

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

MAHASKA COUNTY, IOWA

- Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State, and it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and residents of Mahaska County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has worked with me to secure funding in Mahaska County worth over \$1.2 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than \$64 million to the local economy.

Of course my favorite memory of working together has to be working with people like Deb Philpot, executive director of the South Central Iowa Center for Independent Living, who helps to promote independent living for people with disabilities. There is no substitute for being able to live at home, close to your friends and family, and not in an institutional setting. I look forward to hearing about the kind of progress that has been made in Oskaloosa.

Among the highlights:

Disability rights: Growing up, I loved and admired my brother Frank, who was deaf. But I was deeply disturbed by the discrimination and obstacles he faced every day. That is why I have always been a passionate advocate for full equality for people with disabilities. As the primary author of the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, and the ADA Amendments Act, I have had four guiding goals for our fellow citizens with disabilities: equal opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. Nearly a quarter century since passage of the ADA, I see remarkable changes in communities everywhere I go in

fight for meaningful action to address climate change.

The EPA's new clean power plan is one part of the solution. We must build on this proposal and continue our efforts to cut carbon pollution, to improve energy efficiency, and to invest in building a clean energy economy.

I applaud President Obama and EPA Administrator McCarthy for their leadership in stepping up and pushing for meaningful standards, and I expect that a strong final rule will be implemented next year because no matter the opposition, no matter how powerful those industries that would let our forests burn, let our crops dry up, let our children get sick, and let our cities drown just to protect their own profits, we have no choice but to take real action to fight climate change. The simple truth is that our future depends on it.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL MATTHEW B. RYTTING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and thank Lt. Col. Matthew Rytting for over two decades of service in the U.S. Air Force. Colonel Rytting will be retiring on June 13, 2014, and I am grateful for his service and dedication to our Nation.

Colonel Rytting's career with the U.S. Air Force has been diverse and impressive, and it has included service as a combat control team officer, an F-15C fighter pilot, an F-4 instructor pilot, a chief of flight safety, a Civil Air Patrol commander, an Air Force One advance agent responsible for logistical and security support for Presidential travel, and most recently as a UV-18B instructor pilot, director of operations and cofounder of the Wings of Blue Association at the U.S. Air Force Academy. Within just a few years of his graduation from the Air Force Academy, while serving as a combat control team officer and squadron commander during Haiti's "Uphold Democracy," he led a special operations team in providing communications and air traffic control in non-permissive environments, specializing in parachute insertion techniques. Shortly thereafter, he won accolades as

the top Air Force graduate in undergraduate pilot training at Columbus Air Force Base in Mississippi. His many accomplishments since then include Distinguished Graduate of the Air Force's Squadron Officer School, Top-Wingman Awards in Singapore and Alaska as an F-15C Pilot, a Chief of Staff of the Air Force Safety Award in May 2007, Outstanding Graduate in the top 1 percent of his class from the U.S. Air Force Air War College, a Civil Air Pilot Meritorious Service Award, and a Big Brothers Big Sisters Big Brother of the Year Award in Fairbanks, AK.

Colonel Rytting's many accomplishments serve as a representation of his strong sense of duty and commitment to our great Nation. I am particularly impressed by Colonel Rytting's commitment to enhancing the capabilities of our Nation's airmen, both through investigating catastrophic aircraft mishaps in order to prevent future losses and through devoting years of service to the instruction of students and airmen in employing their aircraft and supporting joint, coalition and multinational forces. As recently as 2013, as a safety officer and a BD-700 instructor pilot in Afghanistan, Colonel Rytting trained pilots on how to provide the needed airborne communication bridges to ground forces entrenched in enemy areas, ultimately saving American lives. He also instructed German Luftwaffe students in F-4 basic flight and air-to-air combat at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico, led successful safety programs for 250 aircrew at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Alaska, established a facility to train combat aircrews in advanced techniques at Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska, and directed 19,000 skydives and 2,400 accident-free flight hours annually for the U.S. Air Force's parachute team Wings of Blue. Throughout his time in the Air Force, Colonel Rytting set a wonderful example for his family and for the men and women who served with him in the Air Force. His commitment to the United States and his leadership within the Air Force is truly commendable.

Colonel Rytting was proud to serve our country, and today I am proud to thank Colonel Rytting for his service to this Nation. I congratulate him on his well-earned retirement.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR OBJECTION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I intend to object to any unanimous consent request at the present time relating to the nomination of Nani Coloretti to be Deputy Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

I have been conducting an inquiry regarding allegations of questionable hiring practices at the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, FinCEN. As part of that inquiry, I have requested documents from the Treasury Department that could resolve my concerns and questions. I encourage the administration to provide those documents to me as soon as possible.

