

nothing to spur investment in clean energy alternatives.

Most important, it would provide yet another excuse for once again punting the urgent, national security imperative of developing a sustainable energy policy for this country. That is what the decision about the Keystone XL tar sands oil pipeline has come to represent regardless of what route it takes.

RECOGNIZING GOLDEN VALLEY, MINNESOTA

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I want to take this opportunity to honor the 125th Anniversary of the incorporation of Golden Valley, MN. As a child growing up in St. Louis Park, I have many fond memories of time spent in my neighboring town to the north, Golden Valley. As next-door neighbors, our cities shared a commitment to civic engagement, strong families, and a tight-knit community that worked for the wellbeing of all its citizens. We can see the results of those values today.

On its 125th birthday, Golden Valley has much to be proud of, a high quality education system, high living standards, and model businesses ranging from Fortune 500 companies to family-owned small businesses. Clearly, Golden Valley is doing something right.

As a representative of the great people of Minnesota, I can see that it's cities like Golden Valley make my State the best place to live in the country. My colleagues here might get tired of hearing how our State consistently does things better, but I will never get tired of telling those stories. Congratulations to the residents of Golden Valley.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING GIL CHAVEZ

• Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, today I come before you with a heavy heart to honor the life of Gil Chavez. Mr. Chavez died on November 30, 2011, of injuries sustained in a car accident outside of West High School in Denver, CO. He was 63 years old.

Mr. Chavez was a true community leader in every sense of the word. After graduating from Denver's West High School in 1967, Mr. Chavez spent the next 30 years of his life giving back to the school through teaching, coaching, and counseling. He was always there for his students, so much so that after retiring, he came back to volunteer coach for the wrestling team beside his son, Gil Junior, the current head coach at West. Mr. Chavez's family continues his legacy of always striving for excellence in all that they endeavor.

Gil Chavez was a committed educator and coach who was a role model to the students he worked with. He was a sincere motivator, and he backed up his words with promises that he kept to his students. Mr. Chavez was always

there for those who needed him with an ear to listen, with help figuring out classes or locating a tutor, and always believing in those who needed it most.

To Mr. Chavez's entire family, I cannot imagine the sorrow you must be feeling. I hope that, in time, the pain of your loss will be eased by your pride in Gil's life and by your knowledge that his community will never forget him. His memory will live on in the team, the school, the community, and all those he has touched along the way.●

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL WILLIAM M. VOIGT

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today I wish to praise an exceptional man, COL William M. Voigt.

Colonel Voigt has been one of the foremost civil and military leaders in Birmingham and in my State of Alabama for around a half century now. I was proud to join Colonel Voigt recently in Birmingham when he accepted his well-deserved award as the 2011 National Veteran of the Year.

I have had the pleasure to know Bill personally for many years and to observe his devotion to his country. His patriotism is unsurpassed.

Colonel Voigt served his country with 30 years in the Alabama Air National Guard and another 5 years of service with the U.S. Air Force Reserve. He has achieved not only a bachelor of science in business administration from Auburn University and a master's in business administration from the University of Alabama in Birmingham but has also graduated from the Air War College, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, the Air Command and Staff College, and the Squadron Officer School.

In addition to his own education, COL Bill Voigt has given his time and efforts to an impressive and exhaustive list of nonprofits and service organizations. On top of this, he has served for over 20 years as the president of the National Veterans Day organization.

Birmingham is the birthplace of Veterans Day. The very first Veterans Day celebration was held in Birmingham by this very organization in 1947. It was only in 1954, 7 years later, that Congress agreed to the value of this wonderful event and made Veterans Day the national holiday it is today.

The Birmingham National Veterans Day celebration is believed to be not only the oldest but also the largest in the country. The day includes a parade and a large awards dinner. The entire effort is a monumental planning exercise. For 20 years Bill Voigt made it happen.

This year's dinner was a very special one. The organization's president, James A. Holt, Congressman Spencer Bachus, Congresswoman TERRI SEWELL, and others took part in the excellent program. I was honored to be a part of the program also. The superb keynote speaker was RADM Tom Stefens (retired), a U.S. Navy SEAL for 34

years. It was a special program indeed, but the remarks all revolved around Colonel Voigt. I know he and his wonderful family were most proud.

