

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 Story 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 Story County worth over \$750 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than \$200 million to the local economy.

Of course, I have many favorite memories of working together including dozens of projects worth more than \$200 million at Iowa State University like the Community Vitality Center that supports Iowa's small and medium-sized communities, funding \$468 million toward construction and programming for a state-of-the-art national animal disease laboratory and jail-based meth treatment for non-violent offenders provided by the Story County Sheriff's Department.

Among the highlights:

Investing in Iowa's economic development through targeted community projects: In Central 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 Story 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 Story County, I have fought for more than \$55 million for innovative businesses in Ames such as Etrema Products, Bioprotection Systems, Advanced Analytical, and Powerfilm, 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 Story City to use that money to leverage other investments to jumpstart change and renewal. I am so pleased that Story County has earned \$221,000

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, Story County has received \$535,488 in Harkin grants.

Disaster mitigation and prevention: In 1993, when historic floods ripped through Iowa, it became clear to me that the national emergency response infrastructure was woefully inadequate to meet the needs of Iowans in flood-ravaged communities. I went to work dramatically expanding the Federal Emergency Management Agency's hazard mitigation program, which helps communities reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and enables mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery period. Disaster relief means more than helping people and businesses get back on their feet after a disaster; it means doing our best to prevent the same predictable flood or other catastrophe from recurring in the future. The hazard mitigation program that I helped create in 1993 provided critical support to Iowa communities impacted by the devastating floods of 2008. Story County has received over \$2.4 million to remediate and prevent widespread destruction from natural disasters.

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, Story County has received more than \$87 million from a variety of farm bill programs.

Keeping Iowa communities safe: I also firmly believe that our first re-

sponders 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, Story County's fire departments have received over \$2 million for firefighter safety and operations equipment and more than \$470,000 in Byrne Justice Assistance Grant funding.

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 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 Story 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.

This is at least a partial accounting of my work on behalf of Iowa, and specifically Story 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 Story 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.●

RECOGNIZING RON SPEARS

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize artist Ron Spears for sharing his talents to create the Nevada Statehood Forever Stamp, almost 150 years following Nevada's entrance into the war-torn union.

This year commemorates a very special year in Nevada's history during which we celebrate 150 years of statehood. From those days of bitter conflict, Nevada forged a State dedicated to preserving liberty and bettering America. Our dramatic entrance is why our State calls itself Battle Born and why Nevadans, over the past 150 years, have been entrepreneurial, fiercely independent, and as diverse as our terrain. It is an honor to recognize the

artist who painted and captured the essence of the Nevada statehood in the Forever Stamp.

A resident of Reno, NV, Ron Spears is a university professor with a master's in fine art. His career is decorated with many different projects, ranging from illustrations on casino games, book covers, magazine articles, and even illustrations for *Magic: The Gathering*, *Dungeons and Dragons*, *Harry Potter Card Game*, *Upper Deck*, *Blizzard Entertainment*, and others. Now, Ron can add the Nevada Statehood Forever Stamp to his long list of works of art. His contribution to our State's history is something to be both commended and applauded. Ron's creativity glows from this stamp commemorating Nevada's sesquicentennial.

The brilliance and the vision that Ron discovered on his 2-year travels throughout this great State exemplifies the very inspiration that was born on October 31, 1864. Just beyond the neon lights of the Las Vegas Strip sits the stunning red rocks and bright blue skies that set the stage for a destination that is hard to miss, the Valley of Fire, Nevada's oldest State park. The magnificent formations of sandstone and dunes are what make this park a truly unique and brilliant place, one that I am glad was captured for our stamp. To say that I was struck by Ron's workmanship and vision would be an understatement.

I am truly proud that we are able to showcase this incredible achievement that I am sure will serve as a model for other artists and pioneers, right here in Nevada. Today I ask my colleagues and residents of the Silver State to join me in recognizing Ron for this great achievement and honor.●

TRIBUTE TO MR. JOEY LEE

● Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, today I honor Joseph "Joey" Lee for his outstanding achievements as a teacher at Pinkerton Academy in Derry, NH. Mr. Lee is the New Hampshire Department of Education's Granite State Teacher of the Year for 2014, selected from a field of 36 nominees.

Mr. Lee is also New Hampshire's candidate for the National Teacher of the Year award, the Nation's oldest and most prestigious program focused on excellence in teaching.

