

frontline of advocating for the interests of retired Nevadans for more than a decade. Scotty Watts, who was the founding president of NARA, led the organization and played a critical role in its progress and success. Under his steadfast leadership, Scotty helped NARA build a powerful grassroots network to support the economic and health programs that are important to retirees throughout Nevada. Today, NARA has grown to include more than 19,330 members and 28 chapters, making it the largest progressive senior citizen organization in the Silver State.

Prior to becoming the president of NARA, Scotty was a leading advocate for retirees and seniors in the Silver State. He served two terms as the president of the Nevada National Council of Senior Citizens. Through his leadership positions in these organizations, he led the effort in our State to protect and strengthen the benefits seniors have earned under Social Security and Medicare and has been a fierce advocate for the Affordable Care Act. I am pleased that this month NARA will honor Scotty during the organization's State convention for his career in dedicated service and advocacy.

I have had the pleasure of meeting with Scotty, and I can say without reservation that Nevada's retirees were fortunate to have him in their corner, fighting on their behalf. I commend Scotty for his service to the Silver State, and I wish him the best in his retirement and future endeavors.

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DOMINICANS OF HAITIAN DESCENT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have traveled to the Dominican Republic and Haiti and am familiar with the history of racial tensions between the population of Haitian migrants and Dominicans of Haitian descent and other citizens of the Dominican Republic. These problems are by no means unique to these two neighboring countries, nor are there easy solutions. In addition to race there is competition for land, social services, and jobs. But while this situation should not be oversimplified, the way the Dominican Government is dealing with it is unfortunate.

In a September 2013 Dominican Constitutional Court ruling the citizenship of more than 200,000 people—mostly Dominicans of Haitian descent—was summarily revoked, and they lost access to education, health care, and other essential social services, as well as their basic rights. Since that ruling the Dominican Government has threatened to enforce strict and prejudicial immigration laws. Many affected residents live under constant fear of deportation, and according to the United Nations nearly 20,000 have already fled the country in the past month, putting the island on the brink of a mass refugee crisis.

By threatening to deport Haitian migrants and Dominicans of Haitian de-

scent, the Dominican Government is on a path that not only disregards fundamental principles of international humanitarian law, but may provoke a reaction that makes the situation worse. Even as we are already seeing the consequences of the threat of mass deportations, following through with such a policy would likely greatly exacerbate tensions in the Dominican Republic and create a regional diplomatic and humanitarian crisis. Haiti, impoverished and still recovering from the devastating 2010 earthquake, does not have the capacity to handle the sudden arrival of thousands of homeless, jobless, Dominicans.

The United States, with 319 million people spread across 50 States is among the most ethnically and racially diverse countries in the world. The challenges this has posed for our own democracy over the past two centuries are well known. We have not always handled these challenges as we should have. I hope the Dominican Government will learn from our experience and recognize the need to reverse course and reaffirm the legal status and rights of these people.

NOMINATION OBJECTION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I intend to object to any unanimous consent request at the present time relating to the nomination of David Malcolm Robinson to be Assistant Secretary for Conflict and Stabilization Operations and Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization.

I will object because the State Department has engaged in unreasonable delay in responding to Judiciary Committee investigations and inquiries. Since June of 2013, the Judiciary Committee has requested a number of documents related to an investigation into Ms. Huma Abedin regarding her possible conflicts of interest created by her simultaneous employment with the State Department and private sector entities. In addition, the Judiciary Committee has inquired about former Secretary Clinton and Ms. Abedin's questionable email practices that may be in violation of Department policy and Federal law. Furthermore, the committee's inquiry also centers on the possible interference of Freedom of Information Act requests by State Department personnel, including Secretary Clinton's former Chief of Staff, Ms. Cheryl Mills. To this day, the committee has not received a complete response. Moreover, the committee recently acquired information that shows the State Department has been in possession of material that would answer some of the Committee's inquiries. Yet, the requested material is still not forthcoming.

This willful lack of cooperation is made more evident by the example of repeated failures by State Department personnel to respond to emails or respond days or weeks later. And in yet another recent committee investiga-

tion beginning in June 2015, the State Department has still failed to provide any communication, via email or a phone call, to acknowledge or confirm that they have received a committee letter, despite three emails sent by committee staff.

