Billy Casper was one of the greatest family men—be it inside the game of golf or out—I have had the fortunate blessing to meet. He had such a wonderful balance to his life. Golf was never the most important thing in Billy's life—family was. There was always much more to Billy Casper than golf . . . It was not even a year ago, someone asked Billy how he wanted to be remembered, and he said, ''I want to be remembered for how I loved my fellow man.''

Mike Reid, a fellow PGA Tour competitor and Utahn, said the following about Billy: ''He taught by example, that while we strive for excellence in golf, success should never come at the cost of the relationships we hold dear.''

To Billy and his wife Shirley, family was always the first priority. They are the proud parents of 11 children, 6 of whom are adopted, and they now have over 70 grandchildren and many great-grandchildren. When his sons were old enough Billy would have them caddie for him on tour so that he could spend that special time with them. He gave freely of himself and spent countless hours in the service of others, both in golf and in church callings.

Billy Casper was one of the very best in his chosen profession, but at the same time, he never let the trappings of the world overshadow what was most important to him—his friends, his faith, and his family. I am profoundly grateful that Elaine and I were able to call Billy and Shirley friends. I will miss Billy Casper dearly, as will all who knew him. May his memory remind us all of the importance of kindness, charity, love, and optimism.

## RECOGNIZING THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATIONAL LABORATORY

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today, with my colleague Senator CANTWELL, we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, PNNL, a true example of scientific excellence located in our home State of Washington. For the past 50 years, PNNL has served as the Department of Energy's premier chemistry, environmental sciences, and data analytics national laboratory and has tackled some of our Nation's most complex and urgent challenges.

In 1965, Battelle won a contract to operate a research and development lab at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington State. Then known as Pacific Northwest Laboratory, its scientists provided critical support to plutonium production and nuclear waste cleanup at Hanford. Through its commitment to excellence and innovation, the lab grew and evolved to serve the ever-changing needs of our Nation. In 1969, the Pacific Northwest Laboratory's scientific prowess caught the eye of NASA, which chose the lab to analyze lunar soil samples that were collected after landing a man on the Moon. The lab changed its name to the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in 1995, and in 1997 opened the Environmental Molecular Sciences Laboratory. This state-of-the-art national scientific user facility provides researchers from around the Nation and the world with experimental instruments, a high-performance supercomputer, and specialized staff allowing them to advance energy and environmental discoveries.

Today, the lab employs 4,300 people at its main Richland campus, the marine research facility in Sequim, and in satellite offices in Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, and Washington, DC, and conducts $1 billion in research annually for the Department of Energy, Department of Homeland Security, National Institutes of Health, and many more. While it is clear PNNL serves as a cornerstone of the Tri-Cities economy, the dedicated staff are also key leaders in the community. The lab has made it a priority to invest in STEM education, playing an important role as a founding partner in one of Washington State's first STEM high schools. Delta High School is now educating our next generation of scientists and engineers. In higher education, PNNL supported efforts to create a Washington State University branch campus in the region which led to WSU Tri-Cities opening its doors in 1989. I am consistently impressed with PNNL's contributions to the local community.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I join my colleague, Senator MURRAY, in commemorating the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory's 50th anniversary. As our constituents in Washington State know, PNNL is an integral part of our economy. The lab has a total economic output of $1.3 billion and supports more than 6,800 jobs in Washington. PNNL's commitment to commercialization and technology transfer has brought research out of the laboratory and into the real world, further bolstering PNNL's reputation as a national scientific leader and supporting Washington State's economy.

I am reminded each day how the work at PNNL impacts our daily lives. During my visits to the Port of Seattle, I know that PNNL has deployed radiation detection systems that keep our ports safe. And when I watch a movie at home, I know that the DVD I use is possible because of PNNL's advancements in digital data storage technology. Because of these and other important contributions, PNNL has earned more Federal Laboratory Consortium Awards than any other national laboratory, holds more than 2,300 U.S. and foreign patents, and fostered the creation of 108 spin-off companies that remain open today.

