

Following his retirement from the Air Force in January 1994, Colonel Strobebridge joined the Retired Officers Association of America and served as Deputy Director and since 2001 he has served as Director of Government Relations for the Military Officers Association of America, MOAA.

Under Colonel Strobebridge's professional stewardship, MOAA has played a vital role as a principal advocate of legislative initiatives to improve readiness and the quality of life for all members of the uniformed service community—active, reserve, and retired, as well as their families.

Defense News noted recently that “no major [military] personnel-related legislation has been enacted since 1994 without Colonel Strobebridge's imprint.”

Colonel Strobebridge has worked closely with, and has been a valuable resource for, the U.S. Senate and the Senate Armed Services Committee in particular as we enacted a wide range of benefit improvements for our military personnel. He provided input or support for legislative proposals on a wide range of issues, including TRICARE for Life; the elimination of VA disability pay offsets to military retired pay for many retirees; restoration of full cost of living adjustments to retired pay; elimination of the offset to survivor annuities by Social Security payments; TRICARE benefits for reserve families; and many other initiatives that have been invaluable in improving the long-term retention in our Armed Forces.

Colonel Strobebridge's long and distinguished career of leadership and personal dedication to fostering readiness by protecting every servicemember's welfare is an inspiration and a continuing lesson to all who care about the men and women of our military. My best wishes go with him and his family.

Colonel Strobebridge, on the occasion of your retirement as Director of Government Relations for the Military Officers Association of America, I salute you on behalf of all the men and women, past and present, who wear the uniform.

THANKING STAFF

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, on Saturday, March 23, 2013, the Senate passed the budget, S. Con. Res. 8. In my statement, I thanked a few members of my staff and I would like to acknowledge the rest of my dedicated staff who worked tirelessly to pass the Senate budget:

Jeannie Biniek, Sarah Bolton, Michael Branson, Alex Brosseau, Dave Brown, Paula Burg, Josh Caplan, Stephanie Cherkezian, Ally Coll, Brendon Dorgan, Amy Edwards, Robert Etter, Jennifer Hanson, Helen Hare, Robyn Hiestand, Mike Jones, Amaia Kirtland, Tyler Kruzich, Zach Moller, Michael Oleyar, Farouk Ophaso, Jason Park, Miles Patrie, Ryan Pettit, John Righter, Josh Ryan, Evan Schatz, Brian Scholl, Emily Sharp, Eli Zupnick.

Steven Bergsbaken, Shawn Bills, Scott Cheney, Beth Chrusciel, Sean Coit, Jake

Cornett, Carole Cory, Katherine Dapper, Ariel Evans, John Fogarty, Megan Foster, Emma Fulkerson, Adam Goodwin, Dabney Hegg, Alex Keenan, Zach Mallove, Matt McAlvanah, Megahan McCarthy, Ben Merkel, Rachel Milberg, Silke Mounts, James O'Brien, Molly O'Rourke, Lauren Overman, David Prestwood, Stacy Rich, Kathryn Robertson, Meghan Roh, Alexa Seidl, Mike Spahn, Anna Sperling, Michael Waske.

POLITICAL IMPRISONMENT IN UKRAINE

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President. I would like to address the current situation in Ukraine, an important country in the heart of Europe, a bellweather for democratic development in the region, and the current Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE.

Let me first welcome the release from prison Sunday of former Ukrainian Minister of Internal Affairs and leading opposition figure Yuri Lutsenko. Mr. Lutsenko had been convicted on politically motivated charges and incarcerated since December 2010. President Yanukovich's pardon of Mr. Lutsenko is an encouraging step in the right direction. I also welcome the pardon of former Environment Minister Heorhiy Filipchuk, who also served as a member of Ms. Tymoshenko's Cabinet and had been released last year after his sentence was suspended. By pardoning Mr. Lutsenko and Mr. Filipchuk, President Yanukovich is indicating not only a willingness to resolve what has been a major irritant in Ukraine's relations with the United States and the EU, but also a stain on Ukraine's democratic credentials.

