

Monks for his artistic excellence, his spirit of volunteerism, and his generous contributions to the history and operations of the United States Senate.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN COLOMBIA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to express my thanks to the governments of Colombia, Cuba and Norway, and to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Reverend Jessie Jackson, for their efforts to secure the release yesterday of American citizen, Kevin Scott Sutay, who was kidnapped by the FARC earlier this year. I hope this is another sign that negotiations to end Colombia's decades long armed conflict are progressing, and that a peace agreement is possible.

I also want to take this opportunity to call attention to the contributions of two courageous Colombian human rights activists, Islena Rey and Father Alejandro Angulo Novoa, and to the challenges they and other human rights defenders face.

On September 9, Colombia's Human Rights Day, both were awarded for their human rights work in a presentation organized by Di logo Inter-Agencial en Colombia, a consortium of international nongovernmental organizations working for human rights in Colombia. This is the second year of the awards, and they were presented during a time of increasing attacks against human rights defenders in that country. The awards are significant not only because they recognize the recipients' contributions, but also because they help to reduce the social stigma that surrounds human rights work in Colombia and many other countries.

Islena Rey, founder of the Meta Civic Committee for Human Rights, was named Defender of the Year for her efforts to bring together and organize community leaders in support of victims of human rights abuses. She works in one of Colombia's most dangerous regions, the Eastern Plains, which has long been plagued by violence spurred by the illegal narcotics trade.

Ms. Rey knows the risks. Four years ago this month, she was shot and seriously wounded while returning from a community meeting. She is also the sole survivor of the original Meta Committee members, who, throughout the 1990s, were systematically assassinated, leaving her to carry out her advocacy work alone. Four years after nearly losing her life, she presses on, conducting investigations, providing support to victims, and working to rebuild the Meta Committee.

In addition to recognizing Islena Rey, the organization presented Father Alejandro Angulo Novoa with the Life Long Defender award for his contributions to human rights in Colombia over the past 4 decades. Father Alejandro is one of the founders of the Center for Research and Popular Education in

Bogotá. He is currently the coordinator of CINEP's human rights database which collects, records, and disseminates information on the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. He has dedicated his life to this work and to supporting the poor and excluded.

The courage and dedication displayed by these two individuals represents just a small fraction of the essential work being done by human rights defenders in Colombia. It is all the more remarkable because, despite some notable progress in investigating, prosecuting and punishing those responsible for heinous crimes, impunity is the norm and Colombia remains a very dangerous place for lawyers, social activists, and journalists who work and report on human rights.

Islena Rey, Father Alejandro, and countless other brave Colombians will continue tending to victims of human rights abuses. They are undeterred by the social stigma they face, or the threats and acts of violence against them and their colleagues. They deserve our respect and our thanks, because the protection of human rights, wherever they are threatened or denied, is everybody's responsibility.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS PRIVACY ACT 27TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Electronic Communications Privacy Act ECPA, one of the Nation's premiere digital privacy laws, was enacted 27 years ago on October 21. I join the many privacy advocates, technology organizations, legal scholars and other Americans who celebrate this milestone and all that ECPA has come to symbolize about the importance of safeguarding our privacy rights in cyberspace.

When I introduced ECPA with former Republican Senator Charles Mathias in 1986, I said that "the privacy protections in ECPA are designed to protect legitimate law enforcement needs while minimizing intrusions on the privacy of system users as well as the business needs of electronic communications system providers." During the last three decades, ECPA has become the premier law for protecting Americans from unauthorized government intrusions into their private electronic communications.

When Congress enacted ECPA, email was a novelty and no one imagined how prevalent it would become in our daily communication let alone how long it might be stored. But after almost three decades, new technologies—such as the Internet, social networking sites and cloud computing—have changed how Americans use and store email. Storing documents and other information electronically has become much less expensive and mobile technologies permit users to access stored documents wherever and whenever they choose. As a result, the digital privacy protections put in place 27 years ago have not kept pace with new technologies.

That is why Congress must revitalize the digital privacy protections that were enacted in ECPA. That is also why I am working in a bipartisan manner to update this law to reflect the realities of our time.

