

national security, and it is imperative that they be reauthorized before they expire at the end of this year. The reauthorization bill is narrow in scope, and many amendments were proposed at the committee markup that had little or nothing to do with the reauthorization of FISA. As I stated during the markup, I may have supported or been open to working out a compromise on several of the amendments in other contexts. However, I voted in opposition to all of the extraneous amendments offered because I felt their adoption would threaten the timely passage of the FISA reauthorization bill. That is not a risk I was willing to take.

In particular, as for Senator KYL's amendment to criminalize certain behavior that would reward past terrorist acts and Senator GRASSLEY's amendment to impose the death penalty on terrorists who use weapons of mass destruction, I want to make clear that I strongly oppose the funding of terrorism and I believe that terrorists should be subject to the death penalty. I support the objectives of both of these amendments, but I was concerned that their adoption by the committee could delay or prevent passage of the FISA reauthorization bill. I am prepared to work with Senator KYL and Senator GRASSLEY to address these important issues at a more appropriate time going forward.

I hope that these amendments and others are raised in the appropriate context so they can be adequately addressed.

#### TRIBUTE TO COLONEL PAUL W. BRICKER

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, our men and women in uniform sacrifice much to keep our Nation strong and free. They are well-trained, extraordinarily capable and are some of our country's best and brightest. It is with this in mind that I recognize COL Paul W. Bricker as he retires from the United States Army this week. Colonel Bricker has served our country in uniform for more than a quarter of a century, and I am honored to congratulate him on a long and distinguished military career.

COL Paul W. Bricker has served as the Chief of the Army's Senate Liaison Division since May 2011. As a member of the Secretary of the Army's Office of Legislative Liaison, Colonel Bricker was responsible for advising Army senior leadership on legislative and congressional issues, as well as assisting Senators and our staff on Army matters. It is in this capacity that my Armed Services Committee staff and I have worked closely with Colonel Bricker. Throughout his tenure, he has consistently provided important technical expertise and useful insight on the issues, challenges and opportunities that face our soldiers and their families and has exemplified the highest level of professionalism. I also benefited from Colonel Bricker's organiza-

tional diligence and military insights on a number of congressional delegation trips over the past year, including to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey and NATO. The success of these trips were due in large part to Colonel Bricker's careful preparation and adaptability in making course corrections on the fly, often literally.

Colonel Bricker has strong Michigan roots. He is a native of northern Michigan and a proud graduate of Michigan State University, where, upon graduation, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant of Aviation. Colonel Bricker has served in a variety of tactical and operational assignments from platoon to corps level in airborne, air assault, light infantry, and motorized units in the United States, Afghanistan, Iraq, and South Korea. He has commanded in combat with the 82nd Airborne Division at both the battalion and brigade level. Additionally, in 2007, he served as the 82nd Airborne Division's Rear Detachment Commander, and from 2005–2006, as the Chief of Aviation for the Multi National Corps-Iraq.

From 2008 to 2010, Colonel Bricker commanded the 82nd Airborne Division's Combat Aviation Brigade and led them to war on short notice as part of the Afghanistan surge. He assumed no-notice responsibility for the DoD Consequence Management Response Force Aviation Brigade while simultaneously executing Department of the Army Pilot Reset. Once in Afghanistan, his brigade supported more than 40,000 coalition troops in Regional Command-South with lift, reconnaissance, MEDEVAC, and attack aviation. They executed the largest air assault in our nation's history without error or incident, a testament to his exceptional leadership. Colonel Bricker's brigade was commended by the ISAF Joint Command Deputy Commander for his exceptional maintenance and safety record under the most trying combat conditions.

We know that our military personnel don't shoulder the stress and sacrifice of military service alone, and Colonel Bricker is no exception. His wife, Katie, and their three children, Jacob, Jesse and Sophia, have proudly stood by his side, sacrificing time with their husband and father while he fulfills his military commitments.

As he retires, Colonel Bricker leaves behind an impressive record of military service and his counsel, professionalism and expertise will surely be missed. Throughout his service to our Nation, Colonel Bricker has been a shining example for the people of Michigan and the United States, and for this, we offer him our heartfelt thanks. I know my colleagues join me in wishing Colonel Bricker and his family all the best as he begins the next chapter in his life.

#### 22ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, July 26, 1990—22 years ago today was a great day in our Nation's history. When President George Herbert Walker Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act, we could see the future before us, full of possibility and opportunity for people with disabilities. It was one of the proudest days of my legislative career.