At the same time, I remain deeply concerned about the politically motivated imprisonment of Ukrainian opposition figure and former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, who has been incarcerated since August 2011.

Mrs. Tymoshenko's case stands out as a significant illustration of Ukraine's backsliding with respect to human rights, democracy, and the rule of law since she was defeated by President Yanukovich in February 2010. The United States, EU, and Canada have repeatedly expressed concerns about the application of selective justice against political opponents, their flawed trials, conditions of detention, and the denial of their ability to participate in last October's parliamentary elections.

As Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, which has long been committed to Ukraine's independence and democratic development, I am especially mindful of Ukraine's 2013 OSCE chairmanship. Like any Chair-in-Office, Ukraine faces formidable tasks in leading a multilateral organization that operates on the basis of consensus, which includes 57 countries ranging from mature democracies to oppressive dictatorships. The United States wants Ukraine to succeed, but the reality is that the politically motivated imprisonment of Ms. Tymoshenko casts a cloud over its chairmanship. A Chair-

in-Office must itself have strong democratic credentials if it is to succeed in encouraging reform in other countries.

Furthermore, democratic regression in Ukraine has harmed U.S.-Ukrainian bilateral relations, preventing a traditionally strong partnership from realizing its full potential. It has also slowed down the process of Ukraine's drawing closer to the EU, which is that country's stated foreign policy priority, manifested in the still-delayed signing of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. More than half a year has gone by since the unanimous adoption of S. Res. 466, calling for the release of Yulia Tymoshenko.

The Ukrainian authorities now need to follow up on the important step they have taken in freeing Yuri Lutsenko. They need to free Ms. Tymoshenko and restore her civil and political rights. By demonstrating commitment to the rule of law and human rights principles embodied by the OSCE, Ukraine will strengthen the credibility of its chairmanship and show it is serious about being a full-fledged member of the democratic community of nations.

I strongly urge the Ukrainian government to resolve the case of Ms. Tymoshenko.

HONOR FLIGHT 2013

Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, in April, the participants in the 2013 Honor Flight will be traveling to Washington, DC, to visit memorials of World War II, Vietnam war and the Korean war, as well as the Lincoln Memorial on The National Mall.

I would like to record the names of the World War II veterans selected for this trip: Ms. Hallie Odessa Dixon from Anchorage, who served in the Navy as a telegrapher 2nd Class and also worked as a cryptographic aide. Mr. Chelton S. Feeny from Anchorage, who served in the Army as a private first class, participated in the Army Specialized Training Program at Princeton University, and also worked as a medic on hospital trains. Mr. Dietrich L. Strohmaier from Fairbanks, who served in the Army as a private first class, 25th Division, 35th Regiment and also served briefly in Hollandia, New Guinea, and the Philippines as part of a seven-man recon squad, and later in Japan as part of the Occupation Forces. Mr. Dale Joseph Trombley from Soldotna, who served in the Army Air Corps as a major and B-17 pilot in the 452nd Bomb Group, 730th Air Mobility Squadron, and Mr. John Walker from Soldotna who served in the Army as a sergeant, 2nd Division and 1st Army at Omaha Beach, Belgium and in Germany.

I would also like to make special mention of a Korean war veteran, Mr. William Ladd McBride, from Fairbanks, who has been selected for the trip as well. His vision is failing and it is his fervent wish to see 'his' memorial while he still can with his own eyes. Mr. McBride joined the Army in

1952 and served during the Korean conflict as a photographer for intelligence. He continued his service in the Army Reserves for a total of 12 years, with a final rank of staff sergeant. In 1961 he joined the Navy Reserves, leaving after 6 years with a final rank of intelligence specialist senior chief.

Each of these veterans has my thanks for their service and I very much appreciate the staff, volunteers, and supporters of the Honor Flight program who make these trips happen.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DARRELL MUELLER

• Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Madam President, today I offer my heartfelt thanks to an educator who has been committed to the wellbeing of the children of my State.