In April, the Judiciary Committee favorably reported bipartisan legislation that I authored with Republican Senator MIKE LEE to update ECPA and to bring this law fully into the digital age. Our bipartisan bill updates ECPA to require that the government obtain a search warrant—based upon probable cause—before obtaining the content of our emails and other electronic communications. The commonsense reforms in our bill carefully balance the interests and needs of consumers, the law enforcement community, and our Nation's thriving technology sector. The bill enjoys the support of a diverse coalition of more than 100 privacy, civil liberties, civil rights and technology organizations from across the political spectrum, including the American Civil Liberties Union, the Heritage Foundation, the Center for Democracy and Technology and Americans for Tax Reform. The bill is also the product of careful consultation with many government and private sector stakeholders, including the Departments of Justice, Commerce and State, local law enforcement, and members of the technology and privacy communities. I remain disappointed that a single Republican Senator has objected to the unanimous consent request to pass this bipartisan bill, which overwhelmingly passed the Judiciary Committee.

The privacy reforms in this bill are too important to delay. Like Senator LEE and me, all of the bill's supporters understand that protecting our digital privacy rights is not a Democratic ideal, nor a Republican ideal, but an American ideal that all of us should embrace. As ECPA reaches another milestone, it is important to remember that Americans continue to face threats to their digital privacy. I hope that all Senators will join me in supporting the Electronic Communications Privacy Act Amendments Act and that the Senate will pass this bill without delay.

TRIBUTE TO HEDY RATNER AND CAROL DOUGAL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to thank two exceptional women who have been strong advocates for social justice and for the advancement of women's business ownership in the State of Illinois, across America, and beyond.

Hedy Ratner and Carol Dougal have recently stepped down after working 27 years as the founders and co-presidents of the Women's Business Development Center, WBDC. The WBDC is the first, and largest, nonprofit organization that provides services to encourage women's business ownership across the United States.

When the WBDC was founded in 1986, less than 10 percent of the businesses in the United States were owned and operated by women. Today, thanks in part to the leadership and encouragement provided by Hedy and Carol, there are over 8.6 million women-owned businesses throughout the country, generating over \$1.3 trillion in revenues this year and employing nearly 7.8 million people.

As a champion for women's economic development, the WBDC has worked to assist tens of thousands of women in entrepreneurial efforts nationwide. From business certifications to financial assistance workshops, the WBDC provides women business owners with the training they need to establish and expand their businesses. By providing women with essential resources to become successful business owners, the WBDC has empowered women and helped them achieve economic independence through entrepreneurship.

Since its founding in 1986, the WBDC has expanded in size and scope from a two-person operation seeking to address the lack of representation of women in the business sector, to a staff of 24 full-time employees and contractors that now influence policies on the federal, State and local levels. The achievements of Hedy and Carol are significant, and the positive role of the WBDC in supporting women's entrepreneurship is evident.

On behalf of the people of Illinois, I thank Hedy and Carol for their 27 dedicated years with the WBDC and congratulate them on their many contributions for women in the business sector. I wish both of them the best as they continue to inspire and provide leadership for women's entrepreneurship in the years to come.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY INFORMATION ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise to recognize the 25th anniversary of the National Center for Biotechnology Information—NCBI—part of the National Library of Medicine at the National Institutes of Health, America's world-renowned research institution in Bethesda, MD.

The late Senator Claude Pepper, for whom a major building on the NIH campus is named, authored six separate laws creating individual institutes at NIH. In 1987, while a Member of the House of Representatives and chairman of the Select Committee on Aging's Subcommittee on Health and Long-Term Care, Pepper introduced H.R. 393, the National Biotechnology Information Act, which established the NCBI. At a March 1987 hearing on H.R. 393, Pepper explained that "we are dealing with nothing less than the mystery of human life and the unfolding scroll of knowledge, seeking to penetrate that mystery, which is life itself." He noted that his bill was intended "to facilitate the development of advanced computer

and communication systems that will make it possible for the vast expanding knowledge of the gene to be assimilated into a computer system and made available for distribution to researchers and to people generally all over the World."

