

the birth and development of the State of Israel, and in him we see the essence of Israel itself—an invincible spirit that cannot be denied. Through his determination, his strength and perseverance, and his profound compassion, President Peres enabled a seemingly impossible dream to become a reality and changed forever the destiny of the Jewish people.

Even as a young man, Shimon Peres showed a dedication to public service and a commitment to the pursuit of justice and peace. He was an active leader in the “Working Youth” group, he founded a kibbutz in the Jordan Valley, and became a member of the Haganah [hah-gah-nah]—all before he reached 21.

Over the course of his seventy years of public service, President Peres has served as a member of the Knesset for 48 years and held virtually every position in dozens of cabinets, serving in nearly two dozen ministerial posts including twice as Prime Minister, and as Defense Minister, Treasury Minister, and Foreign Minister. He was then elected as the ninth President of the State of Israel, the position he holds today.

I have met many brave and inspiring people in my life, but there are few who have done more to preserve freedom for future generations than Shimon Peres. He recognized that the highest duty of leaders is to protect and preserve the freedom and security of their people, even in the face of hostility and in the face of doubt and disappointment. And this is just what President Peres has done, not only for the Jewish people but for all people.

He has been a leader for strength, building Israel’s military and defense capabilities. He has been a leader for prosperity, helping make Israel one of the strongest economies in the world today. And he has been a leader for peace, making difficult and sometimes unpopular decisions in persuading the Palestinians to pursue negotiations and find peace for all, standing by his belief that all children, both Israeli and Arab alike, deserve the chance to grow up and grow old free from the threat of violence and tyranny.

In the time that I have known Shimon Peres, I have been inspired by his statesmanship, leadership, courage and civility. And among his many virtues, I have been most inspired by his idealism. Shimon Peres has always been a dreamer. He once said that “dreaming is only being pragmatic”—words that drew criticism from some and laughter from others.

But he is right, of course. It is difficult to understand how someone who has witnessed such unspeakable horrors in his life can still place such faith in dreams. But it is due in part to his optimism and idealism, and his willingness to serve on behalf of those dreams, that Israel exists today. By never giving up on his dreams, Shimon Peres reminds us that we do not need to give in to complacency or cynicism—and why we can’t afford to.

So I join all of you in recognizing the great achievements of Shimon Peres. And I thank you for devoting your time to honor this great man. With your help, it is my hope that our friends in the House will complete the necessary legislation, and all of us in Congress will be able to join together to express the abiding affection and admiration that we and the American people have for one of Israel’s most distinguished sons—a man whose inspiration and impact will endure far beyond the generations who have witnessed them.

RECOGNIZING MARRINER S. ECCLES

Mr. HATCH. Over time, many Utahns have been honored for their contribu-

tions to our country, and perhaps no one contributed more to our Nation’s economic success at such a critical time than Marriner S. Eccles. I am honored to stand with the Eccles family this week as the Federal Reserve unveils a statue of Marriner Eccles in the atrium of the Marriner S. Eccles Building of the Federal Reserve Board in Washington, DC.

Marriner Stoddard Eccles was born in Logan, UT, on September 9, 1890, the oldest of nine children. Following the death of his father, who had become a leading industrialist with numerous enterprises, Marriner, at the young age of 22, took over the leadership of his father’s businesses that were left to his mother, Ellen Eccles, and Marriner and his siblings. Previously, Marriner had worked in several of his father’s businesses, had served a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, LDS, in Scotland and had attended Brigham Young College in Logan.

A superb business analyst and bold administrator, he reorganized and consolidated his father’s industrial conglomerate and banking network. Eccles, along with his brother George, joined with the Browning family in Ogden, UT, to form the Eccles-Browning Affiliated Banks, believed to be the first multibank holding company in the United States.

