

master's degree in aeronautics and astronautics from Stanford University. She completed pilot training at the top of her class in 1992, kicking off the start of her successful career. Since then, she has logged over 300 hours of combat, serving in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as Operation Southern Watch.

In 1993, Colonel Leavitt became the first female fighter pilot and later the service's first woman to graduate from the Air Force Weapons School at Nellis AFB. In addition, in 2012, she became the Nation's first female fighter wing commander when she assumed command of the 4th Fighter Wing at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in North Carolina, and she will now be the first woman to assume command of the 57th Wing at the Silver State's Nellis AFB. She is truly a role model, demonstrating a great amount of strength and courage.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Colonel Leavitt for her courageous contributions to the United States of America. Her unwavering dedication to her career is commendable, and she stands as a shining example for future generations of heroes. Colonel Leavitt's service to her country and her bravery earn her a place among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly defended our nation.

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. Equally as important, it is crucial that female servicemembers and veterans have access to their specific health care needs. There are countless distinguished women who have made sacrifices beyond measure and deserve nothing but the best treatment. I remain committed to upholding this promise for our veterans and servicemembers in Nevada and throughout the Nation and will continue to fight until this becomes a reality.

During her tenure, Colonel Leavitt has demonstrated professionalism, commitment to excellence, and dedication to the highest standards of the Air Force. I am both humbled and honored by her service and am proud to have such a distinguished member of the Air Force serving in the State of Nevada. Today I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Colonel Leavitt for all of her accomplishments and wish her well in all of her future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO JANE ALBRIGHT

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate a true role model in the Nevada Wolf Pack community, women's basketball coach Jane Albright, on reaching a significant milestone of 500 collegiate basketball wins. This is a tremendous accomplishment for Ms. Albright, who has dedicated eight seasons to making Nevada women's basketball the best it can be.

Ms. Albright began her career coaching collegiate basketball in 1981, when she served as a graduate assistant for the University of Tennessee. She later spent one season as an assistant coach at the University of Cincinnati before taking on her first role as head coach at Northern Illinois. During her 10 seasons with this university, Ms. Albright led the women's basketball team in its most successful run in Northern Illinois history with a record of 188 wins to 110 losses from 1984-94.

Following her tenure at Northern Illinois, Ms. Albright coached the women's basketball team at the University of Wisconsin, where she revitalized the program. Ms. Albright led this team, which previously had experienced nine losing seasons, to eight consecutive winning seasons. Prior to her tenure with the University of Nevada, Reno, UNR, Ms. Albright served as head coach at Wichita State.

Beginning in 2008, Ms. Albright became a member of the Pack, taking on the role of UNR's head women's basketball coach. Throughout her first year at Nevada, Ms. Albright achieved the most wins as a first-year coach, with an overall record of 18 wins to 14 losses. In that same season, she also picked up her 400th career win when Nevada defeated Northern Iowa. In the 2013-14 season, Ms. Albright led the Wolf Pack in winning 12 Mountain West games, setting a program record for most conference wins in a single season and securing the number three seed for the Mountain West Championships.

She was also awarded the 2014 Carol Eckman Award this season, recognizing her for her commitment to the incredible student athletes on her team. On January 27, 2016, Ms. Albright reached her 500th career win, leading the Pack against San Diego State. Her ability as a coach is remarkable, and we are lucky to have someone like Ms. Albright representing UNR.

Aside from her incredible record as a coach, Ms. Albright also goes above and beyond to keep her team involved in the community, as well as in the classroom. In 2009-10 alone, UNR logged more than 530 hours of service to the city of Reno. Ms. Albright is a shining example of true leadership for our community.

Ms. Albright is an inspiration to many across northern Nevada both on and off the basketball court. Her enthusiasm and passion for her team have not gone unnoticed. Today I join citizens across the Silver State in congratulating Ms. Albright on this incredible achievement and wish her well as she continues to lead the Nevada Wolf Pack.●

REMEMBERING MICHAEL A. WERMUTH

● Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the life of Michael Wermuth of Birmingham, AL.

Michael Anthony Wermuth was born in Birmingham, AL, in 1946, was com-

missioned in the U.S. Army upon graduating from the University of Alabama, earned his law degree from the University of Alabama School of Law, and practiced law in Mobile, AL, as a partner of the firm Wilkins, Druhan & Wermuth. While in Mobile, Mike became involved in local politics and worked on the senatorial campaign of ADM Jeremiah A. Denton. Upon Admiral Denton's election to the Senate, Mike and his family moved to Washington where he served as Senator Denton's chief counsel and legislative director from 1980 to 1987.

After his time in the U.S. Senate, Mike served in the Department of Justice as a legislative counsel for civil rights and was Deputy Assistant Attorney General for legislative affairs. In 1989, he was named Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for drug enforcement policy and was instrumental in the implementation of President George H.W. Bush's national drug control strategy that was highly effective in reducing drug use and importation.

After 30 years of service, Mike retired as a colonel in the Army Reserves. That same year, he joined the RAND Corporation as the director of its homeland security program and was the executive director of a Federal advisory panel on terrorism. During his time at RAND, he worked on a variety of issues including infrastructure protection, emergency preparedness, risk management, border control, and intelligence.

