

property, racially profiled, and degraded. We cannot forget that “national security” was then—and is now—a poor justification for racial profiling and a transparent attempt to sanction and institutionalize racism.

These are lessons the Asian American and Pacific Islander community has carried for generations, all while making our country stronger and more inclusive. The AAPI experiences—when we take the time to hear them—force us to engage in self-reflection, to be more aware of our own biases, and more cautious of our own impulses.

As the former chairman and ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific, I have worked hard to stay mindful of the needs and concerns of the AAPI community. I have learned that, while we have come a very long way over the past 75 years, the AAPI community still battles nativism that portrays its members as something other than “real” Americans. They still bear the burden and pain of discrimination, and they still struggle to have their voice and their perspective heard during the great debates of our time.

The changes Republicans are seeking on healthcare, for example, would have far-reaching consequences for the AAPI community. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have one of the highest incidences of Hepatitis A. In fact, in 2013, they had the highest Hepatitis A rates out of any ethnic group in the country. In 2015, tuberculosis was 30 times more common among Asian Americans than among any other group. Both Hepatitis A and tuberculosis would be considered preexisting conditions—conditions that would have made many Asian American and Pacific Islanders uninsurable before President Obama signed the Affordable Care Act into law and conditions that would result in sky-high premiums under the misguided American Health Care Act.

By comparison, the Affordable Care Act has reduced the uninsured rate for minority communities by at least 35 percent. It also expanded Medicaid, allowing over 250,000 more Maryland beneficiaries to access an array of mental health services like therapy, psychiatric rehabilitation, and many others. The Affordable Care Act’s Medicaid expansion had similar positive impacts for mental health services across the country, which affects Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders directly as they continue to work tirelessly to reduce suicide rates. For these reasons, when we think of healthcare, we must consider the human cost our policies inflict on every community—on every American.

Likewise, immigration bans based on country of origin, race, or religion are awakening newfound fear that minority communities will be targeted once more, that racial profiling will rear its ugly head again, licensed and sanctioned by the Federal Government. The

AAPI community’s concern is warranted; people’s fear is understandable. Each Member of Congress must realize that caring about the mistakes of our past means working with purpose and with conviction to prevent them from happening again in the present. We must use our votes where our values need defending and our voices where there is silence.

As we move forward through Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and beyond, I implore every member of this Chamber to remember that the best way to honor that heritage is to respect the community bearing it. Hearing their experiences, carrying their lessons with us into the policy arena, and considering their needs and fears as our own, these are the substantive ways by which we can truly honor Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage. I am committed to honoring it accordingly and join every American of Asian or Pacific Islander heritage in celebrating this month as their own.

JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and celebrate Jewish American Heritage Month. As a proud Jewish American, I am honored to have the opportunity to acknowledge our heritage and the ways by which it has helped shape this country. The list is a long one, but this year, I want to focus on Mendes Cohen, whose legacy serves as a microcosm of our community.

Mendes Cohen was born in Richmond, VA, in May of 1796 to Israel and Judith Solomon Cohen, both of whom were immigrants. Mendes’s father came from Germany, and his mother came from England. His father died when Mendes was just 12 years old. The event was a tragedy, of course, for Mendes, his six siblings, and his mother, who moved the family to Baltimore for a fresh start shortly thereafter.

Mendes grew up not far from where I grew up; he was raised not unlike I was raised. He believed in the value of public service. He believed in serving his country and working for the good of his community. He held fast to an ideology based on tolerance, equality, and fraternity. It was precisely this ideology that led him to fighting in the War of 1812 at Ft. McHenry. After the war, he and his brother Jacob began lobbying to change Maryland’s constitution so that Jews could run for public office. In 1826, he was successful, and by 1847, he was a delegate in the Maryland General Assembly. He carried his love of country and belief in public service with him throughout the remainder of his life, going on to serve as a delegate to the State Peace Convention during the Civil War.