Not only has the Judiciary Committee experienced unacceptable delays in receiving information, other entities inside and outside of the government have experienced delays as well. The Associated Press sued the State Department over the failure to satisfy repeated document requests under the Freedom of Information Act related to these same issues. One of these requests dates back 5 years ago. Judge Richard Leon of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, the judge responsible for this case, chided the State Department for its failure to produce documents on time, "Now, any person should be able to review that in one day—one day. Even the least ambitious bureaucrat could do this."

In total, these actions illustrate a pattern of conduct that clearly demonstrates a lack of cooperation and bad faith in its interaction with Congress. This is unacceptable and cannot continue.

In order to maintain the proper balance of separation of powers and in order for Congress to exercise its proper oversight function, government agencies must respond to inquiries. The State Department apparently believes that it can simply ignore Congress. It is important to note that my objection is not intended to question Mr. Robinson's credentials in any way. However, withholding consent to suspend Senate rules on nominations is one tool a Senator has to incentivize executive agencies to respond to congressional inquiries. Frankly, this should not be necessary, and the nominee is an innocent victim of the State Department's contemptuous failures to respond to congressional inquiries. I urge the State Department to change its ways and if they choose not to, I will be forced to escalate the scope of my intent to object to include unanimous consent requests relating to Foreign Service officer candidates as well.

TRIBUTE TO GENERAL RAYMOND T. ODIERNO, 38TH CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMY

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, on behalf of myself and my cochair of the Army Caucus, the senior Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. REED, I rise today to honor GEN Raymond T. Odierno, the 38th Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, and one of our Nation's finest military officers. General Odierno will retire from Active military duty in August 2015, bringing to a close 39 years of distinguished service to our great Nation.

In 1976, General Odierno was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Field Artillery upon graduation from the United States Military Academy at West Point. He commanded units at

every echelon, from platoon to theater, with duty in Germany, Albania, Kuwait, Iraq, and the United States. General Odierno deployed in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm; commanded the 4th Infantry Division during Operation Iraqi Freedom from April 2003 to March 2004; served as the commanding general, Multi-National Corps—Iraq, III Corps, from 2006 to 2008; and later served as the commanding general, Multi-National Force—Iraq and subsequently United States Forces—Iraq, from 2008 until 2010. General Odierno went on to serve as the commander of U.S. Joint Forces Command from 2010 to 2011, where he led the development and integration of joint capabilities in support of combatant command requirements around the world.

On September 7, 2011, General Odierno became the 38th Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army. Since assuming this position, General Odierno's leadership and commitment to his soldiers, to the Army, and to the Nation have significantly contributed to the U.S. Army being the most highly trained and professional land force in the world.

General Odierno developed and implemented the U.S. Army's vision establishing a path for the Army of 2025 and beyond. He envisioned how future Army forces would prevent conflict, shape security environments, and win wars. He ensured that we possessed the capability and capacity to provide globally responsive and regionally aligned forces, as well as expeditionary and decisive land-power across the range of military operations in defense of our Nation at home and abroad, both today and against emerging threats.

But the one thing that remained constant was General Odierno's tireless commitment to soldiers and their families. He built leaders capable of navigating the complex challenges of the world we face today and cared for our families by focusing on keeping the total Army—soldiers, families, and civilians alike—healthy, ready, resilient, and total Army strong. General Odierno is an exceptional leader, an American patriot committed to our Army and Nation, but most importantly, General Odierno is a great man of character. It is for GEN Ray Odierno, a soldier, leader, and selfless servant, whom we with profound admiration and deep respect pay tribute to for all he has done for the U.S. Army and our Nation. We thank General Odierno, his wife Linda, and his three children, Tony, Katie, and Mike, for their dedication and sacrifice, and we wish them well in the years to come.

RECOGNIZING LARRY AND MARGO BEAN

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, on September 1, 2015, the Boys & Girls Club of Central Wyoming will be holding their Annual Awards and Recognition Breakfast where they will honor Casper philanthropists, Larry and Margo Bean.

