

Over the past year, I have been encouraged by the close cooperation between the United States and the European Union to hold accountable those in Belarus who are responsible for the brutal crackdown there. Continued transatlantic coordination on Belarus is vital. The Euro-Atlantic community of democracies must speak with one voice to ratchet up pressure on Lukashenko. And while the United States and the EU have taken strong and important steps, including imposing travel bans on nearly 200 Belarusian officials, freezing the assets that these officials hold in the West, and both renewing and imposing new sanctions on Belarusian state-owned enterprises, more can be done.

In particular, I hope that in the weeks ahead, the United States and the EU will implement sanctions against other state-owned entities that enrich the Lukashenko regime at the expense of the Belarusian people.

Furthermore, it is critical that at a moment when the Lukashenko regime is looking for a financial lifeline to keep himself in power, the United States and our allies work together to ensure that responsible international institutions and actors—including the IMF—do not lend money to that regime. It is clear—as we have seen over the past 2 years—that such funds will only be used by Lukashenko to prop up his illegitimate and repressive rule. And I continue to urge our own government to state publicly that the United States will not support any further IMF assistance to Belarus until we see credible political and economic reforms by Belarusian authorities, beginning with the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners in Belarus.

At the same time we are shocked and appalled by the cruelty and thuggishness of the Lukashenko regime, we should also take note of the remarkable courage and perseverance of the Belarusian people, who press on in their struggle for greater freedom and opportunity.

Over the past year, I have been honored to meet with Belarusian opposition leaders and activists. These conversations have been extremely powerful, as I have heard directly from the men and women who are facing repression on the front lines and looking for help from us in their noble struggle.

Today, I join my colleagues in saying to the brave people in Belarus who are striving to secure their fundamental freedoms: We have not and will not forget about you and your important cause. We remember your names. We will stand in solidarity with you and in support of you until you achieve your goal, which is a free and democratic Belarus. And we believe more than ever that the day will come when Belarus will be free.

The extraordinary revolutions that are taking place across the Middle East and north Africa should remind us all that the United States does best in the

world when we stand with our values and the people who share them. And there is much we can do to help the Belarusian people.

To begin with, we must work with our European allies to ensure that the financial and technical assistance we have pledged to the Belarusian opposition is disbursed and implemented as quickly as possible, particularly for groups operating inside of Belarus. And we in Washington must continue to engage with the Belarusian opposition and its emerging leaders, and lend them our support.

Let me conclude by saying that I do not know when Belarus will be free, but I have no doubt that someday it will be free. I am confident that the future of Belarus belongs not to Lukashenko and his thugs but to the Belarusian people.

Indeed, the future of Belarus belongs to the dissidents who are in jail or who are being harassed—to Ales Byalitski, the founder of Belarus' largest human rights organization who recently celebrated his 49th birthday in prison. It belongs to Alyaksandr Klaskouski, a 33-year-old former traffic police officer in Minsk who pleaded with security forces on December 19 not to use force against peaceful protestors and who himself stood between riot police and unarmed protestors. He, too, is now serving time in a maximum security prison for his efforts. The future of Belarus belongs also to Natalia Kaliada, the director of the Belarus Free Theatre, who was arrested on December 19 but continues to press on in her work—to fight dictatorship with art. Natalia does this, as she put it in January when she testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, because “we want our spectators to think. When people start thinking, this is the most terrifying thing for a dictator.”

The future of Belarus belongs to every Belarusian who seeks a brighter future for their country—a future of democracy and opportunity. And we stand with them in their cause on this anniversary of the December 19, 2010, election—and on every anniversary to come, until Belarus is free.

TRIBUTE TO MARK JICKLING, CRS

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, I want to recognize Mark Jickling, a dedicated public servant who has served as a financial economist with the Congressional Research Service and is retiring after nearly 33 years of providing expert analyses to the U.S. Congress on economic, finance and securities matters. He is widely respected in the Senate and House of Representatives, as well as among his CRS colleagues, for his broad knowledge and insights into financial and economic matters as well as his professionalism and collegiality. Thanks to his dedicated efforts, Congress has been better informed as it has sought to find legislative solutions to many of the

issues facing the United States financial system.