The Americans with Disabilities Act is one of the landmark civil rights laws of the 20th century—a long-overdue emancipation proclamation for Americans with disabilities. The ADA has played a huge role in making our country more accessible, in raising the expectations of people with disabilities about what they can hope to achieve at work and in life, and in inspiring the world to view disability issues through the lens of equality and opportunity.

In these times, it is valuable to remember that passage of the original Americans with Disabilities Act was a robustly bipartisan effort. As chief sponsor of the ADA in the Senate, I worked very closely with Senator Bob Dole and others on both sides of the aisle. We received invaluable support from President George Herbert Walker Bush and key members of his administration, including White House Counsel Boyden Gray, Attorney General Dick Thornburgh, and Transportation Secretary Sam Skinner. Other Members of Congress also played critical roles in passing the ADA first and foremost, Senator Ted Kennedy; but also Senator ORRIN HATCH, and Representatives Tony Coelho, STENY HOYER, Major Owens, and Steve Bartlett.

Before the ADA, life was very different for folks with disabilities in Iowa and across the country. Being an American with a disability meant not being able to ride on a bus because there was no lift, not being able to attend a concert or ball game because there was no accessible seating, and not being able to cross the street in a wheelchair because there were no curb cuts. In short, it meant not being able to work or participate in community life. Discrimination was both commonplace and accepted.

Since then, we have seen amazing progress. The ADA literally transformed the American landscape by requiring that architectural and communications barriers be removed and replaced with accessible features such as ramps, lifts, curb cuts, widening doorways, and closed captioning. More importantly, the ADA gave millions of Americans the opportunity to participate in their communities. We have made substantial progress in advancing the four goals of the ADA—equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency.

But despite this progress, we still have more work to do. Last month marked the 13th anniversary of the

U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, which held that the ADA requires that people with significant disabilities be given a meaningful opportunity to live and remain in their communities, with the appropriate supports and services, rather than having to live in an institution or nursing home in order to receive the services they need. Yet too many people with significant disabilities still do not have access to these home and community-based long-term services and supports—and we must do more. Last month, following a hearing I chaired to assess the progress we have made on this issue in the various States, I sent a letter to the Governor of each State with information about the variety of new tools available through the Medicaid Program to make it easier to provide community-based services, including the Community First Choice Option and the Money Follows the Person Program. I asked each Governor to let me know by September 7 what they are doing within their State to ensure that the promise of the ADA and *Olmstead* is being met.

We have made significant progress in the last 22 years in making sure that public transportation options, such as buses, are fully accessible to people with disabilities. But we have not made similar progress on the accessibility of taxicabs. During the past year, there have been major advances in New York City on this issue, and I commend Governor Cuomo and the disability advocates. However, we still have a lot of work to do here in Washington, DC, and in other major metropolitan areas of this country. When I was in London last year, every taxicab was accessible to people with disabilities, through universal design. There is no reason that we cannot work toward this same goal here in the United States.

Yet the most critical challenge we still need to address is the persistently low employment rates among Americans with disabilities.

More than two-thirds of working-age adults with disabilities are not part of the labor force. This is shameful, and we need to do better.

Sometimes a picture is more powerful than any words, so I ask you to look at the chart that I have here. This chart compares the labor force participation rates of working-age Americans in the general population, with the participation rates among women, African Americans, Latinos, and people with disabilities between 1990 and 2011.

Less than 35 percent of American adults with disabilities were in the workforce when we passed the ADA in 1990, and less than 20 percent of this population was in the workforce in 2011. Although our country continues to have employment gaps for women, African Americans, and Latinos, the gap for workers with disabilities is many times the gap for these other groups.

The other noteworthy trend this chart shows is that workers with dis-

abilities often don't benefit even when our economy is doing well. Between 1994 and 2000 and between 2005 and 2007 you can see that while labor participation rates went up for other groups, they were either flat or declining for workers with disabilities.

Since the passage of the ADA we have not made a lot of progress on increasing the employment rate of people with disabilities. This was partly due to the confusion about the requirements of the ADA's employment provisions caused by the U.S. Supreme Court's decisions in the Sutton trilogy in 1999 and the Toyota case in 2002. But in 2008, we passed the ADA Amendments Act which once and for all clarified the definition of "disability" and started the clock anew on our efforts to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

But I believe our country is on the verge of major progress on the issue of disability employment. I released a report last week calling on the country to finally make this issue a national priority, because I believe in my heart that we can make substantial progress in the next 3 years. A copy of that report, entitled "Unfinished Business: Making Employment of People with Disabilities a National Priority," is available on the HELP Committee Web site.

I think we are on the cusp of making real progress on this issue for a number of reasons.

