

2013. He was only the second American inducted into this elite group.

Jim was also active with the Kentucky Distillers Association board of directors for 13 years, and served as chairman of the internationally attended Kentucky Bourbon Festival for 7 of the 9 years he was on the board. The Kentucky Bourbon Festival is a 6-day event that takes place in Bardstown, KY.

Jim graduated from the University of Louisville with a BSC in marketing and a minor in chemistry. Let me add that not only did Jim and I both attend the University of Louisville, we are also fraternity brothers.

In retirement, Jim hopes to stay involved with bourbon and the distilled spirits industry. I suspect he will also get to spend more time with his wife Beverly Anne, as well as his children Dennis, Deborah, Cynthia, and Doralee, and his grandchildren.

Jim will be missed as the face of Four Roses Bourbon but I know the entire distilled spirits industry in Kentucky joins me in recognizing his lifetime of accomplishment and wishing him the best in retirement. I want to wish congratulations again to Jim Rutledge for his many successes in the world of bourbon.

TRIBUTE TO DANIELLE BLAKENEY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to an honored Kentuckian who is bringing home Olympic gold. Danielle Blakeney of Erlanger is a rhythmic gymnast who has won three gold medals at the 2015 Special Olympics World Games in Los Angeles.

Danielle won the gold medal in the ball routine competition. She also won gold in all-around rhythmic gymnastics, and was part of the gold medal-winning team in the group ball competition.

Danielle also won a silver medal in the ribbon competition, a bronze medal in the clubs competition, and placed fifth in the hoop competition.

Danielle is 24 years old and a graduate of Boone County High School. She is one of six Kentucky athletes competing in this year's Special Olympics, among 7,000 athletes representing 177 countries.

Danielle is no stranger to winning medals. She is competing in her second Special Olympics World Games. In addition to winning the all-around gold medal in rhythmic gymnastics at the 2011 Games in Athens, Greece, she won two golds, a silver and a bronze in individual events at that games as well.

The mission of the Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them the opportunity to see the power of sport change lives. The first Special Olympics Games was held in 1968 in Chicago, and saw a thousand people with intellectual disabilities from 26 States and Canada participate.

Today, Danielle Blakeney and her fellow athletes are the inheritors of that legacy. I want to congratulate Danielle for her many athletic achievements. She truly makes Kentucky proud and we are pleased she will be bringing her medals home to the Bluegrass State.

RECOGNIZING THE ANNIVERSARIES OF SOCIAL SECURITY, MEDICARE, AND MEDICAID

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the respective anniversaries of three of the most important programs for American seniors: Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

On August 14, 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act into law. Among other things, this bill created the Social Security Program and made a promise to all Americans: that if you work hard, contribute, and play by the rules, you can retire and live in dignity.

Before Social Security, more than 50 percent of older Americans in this country lived in poverty. Many of these seniors worked hard their entire lives but became dependent on others and often had to beg for basic necessities, such as food, shelter, and medical care. "Poverty-ridden old age" was a pressing national concern both for seniors and younger Americans, who wondered if their years of hard work would provide enough for them to survive in their old age.

Today, less than 9 percent of seniors live in poverty. This significant decrease in poverty among seniors is a direct result of Social Security and the secure retirement it provides.

As we approach the program's 80th anniversary, Social Security is the most successful program in American history, and its trust fund contains sufficient assets to fully fund all promised benefits for almost 20 years. Yet, notwithstanding its success, Social Security remains deeply controversial among many Republicans and super-wealthy Americans, who are committed to weakening and ultimately destroying the program.

Just 10 years ago, President George W. Bush tried to privatize Social Security, which would have forced deep cuts to guaranteed benefits and a massive increase in debt. More recently, several leading Republicans have called for delaying the retirement age and cutting benefits. I have strongly opposed all these proposals to break our promises to seniors, and I will continue to do so.

On July 30, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson expanded our Nation's commitment to seniors by signing into law the Social Security Amendments of 1965—the legislation that created Medicare. For 50 years, this program has helped millions of American seniors live longer, healthier lives and has also provided them with the peace-of-mind and economic security that comes with having comprehensive health coverage.

