

was special from an early age. From his involvement in the church youth group, to his mentorship of young athletes, Blake was devoted to helping others.

At Stonehill College, Blake majored in criminal justice and studio arts, and it was during his senior year that he decided that he wanted to become a Navy SEAL—a member of the most elite special forces unit. Blake's athleticism, leadership, and determination provided him with the physical and mental toughness he needed to endure one of the most grueling training experiences in the world in order to become a SEAL. And he succeeded.

Blake's service to our Nation included two tours of duty in Afghanistan. He never let up on his desire to improve and be the best SEAL he could be. Just as he put in the time in his backyard with his dad honing his baseball skills, he also worked tirelessly at being the best that he could be as a defender of our country.

Blake died training to conduct the kinds of missions that keep Americans safe. We owe our freedom and security to Blake and the men and women like him in our armed services.

During the Celebration of Life service held in Blake's honor, his family, friends, and classmates described a young man who was kind, compassionate, thoughtful, and funny—a gentle giant, yet also a highly trained, elite warrior. In describing his devotion to his fellow SEALs, Blake once remarked to his father, "You know, Dad, I can't possibly imagine being in any other profession where I have such respect and love for my teammates."

Blake will be laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery, a hero surrounded by his brothers in arms.

My thoughts and prayers are with Blake's parents Nancy and Bill, and sister Emily, who have lost a loving son and brother. May God bless Blake and his family.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### REMEMBERING MASTER SERGEANT JAMES WILLIAM HOLT

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, this Saturday, February 7, 2015, members of the Hempstead County community will gather for a memorial service for MSG James William Holt of Hope, AR, who was killed in action in Vietnam in 1968.

The service will take place on the 47th anniversary of Master Sergeant Holt's heroic actions and will coincide with the return of his remains for proper burial.

In the early morning hours of February 7, 1968, the North Vietnamese Army launched a massive, coordinated tank and infantry assault on the Special Forces Camp at Lang Vei that created numerous casualties among the troops defending the base.

As a Special Forces medic, Master Sergeant Holt raced around the com-

pound, while under heavy fire, to administer aid to the wounded and move them to safety. His valiant actions during the assault did not end there.

While not a weapons specialist, Master Sergeant Holt nonetheless was a professional Special Operations soldier who knew how to fire every weapon in that camp accurately and effectively. He was also a decisive leader who took charge of a silent 106 mm recoilless rifle and brought it to life, destroying three enemy tanks before running out of ammunition.

Master Sergeant Holt then supplied himself with light anti-tank weapons and charged into the face of the enemy, single-handedly attacking the tank formation, and allowing time for his brothers-in-arms to fight their way to safety. When two enemy tanks broke through the perimeter, Master Sergeant Holt delivered deadly fire on them, scoring a direct hit on one of the armored vehicles.

The Battle of Lang Vei was a short, but costly battle that could have even worse for American forces if it were not for Master Sergeant Holt's heroics. For his acts of bravery, Master Sergeant Holt was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action and the Purple Heart.

I was at the ceremony in 2013 when Master Sergeant Holt was posthumously inducted into the Arkansas Military Veterans Hall of Fame and I wish I could be onhand when the community honors him this weekend. These tributes will help ensure Master Sergeant Holt's remarkable story of bravery and selfless sacrifice forever lives on.●

##### TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT JUSTIN MAHANA

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Sgt Justin Mahana for his courageous act to help others. After driving from Las Vegas to Lake Havasu, AZ, to help a coworker whose car had broken down, Sergeant Mahana stopped at a gas station to check that his own car was ready for the trip back to Nevada. While there, Sergeant Mahana witnessed a car crash into a median, leading him to investigate the accident and pull the driver out of the car as it lit into flames. It gives me great pleasure to recognize his bravery and his commitment to others both in this moment and throughout his life.

Sergeant Mahana, a 17-year veteran, joined the U.S. Air Force because he wanted to make a difference in the lives of others. His job entails the maintenance and upkeep of military vehicles that are used by pararescuemen when conducting combat search and rescue missions, as well as humanitarian relief operations. Both his commitment to the Air Force, as well as his daily actions, prove his regard for others.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Sergeant Mahana for his courageous contributions to the United States of

America and to freedom-loving nations around the world. His service to his country and his bravery earn him a place among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly defended our Nation.

His commitment to helping those around him, as well as serving the country, demonstrates his unwavering selfless character. His actions represent only the greatest of Nevada's values, including a sense of community and an obligation to help others.

