

Casey	Markey	Schumer
Durbin	McCaskill	Stabenow
Franken	Menendez	Udall
Gillibrand	Merkley	Van Hollen
Harris	Murphy	Warren
Heinrich	Murray	Whitehouse
Hirono	Peters	Wyden
Leahy	Reed	
Manchin	Sanders	

NOT VOTING—3

Cassidy	Donnelly	McCain
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 66, the nays are 31.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Wilbur L. Ross, Jr., of Florida, to be Secretary of Commerce.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, "Hidden Figures" has been lodged at the top of the box office charts for 2 months now—and with good reason. "Hidden Figures" tells the fascinating, true story of three mathematicians who worked as "human computers" at NASA in the early years of America's manned space program.

Their job involved double-checking the accuracy of intricate calculations made by NASA's computers. And they carried the weight of awesome responsibility. Fifty-five years ago this week, their calculations helped launch Lt. Col. John Glenn into the heavens and return him safely after he had orbited the Earth three times.

Coming in the midst of cold war tensions and the real fear that the Soviet Union was winning the space race, that historic flight was a source of intense pride and relief to Americans. It made John Glenn a national hero and an international symbol of American ingenuity and ambition.

But the brains behind that flight remained largely unknown—until now. Why? It is because those formidable mathematicians—those "human computers"—were three African-American women. They served this Nation at a time when racial segregation was the law of the land and gender-based discrimination was almost as common as air.

As America marks Black History Month, this month seems a good time to say thank you to Mary Jackson,

Dorothy Vaughn, and Katherine G. Johnson.

America's history is filled with the stories of men and women whose contributions have been minimized or overlooked entirely for the same reason the "Hidden Figures" of NASA remained unknown for so long—because our Nation's tortured history with race blinded us to large parts of our own national story.

Ninety years ago, an historian and scholar by the name of Carter G. Woodson suggested a way to overcome this historical myopia. Dr. Woodson and other prominent African Americans proposed that 1 week each February be designated Black History Week.

This is the first Black History Month since the opening last fall of the Smithsonian Museum of African American History and Culture on the National Mall in Washington, DC. This remarkable new museum represents America's first official attempt to tell the African-American story. In the not quite 5 months since the museum opened, more than 900,000 people have visited. My wife and I toured the museum over the Thanksgiving holiday. We spent hours there—what a moving experience.

The history of African Americans is a story that stretches back 600 years. It is a story of brutal subjugation, racial violence, and discrimination. It is also story of a resilient people who survived those horrors and created a rich and vibrant culture and who have enriched our Nation by their contributions in every walk of life.

In a speech a few months ago, then-First Lady Michelle Obama alluded to the vast and inspiring sweep of that history when she said, "I wake up every morning in a house that was built by slaves and I watch my daughters—two beautiful, intelligent, black young women—playing with their dogs on the White House lawn." It was a simple but powerful image that captured how far we have come on questions of race since our founding.

As America's 44th President, Barack Obama grappled honestly with complex challenges facing America and the world and delivered solutions that has improved the lives of millions. He and Michelle served our Nation with uncommon dignity, wisdom, and compassion. I am proud to call them both friends.

The Obamas' story is just one of the stories told in the new African-American History Museum. Other famous African Americans are featured as well, from Crispus Attucks, the first patriot to give his life in the American Revolution; to the great abolitionists and women's suffrage champions, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and Harriet Tubman; from Jesse Owens, who won four gold medals at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin and singlehandedly shattered the racist myth of Aryan superiority; to the Tuskegee Airmen, who helped democracy defeat fascist tyranny in World War II.

The museum tells the stories of other prominent men and women, including Martin Luther King and Coretta Scott King; Malcolm X; Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court; Congressman JOHN LEWIS, my friend, an icon of the civil rights movement; and Shirley Chisholm, the first African-American woman ever elected to Congress—in 1968. Some of the best advice I have ever heard about making a difference came from Shirley Chisholm. She said, "If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair." I think Shirley Chisholm would have loved to see the way the women of America are making their voices heard today and changing the debate in this country.

The new African-American History Museum and Black History Month give us a fuller, truer picture of our past. They also give us hope and guidance for today. Here are just a few quick examples of what I mean.

Ida B. Wells, born into slavery in 1862, was a journalist, activist, and feminist who led an antilynching crusade in the 1890s, speaking throughout the United States and Europe. She reminds us that brave journalists, armed with the First Amendment, can shine a light on wrongdoing and change history.

Garrett Morgan had only a sixth-grade education, but he also had a natural mechanical genius and an entrepreneurial bent. In 1914, he invented a "safety hood" that protected wearers from smoke, gases and other pollutants. It became the prototype in World War I for gas masks and for the breathing devices that firefighters wear today. His inventions have saved untold millions of lives.

While some argue that we should cut funding to public schools that serve low-income children, Garrett Morris reminds us that American genius and ingenuity isn't limited by race, or gender, or family income. Our future prosperity depends on our willingness to invest in the potential all of America's children.

Finally, A. Philip Randolph organized and led the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first predominantly African-American labor union. In 1941, he was part of a group that convinced President Roosevelt to ban discrimination in the defense industries during World War II. In 1948, that same group persuaded President Truman to issue an Executive order ending segregation in America's Armed Services. And in 1963, A. Philip Randolph helped led the March on Washington. If you want to know how to raise the wages of working people and mobilize ordinary Americans to create a more perfect union, study the life of A. Philip Randolph.

Black History Month actually started as Black History Week 90 years ago. The choice of the week had special significance; it included the birthdays of both Abraham Lincoln and the mighty abolitionist, Frederick Douglass.