I remember what it was like for seniors who became sick or injured before

Medicare was enacted. In fact, Medicare was implemented during my tenure on the board of trustees for the Southern Nevada Memorial Hospital, now the University Medical Center of Southern Nevada. Prior to Medicare, 40 percent of seniors who came into that hospital were required to have a signature from a friend or relative who agreed to be responsible for their medical bill if they could not pay. If the patient could not produce a signature, they were turned away. Nationwide, nearly half of all seniors age 65 and older were uninsured, and if you were fortunate enough to have health insurance, you paid more than 50 percent of the cost out-of-pocket. That is how bad it was for seniors. Today, 98 percent of all seniors are insured and can go to the hospital or see their doctor when they need care. This program has truly been a lifeline for millions of seniors throughout the country.

And let us not forget about Medicaid, which was also created under the Social Security Amendments of 1965. Medicaid provides health care and long-term services to 16 million low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities. Medicaid pays for services that Medicare does not cover. It ensures that low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities have access to a wide variety of services. These options often allow them to remain in their communities rather than relocating to nursing homes.

I have long worked to protect and strengthen Medicare and Medicaid for the millions of seniors and younger Americans who depend on these benefits. In 2010, I proudly cast my vote in support of the Affordable Care Act, which is strengthening Medicare and working to keep seniors' hard-earned savings in their own pockets. Since this law was enacted, millions of seniors throughout the country have saved more than \$15 billion dollars on their prescription drug costs and the program's solvency has been extended for 13 years. The Affordable Care Act has also given States the option of expanding their Medicaid Programs so that more low-income Americans can access the care they need.

Sadly, Republicans have repeatedly attacked and tried to eliminate Medicare and Medicaid, just as they have done with Social Security. Throughout the last 50 years, they have tried to privatize Medicare, convert Medicaid into a block grant program, and cut benefits for both programs. Now, they have set their sights on the Affordable Care Act, with repeated challenges to the law before the courts, more than 50 votes to repeal or undermine the law, and Republican Governors turning back millions of Federal dollars to expand their Medicaid Programs and expand access to health care in their States. Republicans are determined to destroy effective health care programs in spite of all the good they have done, but my Democratic colleagues and I will continue to work to prevent this from happening.

As President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act into law 80 years ago, he said, "Today, a hope of many years' standing is in large part fulfilled . . . We have tried to frame a law which will give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against poverty-ridden old age." Similarly, five decades ago President Johnson declared, "No longer will Americans be denied the healing miracle of modern medicine. No longer will illness crush and destroy the savings that they have so carefully put away over a lifetime so that they might enjoy dignity in their later years." Let us remain mindful of these words and the promise that our country has made to seniors as we commemorate the 80th anniversary of Social Security and the 50th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid. I am committed—just as President Roosevelt and President Johnson were decades ago—to giving Americans the health and economic security they need, deserve, and have earned.

CELEBRATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED LABOR AGENCY OF NEVADA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 20th anniversary of the United Labor Agency of Nevada.

Since it was established in a joint venture with United Way of Southern Nevada and Nevada State AFL-CIO in 1995, the United Labor Agency of Nevada, ULAN, has been assisting Nevada families who are experiencing unexpected crises. Whether it be job loss or a medical emergency, ULAN provides individuals and families throughout our community with assistance so they may have access to vital resources, such as housing and nutrition, during their time of need. ULAN also offers guidance to those battling hardship to prepare plans for long-term self-sufficiency and financial stability. These imperative services have made a lasting impact on Nevadans, and the benefits of ULAN's services are felt across the Silver State.

ULAN began as a small dream, with only Audrey Arnold and \$30,000 to help the community. Under Ms. Arnold's steadfast leadership, ULAN has grown into a \$2 million organization. Today, Ms. Arnold and her dedicated staff and volunteers are now able to provide a one-stop shop for those experiencing hardship. By offering immediate housing, nutrition, job outreach, and financial counseling services, the organization works to prevent financial situations from becoming worse and helps individuals and families transition to living within their means on a new reduced income through federal programs and other resources. This two-pronged approach has had a remarkable effect on countless families over the past 20 years.

I applaud ULAN on their decades of dedicated public service and extend my best wishes for much continued success.

WOOD DALE AND GRAYSLAKE, ILLINOIS STORMS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, once again, Illinois communities are assessing damage from severe storms. A confirmed tornado along with heavy winds, hail, and lightning moved through the Chicago area on Sunday leaving a path of damage in several communities.

