

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 Wayne 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 Wayne County worth over \$100,000 and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than \$23 million to the local economy.

Of course, one of my favorite memories of working together is the great work that the Wayne County Public Health Department has done to secure wellness funding to improve the health and lives of its residents.

Among the highlights:

**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 Wayne County has recognized this important issue by securing more than \$100,000 for community wellness activities.

**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, Wayne County has received \$109,597 in Harkin grants. Similarly, schools in Wayne County have received funds that I designated for Iowa Star Schools for technology totaling \$90,000.

**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, Wayne County has received more than \$20 million from a variety of farm bill 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, Wayne County's fire departments have received over \$850,000 for firefighter safety and operations equipment.

**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 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 Wayne 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 Wayne 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 Wayne 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.●

#### NEVADA NATIONAL GUARD

● Mr. HELLER. Madam President, today I wish to recognize the Nevada National Guard's 45th Detachment of the Operational Support Airlift Agency, DET 45 OSAA, located at Reno-Stead airport. On June 6th, this unit departed for Joint Base Bagram, Afghanistan, where they will be serving for the next 9 months.

While tensions continue to rise in the Middle East, I am both humbled and honored that these brave men and women are willing to go into harm's way to put the needs of our country before their own. We owe our respect and gratitude to these soldiers, who are sacrificing so much to defend our freedoms. The DET 45 OSAA unit has a flawless reputation for providing safely executed flight operations both nationally and internationally without any accidents for the past 20 years, which has earned them a spot among the top 10 units for the past 10 years. I, along with my fellow Nevadans are honored that the DET 45 OSAA Unit call Nevada home. We as a nation are fortunate to have men and women, like those in the DET 45 OSAA unit, to serve and protect us.

The Nevada National Guard's 45th Detachment plays an integral role within the Operational Support Airlift Agency's mission by providing high priority, short notice fixed wing air transport support to passengers and cargo for all components and members of the Department of Defense. DET 45 OSAA has supported many missions both nationally and abroad. From 2003 to 2010 the unit flew missions in Cuba in support of Special Forces operations, and were deployed to Iraq and Kuwait supporting Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the United States Africa Command. The DET 45 OSAA unit has also supported ground forces by flying an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance mission with the King Air 300 series Medium Altitude Reconnaissance

and Surveillance System aircraft. Most recently, the State of Nevada has contributed to a new intelligence mission by providing soldiers working as Aerial Electronic Sensor Operators to perform their newest intelligence mission.

I would like to thank the courageous men and women in DET 45 OSAA for their contributions to the United States of America and to freedom-loving nations around the world. Their service to our country and their bravery and dedication to their families and communities earn all of these heroes a place among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly defended our Nation.

I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in recognizing and thanking these heroes for their selfless service both at home and abroad. May they have another successful mission and a safe return home.●

#### RECOGNIZING SQUADBAY

● Mr. HELLER. Madam President, today I wish to recognize a veterans volunteer program within Las Vegas known as Squadbay for their continued dedication to help their fellow servicemembers transition back from the battlefield to their communities. This unique program comprised of Marine Corps combat veterans provides recently discharged veterans with a mission, which uses newly acquired battlefield skills, and provides housing and other resources.

There is no way to adequately thank the men and women who lay down their lives for our freedoms, but the founders and volunteers at Squadbay have developed a way to assist our Nation's veterans in need by affording them various ways to use their training to benefit others. I commend this organization's continued dedication to serving Marine combat veterans needing to process traumatic experiences while simultaneously affecting a positive change in the lives of those in need of humanitarian assistance. Squadbay was founded by Lu Lobello, a brave veteran living in Las Vegas who realized the importance of having a mission after returning home from combat in Baghdad. Lu serves as a shining example of putting one's community before oneself.

With its first mission in 2013 to the Philippines after Typhoon Yolanda, Squadbay's service extends far beyond our Nation's borders. By allowing veterans the ability to continue using their combat training in a new environment, with a new mission that mirrors the values of their military experience, Squadbay is working to create a seamless transition to civilian life for our veterans. By providing a safe and social space for combat veterans to come together and the opportunity to embark on humanitarian aid missions, they are affording these brave men and women an opportunity to work through any issues brought on by experiencing combat.

