

HYDROPOWER POTENTIAL

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, a strong economy needs affordable, abundant, and reliable energy. In recent years, Americans have experienced higher prices for energy across the spectrum. This has led to an enormous growth in private and public research and development of innovative and advanced energy technologies. These innovative technologies include fuel from algae, solar, and wind generation, battery manufacturing, advanced nuclear, and many others.

I recently had an opportunity to visit with Virgil Vanderloo, of Ackley, IA. It was immediately apparent that Virgil has a passion for new and innovative ideas regarding hydroelectric power generation. Virgil does not have an engineering background; he is a retired farmer. For 30 years he farmed land in Hardin, Plymouth, and Woodbury Counties. It is because of this time as a farmer that Virgil came to appreciate the land and its rich natural resources. Now, he is pursuing a concept to capture the power from our Nation's rivers to generate electricity.

After speaking with Mr. Vanderloo and reviewing the material he compiled, he believes that his concept may have the potential to increase the production of hydroelectricity and capture a renewable energy source that currently goes uncollected. Mr. Vanderloo's concept includes placing barges below dams fitted with water turbines to produce electricity. He reasons that this type of electricity generation could be viable on the 30 or so dams along the Mississippi River. If viable, this concept could conceivably be implemented on many of the more than 50,000 nonpowered dams in the United States.

After all, the U.S. Department of Energy just last month published a study that indicated the United States could get as much as 12 gigawatts of energy per year by utilizing the hydropower potential of existing dams. The idea proposed by Virgil could be one of the innovations in hydropower technologies that could help us use existing dams to generate renewable energy.

I would like to make an appeal to hydroelectric designers and engineers to review the concept presented by Mr. Vanderloo. I have posted his information on the Internet which can be accessed at <http://1.usa.gov/J1A5Ky>. I hope those with scientific and engineering expertise in this area will review his proposal and contact him directly. It may have promise, and I hope this brings attention to his ideas regarding hydroelectric power generation.

TAIWAN'S PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Madam President, January 14, 2012, marked Taiwan's fifth direct Presidential election, and on May 20, President Ma Ying-jeou will be

sworn in for his second and final term as the leader of our friend and ally Taiwan. I would like to congratulate President Ma on his reelection, and I would also like to congratulate Taiwan for its commitment to democracy.

Since the island's first Presidential elections in 1996, the people and Government of Taiwan have enthusiastically embraced democratic values and ideals. From extremely high rates of voter participation in elections to public and open political discourse and debate, signs of a vibrant democracy can be seen throughout Taiwan's society.

The January elections proved a continuation of Taiwan's commitment to a democratic form of government, and President Ma's reelection demonstrates the faith the people of Taiwan have in his leadership. I therefore close by urging all my colleagues to join me in congratulating President Ma on his second inauguration and Taiwan's people for their embrace of democracy. I look forward to continuing to work to advance the strong relationship between Taiwan and the United States and our common goals and interests.

TRIBUTE TO MERLE J. SMITH, JR.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, today I wish to pay tribute to Commander Merle J. Smith, Jr., of Mystic, CT, who was honored on April 1, 2012, during the Coast Guard's annual Eclipse Week, as the first African-American graduate of the Coast Guard Academy in 1966.

Founded in 1876 in New London, CT, the Coast Guard Academy has made fundamental progress since its first African-American cadet. Over the past decades, it has diversified its student body, provided support to underrepresented students, and raised awareness about the Coast Guard, its Academy, and military training more generally among a wide range of communities. Commander Smith was honored this year with the inaugural Merle J. Smith Pioneer Award as one of the first to realize the ideal of minority participation and for his contributions to our Nation since paving the way for future cadets on that infamous graduation day.

After leaving the Academy, Commander Smith served in Vietnam in 1969, commanding a patrol boat on more than 80 missions and becoming the first African-American member of the maritime service to earn a Bronze Star. While in the Coast Guard, he received a law degree from George Washington University, and after his military tenure, dedicated many years as an attorney for Groton-based Electric Boat. Commander Smith also taught at the Academy as a part-time law teacher and then later as an adjunct professor. He is a shining example of the wide range of possibilities offered to Academy graduates—whether they choose to pursue a career in the military, in a civilian profession, such as

the law, or both—and is a stellar role model for cadets past and present.

The Coast Guard and Coast Guard Academy began adopting equal opportunity policies in earnest when President Kennedy ordered the diversification of the forces defending our coasts. Now, each year, the Coast Guard hosts Eclipse Week, a week-long effort to put its diversity efforts in the spotlight. Discussions on openness and inclusivity are facilitated. Minority alumni are welcomed on campus to form relationships with current and incoming Academy students as well as interested high school students.