Mendes was, simply put, a historic marvel. He was a forward thinker, an activist, a consummate public servant, and a proud Jew. He broke down the single greatest barrier to Jewish entry into public life and opened the door for

Jews—including me—to pursue public service. Today, as I stand in this Chamber as a U.S. Senator from Maryland, I am struck by the impact of Mendes Cohen’s legacy. If I were able to speak to him now, I would tell him: thank you. Thank you for paving the way for me to have it all: my faith, my family, my heritage, and my career in public service. If Mendes were able to speak now, I imagine he would tell us that his work is unfinished. He would encourage us to continue carrying the torch of public engagement and civil service. He would remind us that path toward progress, by its very definition, has no endpoint.

These values underpin the broader Jewish community in Maryland and across the country. We learned early in our own history that the tide of oppression and bigotry can rise quickly and that, when it floods one shore, it floods them all. We learned that, when it comes for one community, it spares none. We learned that we must be our own stewards—that pluralism and equality demand constant guardians and that, when prejudice threatens them, nothing but our own tenacity can fend it off.

That tenacity is needed now more than ever, as we are confronted by resurgent anti-Semitism in every corner of the world—even here, at home. In the past few months, we have witnessed hate speech targeted at the Jewish community on social media, the ostracism and vilification of Jewish students on college campuses, and attacks against Jewish businesses and synagogues; yet it is precisely because the Jewish community has endured generations of persecution that promoting tolerance, equality, and inclusion has become a central tenant of Jewish American culture.

Jewish Americans participated in the abolitionist movement in the 19th century. They joined the ranks of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee during the Civil Rights movement. The partnership between Julius Rosenwald and Booker T. Washington resulted in the construction of thousands of schools for African-American children in the South throughout the 20th Century.

Jewish Americans are proud of their history promoting such causes. They are proud of their faith and their heritage, but they are also proud to profess their support of other people’s faiths and heritage. They are proud to be guardians of a free and pluralistic society; they are proud to weave love out of millennia of knowing hate. That is the story of Jewish Americans. From Mendes Cohen to the American Jewish community’s defense of diversity and inclusion today, every chapter we write, though unique, shares the same theme: progress—progress and equality.

Jewish Americans have, therefore, helped make the United States the force for human and equal rights that it is today, but each day, we face challenges to those ideals, challenges that

have felt increasingly ominous in recent months; yet this country will remain a beacon for the oppressed and the downtrodden. That beacon will stay lit due, in no small part, to the continued activism and conviction of the Jewish American community. This month, we thank them for that service, as we remind ourselves that our work goes on.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, today I wish to honor our brave men and women in law enforcement. During National Police Week, we commemorate the conviction and compassion they bring to their jobs every day, as well as the difficult choices and the sacrifices they make. From members of local police departments, to rapid transit officers, to court bailiffs, public safety officers risk their lives to keep our families and communities safe. That is a fact that we can never forget and a reality that confronts public safety officers and their families every day. This is a time to reflect on what law enforcement officers do for our communities, to thank those who serve us, and to pay special recognition to those who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

It is in that spirit, and with a heavy heart, that I rise to honor seven Michigan law enforcement officers who were killed in the line of duty in 2016. These men gave everything to their communities, their families, the State of Michigan, and their country. Across Michigan, our hearts have been shattered by their deaths, and our grief and gratitude go out to their families. Let us take one moment to honor their lifetimes of service: Myron Jarrett, Police Officer, Detroit Police Department; Ronald Kienzle, Court Officer, Berrien County Trial Court; Kevin Miller, Sergeant, Detroit Police Department; Collin Rose, Wayne State University Police Department; Kenneth Steil, Sergeant, Detroit Police Department; Michael Winter, Posse Deputy, Branch County Sheriff's Office; and Joseph Zangaro, Security Supervisor, Berrien County Trial Court.

The deaths of these officers were only some of the devastating tragedies that have shaken communities in Michigan and across this country. In these difficult times, we must always acknowledge each other's sacrifices, walk in one another's shoes, and feel the compassion in each other's hearts. This is what our law enforcement officers strive to do for us, and what we can do for them. During National Police Week and every day, we must continue to support our law enforcement officers, and we must work to ensure that they and their communities have the resources they need to live safely and serve the highest ideals of this Nation.

