

There really aren't enough words to describe Melissa's contributions to my office and to my success in serving the people of Michigan over these many years. She has been the go-to person on my team to mentor new staff, handle challenging cases, and answer those questions that don't seem to fall into anyone else's job description.

We all wish Melissa continued success and happiness with her family as she begins this new chapter in her life, joining her husband, Tim, in full-time retirement.

Her friendship and commitment to me and to the people of Michigan have been immeasurable, as is my gratitude for her decades of service. While my staff and I will miss her presence in our office, she will forever be an invaluable member and leader of "Team Stabenow."

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING HACKETT MAYOR JEFF T. HARPER

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the life and legacy of the mayor of Hackett, AR, Jeff Harper, who passed away on Thursday, November 5, 2015.

Affectionately known as Papa Bear to many, Mayor Harper dedicated his life to serving the citizens of Hackett. Mayor Harper worked for the street department and served as a firefighter for a decade, eventually becoming the fire chief of Hackett. His commitment to the city of Hackett led him to run for mayor. He was elected in 2014 and served Hackett honorably the entirety of his all too short time in office.

I am greatly appreciative for Mayor Harper's noble service to the city of Hackett and the State of Arkansas. My prayers are with his wife Trini, his three children, and all those who are mourning him during this trying time. I hope they find comfort knowing that he made a positive impact on his community.●

TRIBUTE TO LARRY ZIMMER

• Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I wish to honor the voice of CU Buffalo football, Mr. Larry Zimmer, who will be calling his last game and celebrating his 80th birthday on November 13.

Mr. Zimmer joined the University of Colorado broadcasting team in 1971. He has since led a career filled with many awards and distinctions, which highlight his dedication to CU sports. He is a five-time winner of the Colorado Sportscaster of the Year award and recipient of the esteemed Chris Schenkel Award, given to those who dedicate their talents to college football. Even more important than these awards, however, is the respect and admiration he has earned from the students and faculty at the University of Colorado and all those who tune in to Buffalo football.

Over his long and distinguished career, he has truly become a hallmark of CU football games. I thank him for his many years of excellent broadcasting and wish him a very happy birthday.●

WELCOMING RITCHIE COUNTY VETERANS TO THE NATION'S CAPITAL

• Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize with, overwhelming pride, a group of courageous veterans from Ritchie County, WV, who are visiting our Nation's Capital this Thursday. On behalf of our State and Nation, it is a true honor and privilege to recognize these heroic men and women and their families for their brave service and sacrifice as they tour the memorials built in their honor.

I have always said that West Virginia is one of the most patriotic States in this great Nation, and we are so proud of the number of veterans and Active-Duty members who have served our country with honor and distinction. The 20 veterans and their family members who are traveling to Washington, DC, embody our State's history and contributions to the freedom of this Nation. They may represent different generations of warriors, but no matter the war or the era, no matter the rank, each and every one of them courageously answered the call of duty to defend our Nation and protect the freedoms we enjoy as Americans. In our time of need, they stepped forward and said, "I'll do it—I'll protect this country."

This trip will be a truly moving and special experience for these veterans, many of whom have never been to the memorials that were built for their service. It will include wreath-laying ceremonies at the monuments that commemorate the wars in which many have served, including the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial, and the National World War II Memorial. They will also be touring Arlington National Cemetery and have private time for a wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Mr. President, it is also tremendously important to recognize that this visit would not have been possible without the hard work and determination of an inspirational young Ritchie County native, Kirsten Seese. Kirsten is a Ritchie County High School senior who aspires to be a nurse one day. She was inspired to coordinate this trip as her prenursing senior project after hearing about a group of veterans that had recently traveled to Washington, DC, to visit the memorials sponsored by their community.

Kirsten wasted no time. She went to businesses in Ritchie County with the goal of organizing a 100 percent free veterans appreciation tour. In just 3 weeks, Kirsten raised enough money for 20 veterans, their family members, and local volunteers to visit to Washington, DC, absolutely free. They will

not have to pay for any meals or refreshments and will receive a commemorative shirt and a hat. The funding will also go towards the wreaths for the ceremonies that will be held at each memorial and a group photo at the Capitol to commemorate their special day.

I am so proud of Kirsten. She has truly set an extraordinary example for her generation by giving back to those who have served this country and those who have protected our freedoms. It is the devotion and drive of young people like Kirsten that bring our communities together. I wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors, and I commend her for making an enormous impact on the lives of our veterans through this veterans appreciation tour.

Mr. President, I am filled with pride every time I meet the patriots who have served our country, and I am so pleased to welcome West Virginia's most courageous veterans who are all heroes to Washington, DC. I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in saluting them. They truly inspire us all as we are reminded of their selfless service. It is because of their bravery that all Americans enjoy the greatest liberties and freedoms in the world. We whole heartedly thank them.●

TRIBUTE TO JUDGE GEORGE HEALY

• Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to a Rhode Islander whom I have known and admired for nearly 30 years: George Healy, chief judge of our State's Workers' Compensation Court, who retired in July after 24 years on the bench. A number of George's colleagues will be gathering on November 19 to honor his years of service, and it is indeed my honor to say a few words about him today.