As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I recognize that Congress has a responsibility not only to honor these brave individuals who serve our Nation, but also to ensure they are cared for when they return home. I remain committed to upholding this promise for our veterans and servicemembers in Nevada and throughout the Nation.

During his tenure, Sergeant Mahana has demonstrated professionalism, commitment to excellence, and dedication to the highest standards of the Air Force. I am both humbled and honored by his service and am proud to call him a fellow Nevadan. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Sgt. Justin Mahana for all of his accomplishments and wish him well in all of his future endeavors.●

##### REMEMBERING DAVID LEE THOMAS, SR.

• Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to David Lee Thomas, Sr. of Mobile, AL, who passed away on January 22, 2015. He and I were friends for many years. I first got to know him when I was a young Assistant U.S. attorney in Mobile and he was already a proven and respected Federal law officer. He had been hired as the first African-American investigator in the southeast region, with the office of inspector general, U.S. Department of Agriculture. He was investigating fraud by stores and businesses that were buying food stamps for cash or carrying on other unlawful activities. One of the highlights of his career with the OIG was receiving a letter from President Ronald Reagan for solving a fraud case which saved the U.S. Government \$10 million. During that time, we worked a number of cases together. Several went to trial, and he taught me a great deal about law, trials, and how fraud and abuse occur.

David retired from the OIG in 1990, but that retirement lasted all of 6 months. He began working at the Mobile Drug Coalition, and from there he began the second most rewarding career when he became the assistant director of the Mobile County Community Corrections Center. In that role, he established the Court Police Department and helped develop the Mobile County Drug Court Program, which was the first of its kind in Alabama.

David loved his community and was involved in many organizations to make Mobile a better place to live. He

was also very active in his church. He was a great law enforcement officer, citizen, friend, and devoted father and grandfather. This Nation has many excellent Federal employees and officials. David was one of the best. His record speaks for itself. I extend my sympathy to his friends and family. ●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

#### REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13396 ON FEBRUARY 7, 2006, WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN OR IN RELATION TO CÔTE D'IVOIRE—PM 4

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency, unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006, with respect to the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire is to continue in effect beyond February 7, 2015.

The Government of Côte d'Ivoire and its people continue to make significant progress in promotion of democratic, social, and economic development. The United States also supports the advancement of impartial justice in Côte d'Ivoire as well as the Government of Côte d'Ivoire's efforts to prepare for a peaceful, fair, and transparent presidential election in 2015, which will be an important milestone in Côte d'Ivoire's progress. We urge all sides to work for the benefit of the country as a whole by rejecting violence and participating in the electoral process.

While the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and its people continue to make progress toward peace and prosperity, the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.

BARACK OBAMA.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 4, 2015.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:16 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 596. An act to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and health care-related provisions in the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, and for other purposes.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 159. An act to stop exploitation through trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 181. An act to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 285. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide a penalty for knowingly selling advertising that offers certain commercial sex acts; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 515. An act to protect children from exploitation, especially sex trafficking in tourism, by providing advance notice of intended travel by registered child-sex offenders outside the United States to the government of the country of destination, requesting foreign governments to notify the United States when a known child-sex offender is seeking to enter the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

#### MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 596. An act to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and health care-related provisions in the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, and for other purposes.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-505. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Use By Over-Snow Vehicles (Travel

Management Rule)" (RIN0596-AD17) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 2, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-506. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Irish Potatoes Grown in Colorado; Relaxation of the Handling Regulation for Area No. 3" (Docket No. AMS-FV-14-0092; FV14-948-1 IR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 2, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-507. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Revision of the Salable Quantity and Allotment Percentage for Class 3 (Native) Spearmint Oil for the 2014-2015 Marketing Year" (Docket No. AMS-FV-13-0087; FV14-985-1B IR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 2, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-508. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Oranges and Grapefruit Grown in Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas; Decreased Assessment Rate" (Docket No. AMS-FV-14-0054; FV14-906-3 FIR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 2, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-509. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Poly(oxy-1,2-ethanediyl), a-(3-carboxy-1-oxosulfo-propyl)-w-hydroxy-, (C10-C16) - alkyl ethers, disodium salts; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9920-44) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 2, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-510. A communication from the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting the Agency's proposed fiscal year 2016 budget; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-511. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Commuted Traveltime; Correction" (Docket No. APHIS-2004-0108) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 3, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-512. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Importation of Two Hybrids of Unshu Orange From the Republic of Korea Into the Continental United States" ((RIN0579-AD87) (Docket No. APHIS-2013-0085)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 30, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-513. A communication from the Chair of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, reports entitled "Report of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission: Legislative Proposals," "Report of the Military