

age was a great loss, but he left behind a legacy that will be cherished for generations to come.

I rise today in tribute to this outstanding leader and to offer my deepest condolences to his wife Norma, family, and friends.

Growing up in Aroostook County, the heart of Maine's potato industry, I saw every day the importance of family farms to our way of life and to our communities. Bernard was a leader in this iconic Aroostook industry.

Born in Limestone, ME, near my hometown of Caribou, Bernard began farming with Norma's father, Herman Ward. In addition to helping to build a strong and successful family business, he served the industry in numerous agricultural organizations at the local, State, and national levels.

Bernard served as Maine's commissioner of agriculture from 1988 to 1996 during Governor McKernan's administration. During my own service in State government, I had the pleasure of working alongside Bernard, a leader of uncommon energy, intelligence, and dedication.

During their 67 years of marriage, in both Aroostook County and our State capital of Augusta, Bernard and Norma were active volunteers in their community, serving youth programs, civic organizations, schools, and their church. Upon Bernard's retirement in 1996, the couple devoted countless hours to the Augusta Food Bank, helping their neighbors in need throughout the capital region.

In 2012, Bernard and Norma were honored with the Maine Agriculture Commissioner's Distinguished Service Award. The citation accompanying that award described them as "two of the most accomplished, yet humble, contributors to Maine's agricultural community" who personified the traditional, hard-working Maine farm family.

Bernard Shaw was guided by the traditions that define Maine, and he strengthened them for the future. His invaluable contributions to agriculture and to our State will be deeply missed, but he will long be remembered for his leadership and vision.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, today we remember the life of Bernard "Bernie" Shaw, who passed away earlier this year at the age of 88. As a lifelong resident of Maine, a wonderful husband and father to three, and a champion for agriculture, future generations will continue to remember Bernie by the lasting impact he has left on the State.

Originally from Limestone, Bernie attend the Limestone schools and later the University of Maine. It was after this that he met his beloved wife, Norma. In over 65 years of marriage, Bernie and Norma raised three children—Steve, Susan, and Sara—all while running a successful family farm and giving back to their community in numerous ways.

Bernie first began farming with Norma's father, Herman Ward, and eventu-

ally took over the family business, before moving to Augusta in 1987. From 1988 to 1994, Bernie served the State of Maine as the commissioner of agriculture. Over the years, he served on local, State, and national level agriculture committees, drawing from his own experience as a former Aroostook County potato farmer. Only a few out of the many groups he championed for, Bernie devoted his time to the Maine Potato Council, the Maine Potato Board, the Agricultural Bargaining Council, and the Land For Maine's Future Board.

After retiring, Bernie devoted much of his time to volunteering at the Augusta Food Bank, and the Windsor Fair. He was honored for this commitment back in 2012, when he received the Agriculture Commissioner's Distinguished Service Award, along with his wife, Norma. Both were lauded for their weekly efforts with the food bank and their success in expanding the number of families able to be helped.

Bernie Shaw represented in so many ways the values we hold dear in Maine: family, faith, community, service, and tradition. We have much to be thankful for in Maine because of Bernie's dedication and service to the State, and he will be deeply missed by many.

#### RECOGNIZING CONNORS-EMERSON SCHOOL

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am delighted to commend Connors-Emerson School in Bar Harbor, ME, on being named a 2017 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. Serving students from kindergarten through the eighth grade, this outstanding school is one of only 342 schools across the country to receive Blue Ribbon recognition from the U.S. Department of Education.

Created in 1982, the Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private schools that are either academically superior in their States or that demonstrate significant gains in student achievement. The schools singled out for this national recognition are models of high educational standards and accountability.

The Blue Ribbon designation continues a tradition of quality education at Connors-Emerson. Since first being named a Blue Ribbon School in 2004, educators and staff have deepened and expanded standards-based teaching and learning. More than half of the faculty have advanced degrees or certification as master level teachers. A strong commitment to professional development ensures that teachers and staff, as well as students, are lifelong learners.

Bar Harbor is the gateway to Acadia National Park, and the school has a strong ethic of environmental responsibility. Currently, the seventh grade students at Connors-Emerson are working on an expeditionary learning unit which is exploring the effects of climate change on Acadia and all of Mount Desert Island.