Iowa—not just in curb cuts or closed captioned television but in the full participation of people with disabilities in our society and economy, folks who at long last have the opportunity to contribute their talents and to be fully included. These changes have increased economic opportunities for all citizens of Mahaska County, both those with and without disabilities, and they make us proud to be a part of a community and country that respects the worth and civil rights of all of our citizens.

Investing in Iowa's economic development through targeted community projects: In Southeast Iowa, we have worked together to grow the economy by making targeted investments in important economic development projects including improved roads and bridges, modernized sewer and water systems, and better housing options for residents of Mahaska County. In many cases, I have secured Federal funding that has leveraged local investments and served as a catalyst for a whole ripple effect of positive, creative changes. For example, working with mayors, city council members, and local economic development officials in Mahaska County, I have fought for \$476,000 for nursing and sciences teaching laboratories at William Penn University, helping to create jobs and expand economic opportunities.

Main Street Iowa: One of the greatest challenges we face—in Iowa and all across America—is preserving the character and vitality of our small towns and rural communities. This isn't just about economics; it is also about maintaining our identity as Iowans. Main Street Iowa helps preserve Iowa's heart and soul by providing funds to revitalize downtown business districts. This program has allowed towns like Oskaloosa to use that money to leverage other investments to jumpstart change and renewal. I am so pleased that Mahaska County has earned \$160,000 through this program. These grants build much more than buildings. They build up the spirit and morale of people in our small towns and local communities.

School grants: Every child in Iowa deserves to be educated in a classroom that is safe, accessible, and modern. That is why, for the past decade and a half, I have secured funding for the innovative Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program—better known among educators in Iowa as Harkin grants for public schools construction and renovation. Across 15 years, Harkin grants worth more than \$132 million have helped school districts to fund a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools. In many cases, these Federal dollars have served as the needed incentive to leverage local public and private dollars, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect within a school district. Over the years, Mahaska County has received \$598,650

in Harkin grants. Thank you to the leadership of Superintendent Russell Reiter for his ongoing support in the Oskaloosa Community School District. Similarly, schools in Mahaska County have received funds that I designated for Iowa Star Schools for technology totaling \$89,500.

Agricultural and rural development: Because I grew up in a small town in rural Iowa, I have always been a loyal friend and fierce advocate for family farmers and rural communities. I have been a member of the House or Senate Agriculture Committee for 40 years—including more than 10 years as chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Across the decades, I have championed farm policies for Iowans that include effective farm income protection and commodity programs; strong, progressive conservation assistance for agricultural producers; renewable energy opportunities; and robust economic development in our rural communities. Since 1991, through various programs authorized through the farm bill, Mahaska County has received more than \$42 million in loans and grants from a variety of programs.

Keeping Iowa communities safe: I also firmly believe that our first responders need to be appropriately trained and equipped, able to respond to both local emergencies and to statewide challenges such as, for instance, the methamphetamine epidemic. Since 2001, Mahaska County's fire departments have received over \$251,099 for firefighter safety and operations equipment.

Wellness and health care: Improving the health and wellness of all Americans has been something I have been passionate about for decades. That is why I fought to dramatically increase funding for disease prevention, innovative medical research, and a whole range of initiatives to improve the health of individuals and families not only at the doctor's office but also in our communities, schools, and workplaces. I am so proud that Americans have better access to clinical preventive services, nutritious food, smoke-free environments, safe places to engage in physical activity, and information to make healthy decisions for themselves and their families. These efforts not only save lives, they will also save money for generations to come thanks to the prevention of costly chronic diseases, which account for a whopping 75 percent of annual health care costs. I am pleased that Mahaska County has recognized this important issue by securing \$61,901 for community wellness activities.

This is at least a partial accounting of my work on behalf of Iowa, and specifically Mahaska County, during my time in Congress. In every case, this work has been about partnerships, cooperation, and empowering folks at the State and local level, including in Mahaska County, to fulfill their own dreams and initiatives. And, of course, this work is never complete. Even after

I retire from the Senate, I have no intention of retiring from the fight for a better, fairer, richer Iowa. I will always be profoundly grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of Iowa as their Senator.●

DECATUR COUNTY, IOWA

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State. And it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

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Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and residents of Decatur County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has worked with me to secure funding in Decatur County worth over \$2.7 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than \$8.9 million to the local economy.

Of course my favorite memory of working together has to be our shared commitment to school construction, renovation, and fire safety through the Harkin grant program. Working together with State and local communities, this funding has ensured Iowa students are learning in schools that are safe and modern. I look forward to learning about the renovations made possible in Decatur County.

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