With the onset of the Great Depression of the 1930s, banks around the country faced customers rushing to withdraw their deposits. The Eccles-Browning Affiliated Banks withstood several bank runs, and in the process, Eccles began to understand the need for a compensatory fiscal and monetary policy. In July of 1933, Eccles was one of the experts summoned by the Senate Finance Committee to travel to Washington to counsel Congress on the profound economic turmoil that was occurring across the country.

Eccles delivered 38 pages of testimony, including a distinct 5-point plan for fixing the economy. “We must correct the causes of the depression rather than deal with the effects of it!” became one of the most quoted lines from Eccles’ dramatic testimony. His five-point plan included unemployment relief through direct aid to the States, a bank deposit guarantee program, canceling the World War I Allies’ war debt, implementing a national minimum wage, and establishing a national economic planning board.

Eccles made his points clearly enough that the Roosevelt administration invited Eccles to join as an Assistant Treasury Secretary. Even when asked by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to become a Governor of the Federal Reserve Board, Eccles stood strong and replied he would “not unless fundamental changes [were] made in the (Federal Reserve).”

Eccles’ involvement with policy-making did not stop there. He became involved with the Emergency Banking Act of 1933, the Federal Housing Act of

1934, and the 1933 law creating the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. With FDR’s blessing, Eccles rewrote the 1935 Federal Reserve Act and became the first Chairman of the reorganized Federal Reserve Board, serving from 1936 to 1948. In February 1944, Roosevelt appointed Eccles to another 14-year term and Eccles stayed on the Board until 1951, when he resigned, marking a total of 17 years of service.

Eccles’ talents combined with the policies he supported helped counter the recession crisis of 1937–1938, which in turn helped build America’s economic strength prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor and World War II.

Many at the time considered Marriner Eccles’ policies to be radical, but there is little doubt that his influence at the Federal Reserve continues to benefit our country today.

It is my honor to stand with the Eccles family this week and unveil yet another tribute to this remarkable Utahn we are so proud of.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH QUALITY CHARTER SCHOOLS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I am here to support the introduction of a bill I am cosponsoring, the Expanding Opportunity Through Quality Charter Schools Act.

Charter schools are about freedom for teachers, choices for parents, and more and better opportunities for students.

I gave the weekly address for the Republican Party on Easter weekend, and I said that, instead of mandating tasks for you to do, government should enable you to create a happier, safer, more prosperous life.

This bill is just the kind of proposal that enables people. It enables parents to help their children get a real opportunity by choosing better schools for them to attend. It enables students to learn and succeed. It enables teachers to succeed by giving them the freedom to use their firsthand knowledge.

And it enables administrators to succeed by freeing them from bureaucratic mandates and giving them the chance to use their good judgment.

The bill would continue the Federal charter schools program, which since 1994 has given grants to states to start new charter schools. It would make improvements to that program to ensure that those funds are used as effectively as possible to increase the number of high-quality charter schools.

Specifically, this bill would invest more Federal funds in the replication and expansion of high-quality charter schools with a proven record of success, while still giving States the flexibility to invest in innovative new models.

The bill would continue Federal support for non-profit organizations which help charter schools find suitable facilities, while also encouraging States to assist charter schools in this task.

It would provide those hard-working and creative educators seeking to open

charter schools with greater flexibility in how they use Federal startup grants, for example, by allowing them to use the funds for transportation or for facilities improvements if that is what they decide is the best use of funds.

Finally, this legislation would encourage States to provide charter schools with the support they need to be successful and to hold them accountable when they fail to demonstrate positive results.

Last summer, Senator RAND PAUL and I sat in a room with the parents who had been able to get their child into a charter school in Nashville, where 600 students were left on the waiting list.

It was an emotional experience to hear these parents talk about their child getting this opportunity, to hear the students talk about how well they are doing, and to hear from the teachers who spend their lives helping these students.

Charter schools are public schools stripped of many Federal, State and union rules and constraints placed on traditional public schools. The money the State government would ordinarily spend on their district school follows each child to the charter school instead.