Bar Harbor also is home to the MDI Biological Laboratory and to the Jack-

son Laboratory, world-renowned research institutions. Connors-Emerson excels in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education. The math team and robotics team have received honors at both the State and national levels, and the school has been awarded several grants to advance STEM education.

Fully 98 percent of students in grades five through eight participate in after-school activities. From the State champion jazz band and drama to Destination Imagination and the Outdoors Club, students are encouraged to pursue their interests.

As a school community, Connors-Emerson is dedicated to the values of fairness, compassion, honesty, responsibility, respect, and courtesy that help to create a positive, diverse, safe, and caring learning environment.

This Blue Ribbon Award is a tribute not only to the students but also to the administrators, teachers, staff, and parents of Connors-Emerson School. Together, they are succeeding in their mission to generate excitement and momentum for learning. They are making a difference in the lives of their students, helping them reach their full potential as independent, responsible learners and citizens. I congratulate the entire Bar Harbor community for this well-deserved recognition.

#### RECOGNIZING FALMOUTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am delighted to commend Falmouth Elementary School in Falmouth, ME, on being named a 2017 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. Serving students from kindergarten through the fifth grade, this outstanding school is one of only 342 schools across the country to receive Blue Ribbon recognition from the U.S. Department of Education.

Created in 1982, the Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private schools that are either academically superior in their States or that demonstrate significant gains in student achievement. The schools singled out for this national recognition are models of high educational standards and accountability.

The Blue Ribbon designation continues a tradition of quality education in Falmouth. Established just 6 years ago, the elementary school is relatively young; however, it has a rich history steeped in tradition. The union of two schools in 2011 created the largest elementary school in Maine. One of those schools, Plummer-Motz, received a Blue Ribbon Award in 2005, and the dedication to quality education was expanded through a transition that was guided by a team of representatives from each of the two schools.

Faculty and staff at Falmouth are committed to both academic excellence and each child's social, emotional, and physical health. They work to ensure a

safe and secure learning environment and to develop strong and collaborative relationships with parents and community members.

Students have rich and diverse learning opportunities in art and music, and library skills are part of every child's learning. World language instruction starts in the first grade, and computer science classes start in grade 3. Students benefit from interdisciplinary learning through the garden-greenhouse and through celebrations such as Arts Nights, Coder Express, and Engineering Night.

This award recognizes that Falmouth Elementary School students achieve at the highest level. The school involves all students in extracurricular activities, which helps forge a strong school community where students are connected and encouraged to pursue their interests.

I applaud the administrators, teachers, staff, and parents of Falmouth Elementary School. Together, they are succeeding in their mission to generate confidence and momentum for learning. They are making a difference in the lives of their students, helping them reach their full potential as independent, responsible learners and citizens. I am pleased that the U.S. Department of Education has selected Falmouth Elementary School for this well-deserved honor, and I congratulate the entire school community for this outstanding achievement.

#### RECOGNIZING FOURTEENTH STREET SCHOOL

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am delighted to commend Fourteenth Street School in Bangor, ME, on being named a 2017 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. Serving students from prekindergarten through the third grade, this outstanding school in the city I am proud to live in is one of only 342 schools across the country to receive Blue Ribbon recognition from the U.S. Department of Education.

Created in 1982, the Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private schools that are either academically superior in their States or that demonstrate significant gains in student achievement. The schools singled out for this national recognition are models of high educational standards and accountability.

The success at Fourteenth Street School is the result of two guiding philosophies. The first is "meet the students where they are," with instruction and support tailored to the strengths and needs of each individual student. The second is "all hands on deck," a call for all staff members to engage with students and encourage them to achieve their full potential.

One of the unique features of Fourteenth Street School is the use of every opportunity during the school day to support learning. Whether in the classroom, preparing for recess, or standing in the lunchroom, students may be par-

ticipating in a math game, reciting a rhyme, or singing. The entire school eats lunch together daily, and a staff member uses this time to read aloud to students. This focus on literacy even extends to physical education classes, where the PE teacher often reads articles from sports magazines to students.

The impact of this dedication to individual students is evident. Over the last 5 years, average attendance exceeded 95 percent, and 100 percent of students participated in at least one afterschool activity.

