

COMMEMORATING THE 84TH
BIRTHDAY OF HIS MAJESTY
KING BHUMIBOL ADULYADEJ

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, on behalf of myself as ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Senator JAMES INHOFE, the ranking member of the East Asia and Pacific Subcommittee, I rise today to commemorate the 85th birthday anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej who has reigned for 66 years as King of Thailand.

Over 50 years ago, the King, also known as Rama IX, a long-time and proven friend of the United States, addressed a Joint Session of Congress. He and the people of Thailand have partnered with the people of the United States in war and in peace. As noted in the recent Thailand-U.S. Joint Vision Statement preceding President Obama's recent trip to Thailand, "... the Thai-U.S. defense alliance has promoted regional stability by fostering cooperation in areas that enables both nations to address shared security concerns effectively".

The King has been internationally recognized for his consistent dedication to promote the well-being of the Thai people. Among the awards received is the U.N. Development Program First Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award. Over the last 60 years the King has initiated thousands of development projects throughout Thailand addressing a wide range of challenges including public health and education, agricultural development and reforestation.

Mr. President, in the Congress extensive time and effort are dedicated to the consideration of major challenges to the United States, domestically and overseas. Endless debate carries on to determine how to deal with leaders in those countries who do not share democratic values, and in fact are opposed to the United States actively engaging in global free trade and the promotion of our national security.

Consequently, it is a pleasure and an honor on behalf of Senator INHOFE and myself to highlight the life of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who has been steadfast in his friendship to the American people. He is the longest-reigning monarch in the history of Thailand and currently the world's longest-reigning monarch as well.

Mr. President I was pleased to recently visit Thailand and meet with government officials regarding Thailand's participation in the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction, CTR, Program. Thailand is actively working to counter biological threats. Among other areas, the U.S. will also continue to work to help Thailand control infectious disease that could become the source of a pandemic or the target of terrorists seeking to create a biological weapon.

In conclusion, I am grateful for the overall relationship between our two countries, and look forward to developments in the future which will bring us closer together.

• Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, December 5 marks the 85th birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand. I would like to offer my sincerest congratulations to His Majesty and to the people of Thailand as they commemorate his 66-year reign of Thailand.

The United States and Thailand have had an extensive, close relationship for nearly 200 years, beginning with the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in 1833. This treaty—the first U.S. treaty in Asia—cemented the friendship between the American and Thai people. King Bhumibol has nurtured this relationship in line with our shared values of democracy and rule law. He has been a vital supporter of a free and open society in Thailand and a stabilizing force in the government's transitions of political power. As the world's longest serving monarch, he has placed his commitment to the Thai people above all.

I have visited Thailand many times over a span of more than 30 years. As chairman of the East Asia and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee, I was fortunate to continue this close relationship, visiting Thailand numerous times to meet Thai leaders, and reaffirm my support for a strong alliance with the United States. I would like to thank King Bhumibol and the Thai government for the courtesies extended to me over the past 6 years of my service in the U.S. Senate. Going forward, I am confident that the U.S.-Thai alliance will continue to be a critical partnership in guaranteeing stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. President, I am so pleased to join the people of Thailand in celebrating the birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, and extend my best wishes to His Majesty for his good health.●

GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I would like to thank Senator WICKER for bringing attention to the need for the Department of Defense, and all Federal agencies, to include American-made wood products in green building standards and rating systems.

I would also like to express my continued support for Federal Government measures designed to spur the design and construction of high-performance green buildings.

However, I am concerned that discouraging certain wood building products and materials from use in Federal buildings because they do not comply with the LEED standard but are otherwise acceptable for U.S. building projects, may undermine the Federal Government's energy efficiency goals.

Wood products are among the most "green" of all building materials.

With the green building market estimated to reach as high as \$140 billion by 2013, securing a strong place for wood is essential to the wood products industry's future growth.

Wood is an ideal green building material because it is renewable, stores carbon that reduces greenhouse gases, and is energy efficient.