Mr. Jickling graduated from the University of California at Berkeley and started work at the Library of Congress part-time with the Collections Management Division. His dedication and intellect led to his becoming an expert in economic matters about which he consistently delivered comprehensive, insightful and helpful analyses. He rose through the ranks to become an economist reaching the level of specialist, the highest level of analyst at CRS. He headed the Banking, Insurance, Securities and Macroeconomic Policy Section in the Government and Finance Division of CRS from 2005 to 2007, in which he oversaw the work of a dozen other analysts and specialists. He is the author or co-author of 100 CRS reports and countless confidential memos.

Mr. Jickling has worked on some of the most significant securities and banking issues facing the country. He wrote the first CRS reports on the impacts of the September 11 attacks on the markets and on the Enron scandal. At that time, he also coordinated CRS' internal “Enron group.” He assisted senior Congressional staff as they formulated legislative responses to the corporate accountability scandals.

From the onset of the recent financial crisis, Mr. Jickling has been instrumental in assisting Congress as we addressed the serious banking and market problems facing the country. He provided expert analysis on a daily basis to the Banking Committee and to others in Congress on housing finance, non-bank financial intermediation, financial derivatives, exotic financial products and markets, and many other issues. His dedication was shown by his working nights and weekends during this period. He significantly contributed to the quality of legislation that ultimately was enacted and cooperated effectively with Members and their staffs to produce the legislation. He was exactly the right person at the right time.

Mr. Jickling retires from the CRS having set a standard of superior service and having assisted a generation of CRS analysts in developing their skills. He leaves CRS to spend more time with his family and pursue some of his other interests, including the professional performance of music. His many accomplishments will remain a fitting tribute to his career and character.

Mr. Jickling will be greatly missed. I wish him and his family all the best in the future.

TRIBUTE TO DON DIXON

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and honor Don Dixon, who is retiring from Senate service. Don has been a trusted advisor and dear friend for many years.

Approximately 15 years ago, I was blessed to have Don join my staff as my State director of agriculture. He

brought to the position his experience as a farmer and his sincere dedication to solving challenges facing the agricultural community. Throughout his Senate service, Don has covered thousands of miles and spent countless hours meeting with constituents and ensuring that their concerns and interests are properly addressed. It has been said that anytime two farmers meet in Idaho, Don is there. This illustration, while not too far from the truth, emphasizes Don's deep personal commitment to ensuring sound representation of Idaho agriculture. For example, he has assisted with multiple farm bills, gathering input from Idahoans to craft the best policy possible, contributing throughout the drafting and providing information to farmers and ranchers when the laws were enacted. He sacrificed weeks with his family when he stayed in Washington, DC, to assist with the crafting of the 2002 farm bill. I have always been able to count on Don to literally go the extra mile for constituents.

Don's dedication and exemplary service led to his appointment to serve as the Idaho State executive director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency, FSA. While this appointment, unfortunately, led to Don leaving my staff for the first time in 2007, his work on behalf of the agricultural community during his time at FSA and his return to Senate service were welcomed. I feel blessed to have once again benefited from his on-the-ground knowledge of production and agricultural policy for the past 3 years.

His enthusiasm and sincere desire to do all that he can for people are part of what make Don exceptional. His unsurpassed energy, faith, and optimism also set him apart. The humor and get-up-and-go Don brings to any challenge has enabled many accomplishments for Idahoans, and Don is widely respected for his integrity and devotion to achieving results.

Although for many, retirement provides time to slow down and relax, knowing Don, he will likely work as hard in his retirement as he does on the job. "Idle" is not a word in Don's vocabulary. However, I hope that retirement provides Don with more time to spend with his family whom he loves so much: his wonderful wife Georgia; his children Lucinda, "Cindy," Lorin, Paul, and Tobin; eight grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. Lucky for me, Don is also one of my neighbors in my hometown of Idaho Falls, so I hope to see him often. We have shared many laughs over the years, and I look forward to sharing many more.