PNNL plays a unique role in addressing our Nation's energy demands by furthering research in climate change, advanced biofuels, and the electric grid. In the 1990s, the lab helped create the Global Change Assessment Model to help institutions across the world explore the impacts of climate change and the different policy proposals to address it. The scientists at PNNL have also developed a cutting-edge chemical process that transforms algae to crude oil in minutes, a technology that could help our Nation reduce its dependence on foreign oil. And the lab continues to lead in assessing cyber security threats by developing and testing technology to help protect the electric grid. With its stellar record of commercializing research, I have no doubt that PNNL's work will continue to meet the United States' energy challenges in the future.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, together Senator CANTWELL and I have been proud supporters and advocates for PNNL here in the other Washington, working to make sure our colleagues and the administration understand the important research it conducts, and the significant contributions it makes to the Tri-Cities community. Over the past 50 years, PNNL has benefited from a talented and committed staff of scientists, engineers, and nontechnical staff, a dedicated and committed operator in Battelle, and a strong partner in the Department of Energy. Congratulations to PNNL. I know Senator CANTWELL and I look forward to PNNL's future contributions to Washington State, the Nation, and the world.

## MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I wish to express support for Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week, and to express the need for greater Federal investment in medical research.

I regret that severe weather prevented me from doing this last week, which was Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week. Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week is a time for Americans everywhere to help others learn more about multiple sclerosis, and to do what they can to make a difference for those who suffer from this disease.

Multiple sclerosis can be devastating for the individuals who suffer from it, as well as their families. Each year, I am proud to work with Senator COLLINS to recognize multiple sclerosis patients, their caregivers and their families by introducing a resolution in support of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week. Senator COLLINS and I worked together again on a resolution for 2015. I am pleased to say that this resolution, S. Res. 98, cleared the Senate on March 4. It is a testament to the support of the Senate for the 400,000 Americans who are estimated to be suffering from this terrible disease.

While it is important to recognize the toll taken by multiple sclerosis, it is just as important to note that it is but one of many debilitating or deadly diseases for which we lack a cure, or for which existing treatments are inadequate. For many of these diseases, we have made great progress due to federally funded biomedical research. Unfortunately, when medical inflation is taken into account, the National Institute of Health's, NIH, budget has been

falling for nearly a decade. This is unacceptable.

We must reverse the decline in NIH funding, and work to support other Federal research programs. The research done by these programs saves lives and improves quality of life. Funding these programs also makes sound economic sense: Federally funded biomedical research is an important driver of economic growth throughout the United States. In 2013, NIH grants to my State alone supported an estimated 23,122 jobs. However, while the United States has been the world leader in medical research, other nations such as China are dramatically ramping up their investment, threatening our dominance in the field. We must work to continue investments that support patients, improve quality of life and create jobs that benefit all Americans.

In addition to advocating for NIH funding with Senator BURR—indicative of the bipartisan support the NIH budget enjoys—I am also a cosponsor of S. 289, the American Cures Act, which would authorize increases in Federal research budgets at the NIH, but also at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Defense Health Program and the Veterans Medical and Prosthetics Research Program. As we support those suffering from multiple sclerosis, we must also remember the importance of federally funded medical research. We cannot afford, from a public health or economic standpoint, not to support biomedical progress.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

### RECOGNIZING THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF AUTISM SPEAKS

• Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I wish to acknowledge Autism Speaks as they celebrate 10 years as a leading organization dedicated to serving people with autism and their families. Founded by Bob and Suzanne Wright—concerned grandparents of a child with autism—on February 25, 2005, Autism Speaks has grown to become not just a national leader in the conversation about autism, but a world leader.

Ten years ago, Congress had yet to pass the landmark law now known after two reauthorizations as the Autism CARES Act. The estimated rate of autism in the United States—according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—at that time was about 1 in 150. Today, the CDC estimates that the rate of autism is about 1 in 68. These same figures show that my home State of New Jersey has the highest rate of autism incidence in the Nation, at 1 in 45. It is because of the countless stories of people from my home State—from the parents seeking help for their children, to the teachers and counselors who help people on the autism spectrum to grow and develop, to the researchers seeking to understand the causes of autism—that I am so passionately committed to confronting the challenge of autism, and Autism Speaks has been a leading voice on this issue for a decade.