In addition to Commander Smith, the Coast Guard honored three other valuable members of their community—partners in the pursuit of equal representation—during this year's Eclipse Week. Frances Neal was awarded this year's Humanitarian Award for her legacy of lovingly serving food to cadets for 25 years. One of the Academy's most beloved equal opportunity officers, JoAnn P. Miller, or "Mama Miller," as she was affectionately called by cadets, was also celebrated. And, Vice Admiral Manson K. Brown, a student of Commander Smith's, was given this year's Genesis Award for his service as a Pacific Area commander and his work founding the Genesis Club while attending the Academy—an organization still in existence that supports underrepresented cadets.

The Coast Guard promotes diversity not only through Eclipse Week, but also by running community-based initiatives such as the U.S. Coast Guard Office of Diversity and its various programs, including Diversity Champion of the Week, Affinity Groups, and Strategic Education Partnerships. It also has an active Office of Inclusion and Diversity, headed by Chief Diversity Officer, Antonio Farias, that facilitates partnerships between high school and college students, as well as cadets, so that citizens of all backgrounds can see what it means to work towards a career in the Coast Guard and in the U.S. military. And, in 2011, Rear Admiral Sandra Stosz became the first female Service Academy superintendent in our Nation's history. She was recently named as one of *Newsweek's* "150 Women Who Shake the World." More than 30 years ago, Eclipse Week's goal was racial inclusivity. Today, this yearly event aims to promote diversity more comprehensively.

Displayed in the historical archive of the Coast Guard's Web site, is a photograph of Commander Smith on the day of his graduation, proudly shaking the hand of his father, Colonel Merle J. Smith, Sr., and smiling at the camera. This image speaks of generational advancement, community, and hope. However, the weathered sepia of the photograph of father and son also reminds us that we cannot become complacent, stuck in stories of progress from previous decades. We must always be ready, "*Semper Paratus*," for progress. The theme of this year's

Eclipse Week—"openness, inclusion, change"—is apt and inspiring for the work ahead.

REMEMBERING JOSEPH WILLIAM AUBIN

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, this past Sunday, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, VVMF, held a dedication ceremony on the National Mall, commemorating ten courageous men whose names recently have been carved on the black granite walls of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

One of them—a brave and beloved airman, Joseph William Aubin—hailed from Bridgeport, CT. On the morning of May 26, 1966, Chief Warrant Officer Aubin, an experienced Chief Aviation Electronic Technician, was asked at the last minute to join a mission. He unquestioningly boarded the Skywarrior aircraft with his team from NAS Cubi Point in the Philippines to explore critical suspicious activity in Vietnam. On the way, he and his team encountered damaging weather conditions that unexpectedly doomed the engines. In this critical moment, Chief Warrant Officer Aubin was instructed to "bail out" into the South China Sea. Along with three of his team members, he died there.

Since that day in 1966, Chief Warrant Officer Aubin and the three other men who perished during the mission—ATR3 Richard Carl Hunt from Guys Mills, PA, LT Walter Allan Linzy from Nashville, AR, and ATR3 Richard Dwaine Stocker from Jacksonville, AR—have been remembered as the "Lost Back End Crew." Chief Warrant Officer Aubin's body was never recovered, but he is no less deserving to be memorialized. Now, the entire Nation can visit the site of the Vietnam Memorial to honor him and his ultimate sacrifice.

Chief Warrant Officer Aubin will never be forgotten. Names carved into the wall are written into our national memory and history for all generations to visit emotionally and physically. Newly inscribed names reaffirm the message that the Nation recalls all commemorated at this memorial with deep gratitude and appreciation.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING JOHN T. CYR AND SONS, INC.

• Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, today I wish to offer my congratulations to John T. Cyr and Sons, Inc., on its 100th anniversary. This outstanding Maine company demonstrates why family businesses are so important to our Nation's economy and to communities in every State. The determination and vision that led to a century of success define America's entrepreneurial spirit.

Sometime around 1903, John Thomas Cyr moved his family from Caribou,

ME—my hometown—to Old Town, near Bangor, where he found work in a lumber mill. Nine years later, in 1912, at the age of 51, John T. Cyr struck out on his own. Joined by his son, Joseph, they started a livery stable and delivery business.

What began with horses, buggies, and wagons is today a thriving enterprise of 22 luxury motor coaches, 200 school buses, and nearly 250 employees. A company that got its start hauling lumber for a local canoe factory now serves 17 school districts across Maine with an exemplary safety record. They offer tours throughout the United States and Canada from New York City at Christmas to Washington, D.C., in cherry blossom season. As a native of Aroostook County, I know how valuable their daily intercity service is to the towns and cities of northern Maine.

Handed down and nurtured through the generations, this is a true family business, owned and operated by the founder's grandson, Joe Cyr, joined by his brother, Pete, son Mike, and daughter Becky.

