

An advocate for people with disabilities, Deborah Kendrick of Cincinnati, recently wrote that supporting the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is “the good old-fashioned right thing to do.”

She is absolutely right. The CRPD is an antidiscrimination treaty, a civil rights issue, a human rights issue. It embraces the values of our own Americans with Disabilities Act.

It will not affect U.S. law and does not infringe upon U.S. sovereignty. Ratifying this treaty does allow us to reassert our leadership globally on disability rights. It will give us a seat at the table as parties to the convention grapple with how best to implement it. This treaty is important for Americans with disabilities, including soldiers and veterans when they work abroad, study abroad or simply travel abroad. That is why I urge my colleagues to join in ratifying this treaty, to stand up for people with disabilities in Ohio, throughout America, and around the world.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DAVID BETTS DOUBLE PLAY DIAMOND

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam President, I rise to commemorate the grand opening of the David Betts Double Play Diamond, which will take place a week from today in Bryan, OH.

As the result of a community's commitment to working together, an unused farm field will soon cultivate the next generation of Bryan-area baseball players—nourishing friendships and supporting sportsmanship.

This new indoor field in Williams County honors the life of an extraordinary young Ohioan.

David Betts would have been 26 years old on December 10, 2012, the day that this field will open for members of the entire Bryan community to enjoy.

David, the beloved son of John and Joy, died in a March 2007 motorcoach accident along with other members of the Bluffton University baseball team in Atlanta, GA.

He was a graduate of Bryan High School.

After this tragedy, John and Joy Betts made a promise that David's

death—and the loss of four other players and the bus driver and his wife—would not be in vain.

Out of the Bluffton bus tragedy—and other tragedies like it—Senator HUTCHISON and I introduced the Motorcoach Enhanced Safety Act—to help prevent the loss of life on our nation's roadways.

President Obama signed the bill into law earlier this year to ensure that tour buses are equipped with seatbelts, stronger roofs, safer windows, and drivers that are better trained.

This safety bill was written with the support of the Betts Family, the Bryan community, and a national community of people who have lost loved ones in motorcoach crashes.

Some 5 years later, this close-knit Ohio community also has a tangible monument in memory of one of their sons.

May the David Betts Double Play Diamond serve as a remembrance to this wonderful young man and help this community continue to heal and move forward.

HONOR FLIGHT OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the military service of a group of remarkable Coloradans. At critical times in our Nation's history, these veterans played a role in defending the world from tyranny, truly earning their reputation as guardians of democracy and peace through their service and sacrifice. Now, thanks to an organization dedicated to honoring those who have defended us abroad, these great Coloradans have come to Washington, D.C. to visit the national memorials built to honor their service, to share their experiences with later generations, and to pay tribute to those who gave their lives. It was an honor to have them here, and I join with all Coloradans in thanking them for all they have done for us.

I also want to say a word about the volunteers from Honor Flight of Northern Colorado who made this trip possible. They are great Coloradans in their own right, and their mission to bring our Northern Colorado veterans to Washington, D.C. is truly commendable. They have been doing great work since their inception in 2008 and their flight in September brought another group of American heroes to Washington, D.C. The volunteers of Honor Flight of Northern Colorado believe our veteran heroes aren't asking for recognition, but they certainly deserve it. This opportunity to come to Washington is just a small token of appreciation for those who gave so much.

I want to publicly recognize the members of the Northern Colorado Honor Flight who are visiting their Nation's capital today, many seeing for the first time the memorials that stand as a tribute to their selfless service. These Coloradans risked their lives to

defend freedom, and they have earned our deepest respect. I rise today to thank the veterans of Northern Colorado Honor Flight, and pause to remember those who laid down their lives for us all. I would like to read the names of all those who made this visit to our Nation's capital and to each of them, I say thank you.

Veterans from World War II include: Willard Bauer, Robert Bell, Edward Coleman, Floyd Ewing, Albert Fairweather, Marvin Fowler, Elwyn Frazier, Robert Fulton, William Garcia, Edward Glover, Herold Hettinger, Raymond Holiday, Buford Johnson, William Kamlade, Donald Lawless, Russell Maxwell, Dale Norwood, Philip Owen, Paul Painter, George Parker, Theodore Pratt, Henry Redd, Kenneth Robb, Harley Rouze, Harold Scatterday, Dean Severin, Leonie Shannon, Keith Simons, Jacob Stieb Jr., Howard Teague, Margaret Thompson, Charles Vogel, Thomas Weathers, Victor Weidmann, Milo Whitcomb, John Williams, and Quentin Younglund. Veterans from the Korean War include:

Bobby Andersen, Emmett Achuletta, Donald Armagost, Robert Arnbrecht, Gary Beverlin, Stanley Black, Ronald Brasseur, Earl Buckendorf, Robert Buttner, Donald Campbell, Clarence Carnes, Jerald Clark, Robert Clayton, Keith Coates, Kenneth Comin, Victor Crenshaw, Dean Daggett, Lester Edgett, Arnold Engele, Roy Erickson, William Erickson, Bernard Erthal, Donald Fenske, Donald Fickenschner, Russell Foster, Franklin Fronek, Porfello Garbiso, William Goble, Carl Goeglein, Delbert Gorsline, George Gray, Kenneth Hoff, Robert Hull, Robert Jones Jr., George Knaub, Arthur Kober, John Leach, Roger London, Willard Loose, Joseph Lopez, Arthur Lukemire, Charles Mahoney, Eathon Marr, Vernon Marston, Robert Martin, George Maxey, Loren Maxey, and Albert Melcher.