Another important factor in the school's success is the emphasis on building strong relationships with families. Through schoolwide and classroom newsletters, parent meetings, parents and educators accelerating kids—PEAK—events, academic showcases, and, most important, direct communication with teachers, parents have the opportunity to play a significant role in their children's education.

I applaud the administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and students of Fourteenth Street School. Together, they are succeeding in their mission to generate confidence and momentum for learning. This outstanding school is making a difference in the lives of its students, helping them to become independent, responsible learners and citizens. I am pleased that the U.S. Department of Education has selected Fourteenth Street School for this well-deserved honor, and I congratulate the entire school community for this outstanding achievement.

#### TRIBUTE TO PEGGI HANRAHAN

Mr. STRANGE. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to an Alabamian who has spent more than two decades in public service, Peggi Hanrahan.

Many people in Washington, DC, know Peggi as the executive assistant and gatekeeper to the former Alabama Senator, Jeff Sessions, who is now the U.S. Attorney General. For more than 20 years, Jeff Sessions has been a strong leader on the issues of legal reform and immigration. In order to speak with Jeff Sessions on any issue, you had to go through Peggi.

Peggi has earned praise from the countless people she has worked alongside throughout the years. Here are a few statements from her former colleagues.

Attorney General Sessions stated:

Peggi has been at the center of everything we have accomplished in public service. She loves America and its ideals, is smart, decisive, loyal, and a total professional. She speaks up for the high principles she believes in, and for two decades has been the key point of contact in our office for thousands of Alabamians and Americans all over the Country. She has provided invaluable service to me, the Nation, and the so many who she trained and mentored. Though we will miss her marvelous contributions, we wish her all the best as she and Kevin embark on this next adventure.

Kate Hollis, then-Senator Sessions' former scheduler, said the following:

For 14 years I had the pleasure of working side by side with Peggi for Senator Jeff Sessions. We were a great team and became great friends during that time. I can attest that she was one of the hardest working people in the United States Senate who always went the extra mile to assist Senator Sessions and our staff, as well as our constituents from the great State of Alabama.

Pete Landrum, former military legislative assistant under former Senator Sessions, stated:

Peggi Hanrahan is a great colleague and friend. She is a person that can be depended on when things are good or when things are bad—it doesn't matter.

Danielle Cutrona, counselor to the Attorney General, said:

Peggi is an institution in our office. Her loyalty and dedication to then-Senator, now Attorney General Sessions and to his staff has been unwavering. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work with Peggi all these years and will miss her tremendously.

Michael Brumas, former press secretary for Senator Sessions, said:

The phrase "best in the business" certainly applies to Peggi Hanrahan, who served for more than two decades as Jeff Sessions' executive assistant, first in the Senate and then at the Department of Justice. In many ways Peggi was the backbone of the Senate office, with a knack for solving those administrative dilemmas that always crop up in a busy Senate office as well making sure the senator stuck to his active schedule—not always an easy task.

Senator Sessions' first chief of staff in the Senate, Armand DeKyser, said the following:

From the earliest days of Senator Sessions' tenure when Peggi began sitting just outside Jeff's transition office, she never was more than 20 feet from his desk. She was THE constant among all the many staff that worked for Senator and now Attorney General Jeff Sessions. Her calm demeanor combined with a wonderful work ethic are so very vital to the successful operation of a complex staff operation. She was composed, efficient and trustworthy on the most harried of days—a presidential inauguration, a swearing-in, or even the fateful 9/11 day. Even on a normal day—if there is ever one of those—Peggi's demonstrated support both up and down the ladder of responsibility was one of her best traits and one most admired by all.

Alan Hanson, now Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, said:

Peggi Hanrahan is a national treasure. She is both a trusted confidante and an invaluable colleague. While she will be sorely missed by all of us, her retirement is both hard earned and well deserved.

Paige Hanson, a former Sessions staffer, said:

While I know the Attorney General will miss the benefit of having Peggi around, we are truly happy for her and grateful for her service and friendship.

Stephen Boyd, former communications director for Senator Sessions and now Assistant Attorney General, said:

It is difficult to overstate the important role that Peggi played for all those years in the Senate office. If things got done, it was usually because Peggi made it happen. Her service to then-Senator and now Attorney General Sessions, the Senate, and to the people of Alabama has been tremendous. She is one of many who asked not for recognition