After leaving RAND in 2010, Mike continued his work as a consultant there and served as an adjunct faculty member at the Texas A&M University Bush School of Government and Public Service. He taught graduate level online courses in homeland security defense. His influence in terrorism defense strategy was vast, and his enduring legacy will be his dedication to the stewardship of the next generation of policymakers.

I knew Mike for many years. In Mobile, we served in the same Army Reserve center. He was a conscientious and superior officer with a steady sense of duty and love of country. As a top member of Senator Denton's staff, he was dedicated, loyal, and effective. He was tireless in his work to advance the agenda in which Senator Denton so deeply believed. I can say his support and that of Senator Denton was critical to my appointment as U.S. attorney. In the U.S. Army, the U.S. Senate, the Department of Justice, the RAND Corporation, and as a teacher and lawyer, Mike always excelled. Discipline, work, loyalty, and patriotism were his hallmarks. He was indeed a talented American patriot.

Michael passed away on November 1, 2015. He is survived by his wonderful wife of 35 years, Fran; his children, Ken and Heather; and numerous other family members. His partner throughout, Fran is highly accomplished in her own right having served in top positions within the U.S. Marshals Service. Our

sympathy is extended to her, the family, and friends upon his passing.●

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEWPORT WINTER CARNIVAL

● Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, the 100th anniversary Newport Winter Carnival opens this week to great expectations. Citizens in Newport, NH, are pretty confident that theirs is the oldest continuous winter carnival in the Nation, and they are certain it is the very best.

Newport is a town of classic New England charm, nestled in the scenic hills of western New Hampshire. Much has changed in Newport since the town held its first winter carnival. A century ago, the swift currents of the Sugar River turned water wheels that powered the town's prosperous textile mills. During long winters, townspeople enjoyed skiing, skating, snowshoeing, and other activities that were at the heart of the first Newport Winter Carnival.

Today those mills are no longer in operation, but their handsome brick buildings have been repurposed as offices, shops, restaurants, and apartments. Like many other former mill towns in rural New Hampshire, Newport has weathered economic challenges in recent decades. During many visits over the years, I have admired the town's resilience and indomitable spirit, which have earned it the nickname "the Sunshine Town."

Despite a century of dramatic changes and challenges, the Newport Winter Carnival has been a proud constant. People from neighboring communities come to Newport in mid-winter to enjoy the warmth and friendliness of their neighbors and to have lots of old-fashioned fun.

This year's carnival will begin with a reenactment. In 1917, a Dartmouth student from Newport skied the 29 miles from Hanover to his hometown to enjoy the Winter Carnival. His feat will be reenacted on Friday by his grandson and five others, who will light the ceremonial torch on Newport Common to start the festival. Festivities this year include the traditional Carnival Queen contest, a parade and talent pageant, broom hockey games, skijoring, and an arm wrestling competition with "armed and ready" Cathy Merrill, a Newport resident who recently won gold medals at the U.S. Arm Wrestling Nationals. The carnival will close on Sunday evening, February 14, with a fireworks display.

I salute the Newport carnival committee and the scores of additional volunteers who put in countless hours to make the carnival a success. For them, this is truly a labor of love. I also salute the townspeople and families of Newport, who warmly welcome visitors not only for the carnival, but year-round, and always make us proud to be Granite Staters.

Congratulations to the entire Newport community, and I wish everyone

yet another successful Newport Winter Carnival.●

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 Committee on the Judiciary.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) reported that he had signed the following enrolled bills, which were previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

H.R. 515. An act to protect children and others from sexual abuse and exploitation, including sex trafficking and sex tourism, by providing advance notice of intended travel by registered 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 sex offender is seeking to enter the United States, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4188. An act to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2016 and 2017, and for other purposes.

At 11:45 a.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. 1675. An act to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to revise its rules so as to increase the threshold amount for requiring issuers to provide certain disclosures relating to compensatory benefit plans.

The message also announced that the House agrees to the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 28) to establish the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies for the inauguration of the President-elect and Vice President-elect of the United States on January 20, 2017.

The message further announced that the House agrees to the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 29) to authorize the use of the rotunda and Emancipation Hall of the Capitol by the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies in connection with the proceedings and ceremonies conducted for the inauguration of the President-elect and the Vice President-elect of the United States.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 109. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal to the foot soldiers who participated in the 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1675. An act to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to revise its rules so as to increase the threshold amount for requiring issuers to provide certain disclosures relating to compensatory benefit plans; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. MCCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

*Army nomination of Lt. Gen. John W. Nicholson, Jr., to be General.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DAINES, Mr. KIRK, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 2497. A bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to provide protections for retail customers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BENNET (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 2498. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a pilot program to improve care for the most costly Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries through the use of comprehensive and effective care management while reducing costs to the Federal Government for these beneficiaries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 2499. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve access to health care through expanded health savings accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BENNET:

S. 2500. A bill to provide for the establishment of a health insurance premium reduction program to ensure that health insurance premiums remain low for American families; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI:

S. 2501. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the exemption for certain aircraft from the excise taxes on transportation by air; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. COTTON, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. WICKER):