

on to other Congressional or executive branch offices thanks to the skills Mike helped them develop.

Prior to joining the committee, Mike served as an Executive Assistant to former Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy and had also been Espy's Legislative Director when Espy was a Congressman.

One of the joys of my Senate career was the chance to work with talented and dedicated public servants like Michael Alexander and I want to thank him for all his hard work and wish him the best of luck in whatever his next endeavor may be.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### MARYLAND LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

• Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I want to congratulate Maryland Legal Services Corporation on their 30th anniversary. Established in 1982 by the Maryland General Assembly, Maryland Legal Services Corporation raises and distributes funds to nonprofit organizations that provide civil legal assistance to low-income persons.

As chairman of Maryland Legal Services Corporation from 1988–1995, I know firsthand the extraordinary service they provide to Marylanders. Maryland Legal Services Corporation's grants have enabled 35 Maryland-area nonprofits to assist individuals in matters such as eviction, foreclosure, domestic violence, child custody, veteran's benefits, and health care. To date, Maryland Legal Services Corporation has awarded more than \$164 million in grants, assisting Marylanders in 2 million different legal matters.

In recent years Maryland Legal Services Corporation's mission has become even more critical, as more and more people have turned to our nonprofit community for civil legal services. Studies have shown that poor households will on average face from 1 to 3 legal problems a year, and Maryland is fortunate that Maryland Legal Services Corporation has worked tirelessly to ensure that our nonprofit civil legal service providers can assist its clients.

In the Western part of our State, a couple who were 2 months behind on their mortgage and close to foreclosure was provided a volunteer attorney from Allegany Law Foundation who helped them save their home.

In Harford County, Legal Aid successfully advocated for a woman who was being sued by her credit card company after she had paid thousands of dollars to a debt settlement company believing that the company would pay off her credit card debt. Legal Aid helped her cancel her contract, get a refund and have the lawsuit dismissed.

A man on the Eastern Shore contacted his local Maryland Legal Aid Bureau with concerns about black mold that was growing in his rental unit. The landlord refused to remedy

the mold situation, so Legal Aid staff investigated the situation and helped the man escrow his rent.

Had these Marylanders not had access to civil legal assistance, what would have happened? I submit that inevitably justice suffers. Judges are put in the position of trying to provide some assistance and advice—while remaining impartial—to one or two unrepresented parties before them. Social service agencies absorb additional costs from those that are unfairly denied health care or social services benefits. Neighborhoods and communities are damaged due to unjust evictions. Families are torn apart, and domestic violence and abuse continues unabated. Public health and law enforcement costs rise. The rule of law is undermined, and Americans come to believe that justice is only for the rich, not the poor.

According to one study, each Legal Aid attorney serves over 6,800 people, while there is one private attorney for every 525 people in the nation. This is not "Equal Justice Under Law", as promised by the etching at the entrance to the United States Supreme Court. I am committed to help close the justice gap by giving the Federal Legal Services Corporation the resources it needs from Congress. This must include increasing its authorized level of funding and removing harmful funding restrictions regarding class action lawsuits and attorneys fees.

Maryland Legal Services Corporation's successes over the last 30 years are impressive, and while we celebrate all they have been able to do, we also recommit ourselves to ensuring that all people have access to quality legal representation, regardless of income.●

##### UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONS

• Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, it is with great pride that I pay tribute to my alma mater, the University of Texas at Austin, and, in particular, the Texas Longhorns Volleyball team, the 2012 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Women's Volleyball Champion.

On Saturday, December 15, 2012, the Texas Longhorns won their third national championship for women's volleyball, and first NCAA Volleyball title since 1988. After reaching their fourth NCAA Final Four in five seasons, the Longhorns outlasted the Michigan Wolverines in five sets in the semifinal to advance to Saturday's championship match. The Longhorns then proceeded to post a .438 hitting percentage in the final—breaking an NCAA record—and swept the Oregon Ducks in three sets to earn the 2012 title.

Longhorn outside hitter Bailey Webster led the way with 14 kills and a .500 hitting percentage in the championship match. After recording 96 kills and a .458 hitting percentage during the NCAA postseason, Webster was voted

as the Most Outstanding Player of the 2012 NCAA Division I Women's Volleyball Tournament. She was joined on the All-Tournament team by three Longhorn teammates: Hannah Allison, Haley Eckerman, and Sha'dare McNeal.