Their remarkable story of growth, of meeting challenges, and of delivering value was expertly told in a recent article in *Maine Trails* magazine. I would like to complement that account with my personal observations.

Before coming to the Senate, I worked at Husson University in Bangor, where I had the pleasure of getting to know Joe Cyr, Class of 1962, and his wonderful wife, Sue, Class of 1965. Joe has been a longtime member of the Husson Board of Trustees, and Sue been a volunteer supporter of uncommon energy. Joe and Sue's generosity to Husson includes significant gifts to athletic programs, a new home for the university president, the annual fund, and most recently, the new Cyr Alumni Center. The countless ways they serve—from the Boys Scouts and the Y to St. Joseph Hospital—touch people of all ages.

People throughout Maine are fortunate to have such a family as the Cyrs, but I am especially lucky—my summer camp on Cold Stream Pond is just down the road from theirs. As much as I cherish our time together, having dinner, playing cards, and enjoying the beautiful Maine summer evenings, I cherish even more being in the presence of those who give so much to others and who see the act of giving as the greatest reward. I am delighted to extend my congratulations to the Cyr family in their business's centennial year and to thank them for their contributions to the State of Maine.

I ask that the *Maine Trails* article be printed in the *RECORD*.

The article follows.

[From the *Maine Trails*, Feb./Mar. 2012]

DRIVING THROUGH HISTORY

(By Kathryn Buxton)

FROM HORSE DRAWN WAGONS TO MODERN COACHES AND SCHOOL BUSES, CYR BUS LINE TRAVELS THROUGH HISTORY INTO AN ELITE CLUB OF 100-YEAR-OLD MAINE BUSINESSES

It's midday at Cyr Bus Line, and about a dozen drivers in black company jackets are

gathered, waiting for the next wave of activity to begin. That's when the company's fleet of school buses head out to pick up students for the trip home from Old Town's high school, middle school and three elementary schools. A fresh layer of snow covers the ground outside, and everyone is alert and ready to get to work. Outside, a coach bus pulls in to the lot, returning from its daily run to Aroostook County. The bus will be washed down and ready for its 6 p.m. departure from downtown Bangor.

It is a scene that has played out countless times over the past 100 years since John T. Cyr and his son Joseph founded the company on South Water Street in 1912. Previous to that, John had been working for the Jordan Lumber Company in Old Town. Joseph had been working for the Old Town Woolen Mill. They applied for a trucking license and were approved by the Old Town city council on May 21, 1912. John and Joseph had two horses and the company's first jobs were hauling lumber for Old Town Canoe. The Cyrs also operated a livery stable at the family homestead on French Island (also known as Treat-Webster Island), and for many years, the Cyr stable was the go-to place if you needed a horse and buggy to visit friends or family. The company's wagons and carriages also delivered mail and served as hearses, transporting local citizens to their final resting place.

FATHERS AND SONS

John T. Cyr & Sons, Inc./Cyr Bus Line celebrates its 100th anniversary this year, putting it in an elite group of Maine companies that have been in business for a century or more. Old Town Canoe, located nearby in Old Town is one. Another is the famous outdoor retailer L.L. Bean, which as Mike Cyr is quick to point out, is also celebrating its 100th anniversary this year.

"Cyr Bus is a fixture here," said Mike Cyr, one of a fourth generation of Cyrs to work in the family business. "A lot of people figured we had already been here for 100 years."

For the Cyrs, a century of company history is inextricably meshed with the family history. Through the years many family members have left their mark on the business. Four of John's five sons—Joseph, Albert, Arthur and Harvey—all worked for the company in its infancy (Clibby, a fifth son who worked in the woolen mill, eventually became an Old Town firefighter). Albert, 19 and a weaver at the Old Town Woolen Mill in 1912, was a silent partner for many years, coming on board full-time as the business continued to grow through the 1920s. Arthur and Harvey, young children when their father and brothers founded the company, grew up in the business and eventually joined their brother Albert in running the company in the 1930s and 40s after their father and brother died unexpectedly in 1934. Harvey bought out his brothers in 1951. Today, the company is run by Harvey's son, Joe Cyr. His brother, Pete, works in the company's body shop. Joe's son, Mike, oversees the company's coach division and manages information technology—everything from the company's two-way radio system to its computer hardware and software. Daughter Becky Whitmore is the bookkeeper. Helping them these days, is general manager Rick Soules, who the Cyrs hired not quite two years ago. Bringing Rick in was a necessity as the company has grown and diversified, and as Joe, now 71, has begun to scale back the time he spends at the office.

Working with family has always been one of the great joys of the business, according to family patriarch and company president, Joe Cyr, with the business officially for nearly 50 years.

Joe drove trucks for H.E. Sargent and worked as a surveyor for James W. Sewall