Soon thereafter, Congress embraced the importance of the biotechnology field, recognized the pressing need to harness the large volume of data emanating from the genetic revolution in science, and endorsed the establishment of NCBI to manage this valuable resource for the benefit of human health. With strong bipartisan support in Congress, Pepper's bill was enacted as part of Senator Ted Kennedy's comprehensive measure, the Health Omnibus Extension Programs of 1988, on November 4, 1988.

Today, biomedical research encompassing genomic and genetic knowledge is a major driver of medical progress. The foresight of Congress in establishing the NCBI, combined with the innovative leadership of Director Dr. David Lipman and the expertise of the agency's dedicated staff, has led to the emergence of an impressive national resource for molecular biology information. In June of this year, Dr. Lipman was honored by the White House with the "Open Science" Champions of Change Award for his work at NCBI. By organizing and integrating genomic data for developing diagnostic and clinical applications, the Center serves as a bridge from research to the medical community. Each day, more than 3 million users access NCBI's 40 interlinked genomic and bibliographic databases and download more than 30 terabytes of data.

I am proud that Congress has continued to support funding for the NCBI over the past 25 years. Recently, by requiring that the results of NIH-funded research be made public through the Center's PubMed Central Database, Congress has opened to everyone the full text of published journal articles that are essential to advancing scientific research and public health.

The biomedical research funded by the NIH provides knowledge essential to combat debilitating diseases, and continuing this research is dependent on the resources and tools that NCBI has developed so successfully for the benefit of the biomedical community. As NIH Director Francis Collins has noted, we are entering an era of precision medicine in which a patient's genetic makeup may determine the exact treatment that is provided. Surely, the NCBI databases and tools will be needed on the front lines of this new effort.

On the occasion of this 25th anniversary, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Lipman and the outstanding staff of NCBI, who through their skill and vision have built this unique biomedical resource.

TRIBUTE TO DR. CHARLES M. VEST

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, it is my great privilege to rise today to recognize the distinguished career of Dr. Charles M. Vest, a native West Virginian, on his retirement as president of the National Academy of Engineering, NAE. In his time at the NAE, Dr. Vest worked tirelessly to identify and address the most pressing and important challenges facing American engineering, including the declining interest in math and science among our Nation's students and the growing challenges of information flow among government, the private sector, and academia. As NAE president, Dr. Vest was instrumental in urging Congress to pass the America COMPETES Act, which provided a blueprint for investing in critically important scientific and technological pursuits. Dr. Vest also helped craft the Grand Challenges for Engineering, a global initiative that identifies the greatest challenges and opportunities facing engineers today. In this increasingly technology-based and globalized world, Dr. Vest recognized the need for a clear and strong national vision for our engineers and scientists. He provided the dynamic leadership that the NAE required to allow American engineers to compete and thrive in a rapidly evolving world.

A native of Morgantown, WV, Chuck displayed a clever and inquisitive mind from a young age. Growing up under the shadow of Sputnik, he developed a keen interest in electronics and he would constantly tinker with surplus World War II gadgets, such as microphones and resistors. This curiosity led him to West Virginia University where he received a degree in mechanical engineering. Chuck continued his education at the University of Michigan, earning a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering; he remained there for 22 years as a professor, a dean, and university provost.

Dr. Vest has since served as a director of DuPont and IBM. He has held positions on an array of Federal committees and commissions, including the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology and as vice chair of the U.S. Council on Competitiveness. Chuck has authored three books, received honorary doctoral degrees from 18 universities, and was awarded the 2006 National Medal of Technology and the 2011 Vannevar Bush Award.

Quite possibly, Dr. Vest's most important achievements occurred during his tenure as president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MIT. In his 14 years at the helm of MIT, Dr. Vest proved a worthy advocate of more robust communication and sharing within the science community. Under his extraordinary leadership, MIT launched its OpenCourseWare initiative and cofounded the Alliance for Global Sustainability. As he will readily attest, though, one of Dr. Vest's