First, we have a new generation of young adults with disabilities who grew up since the passage of the ADA, sometimes referred to as the "ADA Generation." These young people have high expectations for themselves. This generation sees disability as a natural part of human experience and does not carry the fears, myths, and stereotypes that lowered expectations for individuals with disabilities in earlier generations.

Along with the ADA generation, we have hundreds of thousands of returning soldiers from Iraq and Afghanistan who do not want their visible and invisible war injuries to prevent them from having a career and supporting their families. These veterans are demonstrating their leadership in our civilian workforce just as they did in service to our country.

In part, to seize on these demographic advantages, I worked with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to set a goal last year that we increase the size of the disability labor force by over 20 percent by 2015. With the leadership of people with disabilities, the Chamber of Commerce, along with elected officials and businesses like Walgreens and Lowes who have also made this a priority, I think we are at a real tipping point.

In particular, Walgreens has been a leader in employing people with disabilities. I attended a CEO Summit on disability employment at Walgreens' distribution center in Windsor, CT, last month, and saw firsthand how

Walgreens built a distribution center designed for a diverse workforce, a distribution center with about half of its employees being people with disabilities, a distribution center that is just as productive as the other Walgreens distribution centers, and is in fact outperforming all of Walgreens' other distribution centers on key indicators like time away from work, turnover, and workplace safety.

Today I hosted a roundtable with many different stakeholders, including Members of the House and Senate on a bipartisan basis, Federal and State government officials, people with disabilities, business leaders, and foundations—all committed to increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities in competitive employment.

If all of us—Members of Congress, business leaders, employers, and people with disabilities—work together, I believe that we can meet the goal of 1 million new workers with disabilities—and ensure that all individuals with disabilities have real opportunities for employment that meet their goals, interests, and high expectations.

So as we celebrate the anniversary of this great civil rights law, we take time to remember the remarkable progress that we have made in the past 22 years, as well as the progress that we will continue to make—including today.

Today, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee marked up the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, CRPD, and approved the treaty on a bipartisan vote of 13 to 6. This brings us one step closer to bringing the convention before the full Senate. I would like to thank my colleague, Chairman KERRY, for considering this convention in such a timely manner, and also Senator MCCAIN for his commitment to this issue. I am proud to support the convention's goal to ensure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

Americans with disabilities already enjoy these rights at home. However, U.S. citizens with disabilities, including our veterans, frequently face barriers when they travel, conduct business, study, or reside overseas. Ratification of the convention would underscore the enduring U.S. commitment to disability rights and enhance the ability of the United States to promote these rights overseas.

American ratification of the convention would not require us to change any U.S. laws, and the amendments adopted today in committee make this abundantly, explicitly clear. The ADA and disability rights issues have always enjoyed bipartisan support, and passage of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities should as well. I am pleased to note the convention is supported by former Senator Dole, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 21 veterans groups and countless disability rights advocates.

On July 26, 1990, when he signed ADA into law, President George Herbert Walker Bush spoke with great eloquence. And I will never forget his final words before taking up his pen. He said, "Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down."

Mr. President, today, that wall is indeed falling. And we must join together, on a bipartisan basis, to continue this progress.

#### VA AND NIH JOINT PARKINSON'S DISEASE RESEARCH

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I would like to take a moment to recognize the Department of Veterans Affairs and the National Institutes of Health, NIH, for their research into an innovative surgery that has demonstrated success in improving the stability of muscle movement for veterans with Parkinson's disease. VA and NIH's joint research collaboration regarding deep brain stimulation therapy has furthered the medical community's understanding of Parkinson's disease and will be incredibly valuable to doctors and Parkinson's patients throughout the world.

For many individuals, medication alone is insufficient when it comes to dealing with neurological diseases such as Parkinson's disease. VA and NIH conducted research into an alternative treatment option known as deep brain stimulation therapy to test the long-term outcomes of the treatment. Deep brain stimulation therapy is a surgical procedure that implants electrodes into specific stimulation sites within the brain. These electrodes are then able to send electrical pulses to areas of the brain that controls movement and motor control and helps mitigate the symptoms of Parkinson's disease as well as reduce some of the side effects caused by medication. Thanks to deep brain stimulation therapy, thousands of individuals suffering from Parkinson's disease have experienced a dramatic improvement in their quality of life.

Since deep brain stimulation therapy was approved by the Food and Drug Administration, FDA, as a therapy for Parkinson's disease in the late 1990s, there has been an ongoing debate about which stimulation sites within the brain provide the best and most durable treatment outcomes and how long those results last. To better understand the role that stimulation sites play in deep brain stimulation therapy, VA and NIH conducted a 3-year clinical trial. The trial ultimately found that the benefits gained from deep brain stimulation therapy remained after 3 years and the benefits from the surgery were not dependent by which stimulation site was selected for implantation.