There are several green building rating systems being used by Federal agencies and the private marketplace now, and the competition among these systems has resulted in improvements in all of the green building standards. Some of these rating systems recognize the benefits of American-made wood products in their scoring system.

It is important that the Department of Defense, General Services Administration and other Federal agencies ensure that multiple green building standards be considered for the design and construction of Federal buildings.

I believe the best approach is to permit the marketplace to decide which rating system is best suited for each project and Congress should encourage all of the rating systems to compete for government contracts.

REMEMBERING NORMA HOLMGREN

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity today to pay tribute to a wonderful woman, devoted mother and grandmother, loyal friend, exceptional employee, and patriotic American Norma Holmgren. Norma was my Northern Utah Area Director for 26 years and was devoted to our state and nation.

Sadly, Norma passed away this past weekend, as a result of a tragic accident as she was taking her daily walk. Norma kept herself very active and physically fit and you could often find Norma walking the streets of her neighborhood enjoying her surroundings and neighbors.

Norma retired from public service almost 10 years ago, however her retirement did not stop her from participating in her community and continuing her interest in republican politics. In fact, my staff contacted her last week to seek her advice on a constituent's request. She was always available and happy to share her knowledge. She spent many years working for the ideas and philosophy of the Republican Party, and assumed numerous leadership positions to further the cause. Norma loved politics and even after leaving the government and political arena, she still loved a good political conversation and was keenly interested in what was happening in our state and nation.

Norma was a ferocious reader, and it was not unusual for Norma to visit her local Costco and buy up to 20 books at a time. She loved to learn and continue her education on so many issues, and would spend hours curled up with a good book.

She also loved antiques and was widely known for her collections that she beautifully displayed throughout her home. She would often invite friends to come and see her latest find or beautiful item and she was very proud of her life-long interest of antiques.

Norma accomplished many great things in her life, yet perhaps her greatest accomplishment was the loving care and nurture she always displayed to her son Randy and his wife, whom she dearly loved. She also adored being a grandmother, and took great pride in her family and the relationships they shared. I had the pleasure of hosting Norma's granddaughter Emily as a Senate page several years ago and I could see first-hand the great traits Norma had instilled in her granddaughter.

I am grateful I had the opportunity to work with Norma for many years, and consider her a true friend. She believed in public service and demonstrated her commitment to excellence on so many occasions. She was a fierce advocate for the military and spent years working as a liaison for me at Hill Air Force Base where she garnered the respect and admiration of the military leaders on the Base. Her influence in so many areas will never be forgotten.

Norma's life touched many and she will be forever remembered as someone who truly cared about her family, her friends, and in doing good for her community. Elaine and I would like to extend our deepest sympathies to Norma's family at the loss of their mother and grandmother; and pray that they will find some peace and comfort in the memories they have shared.

TRIBUTE TO MARREEN CASPER

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, thank you for the opportunity today to pay tribute to a wonderful woman, dedicated public servant and loyal friend Marreen Casper. Marreen is retiring from my staff at the end of the year and she will be very missed.

Marreen joined my staff in 1999 and has been a shining star. She has tackled some of the most difficult assignments that have faced my Utah Senate Offices. She started as a Federal grants coordinator and caseworker. However, when a need arose to fill a very important position in my organization, she willingly sold her house, and packed up and moved to St. George, UT to become my Southern Utah Field Director.

Marreen has filled this position with dogged determination, and a noteworthy attention to details. She quickly immersed herself into the community and became a true Southern Utahn. She was always available to meet with and listen to the citizens of this area of our State. She has attended literally hundreds of local government meetings, and discussed the issues affecting Southern Utah with many mayors, county commission and council members, and community leaders every day she served. She has such a warm demeanor and accepting personality that people from all walks of life and positions felt comfortable to discuss with Marreen the issues important to them, and know that she would try to do something to help. She has

made friends in every nook and cranny of southern Utah and earned the respect of many.