The city of Wood Dale was hit Sunday afternoon during the last day of its Prairie Fest, an annual 4-day festival with rides, food, and music. Due to the storm, rides were stopped and organizers tried to evacuate. But the storm approached too quickly, and its winds knocked down the festival's main tent where many people had gathered to take shelter.

Twenty people were hurt and, tragically, Steven Nincic was killed. He was at the festival with his wife and two young daughters. Our thoughts and prayers are with Steven Nincic's family, as they are with those who were injured by the storm. I spoke this morning with Wood Dale's Mayor Nunzio Pulice, and I know he is leading the community through this loss.

Severe weather continued throughout the day in the Chicago area. Chicago's Lollapalooza music festival evacuated its festival grounds at Grant Park before its scheduled closing. Mayor Emanuel and I also spoke this morning. He is working to assess the damage and help residents clean up and recover from the damage.

My office is also in touch with Mayor Rhett Taylor of the Village of Grayslake, Mayor Kristina Kovarik with Village of Gurnee, and Illinois Representative Sam Yingling. These communities are hurting in the aftermath of Sunday's terrible storms that brought winds at 60 miles an hour and golf ball-sized hail.

A tornado touched down in Grayslake, ripping the roof off the high school and damaging several other buildings and homes. These storms also toppled power lines and trees, making several roads in the area impassable. Crews are working to clean up debris and restore electricity. Over 16,000 people were left without power this morning. Thankfully, no injuries were reported as a result of the Grayslake storms.

Along with other members of the Illinois congressional delegation, I stand ready to help in any way I can as the people in Dale Wood and Grayslake begin the clean-up and recovery from this weekend's deadly storms.

The State of Illinois has sustained extensive damage and managed clean-up costs following a number of severe storms already this year. I stand ready to support any request for Federal disaster aid, including the Governor's request today for FEMA's assistance with damage assessments in downstate communities still recovering from earlier storms.

COMPOUNDED PHARMACEUTICALS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we all know the Department of Defense's record with bungled acquisitions that led to \$500 hammers and \$7,000 coffee makers. The Pentagon has a tough time keeping up with unscrupulous contractors who have figured out how to get rich on the taxpayer's dime, and unfortunately I have learned of yet another example of this.

Several dozen pharmacies around the country specialize in compound pharmaceuticals. These are drugs that are combinations of two or more prescription medications. Many of these pharmacies are on the up-and-up, helping people, and our servicemembers, recover from illnesses or wounds. But a good number of these compounding pharmacies have linked up with high-pressure salesmen and disreputable physicians to scam the Department of Defense out of as much as \$1.2 billion in taxpayer money in this year alone.

The sales pitch went like this. A U.S. servicemember, a military retiree, or their spouse might get a phone call at home asking whether a TRICARE beneficiary is suffering from pain. The telemarketer might ask a few simple questions, get a little bit of personal information, and suddenly, weeks later, prescription creams would start showing up in the mail. In other cases, a food truck may pull up in front of a military base. If a servicemember wanted a hot dog, he or she could listen to a pitch about compounded pharmaceuticals and sign a piece of paper. In many cases, that servicemember had no idea they were signing up for an expensive prescription that might have no medical value. These sneaky marketers would pass personal information on to doctors, often hundreds or thousands of miles away, who would then write prescription after prescription, never having seen the patient.

These ointments and creams were then custom made by a compounding pharmacy, and the bill was sent to the Department of Defense. According to health officials in the Department of Defense, one of these pain creams had a value of about \$150 each. But the Defense Health Program was billed more than \$9,000 each. This scam has added up to big dollars. In 2004, the Department of Defense spent just \$5 million on compound pharmaceuticals. By 2014, as these efforts began to ramp up, the total rose to \$514 million. In April of 2015, just 1 month alone, the bill to the Pentagon was nearly \$500 million. DOD says the total cost of compound pharmaceuticals for this fiscal year could be as much as \$1.2 billion.

What is tragic about this waste of money is that it could have been prevented. In 2013, the Pentagon considered policy changes it could make to the approval process for compound pharmaceuticals. DOD officials came under heavy pressure, both from Members of Congress and from some of these companies, not to move forward.