

universities and many of the hospitals concerned about is that this is going to become a finalized regulation.

The proponents of the regulation are saying there is a year to comply with it. I would submit to you that asking people in this country to check their principles at the door not now but a year from now is not making any kind of an accommodation.

This needs to be reversed. This is clearly a violation of religious liberty, the protection and right we have in the first amendment of our Constitution in our Bill of Rights, and I hope the administration will do the right thing and acknowledge that they have made a mistake, that they have gone too far, that they have overreached, that they have treaded in an area they should not tread and make this right. The way to make this right is to reverse this decision.

Some have argued: What is that going to mean? Does that mean people in this country are not going to have access to contraceptive services? The answer to that is absolutely not. Contraception would be widely available. It is just that religious-affiliated employers would not be forced to fund this coverage which violates the tenants of their faith. It does not have anything to do with contraception. It does not have anything to do with that issue at all. What it has to do with is the issue of religious liberty and whether we are going to respect that or are we going to allow that to be eroded, and who knows where this goes next.

The other point I would make is, this is also, I think, an example of what happens when you get a government that is so big it can give you everything you want but also big enough to take it all away. There are a lot of people who, when this was debated, when the affordable care act was debated, argued—myself included—this would lead to government running more of our lives, making more decisions, intruding more, having more control, and making decisions with regard to people's health care.

I would submit this is an example—and perhaps example No. 1—of that very fact. What we are seeing now is, the affordable care act—as it gets implemented, we are giving more and more power to the Federal Government, and when we do that, when big government gets bigger and bigger, it has more latitude when it comes to running over the rights of ordinary Americans. This is a perfect example of that.

I could go down the list of other regulations. I have come down to the floor many times to talk about regulatory overreach, excessive regulations that go way beyond common sense, that do not deal with issues of public health and safety but are simply regulations for regulation's sake.

People have heard me come down and talk about the Department of Labor's efforts now to regulate the young people who work on family farms and

ranches and the overly proscriptive way in which they are trying to keep young people from performing duties they learned growing up that they are trained to do, that contribute to the overall success and prosperity of family farms and ranches.

The Department of Labor's proposal right now would restrict young people from working at elevations that are more than 6 feet, from working with farm animals that are more than 6 months old, from working around grain elevators or stockyards or operating certain kinds of equipment, many pieces of equipment, types of equipment that are fairly standard on a farming operation. It strikes at the very heart of what makes a family farm and ranch operation tick. It is an assault on the heartland of this country and the culture and values that have helped shape it and make it great.

So this issue of regulatory overreach and big government is an issue that I think is symbolized by this current debate. What we are having is a debate about the reach of government to where they can start coming up with regulations under the new health care law that clearly violate the religious liberty protections that are afforded for people in this country under the first amendment and which I think our Founders, if they were around today, would find incredibly offensive.

This is an affront, an assault on these very liberties. It is an assault on our Bill of Rights, our Constitution. It is something the administration should walk back from and make right. They can do that very simply by reversing this or widening or broadening this exemption to cover religious-affiliated schools, universities and charities. And they could do that right now.

I would hope that would be the case. If it is not, there is legislation that has been proposed here. A number of my colleagues have already filed bills. In fact, Senator BLUNT was down here earlier today and asked to call up an amendment that would address this issue. It was objected to on the grounds that it is not related to the underlying bill, the highway bill. Well, if it is not related to the highway bill, then let's provide an opportunity for Congress to weigh in on this. I can tell you one thing, the American people are weighing in on this. This Congress of the United States, as their representatives, needs to stand for the American people and, more importantly, needs to defend the Constitution of the United States. If the administration is going to take this step, and if the administration is not going to walk back from this, this Congress of the United States needs to be heard.

There will be numerous attempts until that opportunity is presented by my colleagues and me to make sure this wrong is fixed, is corrected, and that the religious liberties for which our Founders came to this country and for which so many have fought and died over the years to defend are pro-

tected, and those rights that are enshrined in our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution and our Bill of Rights are protected for the American people.