One aspect of her job that many do not realize, is the travel she undertook to fulfill her duties to the best of her ability. Marreen's field area includes one of the most remote and unpopulated areas in the continental United States. Traveling in her area can get very harrowing at times, but Marreen never let it stop her from doing her job. She has traveled the icy roads in the dead of winter, attended outdoor meetings in the searing heat, and even crashed on an ATV she was riding on for an event that sent her to the Emergency Room.

And some of the issues Marreen has worked on might seem trivial to some, but have long-ranging impacts on rural Utah. These issues have ranged from prairie dogs, desert tortoises, and Mexican wolves; to fighting with the Army Corps of Engineers over whether a dry wash is a "navigable body of water." I am not sure that she will miss the tedious nature of some of these issues, but I am certain she will miss the people in the many communities she worked with to find solutions to the problems.

There has been no assignment ever given to Marreen that she did not fulfill willingly and with a great determination to see it through. In fact, Marreen has undertaken one of the most tedious, yet important projects every year the Hatch Family Christmas Card. This is a project I am certain she would like to have run from, yet year after year she planned, organized, and ensured that this card was sent to thousands of Utahns helping me stay in touch with so many constituents. For this seemingly thankless task, I want to sincerely convey my appreciation to her for her wonderful assistance that has meant so much to me and to the many who received it.

Although Marreen has accomplished many great things in her professional life perhaps her greatest accomplishments have come because of her wonderful partnership with her husband Ron, and her loving and tender care of her 5 children and 22 grandchildren. She dearly loves her family and expresses it often. She sincerely strives to be at every important function in the lives of her family and is often traveling great distances so she can be there for the noteworthy milestones.

She has also made her belief in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints central to her life and has served countless neighbors and friends through the goodness of her heart. In fact, when other folks might think their days of working with the youth in church service are over, Marreen accepted a call from her local Bishop to lead the Young Women's organization in her Ward. She then spent several years mentoring and helping these young women in various ways and through her beautiful example.

I am truly grateful for the tremendous service Marreen Casper has given

to me, to her community, and to our great State. I will miss Marreen greatly but know that life holds many exciting and wonderful new opportunities for her to enjoy. I want to wish Marreen the very best in retirement and want her to know that I will be forever grateful for her good work and loyal friendship. May Heavenly Father bless Marreen and her family for the honorable person she is and the service she has rendered to so many.

TRIBUTE TO TOBY HYMAN

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, Toby Hyman has become something of an institution in the Senate over the course of her 17 odd years of service in the Office of the Senate Chief Counsel for Employment. I understand that she has consistently and tirelessly devoted herself to ensuring fairness for both Senate employees and their offices, helping them sort through anything from day-to-day concerns that arise to courtroom arguments to union disputes, even in the midst of an anthrax attack on her own office.

Those who know her best say that she displays compassion for employers and employees alike, a deep understanding of employment law and conflict, and great skill resolving disputes and achieving fair outcomes for all involved parties. By all accounts, the Senate body is better today for her efforts, which is why her retirement is received with bittersweet, much deserved well-wishes for the future by her colleagues.

Before her time here, Toby spent 20 years as a fine attorney at the prestigious Proskauer Rose firm in New York City. Prior to that, she served as the first female law clerk for the Honorable District Court Judge John F. Dooling, Jr. And prior to that, she was a fine young citizen of the great State of Massachusetts.

Toby grew up in a family like so many in Boston. She is a proud product of Boston's public schools, including the Girls' Latin School in Roxbury, who excelled in her studies and earned admittance to the government program at Radcliffe College, from which she graduated magna cum laude. Toby then continued to impress her friends and peers at Harvard Law School, where she performed as an able editor of the Harvard Law Review and, once again, graduated with distinction.

To afford these years of schooling, Toby simultaneously pursued a degree in Jewish Education from Hebrew College in order to earn money teaching in Hebrew schools. She wanted to give back to her community, pass on an education that she so enjoyed to the coming generation, and work with children, all while making a little money to sustain her during college. And so she made it happen. Pleased parents affectionately labeled one of her classes the "Hebrew Sesame Street."

Service to others—standing up for fairness and justice—has been a common thread running through Toby's