The Boys & Girls Club of Central Wyoming has been making positive differences in the lives of our children since 1978. The club provides a supportive environment and an extensive array of programs and services to enhance the development of our youth. Through entertaining activities and with the guidance of volunteer mentors, participants learn the important values of independence, community, and belonging. Every year, the Boys & Girls Club plans a breakfast to honor a member or members of the community who make outstanding contributions to both the Boys & Girls Club and the city of Casper. This year's honorees, Larry and Margo Bean, are incredible champions in the Casper community and worthy of this special recognition.

Growing up on farms in Iowa, Larry and Margo moved to Casper as young adults with a desire to help, encourage, and bring joy to those who crossed their paths, particularly children. Anyone who knows the couple knows that the care and support they show for each other equals their passion for philanthropy and civic engagement. Next year, the couple will celebrate their 50th anniversary. They will celebrate this milestone occasion with their children Joshua, Amber, Nathan, and Nicole, and grandchildren Ella, Xavier, Mia, Mars, Sullivan, Cassius, and Vincent—who will be born next month.

As a couple, they are a powerhouse, yet they have significant individual accomplishments. As an author of four children's books, Margo's inspiration to write stories for children came from her father, Max Cronbaugh. Her father was an amazing storyteller who never failed to capture the imagination of children and the excitement of everyday life on the farm. With her experience as an elementary school teacher and growing up on her family's Iowa farm, Margo's books reflect her unique experience and the special place children have always held in her heart. Her continued dedication to educating children in Wyoming is shown by leadership efforts at the St. Anthony Tri-Parish Catholic School, where some of their grandchildren attend school. Additionally, Margo was chairman of the Wyoming Medical Center board of directors and ran a successful business.

Larry is a certified public accountant and he provides valuable guidance and financial advice. In addition, Larry serves on the board of directors for several important organizations including the Martin Family Foundation, the Converse County Bank, and the Central Wyoming Counseling Center. As so many folks in Wyoming know, Larry is the ultimate letterwriter. His letters are individual masterpieces. In every letter from Larry, you see his smile and feel his friendship. Larry freely gives encouragement and inspiration—one letter at a time. Over the years, Bobbi and I have looked forward to the Bean's annual Christmas letter.

Together, Larry and Margo have touched the lives of thousands of chil-

dren and families in Wyoming through their philanthropic and volunteer work. At Christmastime, their "Love in Action" project collects presents for families in need. They sponsor and coordinate youth events in the community including The American Dream Essay contest, The Uprising, and the Global Leadership Summit. The Beans also support youth faith-based organizations such as Child Evangelism Fellowship and Youth for Christ. They also have been strong supporters of the Nicolaysen Discovery Center and the Central Wyoming Rescue Mission.

Their kindness and generosity expands across the globe. Larry and Margo are diligently working to develop faith-based schools in Zambia and Haiti. These neighborhood schools will bring hope and opportunities to these children as well as to these communities.

My wife, Bobbi, joins me in extending our congratulations to Larry and Margo Bean and thanking them for their dedication to Wyoming and its youth. All of us privileged to know them are blessed.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S TENNIS TEAM NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, as a fellow Commodore, I would like to congratulate the Vanderbilt University women's tennis team on winning the NCAA championship, the first national championship for the women's tennis program, and the third in Commodore history.

Geoff Macdonald, the head coach of this program for 21 years, has done a phenomenal job of training and guiding these exceptional student-athletes. He has worked hard to transform the Vanderbilt's women's tennis program into the best in the country.

Vanderbilt is a very special university, one that produces student-athletes of exceptional character and integrity, who have pride in themselves and their school. This may be the first national championship for Vanderbilt's women's tennis team, but their commitment to these ideals ensures that this success will not be the last.

This achievement would not have been possible without the hard work, talent, and teamwork of the following outstanding student-athletes: Payton Robinette, Margaret Leavell, Ellie Yates, Georgina Sellyn, Ashleigh Antal, Marie Casares, Courtney Colton, Frances Altick, Astra Sharma, and Sydney Campbell.

Of course, these student-athletes were trained and mentored by a dedicated team of coaches and staff led by Coach Macdonald. They are: Emil Iankov, Christy Hogan, Kerry Wilbar, Lori Alexander, Aleke Tsoubanos, and Catherine Hillye.

Go 'Dores!•