Over the past 10 years, Autism Speaks has committed more than $525 million towards autism research, awareness, services, and advocacy. Most of these funds have gone to support science and medical research, including a new partnership with Google through the MSSNG program, which will sequence and store the world's largest database of genomic information on autism. Autism Speaks has raised awareness of autism worldwide, and has partnerships with organizations in 60 countries across the globe. Autism Speaks provides funds for services for people with autism through a number of grant programs and scholarships. It is also no secret that Autism Speaks has served as a leading advocate in seeking Federal legislation to address the challenges of autism.

I am proud to have championed the passage of the Autism Coordination, Accountability, Research, Education and Support Act, also known as the Autism CARES Act, which passed this body by unanimous consent on July 31, 2014. President Obama signed the Autism CARES Act into law on August 8, 2014. This law ensures that we continue the critical programs established in 2006 that provide for autism research as well as support services to individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. The Autism CARES Act also makes a number of updates and improvements on the original law, starting with better organization and coordination of Federal autism programs, including new mechanisms to ensure that goals are being met and that Federal dollars are being spent efficiently. It also requires that a report be written that focuses on the needs of young adults on the autistic spectrum or with another developmental disability and the challenges they face when they transition from school-based services to those they need during adulthood, which is a critical need that often goes unspoken. Autism Speaks' advocacy on behalf of those with autism and their families was vital to securing overwhelming bipartisan support for this law and ensuring that it passed through Congress and into law.

As they mark their 10th anniversary, I congratulate Autism Speaks for the decade of great work that they do and express my gratitude and support as they serve as a leading voice in our national discussion on autism for decades to come.•

### TRIBUTE TO DR. WILLIAM MEEHAN

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Dr. William A. Meehan, who has served with great distinction and honor at Jacksonville State University for more than 40 years. I have known him since he became president in 1999, and my admiration for his leadership and for Jacksonville State University has only grown each year. Dr. Meehan is retiring from his post as president of JSU on June 30, 2015, where his extraordinary leadership and vision will be sorely missed.

Dr. Meehan, along with his board of trustees, set a bold vision for Jacksonville State University. He inspired his team to put students first, to inspire their intellectual curiosity, and to nurture critical thinking, communication skills, and creativity in problem-solving. He led the creation of the university's first bold strategic plan that focuses on 21st-century skills.

President Meehan set a course for JSU that would not only move the university forward but would fast-forward. Now, starting in the fall of 2015, 500 entering freshmen at JSU will have an iPad; these students will have global technology at their fingertips and be prepared for the rigors of their academic pursuits.

Under President Meehan's leadership JSU has excelled in many pursuits. Research funding continues to rise, with more than $23 million in grants received last year, an increase of 515 percent. ACT scores of incoming freshmen have risen significantly over the past decade, housing occupancy rates have improved from 64 percent to 90 percent, and student-to-faculty ratio is a stellar 17 to 1 under Dr. Meehan's leadership. JSU now enjoys a wide alumni base of more than 60,000 in all 50 States and 95 countries around the world.

President Meehan has focused the university on innovative approaches such as the creation of 12 interdisciplinary centers that yield practical applications and solutions to real-world problems. These centers concentrate on regional education, teaching and learning, security, applied forensics, disaster and community resilience, disease ecology, ecosystems, behavioral studies, economic development, emergency preparedness, environmental policy, and veteran support.

Further, under President Meehan's leadership, JSU was just awarded a 10-year reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission of Colleges, SACSCOC. JSU also enjoys significant program accreditations, attesting to the high-quality academics provided. JSU is also fierce on the playing field and lays claim to being the only school in the Nation to hold NCAA national titles in football, men's basketball and baseball at the Division I or Division II levels.

President Meehan has a deep and abiding commitment to partnerships with K–12, community colleges, and the region in which he serves. He has extensive service with community initiatives and on education, economic development and community service strategic boards. His view of education is a seamless process flowing from kindergarten through graduate school,