Charter schools cannot charge tuition, and any student who wants to attend a charter school may do so if space is available.

If more students want to attend than can be accommodated, the charter school must use a lottery to decide which students receive a seat.

Several years ago I visited the Memphis Academy of Science and Engineering, a charter school in Memphis. While most Memphis students were on spring break at the time, the sophomores I visited were in the classroom studying Advanced Placement biology.

Because the school's teachers have the flexibility to do what is best for their students, the school was open 12 hours a day and on Saturday mornings because many of these children did not have as much at home as others. And these children, who the year before had been at schools deemed "low-performing," were succeeding.

These students were fortunate because their parents had the opportunity to choose this charter school, and their children were lucky enough to win a seat.

Across Tennessee, more than 15,000 students now have that same opportunity to attend one of 68 charter schools—and they are thriving as a result.

A recent study by Stanford University found that, on average, Tennessee students attending charter schools gain the equivalent of 86 additional days of instruction in reading and 72 additional days of instruction in math each year than do students attending district schools.

In other words, they make almost a year-and-a-half's worth of progress in a single school year.

About 60 percent of students attending charter schools in Tennessee are low-income, more than 90 percent are African American or Hispanic.

In other words, charter schools in Tennessee are making a difference for those students who have traditionally been least well served by our Nation's public schools.

We have come a long way since 1992, when, in my last act as U.S. Education Secretary under George H.W. Bush, I sent a letter to every school superintendent across the country, urging them to consider replicating the early successes of charter schools in Minnesota—which were then called "start-from-scratch schools."

At the time, there were only a dozen charter schools in existence. Today, there are well over 6,000, serving over 2.5 million students. Nearly 5 percent of all public schools students in the United States now attend charters.

Most important—the fact that should give great urgency to our effort here today—there are an estimated 580,000 students on waiting lists for charter schools throughout the Nation.

That is because parents and students see that charter schools are working.

RECOGNIZING THE FRANKLIN REGIONAL COMMUNITY

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the heroic acts of students and teachers during the crisis at Franklin Regional High School in Murrysville, PA. The entire community displayed astounding courage in the face of tragedy.

On the morning of April 9, 2014, a knife-wielding student assaulted students and teachers at Franklin Regional High School. During the attack, 24 people were injured, some gravely. However, thanks to the selfless actions of students, faculty, and support staff, the attacker was subdued and additional harm was prevented.

Students shielded friends from danger and administered emergency first aid, an attentive student had the composure to sound the fire alarm to warn people to exit the building, and several brave individuals put their safety on the line to incapacitate the attacker. At a time of crisis, the Franklin Regional family proved their commitment to one another.

I also want to acknowledge the brave actions of law enforcement and emergency personnel whose quick arrival ensured the safety of our students. Their prompt arrival provided life-saving medical attention to injured students and the community remains indebted to their vigilance.

I believe that the Senate should recognize the Franklin Regional community for their bravery and resiliency. It is imperative that the community knows that our country shares their grief and stands with them as they overcome this tragedy.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING ADAM BOYD

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Adam Boyd for his hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC, office. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Adam is a native of Cheyenne, WY, and a graduate of Cheyenne East High School. He is also a recent graduate of the University of Wyoming, where he earned a degree in French. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts during his time in my office.

I thank Adam for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his next journey. •

RECOGNIZING MARTHA CROSBY

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Martha Crosby for her hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC, office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Martha is from Richmond, VA. She is a recent graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University, where she earned a degree in political science, concentration in politics and government. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last few months.

I thank Martha for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey. •

RECOGNIZING PATTERSON OAKS

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Patterson Oaks for her hard work as an intern in my Casper, WY, office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Patterson is a native of Casper, WY where she graduated from Natrona County High School. She attends Casper College where she is pursuing a degree in paralegal studies. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I thank Patterson for the dedication she has shown while working for me