Colonel Voigt represents the model for the type of person we should push our youth to emulate. He is a man who has proven time and time again that he is willing to serve his country, his community, and his fellow veterans who have fought for the ideals and goals of the United States of America.

Mr. President, it is my honor to pay tribute to this great man and by extension this wonderful annual Veterans Day event.●

RECOGNIZING SOUTHCENTRAL FOUNDATION

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Southcentral Foundation, an Alaska Native-owned, nonprofit health care organization serving nearly 60,000 Alaska Native and American Indian people. Southcentral Foundation received the 2011 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, an award administered by the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program to honor the country's most innovative organizations. The Baldrige Award is the only formal recognition of the performance excellence of both public and private U.S. organizations given by the President of the United States. Southcentral Foundation is the Alaska's first health care organization to receive this award.

Southcentral Foundation was established in 1982 to improve the health and social conditions of Alaska Native and American Indian people, enhance culture, and empower individuals and families to take charge of their lives. They employ over 1,500 people, of which 53 percent are Alaska Natives or American Indians. As mayor of Anchorage and now as Senator, I watched the growth of this excellent nonprofit from a small outpatient facility to a beautiful, culturally designed campus encompassing many buildings to serve their customer-owners.

Southcentral Foundation's innovative Nuka system of care combines medical, dental, behavioral, and traditional practices and creates relationships that focus on supporting wellness instead of just treating illness. This system has received national and international attention for its successes in health outcomes, operational efficiencies, and customer and employee satisfaction. It is a truly exemplary health care system that is one of the best in the country.

The award will be presented by President Barack Obama in April, 2012.●

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. BILL VANDERWENDE AND MR. DAVE BAKER

• Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Mr. William "Bill" Vanderwende and Mr. David "Dave" Baker for their leadership, vision and commitment to Delaware's agriculture

community through their roles as Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively, of the Delaware Nutrient Management Commission. Both have dedicated their lives to Delaware and its farming communities, benefitting and protecting the farming industry and the thousands of farmers and citizens who rely on our state's priceless natural resources.

As the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the 19-member Delaware Nutrient Management Commission since its inception in 1999, Bill and Dave have led the Commission through years of development—made up of innovation, labor and compromise—that resulted in Delaware's premier Nutrient Management Program—one that serves as a model for other States. Moreover, Bill and Dave helped guide Delaware through U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approval of the State's controlled animal feeding operation regulations, helping to preserve our State's rich agricultural resources, while protecting farmers and their livelihood for generations to come. When I was Governor of the State of Delaware, I worked closely with both Bill and Dave on the development of the Delaware Nutrient Management Program and know well their passion and loyalty to doing what is right for the First State's agricultural community, as well as for our environment and our neighbors' environments.

The Delaware Nutrient Management Program was established in June 1999 as a result of the Delaware Nutrient Management Law. The mission of the Delaware Nutrient Management Program is to manage those activities involving the generation and application of nutrients in order to help maintain and improve the quality of Delaware's ground and surface waters and to help meet or exceed federally mandated water quality standards, in the interest of the overall public welfare. The responsibilities of the Delaware Nutrient Management Commission include: considering the establishment of critical areas for voluntary and regulatory programs; establishing Best Management Practices to reduce nutrients in the environment; developing educational and awareness programs; considering incentive programs to redistribute excess nutrients; establishing the elements and general direction of the State Nutrient Management Program; and, developing nutrient management regulations.

In 2001, under the team's leadership, the Delaware Nutrient Management Commission outlined a Memorandum of Understanding with the Delaware Department of Agriculture, the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, and the chief executives of all poultry companies operating in Delaware—an agreement that was the first of its kind. This unique partnership between the agriculture and environmental sectors in Delaware has helped contribute to the progress Delaware has achieved in

nutrient management. Currently, the First State leads the nation in nutrient management planning participation. Ninety-nine percent of all farmers who are required to have a nutrient management plan do, indeed, have one.