I yield the floor.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

OBSERVING NATIONAL INVENTORS' DAY

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, today I would like to focus attention on inventors. Senate Joint Resolution 140, Public Law 97-198, designated February 11, the anniversary of the birth of the inventor Thomas Alva Edison, as National Inventors' Day.

Each year we recognize the contributions of those who use their imagination and skills to conceive, create, concoct, discover, devise, and formulate new devices, machines, and processes in order to receive patents, trademarks, and copyrights.

Inventors play an enormously important role in promoting progress in every aspect of our lives. Invention and innovation are basic to the technological and manufacturing strength of the United States and our economic, environmental, and social well-being.

The Constitution specifically provides for the granting of exclusive rights to inventors for their discoveries. During the First Congress, President George Washington prevailed upon the House and Senate to enact a patent statute and wisely advised that "there is nothing which can better deserve your patronage than the promotion of science."

In our State, since our Nation's bicentennial, over 1,600 patents have been issued to Alaska residents. The ingenuity of our citizens is reflected in the variety of patents issued such as a vehicle escape tool; an ocean spill and contaminated sea ice containment, separation, and removal system; an audible fishing weight; and a fish pin bone removal apparatus—just to name a few.

In recent years, over 500 new applications have been received by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office from Alaskans involving wells, hydraulic and earth engineering, and electric conductors and insulators.

I applaud the efforts of support groups in Alaska such as the Inventors Institute of Alaska, Alaska Inventors and Entrepreneurs, and the Patent and Trademark Resource Center.

The genius of inventors is key to our future. The next great American invention could be among the patent applications pending at the Patent Office.

On the observance of National Inventors' Day, I urge all Alaskans to reflect on contributions of inventors and to take part in appropriate programs and activities.●

REMEMBERING CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT LUTHER JEFFERSON, SR.

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am honored to salute the life and service of retired CMSgt Luther Jefferson, Sr., who served as a Tuskegee Airman in the 332nd Fighter Group. Chief Jefferson will be remembered not only for his valor and service to his country but also for his compassion, optimism, and generous spirit. He died at his home in Victorville, California on January 19, 2012.

Luther Jefferson was born March 23, 1923, in Cotton Valley, LA, and was the fifth of 11 children born to Andrew and Sue Willie Curry Jefferson. Reared in poverty on a sharecropper's farm, Luther was determined to work hard, study diligently, and maintain a positive outlook on life.

In March 1943, Luther Jefferson was drafted into the U.S. military. While completing basic training at the Army Air Base in Greengrove, NC, he learned of an experimental training program for African-American pilots, based at the Tuskegee Institute and Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama. After passing the required examination and being accepted into the program, he was assigned to the 332nd Fighter Group's 99th Fighter Squadron—part of an elite group now known as the Tuskegee Airmen. Logging more than 5,000 hours in aircraft that included the P-40 Fighter and B-25s, he helped protect Army Air Corps bombers in Italy during WWII and participated in the post-WWII Berlin Airlift. Following the war, Jefferson was assigned to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base at Dayton, OH in the Research and Development Section of New Aircraft and Human Characteristics—as one of a select few chosen to test new aircraft and combat simulations. Luther Jefferson also participated in the Dugway Proving Ground atomic test in Utah. By the time he retired from the U.S. Air Force in 1972, Luther Jefferson had become one of the branch's first African-American chief master sergeants.

As a civilian, Chief Jefferson remained active in his community and volunteered as a Little League umpire and a Meals-on-Wheels driver for homebound seniors.

Luther Jefferson, Sr., passed away at 88 years of age. I extend my heartfelt condolences to his two siblings Avis Jefferson and Alice Shaw; three children, Deborah Jefferson, Yvonne Atkinson, and Andrew Jefferson; and his six grandchildren, extended family, and numerous friends.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Tuskegee Airman CMSgt Luther Jefferson, Sr.

HONORING CAPTAIN CARLTON JACOB HOLLAND, JR. USA

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, today I honor Captain Jake Holland, United States Army, for his service in defense of Wyoming and our Nation.