Don, you are model public servant, and I feel very fortunate to have benefited from your wise counsel and hard work for so many years. I wish you the happy retirement you so greatly deserve for your years of dedicated service. Don, thank you for all that you have done on behalf of Idahoans.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO FRANKLIN OTIS CARROLL

• Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and honor the public service of Mr. Franklin Otis Carroll, who is retiring from the U.S. Forest Service after 45 years of dedicated service to protecting our Nation's natural resources.

Frank was born on September 18, 1952, to Franklin and Betty Carroll, in Flagstaff, AZ. Blessed with a gift for expressing his opinion, Frank believed early in life that he was destined to pursue a career in the legal profession. But as he worked to pay for school, he took a job with the National Park Service as a firefighter at southern Arizona's Saguaro National Monument. From then on, he sought to follow in his father's footsteps and care for the lands we all enjoy. He has since served in four National Parks and in Forest Service Regions 2, 3, and 4—travelling from Arizona to Idaho to Minnesota before settling in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

Frank earned a degree in history and English at the University of New Mexico and a Masters Degree in Public Administration at Boise State. He and Audrey, his wife of nearly 34 years, raised three girls—Jessica, Lauren and Merri—and are looking forward to spending more time with their seven grandchildren.

Over the years, Frank has worked tirelessly to protect our public lands, first working on hand crews, then working his way up the ranks to becoming a top level fire boss. He has been a respected spokesman for forest health and land management practices that keep our lands green as we battle the Mountain Pine Beetle. Proactive in educating the public about our lands, Frank is the first person to pick up the phone to explain what is happening in the forest. During his tenure, Frank has built lifelong friendships with a wide variety of folks that continue to this day.

Rick Cables, a former Regional Forester for Region 2 who has known Frank for 35 years, describes Frank as, "one of the most passionate and dedicated individuals in protecting our public lands that I have ever known. He is a talented communicator whose unique gift for communicating allows him to convey complex forest issues in simple terms so all can understand. When the Black Hills National Forest was looking to establish its new Forest Advisory Board, I could think of no one better to help in the process. I remember telling the supervisor at the time, John Twiss, he's someone that will push you harder to communicate more than you may want."

Frank's life work has been the protection of public lands and he has done so with an intense love of the places where he lives. It is because of the work of people like Frank Carroll that

the forest industry continues to thrive and maintain its crucial role throughout South Dakota.

I am proud to recognize and honor Frank's service to the United States Forest Service and am delighted to join with his family and friends in congratulating him on his retirement. I wish Frank and Audrey all the best as they begin a new chapter in their lives.●

REMEMBERING VIRGINIA GABRIEL

• Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Virginia Gabriel of Clarks Summit, PA, who passed away on September 26, 2011, at the age of 93. To those who knew and loved her, she will forever remain an inspiration, a motivator, and a role model.

It is no coincidence that Virginia was born into what has been called the greatest generation. Like so many others of her generation, she and her husband Steven responded when the country called on them during a time of great need. Their commitment to the Nation was visible on the day of their wedding. As they exchanged their vows on the altar, Steven's Navy unit waited outside for the ceremony to end, at which point he joined them and together they departed for their assignment, which ultimately took them to the Pacific theater. Like Steven, Virginia also engendered a sense of social responsibility towards our Nation. Remaining stateside during World War II, Virginia did what she could to help in the war effort. This commitment to help our Nation took her to Bridgeport, CT, where she secretly worked at the Singer sewing machine factory throughout the war manufacturing bomber sights for American aircraft.

Beyond Virginia's devotion to our country in its time of need, she will always be remembered for her abiding commitment to her family and by those who profited from her presence. She made life better for everyone around her by lifting their spirits through her kindness, generosity, laughter, and memorable smile. Her love of family and their awareness of that love was an incalculable source of strength which propelled them forward every day. Evoking the same sentiment that Senator Edward Kennedy had for his brother Robert, Virginia provided strength in time of trouble, wisdom in time of uncertainty, and sharing in time of happiness. The manner in which Virginia lived her life, and expected her family to live theirs, leaves behind a legacy that ensures she will always be by their side.●

RECOGNIZING KAKE, ALASKA

• Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate 100 years of Kake, AK, as an incorporated first-class city. Kake Day, on January 8, 2012, will acknowledge the community's accomplishments, ranging from