

We wish them well in their future studies and are proud they represent the Bluegrass State.

REQUEST FOR CONSULTATION

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my letter to the minority leader dated May 29, 2012, be printed in the RECORD.

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

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, May 29, 2012.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,

Minority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCONNELL, I am requesting that I be consulted before the Senate enters into any unanimous consent agreements regarding calendar #714, the nomination of Heidi Shyu to be an Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisitions, Logistics, and Technology.

Ms. Heidi Shyu has been the Acting Assistant Secretary for the position to which she has been nominated for nearly one year. Her office directly oversees the Program Executive Office for soldier weapons. I remain concerned with the Army's plans for the improvement of its small arms weapons while our soldiers are at war. For example, I have not seen the Army make sufficient progress on the directive of the then-Secretary of the Army Pete Geren to conduct a competition to replace its individual carbine rifle no later than the end of FY2009.

Thank you for protecting my rights on this nomination. I will keep you informed of my continued effort to work with the Army on the nomination of Ms. Shyu as we ensure that our soldiers have the very best modern small arms that American manufacturers can provide.

Sincerely,

TOM. A. COBURN, M.D.,

U.S. Senator.

TRIBUTE TO FRANCES WILLIAMS PRESTON

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to pay tribute to Frances Williams Preston, a trailblazing businesswoman, a dedicated humanitarian, a mother, a grandmother, a great-grandmother, and a friend. I was saddened when she passed away on June 13.

Frances began her career as a receptionist at a radio station in Nashville, TN. She quickly moved up within the music community, and in 1958 she was hired to open a regional office for Broadcast Music Inc., BMI, in Nashville, representing songwriters and composers. Glass ceilings had no chance at constraining Frances. In 1964, she became Vice President of BMI, reportedly making her the first woman corporate executive in Tennessee. In 1986, she became CEO and remained CEO of BMI until 2004.

Her work at BMI transformed not only the company, but also the hundreds of thousands of songwriters and composers BMI represents. She tripled the revenues at BMI and advocated for strong copyright protections to benefit artists. BMI under her tenure also helped the city of Nashville to blossom into the leading center for songwriters and the arts that it is today.

Frances's dedication to the songwriters and her industry, and her passion for ensuring they could make a living in their chosen profession, was unrivaled. Kris Kristofferson famously dubbed her the "songwriter's guardian angel."

I worked closely with Frances and the songwriting community to ensure that the rights of composers are protected, but I will remember her most for her humanitarian efforts. She was president of the T.J. Martell Foundation for Leukemia, Cancer and AIDS research, and her name precedes the research laboratories at the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center.

I could go on at length about the various music and humanitarian awards and honors Frances has received, from being inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1992 to twice receiving the Humanitarian Award from the International Achievement in Arts.

The current president of BMI probably best captured her essence by simply describing Frances as "a force of nature." She will be missed by those who knew her, and remembered always by those whom she nurtured as songwriters and composers.

The music industry has lost a legend and I ask unanimous consent that the Wall Street Journal article "From Receptionist to Music-Royalty Guarantor" by Stephen Miller be entered into the RECORD.

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

[From the Wall Street Journal, June 14, 2012]

FROM RECEPTIONIST TO MUSIC-ROYALTY
GUARANTOR

(By Stephen Miller)

Frances Preston rose from radio-station receptionist to chief executive of Broadcast Music Inc., a performing-rights group that helps guarantee that songwriters and music publishers get paid when their songs are played on the radio or in places like restaurants.

Ms. Preston, who died Wednesday at the age of 83, founded BMI's Nashville, Tenn., office and signed up thousands of artists, many of whose careers she shepherded personally.

The deals she struck helped nurture country, rock 'n' roll and jazz, emerging genres that the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, BMI's older rival, had neglected in favor of traditional pop music.

By the time Ms. Preston retired in 2004, BMI represented 300,000 music composers and copyright owners and disbursed more than a half-billion dollars to them annually.

"They never paid royalties to the songwriters for performances until Frances Preston came along," country star Eddy Arnold told The Wall Street Journal in 2004. "She put the hammer on!"

"A lot of them didn't realize that they could get paid for having their music played," Ms. Preston told Amusement Business magazine in 1991. She built a fanatical following among Nashville's performing elite.

Singer-songwriter Kris Kristofferson, whom Ms. Preston signed to a \$1 million songwriting deal in the 1970s, once called her "our guardian angel."

