to the citizens of Parkston on this landmark date and wish them continued prosperity in the years to come.●

##### VIBORG, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I recognize Viborg, SD. This year the town of Viborg will commemorate the 125th anniversary of its founding.

Located in Turner County, Viborg was originally known as Daneville. It was named Daneville because it was a booming settlement of Danish immigrants. When the railroad was built, it did not run through Daneville but, rather, was located a half mile from the village. Residents relocated to the current location of Viborg, which was