I first came to know George Healy amidst a genuine crisis in Rhode Island: the near-collapse of our State's workers' compensation system in 1991. Here is how a 1991 report by the Rhode Island Department of Economic Development summed up the situation.

The financial burden borne by employers had simply become too great. Insurers had begun to exit the Rhode Island marketplace. And, most importantly, the financial protection required for our state's injured workers was being placed in jeopardy.

Indeed, when compared with our New England neighbors, our average claim costs were through the roof. In 1990, the average claim in Rhode Island was \$12,638, more than three times higher than the average claim in Vermont and significantly higher than Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, which collectively had average claim costs in the range of \$6,000 to \$7,000. This was simply unsustainable.

Enter George Healy who until that time had been a civil litigator and workers' compensation practitioner. Our Governor at the time, Bruce

Sundlun, appointed George and a handful of other stakeholders to a task force that was given a bold directive: Reduce the cost of the system without reducing benefits. As Governor Sundlun's legal counsel at the time, I had the honor of leading the task force, but I relied greatly on George for his expertise on the system. Working together with our colleagues, we were able to develop a plan that protected workers, reduced costs, eliminated pending rate increases, stabilized the workers' compensation market, eliminated fraud, and prevented a collapse of the system.

One of the hallmarks of the reform was the creation of the Workers' Compensation Court, which hears and decides all disputes involving an injured employee and an employer relating to workers' compensation benefits. Governor Sundlun appointed George to be among the inaugural class of the court's judges after its creation in 1991. George was then appointed chief judge by Governor Don Carcieri in 2004.

Now, as George Healy looks back on his career, I hope he will rule it a success. I certainly do. The reforms he helped lead reduced average claim costs in Rhode Island from \$12,638 in 1991 to just \$5,179 in 2007. The reduction came about not from benefit cuts but from system reforms, quick court action, injury prevention, and getting people quickly back to work. A 2009 report by the International Workers' Compensation Foundation put it this way: "When both claim frequency and severity are considered (taking into account all employees, whether or not injured) . . . Rhode Island stands out as the state with the lowest average medical cost per employee per year in the entire country." Because of George's work, Rhode Island is now a model system for the rest of the country.

In short, thanks in large part to George's hard work and his years of service on the bench, Rhode Island workers can rest assured that, if they get hurt on the job, their State's insurance program will be there for them. That is a proud and meaningful legacy to leave behind. In addition to all of George's accomplishments on the bench, I will always remember him for his humility, gentle demeanor, and respect toward those who appeared before him. I will also be grateful for his friendship through the years, and I hope George enjoys many peaceful years of retirement, knowing that his efforts have improved the lives of countless others. I wish him the best as he enjoys much deserved family time with his lovely wife Ruth, his son Tim and his wife Jewel, his son Paul and his wife Meghan, and George's three grandchildren, Quinn, Jack, and Charlotte. Godspeed, my friend.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, 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 and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:52 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the title of the bill (H.R. 22) to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes, further, that the House insists upon its amendment to the amendment of the Senate to the text of the bill, asks a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints the following Members as managers of the conference on the part of the House:

From the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for consideration of the House amendment and the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference: Messrs. SHUSTER, DUNCAN of Tennessee, GRAVES of Missouri, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Messrs. CRAWFORD, BARLETTA, FARENTHOLD, GIBBS, DENHAM, RIBBLE, PERRY, WOODALL, KATKO, BABIN, HARDY, GRAVES of Louisiana, DEFAZIO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. NADLER, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Messrs. CUMMINGS, LARSEN of Washington, CAPUANO, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Messrs. LIPINSKI, COHEN, and SIRES.

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-3480. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Acetamiprid; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9936-12) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3481. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Suspension of Community Eligibility" ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2015-0001)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3482. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Energy Ef-

ficiency Standards for New Federal Commercial and Multi-Family High-Rise Residential Buildings' Baseline Standards Update" (RIN1904-AD39) (Docket No. EERE-2014-BT-STD-0047)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 6, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-3483. A communication from the Secretary of Energy, transmitting proposed legislation; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-3484. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Missouri; Control of Petroleum Liquid Storage, Loading and Transfer" (FRL No. 9936-72-Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3485. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; North Carolina Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 8-hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards" (FRL No. 9936-60-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3486. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Louisiana; Major Source Permitting State Implementation Plan" (FRL No. 9936-45-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3487. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Revised Format for Materials Being Incorporated by Reference" (FRL No. 9933-71-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3488. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Ohio; Test Methods; Error Correction" (FRL No. 9936-54-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3489. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; TN; Knox County Emissions Statements" (FRL No. 9936-57-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3490. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; TN; Reasonably Available Control Measures and Redesignation for the TN Portion of the Chattanooga 1997 Annual PM2.5 Nonattainment Area" (FRL No. 9936-55-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 4, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.