Veterans who served in Vietnam include:

Leonard Beutelspacher, John Gruver, Gaylord Mekelburg, and Cloyd Rael.

And from the War in Iraq:

Marshall Spring

Our Nation asked a great deal of these individuals. They left their families to fight in distant lands against our nation's enemies. And each of these brave Coloradans bravely answered the call, placing themselves between this country and harm. They served our country through dangerous times, when democratic nations and ideals around the world were threatened, and they saved millions of people from falling to fascism and tyranny.

Please join me in thanking these American veterans and the volunteers of Honor Flight of Northern Colorado for their tremendous service to an eternally grateful nation.

REMEMBERING LARRY HAGMAN

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Larry Hagman, who passed away

last week in Dallas at the age of 81. Like most Americans and millions around the world, I knew Larry Hagman as J.R. Ewing, the best loved villain in television history. But I was also fortunate to know Larry as a passionate advocate and friend, and I will miss him.

J.R. was larger than life, but Larry Hagman's life was much more than his most famous character. He was a devoted family man, a true friend, and an active citizen who worked with me to ensure that our families are protected from pollution and toxins. He also worked for years to fight lung cancer and promote alternative energy. His tireless commitment to improving his community and country continued until the very end of his extraordinary life. Just last month he launched the Larry Hagman Foundation to promote the educational benefits of theater, visual arts, music and dance and to fund organizations providing these instructional programs for low-income children.

Born in Fort Worth, Larry was brought up by his maternal grandmother in Los Angeles. After attending a series of boarding schools, he moved back to Texas to live with his father, attorney Benjamin Hagman, whose clients later helped shape the character of J.R. Ewing. In 1951, Larry's mother—the great stage actress Mary Martin—got him a small role in the London production of *South Pacific*. A year later, Larry joined the Air Force and stayed in Europe as a director of USO theatrical shows.

After working in New York theater and television, Larry Hagman became a TV star in the 1960s as Major Tony Nelson in the popular comedy series "I Dream of Jeannie." In the 1970s, he appeared in numerous movies and television shows before landing the role of a lifetime on the primetime soap opera "Dallas."

As the charming and conniving businessman J.R. Ewing, Larry Hagman was the best-known television actor on earth. In 1980, between two seasons of "Dallas," hundreds of millions of fans in 57 countries anxiously awaited the answer to the most famous question in TV history: "Who Shot J.R.?" Last year, Larry returned to television to begin a new series of "Dallas," which became a hit on the TNT network; he was at work on the new season when he died.

On behalf of the people of California and Larry's millions of fans and admirers, I send my appreciation and condolences to his wife, Maj; his children, Preston and Kristina; and his five granddaughters. I know that they—and all of us—will miss this marvelous man.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

STOCKTON GURDWARA 100TH ANNIVERSARY

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating

the 100th anniversary of the Stockton Gurdwara, the first Sikh temple in the United States.

In the 1890s, the first Sikh immigrants, mostly from Punjab in northwestern India, arrived at Angel Island Immigration Station. These pioneering immigrants had crossed the vast Pacific and came to the shores of California in hopes of a better and freer life.

The San Joaquin Valley of California, with its Mediterranean climate and abundance of fertile soil and arable land reminded the new immigrants of their native Punjab, and became a place where many of them settled to raise crops that were native to Punjab.

A tight-knit community, the Sikh residents of the San Joaquin Valley formed a committee to raise money for a temple. In September 1912, a plot of land was purchased on South Grant Street in Stockton to build the first Sikh temple in the United States. When the temple was consecrated on November 22, 1915, the Stockton Record reported that it was celebrated with impressive ceremonies. The Stockton Gurdwara became the birthplace of Sikhism in America.

Over the past century, the Stockton Gurdwara has been a site of both religious and historical significance. It was home to America's first Punjabi-language newspaper and to the Ghadar Party, which supported Indian independence for decades before it was achieved. Bhagat Singh Thind, a civil rights advocate and the first Sikh to serve in the United States Army during World War I, and Dalip Singh Saund, the first Asian American elected to Congress, were members of the Stockton Gurdwara.

Today, the Stockton Gurdwara remains the spiritual home to generations of Sikh Americans in the San Joaquin Valley. It also stands as a testament to the rich history, invaluable contributions, and progress of the Sikh community in America.

I congratulate the Stockton Gurdwara on its 100th anniversary and wish its members continued success.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 6429. An act to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to promote innovation, investment, and research in the United States, to eliminate the diversity immigrant program, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 6429. An act to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to promote innovation, investment, and research in the United States, to eliminate the diversity immigrant program, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-8375. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Flood Elevation Determinations" ((44 CFR Part 67) (Docket No. FEMA-2012-0003)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 28, 2012; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8376. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Suspension of Community Eligibility" ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2012-0003)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 28, 2012; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8377. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a transaction involving U.S. exports to Indonesia, Singapore, and/or Malaysia; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8378. A communication from the President of the Federal Financing Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2012; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-8379. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to groups designated by the Secretary of State as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (OSS 2012-1740); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-8380. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Assessing and Managing Risk Before Maintenance Activities at Nuclear Power Plants" (Regulatory Guide 1.82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 28, 2012; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-8381. A communication from the Acting Administrator, Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's annual financial audit and management report for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-8382. A communication from the Director, National Science Foundation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the Foundation's fiscal year 2012 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-8383. A joint communication from the Chairman and the Acting General Counsel, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of Inspector General Semiannual Report for the period of April 1, 2012 through September 30, 2012; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-8384. A communication from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) address for the Department of Veterans Affairs 2012 Performance and Accountability Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.