Captain Holland of Casper, WY, was an Army Ranger assigned to the 48th Army of the Republic of Vietnam, Advance Team 88, Headquarters, Military Assistance Command—Vietnam Advisors, Military Assistance Command. He was stationed in the Central Highlands of Phuoc Long Province as a MACV advisor to the South Vietnamese.

The Central Highlands were a critical supply route for the Viet Cong through the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The MACV mission was infamously known as one of the most dangerous missions for ground troops. They deployed deep into the jungle in small teams of four to train and assist the South Vietnamese Army and the indigenous Montagnard fighters.

Early in the morning on February 9, Captain Holland and his men came under attack. They were outmanned and outgunned by the Viet Cong but that did not dissuade their determination to resist the attack on Bu Dang Compound.

As the enemy advanced closer to the compound demanding surrender over loud speakers, Captain Holland established a perimeter with his remaining forces. He picked up a .50 caliber machine gun and moved from position to position, exposing himself with each burst of fire. After all of the ammunition ran out, Captain Holland and his men succumbed to their wounds but they never gave up the fight. He was 36 years old.

Forty-seven years ago today, on February 9, 1965, Wyoming suffered its first casualty of the Vietnam War. For his valiant actions on this fateful day, Captain Holland was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the second highest honor in the Army. His decorations also included the Purple Heart Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and the Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Today, Captain Holland lays in rest with his brothers in arms at Arlington National Cemetery in Section 35, site 3621. His name is engraved on Panel 01E, Line 86 at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

In Wyoming we never forget. It is through this tradition that we make every effort to honor and remember those who have selflessly made the ultimate sacrifice. We hold Captain Holland's service and valor high.●

RECOGNIZING WEST NOTTINGHAM ACADEMY

• Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the 200th anniversary of the chartering and relocation of West Nottingham Academy in Colora, MD. West Nottingham Academy is recognized as the oldest boarding school in the nation 267 years after the school's original founding. West Nottingham Academy was founded in 1744 by Samuel Finley, a young Presbyterian minister from Ireland who later became president of Princeton. The school prepared boys for university study, and two

early graduates, Benjamin Rush and Richard Stockton, went on to sign the Declaration of Independence. In 1812, West Nottingham Academy was granted a Charter by the State of Maryland, and moved to its present location. Notable alumni include Maryland Governor Austin Lane Crothers, Cincinnati founder John Filson, North Carolina Governor Alexander Martin, and Pennsylvania Congressman Peter Kostmayer.

West Nottingham Academy has evolved from its humble beginnings as a log cabin addition to Samuel Finley's home to a modern campus that is home to 120 boarding and day students in grades 9–12 representing eight States and ten countries. Student life is enriched outside the classroom by interscholastic sports teams, service learning opportunities, student-led clubs, and educational excursions to Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Washington.

West Nottingham Academy uses an innovative, student-centered academic approach which celebrates students' many learning styles through a variety of teaching methods. The student-centered approach is exemplified in West Nottingham's Chesapeake Learning Center, where students with learning differences receive support services uniquely tailored to help each student reach his or her full potential.

I would ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating West Nottingham Academy on the bicentennial of its chartering and relocation, and on over 200 years of providing educational opportunity and leadership to Maryland and our Nation.●

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT FIRST CLASS JEREMIAH MOCK

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor SFC Jeremiah Mock on the occasion of his oath of reenlistment in the Nevada Army National Guard. His commitment to the citizens of the Silver State is unwavering, and Nevada is honored by his service.

I would first like to recognize all of our Nation's service men and women. Each and every day, our troops are serving the United States to protect our freedom. They dedicate their lives to serve this great Nation and constantly make grave sacrifices to ensure the safety of our country. Our servicemembers and their families deserve our gratitude and thanks.

Before serving in the Nevada National Guard, Sergeant Mock served 9 years in the Army Reserve, where he was deployed repeatedly on combat tours to Iraq and Afghanistan. His continued dedication to service led him to join the Nevada National Guard in 2007, and he continues to serve his State, despite becoming the innocent victim of a brutal shooting in Carson City, NV, on September 6, 2011. I will never forget this tragic event, and I continue to send my thoughts and prayers to the victims and their families.

I commend Sergeant Mock for his bravery and thank him for his faithful