Raised in Nashville, Ms. Preston studied at George Peabody College for Teachers. But

shortly before taking a classroom job, she went to work at WSM, the radio home of the Grand Ole Opry, where her duties included answering Hank Williams's mail. She moved on to running the station's promotions department and got to know the country stars of the era.

In 1958, she founded BMI's Nashville office—at first in her parents' garage. A few years later she opened a new office on fledgling Music Row. Thanks in part to BMI's presence, it soon became the home to recording studios and music publishers and the hub of the Nashville country scene.

Ms. Preston moved to BMI's home office in New York City, where she became chief executive in 1986. She oversaw the transition to the digital age as complex new media like the Internet and ringtones joined radio and television as major sources of revenue. She also lobbied Congress as copyright laws were changed.

"It's a constant fight to educate those people [that] music is not just out there in the air for you to pick out for free, because if the creator isn't compensated, there's not going to be that music," she told Billboard in 2004.

Ms. Preston was lionized in Nashville, where she was a glamorous personification of the business side of the music industry. When she was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1992, it dubbed her "the most influential country-music executive of her generation."

Always one to keep things in sensible perspective, Ms. Preston was proud to be remembered as the author of a Nashville motto: "It all begins with a song."

RECOGNIZING HOUSE OF HEROES

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today, I wish to recognize the important work of House of Heroes—a growing organization that honors veterans with dignity, gratitude, and an improved quality of life.

Over Memorial Day weekend, I had the great opportunity to witness the Connecticut chapter of House of Heroes' first projects as it fixed, renovated, and remodeled the homes of three of our country's most deserving veterans. Over \$30,000 of materials and time were donated by local organizations and generous individuals.

House of Heroes is on a mission to help the service men and women of our previous wars and their families—heroes who may not always receive the recognition they deserve. Frequently, our courageous veterans are unable to maintain their homes due to physical disability or financial limitations.

During their inaugural build, the founders and volunteers of Connecticut's House of Heroes chose to honor three Americans, who have continued to dedicate their lives to serving our country and preparing for our future even after their war service. Frederick Joseph Miller served as a Sergeant in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II—and in 1945, searched the legendary crash of Flight 19 in the Everglades. Upon leaving the service, he dedicated his talent and skills to Pratt & Whitney as an equipment and facilities engineer. On Memorial Day in 1991, Miller's wife passed away from cancer, and maintaining his Hamden house has been a challenge.

Private First Class Maura Rettman of Meriden served in Germany between 1977 and 1979 where she suffered a life-altering car accident. Now, she takes care of her grandson with the hope that he can have a bedroom of his own. Sergeant Rudolph Pistey of Stratford served in the Army National Guard during World War II. Now, at 93, he is well-known in his community, always ready to lend a hand or shoot a smile to his neighbors.

Since 2000, House of Heroes has spread influence and awareness from its founding chapter in Columbus, GA, across the country. In Connecticut, co-founders are Steve Cavanaugh of Biltmore Construction and Billy May, a U.S. Army Veteran, Black Hawk test pilot, and business development and strategy leader at Signature Brand Factory. They seek to complete 10 projects in 2012 and to double this number each subsequent year. Both Mr. Cavanaugh and Lieutenant Colonel May bring experience, skill, and dedication to House of Heroes. Their hope is that general contractors and subcontractors across the state and country will donate several hours a week to helping our Nation's veterans.

Amidst the sound of repairs, there were tears in all our eyes when the veterans were serenaded by Nashville singer and songwriter, Tim Maggart. The song—both solemn and celebratory with spiritual music and grounded lyrics—conveyed eloquently the emotion of everyone gathered:

You were young, scared Willing to go anywhere/ When your country called, you stood tall

You came home, scarred/ Didn't think it would be so hard, You don't like to talk about what you saw/ Beyond what I can comprehend/ The sacrifice of the women and men who gave so much without applause/ I don't know you and you don't know me, but thanks to you, I wake up safe and free/ I hope you never feel forgotten, because

Chorus: You've got a home, in the house of heroes/ Your name will live on in the house of heroes/ I want to honor you/ it's been long overdue/ You're right where you belong in the house of heroes

In a world, where Life's not always fair/ And sometimes we have to fight for what we believe

There's a price, paid I can't help be amazed/ By the brave who gave their all for you and me.

At each House of Heroes project, the spirit of volunteerism, patriotism, and human connection was unwavering. As the tremendous energy of the House of Heroes' Connecticut chapter spreads across the country, this theme song will be an anthem for a national movement that touches the lives of one veteran at a time.