At the close of this school year, Darrell Mueller will retire as superintendent of the Andes Central School District, concluding a career in education of over 30 years. After earning his bachelor's degree in elementary school education in 1979, Darrell began teaching elementary school in Nebraska in 1980. In 1982 he moved to Yankton, SD where he served as a teacher and principal at Sacred Heart School. While serving as a principal and teacher, he completed a master's degree in elementary administration at the University of South Dakota in 1984. From 1988 to 2006, Darrell was the principal of Platte Elementary School. He was chosen as a 2004 Milken Educator for his dedication to teaching and his leadership in the field. In 2006, Darrell accepted the position of superintendent of the Andes Central School District.

As superintendent of the Andes Central School District, Darrell has been a strong advocate for the integration of technology in the classroom. The use of technology has enriched and broadened the educational opportunities for students within the school district. Under Darrell's leadership, the district now enjoys a child to laptop ratio of 2 to 1 in grades kindergarten through 6 and 1 to 1 in grades 7 to 12. Darrell has also sought to expand access to quality early childhood education during his tenure as superintendent. Through working with the local Head Start, Andes Central was able to combine services to create a more comprehensive preschool program for its students.

While serving as superintendent of Andes Central, Darrell implemented a system to monitor student progress using curriculum-based measurement. When the South Dakota Department of Education began developing a new statewide accountability model for measuring student achievement, it sought Darrell's expertise. He has made valuable contributions to this effort as a member of the Next Generation Accountability Council.

Darrell is currently serving as the president of the Impacted Schools of

South Dakota. As a leader within our State's Impact Aid community, Darrell and I have met on many occasions, and I have appreciated his insights related to public policy and funding for the Impact Aid program.

Darrell's passion for his community extends far beyond the classroom. He serves as the vice president of the Charles Mix County Lake Restoration Organization, a nonprofit group formed to restore the condition of Lake Andes. Through the work of concerned local citizens like Darrell, they hope to improve and preserve the beauty of Lake Andes for many generations to come. The local economy, the area's environment and wildlife, and the recreational opportunities for the surrounding community have been improved by these efforts.

Darrell is regularly known to say, "It's all about what's right for the kids." This motto represents one of Darrell's guiding principles and has served as words of advice for the many educators, administrators, and school personnel who Darrell has mentored over the years. Darrell will leave a lasting legacy within the Andes Central School District and in the lives of countless young people. On the occasion of his retirement, I congratulate and thank Darrell for his service to his community and selfless dedication to students in South Dakota. I wish him, his wife Diane, and their family a happy and healthy retirement.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

S. 680. A bill to rescind amounts appropriated for fiscal year 2013 for the Department of Defense for the Medium Extended Air Defense System, and for other purposes.

S. 691. A bill to regulate large capacity ammunition feeding devices.

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-944. A joint communication from the Acting Principal Secretary of the Navy (En-

ergy, Installations and Environment) and the Secretary of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Land Interchange of Federal Jurisdiction Between USDA Forest Service and the Department of the Navy"; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-945. A communication from the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, transmitting pursuant to law, the 2012 Packers and Stockyards Program Annual Report; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-946. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Importation of Live Birds and Poultry, Poultry Meat, and Poultry Products From a Region in the European Union" (RIN0579-AD45) (Docket No. APHIS-2009-0094) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-947. A communication from the Director of the Policy Issuances Division, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Food Ingredients and Sources of Radiation Listed and Approved for Use in the Production of Meat and Poultry Products" (RIN0583-AD05) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-948. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Abamectin; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9379-1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 22, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-949. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Banda de Lupinus albus doce (BLAD); Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9380-6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 22, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-950. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Emamectin Benzoate; Pesticide Tolerance" (FRL No. 9381-4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 22, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-951. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Thiamethoxam; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 937-3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 22, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-952. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Clothianidin; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9378-6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 26, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-953. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Castor Oil, Polymer with Adipic