This was the first national championship for Jerritt Elliott, the coach of the Longhorns since 2001. Coach Elliott also guided the Longhorns to their fifth Big 12 Conference championship in six seasons and was named the 2012 American Volleyball Coaches Association AVCA Division I National Coach of the Year.

The Longhorns finished the season with a 29-4 record, and were 15-1 in conference action to claim their second straight conference title. Four Longhorn student athletes earned All-America honors. Bailey Webster and Big 12 Player of the Year Haley Eckerman were selected to the first team, and Sha'Dare McNeal and Khat Bell received honorable mention recognition.

Winning the national championship is an achievement which will long be cherished by each of these Longhorns: senior Sha'Dare McNeal; juniors Hannah Allison, Megan Futch, Sarah Palmer, and Bailey Webster; sophomores Khat Bell, Haley Eckerman, and Madelyn Hutson; freshmen Kat Brooks, Nicole Dalton, Sara Hattis, Molly McCage, and Amy Neal; coaches Jerritt Elliott, Salima Rockwell, Erik Sullivan, and special assistant Nathan Mendoza; women's athletics director Christine Plonsky; and University of Texas at Austin president Bill Powers.

One of my favorite scenes in all of Texas is found on the original Forty Acres of my alma mater. There rising 307 feet at the center of campus is the University of Texas Tower. The tower is a beacon for all Longhorns day and night, when it is flooded with light and set aglow against the nighttime sky. It is a particularly spectacular sight when Longhorn student athletes win a national championship, and the tower is bathed in burnt orange with a number "1" displayed on all sides to mark the achievement.

With the 2012 Women's Volleyball National Championship, the U.T. Tower has now been illuminated to celebrate 50 athletic national championships. Congratulations to the National Champion Texas Longhorns Women's Volleyball team, and Hook 'em Horns!●

• Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I congratulate the University of Texas women's volleyball team for their national championship victory over the University of Oregon. The Lady Longhorns swept the Ducks 3-0 to secure their first NCAA title since 1988.

It was a fitting capstone for a remarkable season, in which the Longhorns finished 29-4 and rallied from a 2-1 deficit against Michigan in the national semifinals. Their championship game against Oregon drew the second-largest crowd in tournament history.

I salute 12 veteran Head Coach Jerritt Elliot for coaching the Longhorn volleyball squad to its third national title. I also salute Associate Head Coach Salima Rockwell, Assistant Coach Erik Sullivan, and Special Assistant Nathan Mendoza, all of whom mentored these young women and helped them reach their full potential. And, of course, I salute the players themselves, such as junior outside hitter Bailey Webster, who was named Tournament MVP; All Tournament team members Haley Eckerman, Hannah Allison, and Sha'Dare McNeal; and all the rest of the Longhorns: Ashley Bannister, Khat Bell, Kat Brooks, Nicole Dalton, Megan Futch, Sara Hattis, Madelyn Hutson, Molly McCage, Amy Neal, and Sarah Palmer.

It is my honor to join with the entire University of Texas family, as well as Longhorn fans across our great State, to celebrate their achievement. In its long and proud athletic history, the University of Texas has now won 50 national titles overall.

The Longhorn volleyball team has learned what it takes to become national champions, and the experience that each of these athletes has gained will prove invaluable in their future endeavors.●

#### TRIBUTE TO VICTORIA ARLEN

● Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and honor the success of Victoria Arlen of Exeter, NH. This summer, Victoria represented the United States in a number of swimming events at the 2012 Paralympic Games in London.

Victoria Arlen is an 18-year-old young woman who 7 years ago was diagnosed with transverse myelitis, a neurological disorder that causes inflammation of a section of the spinal cord. Victoria's resulting paralysis from the waist down has not damaged her determination or her competitive spirit, and her achievements this year have been truly remarkable.

Victoria was a very active child prior to her diagnosis, and was involved in dancing, swimming, playing field hockey, lacrosse, and soccer. For more than 2 years, Victoria lived in a coma and only began swimming competitively again at the age of 16, and it came as no surprise to Victoria's family when the honors student earned a place on the U.S. Paralympic Team. In London, she competed in the 100-meter, 50-meter, 400-meter and 4x100-meter relay freestyle events and the 100-meter breaststroke event. Victoria set a world record and won a gold medal in the 100-meter freestyle, in her final competition, and earned silver medals in three of her other races.