The volunteers and donors of House of Heroes convey a tremendous spirit—America's boundless appreciation and spirit. Through this great work, and its anthem, we show our veterans—who fought for our security—that America will join together to pay back our debt of gratitude by helping our veterans feel secure and safe.

Appreciative but slightly uncomfortable receiving rather than giving, these

men and women were shown by House of Heroes how much we treasure and owe them as a Nation. Donning House of Heroes t-shirts and bobbing along to the music, fellow veterans and citizens showed their thanks—a fitting spirit now and in the future.

RECOGNIZING THE HARTFORD FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC GIVING

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today, I wish to congratulate the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, which was awarded the 2012 Bronze Award by the Council on Foundations this past Spring as part of their Wilmer Shields Rich Awards Program. Every year, the Council on Foundations recognizes foundations around the country that have engaged in strategic communications strategies and innovative projects that inspire and inform other grantmakers.

Since 1925, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving has been a thriving philanthropic institution where Connecticut nonprofit organizations can seek financial support and connect with givers throughout the State. This highly professional, industrious, and dynamic institution singularly impacts the Capitol Region of Connecticut, having granted \$532 million since its beginning to address community needs. It fosters partnerships, assists nonprofits in developing their long-term plans and funding strategies, and hosts informational forums for the sharing of fresh perspectives. The Foundation is unique in its broad and diverse support for the Greater Hartford area, showcasing families on their website, who invite others to join them, advising "We're not the Rockefellers. We're just a normal family . . . willing to take this step."

The Council on Foundations recognized the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving specifically for its 2010 Annual Report, Creating Brighter Futures, which focused on the Foundation's efforts towards effective childhood development and education through its Brighter Futures Initiative. The great success of the Brighter Future Initiative has strengthened existing early education programs as well as inspired the development of innovative strategies around the country. In the report's introductory letter, President and Chief Executive Officer Lindy Kelly eloquently shares the groundbreaking changes she has witnessed in our Hartford-area schools. She tells the story of Lavarey—then a second-grader at Rawson School at risk for illiteracy. Through the Hartford Haskins Literary Initiative, he learned to read with joy. Ms. Kelly writes of her memory of Lavarey on stage during their annual Celebration of Giving ceremony, waving confidently at the 400-member audience, who in turn, mirrored Lavarey's happiness, proud to be part of the journey of a young boy who will soon become a contributing member of their community.

The Hartford Foundation's 2010 Annual Report—a large, comprehensive

document that expertly weaves stories, accomplishments, and statistics—reflects the rich tapestry of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. By seamlessly inviting families, all levels of government, schools, nonprofit organizations, professional advisors, volunteers, and donors to join their mission for change, they evoke and provoke humanitarianism and patriotism.

I invite my Senate colleagues to join me in congratulating the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for bringing hope and help to Connecticut's institutions, programs, and citizens that need it the most.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DR. ROBERT BELL

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I would like to congratulate Dr. Robert Bell on his outstanding record of service to Tennessee. Dr. Bell will be retiring as president of Tennessee Technological University at the end of this month and has served the university for 36 years.

He has served as president of Tennessee Tech since 2000, and before becoming the university's president, he served as both a professor and dean of the College of Business.

During his time at Tennessee Tech, Dr. Bell has fostered both an increase in student enrollment and university recognition, while ensuring that student education remained affordable.

His contributions to Tennessee extend beyond the university level. He has served as a member of the board of directors for the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence since 1993 and chairs the Cookeville Industrial Development Board. He is also a proud member of the executive committee of the Middle Tennessee Boy Scouts of America, an organization dedicated to helping young men achieve their potential.

I want to add my appreciation for his years of service to Tennessee Tech and wish him well in his retirement.

I ask to have the following resolution printed in the RECORD.

The resolution follows.

A RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION FOR THE SERVICE OF DR. ROBERT R. BELL TO THE TENNESSEE BOARD OF REGENTS

Whereas, Dr. Robert R. Bell has thirty-six years of service with the Tennessee Board of Regents system and Tennessee Tech University, serving as a professor in TTU's College of Business, then as dean, then as President of the University since 2000,

Whereas, as President of TTU, he oversaw 12 straight years of enrollment growth, with TTU's enrollment approaching 12,000,

Whereas, he chaired a TBR Vision of Teaching Excellence committee in 2004 to establish future teaching standards and led his University to develop and expand extended education, distance learning and virtual classrooms,

Whereas, he supported the Regents Online Degree Program and championed degree innovations at TTU to increase access to education and to respond to industry needs in order to improve the education and economic progress in the state,