The Delaware Nutrient Management Commission's strong working relationships with the Delaware Department of Agriculture, the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Delaware's Congressional delegation, and with Delaware's Governor and the State's General Assembly has contributed to the implementation of on-the-ground solutions for nutrient management that encourage environmental stewardship and have positive benefits to agriculture and its farmers.

A native of Harrington, DE, Bill Vanderwende is a man of family, faith and farming and serves as a proud, lifelong member of Delaware's farming tradition. For over 40 years, Bill and Ellen—his wife of almost 60 years—along with their 4 children, 10 grandchildren and several employees, have run a dairy, grain and vegetable farming operation in Bridgeville with 700 head of dairy and 3,000 crop acres. Bill has represented Delaware's dairy industry for decades.

Bill's leadership in the agricultural community stretches beyond the Nutrient Management Commission. Bill has been a distinguished member of the Sussex County Conservation District Board of Supervisors for 20 years, serving as chairman since 1992. In addition, Bill served as a member of the Governor's Advisory Council on Agriculture, a member of the Governor's Advisory Council on Soil and Water, and as Vice-Chairman of Delaware Aglands Preservation Foundation Board of Trustees. Bill and the Vanderwende family have also received numerous awards recognizing their positive impact and influence on Delaware's farming tradition, including Bill's honor as the recipient of the 2009 Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service to Agriculture given by the Delaware Department of Agriculture and the Vanderwendes' 1993 Farm Bureau award for the Farm Family of the Year.

Over the years, Dave Baker has made a remarkable contribution to Delaware's agricultural community through his work, leadership and thoughtful attention to detail. His commitment to Delaware's and our nation's farmlands, as well as his commitment to his family and community is unmistakable. Since moving to Middletown, DE in 1952, Dave Baker has remained close to his roots. Today, just outside of his hometown, Dave lives with his wife Barbara. Together, they have a son Erik and two grandchildren. There, Dave is the President of Baker Farms, a 3,000-acre grain farm. He also founded Delaware Egg Farm—now Puglisi Egg Farms Delaware—Delaware's largest egg producing operation.

In addition to his role of Vice-Chairman of the Delaware Nutrient Management Commission, Dave is Chairman of the Commission's Planning and Personnel subcommittees. Moreover, Dave's agricultural acumen and outstanding leadership in the field of agriculture has been recognized in Delaware and well beyond our borders. Most recently, he received the 2010 Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service to Agriculture given by the Delaware Department of Agriculture. During my term as Governor, Dave was the Chairman of the Nutrient Management Advisory Committee, the organization responsible for drafting Delaware's ground breaking nutrient management statute. He is also a past president of the Delaware Council of Farm Organizations. Nationally, he has served on the American Egg Board and the Poultry Advisory Committee for the Farm Bureau, and regionally, he is a past chair of the Egg Clearinghouse and the Northeast United Egg Producers.

Delaware is fortunate to have such an outstanding team led by Bill Vanderwende and Dave Baker to carry on a legacy of farming values that shape, honor and preserve our State's treasured agricultural heritage. Bill and Dave's leadership on the Nutrient Management Commission reaches those not just in our agricultural community, not just in our State, but the millions of Americans who are impacted by Delaware's decisions on nutrient management. The continued leadership of these two men will keep our farming industry prosperous, while protecting our natural resources for generations to come. It is with a genuine sense of honor and pride that I rise today to extend the heartfelt congratulations and thanks of our entire Congressional delegation to our friends and outstanding Delaware residents, Bill Vanderwende and Dave Baker.●

RECOGNIZING ORONO MIDDLE SCHOOL

● Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, today, I commend Orono Middle School of Orono, ME, on being named a 2011 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. This prestigious recognition of high accomplishment was bestowed by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

Created in 1982, the Blue Ribbon Schools award is considered the highest honor an American school can obtain. Schools singled out for this national recognition reflect the goals of our Nation's education reforms for high standards and accountability. Specifically, the Blue Ribbon Schools Program is designed to honor public and private schools that are either academically superior in their States or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement.

This award recognizes that Orono Middle School students achieve at the highest level academically. Orono Middle School is a top-performing school