As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I know the struggles that our veterans face after returning home from the battlefield. Congress has a responsibility not only to honor these brave individuals but to ensure they receive the quality care they have earned and deserve. I remain committed to upholding this promise for our veterans and servicemembers in Nevada and throughout the Nation. I am very pleased that veterans service organizations like Squadbay are committed to ensuring that the needs of our veterans are being met.

Today, I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in recognizing Squadbay, an organization whose mission is both noble and charitable. Their commitment to helping rehabilitate our veterans by giving them an outlet to embark on humanitarian aid missions in a positive life-changing scenario is admirable, and I wish them the best of luck in all of their future endeavors.●

#### REMEMBERING MICHAEL GEORGE

● Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, on June 24, my hometown of Detroit and the State of Michigan lost a great friend and public servant. Indeed, the loss of Michael George at the age of 81 was a tremendous loss for all those who admire hard work, dedication, generosity, and commitment to making the world a better place.

The son of immigrants, Mike was best known to many through his successful business ventures. He built a small, family-owned dairy business into Melody Farms, one of the largest and most successful dairy producers and distributors in the country.

Had that been his only endeavor, we would have called Mike's life well-lived. But Mike was more than a businessman. He became a leader in Detroit's Chaldean community. Chaldeans—Catholics originating mainly from Iraq—settled in large numbers in Detroit along with other immigrants from the Middle East. Mike was deeply proud of his Chaldean heritage. He helped found the Chaldean Iraqi Association of Michigan, and chaired the Chaldean Federation of America. He helped hundreds of Chaldean-owned businesses to grow. And as religious minorities came under increasing persecution in the Middle East, he became a leader in helping to settle endangered Iraqi Christians in the United States.

Mike didn't just serve the Chaldean community. He was passionately committed to Detroit and its rebirth. He served on countless charitable foundation boards and supported a host of worthy causes.

Mike George was a walking, talking personification of the American Dream. He was a friend to the city of Detroit. He was a friend to me. Barbara and I join Mike's legion of friends in Michigan and around the country extending our condolences to his wife Najat, and his family and friends.●

#### TRIBUTE TO COLONEL ROY BAHR

● Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I wish to commemorate the service of a patriot and decorated Soldier, COL Roy W. Bahr. Roy joined the U.S. Army in 1950 after the onset of the Korean War. Shortly after graduating from Officer Candidate School, he deployed to Korea and served as an infantry platoon leader. Following his deployment, Colonel Bahr volunteered for U.S. Army Special Forces and went on to serve with the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) in Vietnam. There, he was assigned as the commander of Forward Operating Base 3, Khe Sanh, leading elements of Military Assistance Command Vietnam—Studies and Observations Group, MACVSOG.

MACVSOG was tasked with conducting highly classified operations throughout Southeast Asia during the Vietnam war. This highly decorated unit was responsible for gathering critical intelligence throughout the conflict and was so effective that the North Vietnamese had to divert tens of thousands of troops in an attempt to counter MACVSOG operations. Consequently, MACVSOG's casualty rates were higher than any American unit since the American Civil War.

Only the best and most highly skilled commanders were involved with MACVSOG. During Colonel Bahr's time with MACVSOG, he commanded forward operating bases at Phu Bai, Kontum, and Khe Sanh. Colonel Bahr was responsible for dozens of reconnaissance teams and special reaction forces that often worked clandestinely in enemy occupied territory with limited support. It is difficult to fully articulate the risk incurred by Colonel Bahr and his men, or the difficulty of their missions, as they heroically served our Nation.

Colonel Bahr commanded MACVSOG, FOB-3 during the height of the siege at Khe Sanh in 1968. Under constant bombardment, Colonel Bahr's reconnaissance teams were given full authority to operate outside the compound during what would become one of the largest battles of the Vietnam war. Colonel Bahr's unit, in concert with a large contingent of U.S. Marines, fought to prevent the North Vietnamese units from overrunning the combat base at Khe Sanh.

Later in the conflict, Colonel Bahr organized and led a force to relieve an American operating base at Da Nang after it came under assault by North Vietnamese sappers on August 22 and 23, 1968. The North Vietnamese attack on Da Nang was the single deadliest day for U.S. Army Special Forces during the war. Colonel Bahr's relief effort and subsequent pursuit of remaining enemy personnel was critical in gaining full control of the base and saving American lives.

In early 1961, while visiting Fort Bragg, President Kennedy stated, "The Green Beret is a symbol of excellence, a badge of courage, a mark of distinction in the fight for freedom." COL