

wife and daughter, family, friends, and country. He will be remembered for his commitment to and belief in the greatness of our Nation. I am honored to pay tribute to this true American hero who volunteered to go into the fight and made the ultimate sacrifice for our protection and freedom.

NEWPORT, MAINE BICENTENNIAL

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I wish to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Town of Newport, ME. Newport was built with a spirit of determination and resiliency that still guides the community today, and this bicentennial is a time to celebrate the generations of hard-working and caring people who have made it such a wonderful place to live, work, and raise families.

While this bicentennial marks Newport's incorporation, the year 1814 was but one milestone in a long journey of progress. For thousands of years, the region was the hunting and fishing grounds of the Abenaki, and the chain of lakes and streams formed their highway between the mighty Kennebec and Penobscot Rivers. The very name of the town a translation of Seabasticook, the Abenaki word for portage is evidence of the friendship between the first white settlers and the Native Americans.

The settlers were drawn by fertile soil, vast forests, and fast-moving waters, which they turned into productive farms and busy lumber mills that were soon followed by blacksmiths, leather manufacturing, textiles, and other endeavors vital to Maine's development. The wealth produced by the land, and by hard work and determination, was invested in schools and churches to create a true community. In the decades that followed, Newport became a center of industry and innovation with such remarkable endeavors as silk production, condensed milk manufacturing, and the fabrication of what were considered the finest carriages in Maine.

Today, the people of Newport continue to build. Their strong environmental ethic has helped make Seabasticook Lake a favorite recreation destination for residents and visitors. The Newport Industrial Center offers a home to new or expanding businesses, and the Newport Cultural Center contributes to a vibrant downtown.

A quality that runs through Newport's history is courage, best demonstrated by the memorial the town dedicated 3 years ago to SGT Donald Skidgel, who was awarded the Medal of Honor for giving his life to save the lives of his fellow soldiers in Vietnam. From the Civil War to the conflicts of our time, the names of some 500 patriots from Newport who have served our Nation with honor and defended our freedom with valor are inscribed on the Veterans Memorial.

This 200th anniversary is not just about something that is measured in

calendar years. It is about human accomplishment, an occasion to celebrate the people who for more than two centuries have pulled together, cared for one another, and built a community. Thanks to those who came before, Newport has a wonderful history. Thanks to those who are there today, it has a bright future.

JUSTICE FROM SERBIA

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, 15 years ago this week three American citizens—the brothers Ylli, Agron and Mehmet Bytyqi—were transferred from a prison to an Interior Ministry camp in Eastern Serbia. At that camp, they were executed and buried in a mass grave with dozens of Albanians from Kosovo.

Today, I again call upon the Serbian authorities to bring those responsible for these murders to justice. Belgrade has given us assurances in recent years that action will be taken, but no clear steps have actually been taken to apprehend and prosecute those known to have been in command of the camp or the forces operating there.

The three Bytyqi brothers went to Kosovo in 1999, a time of conflict and NATO intervention. Well after an agreed cessation of hostilities in early June, the brothers escorted an ethnic Romani family from Kosovo to territory still under Serbian control, where that family would be safer. Serbian authorities apprehended the brothers as they were undertaking this humanitarian task and held them in jail for 15 days for illegal entry. When time came for their release, they were instead turned over to a special operations unit of the Serbian Interior Ministry, transported to the camp and brutally executed. There was no due process, no trial, and no opportunity for the brothers to defend themselves. There was nothing but the cold-blooded murder of three American citizen brothers.

Serbia today is not the Serbia of 15 years ago. The people of Serbia ousted the undemocratic and extreme nationalist regime of Slobodan Milosevic in 2000, and the country has since made a steady, if at times difficult, transition to democracy and the rule of law. In 2014, Serbia began accession talks to join the European Union, and in 2015 it will chair the OSCE, a European organization which promotes democratic norms and human rights.

I applaud Serbia on its progress and I support its integration into Europe, but I cannot overlook the continued and contrasting absence of justice in the Bytyqi case. The new government of Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic has pledged to act. It must now generate the political will to act. The protection of those responsible for this crime can no longer be tolerated.

The surviving Bytyqi family deserves to see justice. Serbia itself will put a dark past behind it by providing this justice. Serbian-American relations and Serbia's OSCE chairmanship will

be enhanced by providing justice. It is time for those responsible for the Bytyqi brother murders to lose their protection and to answer for the crimes they committed 15 years ago.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

PORT LIONS, ALASKA

• Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the residents of Port Lions, AK as they celebrate the golden anniversary of the founding of their community.

Port Lions was founded after the tsunami caused by the 1964 Good Friday earthquake destroyed settlements on Afognak and Raspberry Islands. Residents of Port Lions began moving into the village in December, after receiving incredible support from the Lions Club to build anew. Over the years, Port Lions has become a community with a strong sense of pride in family, friendship, and the kind of resilience that characterizes Alaskans.

This year the city of Port Lions and the Native village of Port Lions have organized events to celebrate their 50-year history. They have honored the neighbors and relatives lost in 1964, celebrated the community they helped to build, and fostered their vision for even more growth and prosperity in the future.

I would like to thank the residents of Port Lions for their persistence, resilience, and determination in the face of difficult obstacles. Their lives are testimony to the strong spirit of Alaska. I am honored to have the opportunity to share in the commemoration of their golden anniversary.●

BREMER COUNTY, IOWA

• Mr. HARKIN. Madam 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 Bremer 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 Bremer County worth over \$2 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than \$38 million to the local economy.

Of course, one of my favorite memories of working together includes the community's tremendous success with the Main Street Iowa program, particularly the great work they have done rehabilitating the Last National Bank Building.

Among the highlights:

Investing in Iowa's economic development through targeted community projects: In Northeast 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 Bremer 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, over many years, I fought for more than \$5.2 million in funding for ag-based industrial lubricant research, as well as \$500,000 for the 10th Avenue South corridor, and \$400,000 to rehabilitate abandoned military facility just outside of Waverly, helping to create jobs and expand economic opportunities.

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, Bremer County has received \$961,998 in Harkin grants. Similarly, schools in Bremer County have received funds that I designated for Iowa Star Schools for technology totaling \$89,295.

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. Bremer County has received over \$6 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, Bremer County has received more than \$1 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 the methamphetamine epidemic. For instance, Bremer County has received \$200,000 in Community Oriented Policing Services, COPS, grants. Also, since 2001, Bremer County's fire departments have received over \$6 million 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 Bremer County, both those with and without disabilities.

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

FRANKLIN COUNTY, IOWA

● Mr. HARKIN, Madam 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 Franklin 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 Franklin County worth over \$1 million and successfully acquire financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than \$8 million to the local economy.

Of course, one of my favorite memories of working together is the great work that community leaders have done in using Main Street Iowa funds to leverage community investment and volunteerism to make major improvements in downtown Hampton.

Among the highlights:

Main Street Iowa: One of the greatest challenges we face in Iowa and all