In May, Mr. Lee visited Washington, DC, to meet President Obama and discuss education initiatives with representatives from the Department of Education.

Born in Hooksett and a graduate of Plymouth State University, Mr. Lee has taught at Pinkerton Academy for 6 years. A social studies teacher, he currently teaches cultural geography while also coaching golf, directing the hockey program and co-advising the China Exchange Program.

Mr. Lee has a talent for connecting with students, recognizing their unique strengths and challenges and adapting his teaching style to their needs. He is

passionate about applying classroom content to real-life situations.

The New Hampshire Department of Education recognized Mr. Lee for his conviction and passion for teaching, his energy in the classroom and his commitment to his students. I congratulate Mr. Lee on the honor of being the Granite State Teacher of the Year.●

TRIBUTE TO BILL LONERGAN

● Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Bill Lonerger for his exemplary leadership as assistant principal of Pinkerton Academy in Derry, NH. Bill was named Assistant Principal of the Year by the New Hampshire Association of School Principals for commitment to helping students succeed.

A 1980 graduate of Pinkerton Academy, Mr. Lonerger first returned to the school as a student teacher in the English department. He soon became a full-time member of the staff, both teaching and serving as associate dean of students. In total, he has worked at Pinkerton for 21 years.

Mr. Lonerger developed Pinkerton's "Freshman Academy" program, working with parents, teachers and students to ease the transition from area middle schools to the high school level. The program, which is among Mr. Lonerger's many accomplishments, is personalized to each student's strengths and interests, and has improved academic performance and integration into the Pinkerton community.

Mr. Lonerger's vision and dedication have made a difference for countless students. I am pleased to recognize his contributions to Pinkerton Academy, and congratulate him on being named Assistant Principal of the Year.●

REMEMBERING HANK LAURICELLA

● MR. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the memory of Hank Lauricella, a beloved community leader from Harahan, LA, who tragically passed away in March of this year. Hank was born in 1930 and would have turned 84 on October 19.

I was truly honored to serve with Hank in the Louisiana Legislature, albeit in different bodies. In all of my many dealings with Hank, he was a pure class act and a truly dedicated public servant. Hank was never a show horse out to grab media or other attention. He was a workhorse who got important, concrete things done, particularly in the area of economic development and transportation infrastructure.

Hank was born in Harahan, LA, and attended Holy Cross High School. Following his time at Holy Cross High School, Hank attended the University of Tennessee, where he received his bachelors of science in business administration. While at Tennessee, Hank was a standout athlete who gained immense national recognition. He was a member of the 1951 national champion-

ship team at the University of Tennessee and was first runner-up for the Heisman Trophy. In 1981, Hank was appropriately elected to the College Football Hall of Fame.

Following his college career and a year playing professional football with the Dallas Texans, Hank served as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army from 1953 to 1955, with 1 year of his service in Korea. After his service in the Army, Hank returned to Louisiana where he joined the family business, John L. Lauricella and Sons, now known as Lauricella Land Company. In that role, Hank was instrumental in providing strong leadership in guiding the company as they transitioned from residential to commercial real estate development.

For over 30 years, Hank served the Jefferson Parish community and indeed all of Louisiana in both the State House and the State Senate. During his time in the State legislature, Hank made economic development one of his top priorities. Hank promoted legislation that benefited the Louisiana Superdome, the Morial Convention Center, Louis Armstrong International Airport, the Port of New Orleans, and the Pontchartrain Center. Hank also served as an effective leader in many other roles. He was an original member of the Superdome Stadium Commission and played an instrumental role in the construction of the Superdome. Hank served on the boards for the Port of New Orleans, the World Trade Center of New Orleans, the Jefferson Business Council, and he served as the first chairman of the Board of the Jefferson Community Foundation.

Hank Lauricella was a man of many talents and interests. Not only was Hank a superior athlete, he also had a passion for gardening and cooking. He loved to cook using the tomatoes, basil, and rosemary that he grew in his own garden.

Of course Hank is lovingly remembered by his wife of 61 years, Betty, his four sons and one daughter, and his fifteen grandchildren. But well beyond that, Hank is remembered as a great friend and true public servant by the entire extended community which he served so ably.

I am so pleased to join them in continuing to remember and honor Hank Lauricella, a man who provided a great example of leadership through his service to others and his community.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:15 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4810. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts for the provision of hospital care and medical services at non-Department of Veterans Affairs facilities for Department of Veterans Affairs patients with extended waiting times