This is the type of research that is crucial to providing the care that our Nation's veterans need and deserve. Thanks to the hard work of VA and NIH researchers, the 40,000 veterans

living with Parkinson's disease whom VA cares for along with Parkinson's patients across the world will be better equipped to make informed decisions about their treatment options.

In closing, I commend VA and NIH for their efforts to combat a disease that affects so many of America's veterans.

#### TRIBUTE TO AMBASSADOR L. BRUCE LAINGEN

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to honor an accomplished diplomat and distinguished public servant, Ambassador L. Bruce Laingen. On August 6, Bruce will celebrate his 90th birthday. I want to take this momentous occasion to reflect on his contributions and efforts in support of our Nation. Despite the personal sacrifice, Bruce honorably served the United States with expert skill and dedication throughout his long career.

Bruce was born and raised on a farm in southern Minnesota. He joined the U.S. Navy, and served our Nation during World War II. Bruce received his officer training at Wellesley College in 1943, and attended the University of Dubuque in Iowa for general Naval training. He was a commissioned officer in the Naval Supply Corps. Bruce served in the Pacific with amphibious forces in the Philippine campaigns. After World War II, Bruce graduated from St. Olaf College in Minnesota in 1947. He went on to further his education at the University of Minnesota, where he received a Master's degree in International Relations in 1949.

As a result of his passion and interest in what was happening across the globe, Bruce dedicated 38 years to the Foreign Service. He joined the Foreign Service in 1949, and served this Nation across the world in Germany, Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. The United States was very fortunate to have Bruce serve as U.S. Ambassador to Malta from 1977 to 1979.

In June 1979, Bruce returned to Iran to serve as the U.S. Charge d'Affaires in the wake of the Iranian revolution. Within a few months of his arrival, a group of demonstrators took over the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. The students and militants were protesting the United States' relationship with the government of Iran and the Shah's entry into the United States on humanitarian grounds. On November 4, 1979, Bruce was taken hostage along with more than 60 other Americans. For a total of 444 days, he and 51 other Americans were held hostage in Iran. Throughout the entire ordeal, he worked diligently to protect the hostages and resolve the crisis. He showed true professionalism and strength. In his book *Yellow Ribbon: The Secret Journal of Bruce Laingen*, Bruce describes his personal perspective and thoughts about the events that took place over those 444 days.

Shortly after Bruce's capture, his wife Penelope "Penne" Laingen tied a

yellow ribbon around an oak tree on their lawn in Maryland to symbolize her hope for a safe return for her husband and all of the hostages. Penne encouraged others to show their support and determination to be reunited with their loved ones through the use of yellow ribbons. The original yellow ribbon was later donated to the Library of Congress. It is because of her efforts that Penne is credited with founding the yellow ribbon campaign during the Iran hostage crisis.

After his release, Bruce became the Vice President of the National Defense University until he retired from the Foreign Service in 1987. He went on to be the Executive Director of the National Commission on Public Service from 1987 until 1990. Between 1991 and 2006, Bruce was President of the American Academy of Diplomacy.

Bruce continued to share his expertise and knowledge through his efforts on several distinguished Boards of Directors including No Greater Love, A Presidential Classroom for Young Americans, the Mercersburg Academy in Pennsylvania, and the National Defense University Foundation. I had the honor of working with Bruce on the Board of Directors of the Presidential Classroom. He has been a strong advocate for this wonderful program, which encourages students to learn about how their government works and aspire to leadership through public service.

Bruce has received many honors as a result of his brave service to our Nation. He was awarded the Department of State's Award for Valor, the Department of Defense's Distinguished Public Service Medal, the Presidential Meritorious Award, and the Foreign Service Cup.

I am grateful for his willingness to serve our Nation and provide strong leadership in implementing the foreign policy goals of the United States. Bruce, Penne, and their three sons Bill, Chip, and Jim have given so much to our Nation.

#### CROWDFUNDING

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an issue that I and many of my colleagues are very excited about: crowdfunding, which allows startups and small businesses to harness the power of the Internet to pool investments from ordinary Americans intrigued by their ideas. These ideas can range from revolutionary new technologies to simple projects that can improve communities in need.

If crowdfunding is going to take off, this new market needs to inspire confidence in both investors and small businesses. That is why in December of 2011, I introduced S. 1970 with Senators MICHAEL BENNET and MARY LANDRIEU and in March of this year the bipartisan, compromise crowdfunding amendment with Senators MICHAEL BENNET and SCOTT BROWN. That amendment passed the Senate by a vote of 64 to 35 and was included in the