HONORING TROOPER THOMAS CLARDY

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to honor the memory of Trooper Thomas Clardy, who was killed in the line of duty on March 16, 2016.

Last week, the country observed National Police Week, a week in honor of the brave law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty, and on Monday, we will observe Memorial Day, a day we honor the heroic men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to their country. Thomas Clardy, an officer and a veteran, is one of those brave people to whom our Nation owes a debt of gratitude.

Born and raised in Park City, UT, Trooper Clardy spent his adult life in service to his country, his community, and his family. After graduating from high school, Trooper Clardy spent 2 years in the U.S. Army before transferring to the U.S. Marine Corps, where he served 11 years.

Following his honorable discharge from the Marines, Trooper Clardy began a long and esteemed career in service to his community. He graduated from the Massachusetts State Trooper Academy in 2005 and was a valued member of the Massachusetts State Police until his untimely death.

Trooper Clardy was a dedicated and loving husband to his wife, Reisa, and father to his seven children. Thanksgiving was a sacred holiday for Trooper Clardy. He spent it, without fail, surrounded by friends and loved ones, enjoying football with the kids and spending quality time with the family he loved so much.

Today we honor his service and sacrifice. May his memory continue to challenge and inspire us.

HONORING OFFICER RONALD TARENTINO

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to honor the memory of Officer Ronald Tarentino, who was killed in the line of duty on May 22, 2016.

Last week, the country observed National Police Week, a week in honor of the brave law enforcement officers who paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to their community. Officer Ronald Tarentino was one of those brave officers.

Officer Tarentino was born in Medford and raised in Medford and Tewksbury, MA. The son of a police officer, he followed his father's example when he joined the police force, spending 7 years in the Leicester Police Department before transferring to the Auburn Police Department, where he served until his untimely death 2 years later.

I had the honor of attending the wake of Officer Tarentino and was moved by the stories of his selfless dedication to those around him. Officer

Tarentino was the coworker everyone loved. His passion for his work was easily apparent to anyone who knew him. He came into work with a smile and made friends with all of his colleagues. Outside of work, he enjoyed fishing, hunting, and archery and was a member of the Massachusetts Police Association, the Auburn Elks, and Mustangs or Massachusetts.

Most of all, Officer Tarentino was a loving husband and a father of three. Today we honor his service and sacrifice. May his memory continue to challenge and inspire us.

RECOGNIZING THE 555TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY BATTALION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to take a few minutes today and share with my colleagues an extraordinary piece of our country's World War II and civil rights history: the story of the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion—or the Triple Nickles, as they would come to be called.

The 555th was officially activated in December 1943 at Fort Benning, GA, and began as a company of Black officers and enlisted men. Seventeen soldiers graduated Army jump school the following February, earning a coveted Parachutist Badge—their “wings.” The Army transferred the unit after several months to Camp Mackall, NC, and, in November 1944, redesignated it Company A of the newly activated 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion.

Although the 555th did not serve overseas during World War II, it performed an important role in defending the American homeland. In 1944 and 1945, the Japanese launched roughly 9,000 “balloon bombs,” explosives attached to paper balloons that rode the jetstream current across the Pacific Ocean and over the contiguous United States.

One of these balloon bombs exploded in Oregon, killing a pregnant woman and five children in what historians regard as the only American World War II combat casualties to occur in the contiguous United States.

The members of the 555th boarded a train westward to Oregon on a secret mission to help defend Americans living in the Pacific Northwest and the natural timber resources deemed vital to the war effort.

The incident in Oregon was one of more than 275 documented balloon bomb related incidents as far east as Detroit, MI, south into Texas, and north into Canada and Alaska.

Japanese balloon bombs, of course, had the potential not only to wound or kill but also to set forests ablaze in the western United States. Putting those fires out and dealing with their aftermath could divert the Nation's focus on the war effort and dampen American morale.

The Triple Nickles arrived in Oregon in 1945 and were sent out to Pendleton Air Field, then still an active military base. They were assigned to work with