President Lincoln once predicted that, if history remembered him for anything, it would be for issuing the Emancipation Proclamation. With that great promissory note of freedom, President Lincoln declared that the 3 million persons living in bondage in the rebellious states "shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free."

The Emancipation Proclamation marked a turning point in America's Civil War; it transformed the fight to preserve the Union into something even larger and nobler: a battle for human freedom.

But without Frederick Douglass, the "Great Agitator," there might never have been a "Great Emancipator." Frederick Douglass was one of the best-known men in America. He was a powerful and respected speaker and journalist. He criticized Lincoln frequently and publicly for what he viewed as the President's timidity in denouncing slavery. But rather than denouncing Douglass, Abraham Lincoln sought his counsel, and their respectful relationship changed history.

Without Frederick Douglass's prodding, Lincoln might not have issued the Emancipation Proclamation. Lincoln might not have agreed to allow free men of color to serve in the U.S. Army. Without Frederick Douglass, it might have been harder for Lincoln to see that the Civil War could not end until slavery had ended, that only "a new birth of freedom" could redeem the carnage of Civil War.

The relationship between Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass shows us the good that can be achieved when patriotic citizens dare to speak truth to power and leaders are secure enough to listen. That is a lesson worth pondering during this Black History Month and beyond.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO GARY PETERSEN

• Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a close friend, ally, and devoted public servant as Gary Petersen retires from a more than 50-year career in support of our national security, environmental cleanup, and furthering the ever-changing missions of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, PNNL, in my home State of Washington.

A graduate of Omak High School in Okanogan County, Mr. Petersen first came to what is now known as the Tri-Cities in January 1960 as a servicemember stationed with the Nike Ajax missile site at the top of Rattlesnake Mountain. After a duty station transfer to Korea, he came home to Washington and attended Washington State University. With a communications degree in hand, Mr. Petersen had a job lined up with Ford Motor Company in 1965, but in a great stroke of luck for Washington State, he chose not to

move to Detroit and instead got a job with Battelle, a company that had recently won a contract to operate a research and development lab—now PNNL—at Hanford in 1965. One could say that Mr. Petersen got in on the ground floor at PNNL when its scientists were providing critical support to win the cold war.

While at Battelle, Mr. Petersen worked in communications and was the manager of the news service. One of his chief responsibilities was to give tours of the Hanford site to new employees, elected officials and dignitaries, and later, foreign visitors. Congresswoman Catherine May, the first woman elected to Congress from Washington State, was the first Member of Congress Mr. Petersen gave a tour to, but she was certainly not the last. Senator WARREN MAGNUSON, Speaker Tom Foley, and I, to name a few others, have all crisscrossed the Hanford site with Mr. Petersen. He even helped with President Richard Nixon's visit. By now, Mr. Petersen has probably given thousands of tours of Hanford, and many, including myself, have heard the stories from years past, from bumping into the woman who he would later marry during a tour, to the alligators, to bringing moon rocks from the Apollo 11 mission to Hanford for public display.

Mr. Petersen's work with nuclear management began in 1974 for Westinghouse on the construction, start-up, and operation of the Fast Flux Test Reactor and then the Washington Public Power Supply System, which is now Energy Northwest. After spending some time on the International Nuclear Safety Program through the U.S. Departments of Energy and State, Mr. Petersen returned to Battelle as the director of communications and administration at PNNL in the late 1980s.

When he retired from Battelle in 2002, Mr. Petersen was quickly recruited by Sam Volpentest to help him at the Tri-Cities Washington Economic Development Council in a part-time, volunteer capacity to travel to Washington, DC, to secure funding to support Hanford and PNNL. This part-time job quickly became a full-time job, and Mr. Petersen has been advocating on behalf of the Tri-Cities ever since. Since my first days in the Senate, I have worked with Mr. Petersen, and he has been a key ally during many a funding battle. He knows the budget as well as any staff member on the Appropriations Committee, and this isn't just limited to nuclear waste cleanup, but also includes research and development capabilities that support the PNNL mission, transportation, agriculture, and so much more.

It is clear to me that Washington State has benefited greatly from Mr. Petersen's vision and passion for sharing what the Tri-Cities community, its workforce, the Hanford site, and PNNL have to offer. I have seen this firsthand at home and here in the other Washington. His work is evident in the progress that has been made on envi-

ronmental cleanup at Hanford, to charting out a future vision for the Tri-Cities that looks past cleanup operations to preserving history through designating the B Reactor as a National Historic Landmark and the Manhattan Project National Historical Park, to growing the workforce safety mission at the Volpentest Hazardous Materials Management and Emergency Response Federal Training Center, and to seeking out new, emerging opportunities like small modular reactors. Through it all, he has remained as committed as they come. Last October, when I had the good fortune to get one more tour with Mr. Petersen at the Hanford site, I saw that he still carried the same enthusiasm and pride for his work as what I had seen in him on my very first tour years ago.

Mr. Petersen has been critical to my work in the Senate and has made a tremendous impact on the Tri-Cities community, Washington State, and our Nation. Today I join with others throughout the State of Washington in thanking him for his many years of service. I congratulate Mr. Petersen on his retirement and wish him and his wife, Margaret, the best of luck as they write their next chapter.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:01 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 joint resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.J. Res. 43. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule submitted by Secretary of Health and Human Services relating to compliance with title X requirements by project recipients in selecting subrecipients.

H.J. Res. 69. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Department of the Interior relating to "Non-Subsistence Take of Wildlife, and Public Participation and Closure Procedures, on National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska".

The message also announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 3003, and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Speaker appoints the following Members of the House of Representatives to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas and Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.

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-725. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Delay of Effective Date for 31 Final Regulations Published by the Environmental Protection Agency between October 28, 2016