Victoria's determination in the face of adversity and ability to accomplish her goals demonstrate her strength of spirit and her quality of character. Citizens of New Hampshire are incredibly proud of her achievements; she is a role model and an inspiration. I am

confident that her success at the 2012 Paralympic Games is one great accomplishment in what is certain to be a lifetime of impressive feats.

Since 1960, the Paralympic Games have provided athletes who have certain physical disabilities the chance to compete in a broad range of sports and athletic events on the international level, providing them with an opportunity similar to that of their able-bodied counterparts. Victoria's inspiring performance throughout the 2012 Paralympic Games should serve as a reminder of the hard work and dedication required to succeed.

I applaud and congratulate Victoria for her devotion and determination. I also commend her family, including her parents, Jacqueline and Larry, and her three brothers, Cameron, LJ, and William, for their role in her success. I know that her victories give her family, her friends, the Exeter community, and the State of New Hampshire great pride.

I wish to recognize Victoria Arlen for her accomplishments and her victory in the 2012 Paralympic Games in London, and I commend her dedication, maturity, and hard work. She is truly an inspiring young woman.●

#### TRIBUTE TO AMANDA RENTERIA

● Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a truly remarkable member of my staff who is leaving the Senate.

Amanda Renteria came to my office as a Legislative Assistant in 2006, and has been an integral member of my staff for the last 7 years, including serving as my legislative director and then my chief of staff for the last 4½ years.

A proud graduate of Stanford University and Harvard Business School, Amanda brought a wide range of experience with her to the Senate.

After graduating from Harvard, she worked in the private sector for a while before going back to California and working as a high school teacher and coach. She then worked for the city of San Jose before coming to Washington.

And I am so glad she did. She has been my right hand through some very challenging times.

When I asked her to become my chief of staff in 2008, she agreed and promised to stay through the 2012 election. But neither of us knew what we would face between then and now.

Amanda was with me through the Wall Street collapse and our work to reform our financial system, and her business background was an invaluable resource to me during that difficult time.

In the fall of 2008, the American auto industry nearly collapsed, and as I fought to save our automakers and the more than 1 million workers who depend on it, Amanda was right there by my side, working to make sure we kept manufacturing things in this country.

She was there as we worked with partners in the State and here in Wash-

ington to make sure the people of Michigan had a fair shot at turning things around and getting back on their feet.

During the debate on health care reform, she was a critical part of my effort to make sure we kept health care affordable, that we protected coverage for mental health care, that we closed the donut hole for seniors, and she worked with her counterparts in other offices and with industry leaders to get the best possible policies to help every family get the health insurance they need.

And in the middle of all of that, she found time to have her first son, Diego, and prove how important it was that women have access to maternity care, something I was very proud to fight for in the health care law.

And when I became Chairwoman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, she led the effort to put together an amazing team of policy experts that accomplished a legislative achievement that is rare these days—a bipartisan deficit reduction bill that passed the Senate with strong support from both parties.

And as we worked so hard all year long to pass a Farm Bill, she and her husband Pat found time to have their second son, T.J., who we were so happy to welcome this fall.

I know the people of Michigan—and this country—join me in thanking her for everything she has done during her time in public service. She may not have been born in Michigan, but after all she's done for the people back home, she's earned herself a "Pure Michigan" reputation of hard work and dedication.

Amanda will be missed in the Senate, but I am honored to have had her serve as my chief of staff.●

#### NOTIFICATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S INTENT TO TERMINATE THE DESIGNATION OF THE FEDERATION OF SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS AS A BENEFICIARY DEVELOPING COUNTRY UNDER THE GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES (GSP) PROGRAM—PM 64

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

In accordance with section 502(f)(2) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "1974 Act") (19 U.S.C. 2462(f)(2)), I am providing notification of my intent to terminate the designation of the Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis (St. Kitts and Nevis) as a beneficiary developing country under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program. Section 502(e) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2462(e)) provides that if the President determines that a beneficiary developing country has become a "high-income" country, as defined by the official statistics of the International