

abroad, knowing that they may not survive. This Memorial Day, let us pause to pay honor to their immense courage.

I specifically remember the sacrifices of my fellow citizens from Maryland such as SPC Tocarra Green. She was the first woman from Maryland to die in the Iraq War. I remember SGT Erick M. Houck, a Baltimore native like me, who died in Afghanistan just last year. It is a remarkable notion that our fellow citizens were willing to pay such a high cost for our own freedom. They and those like them deserve every honor we can bestow.

Memorial Day weekend often serves as an opportunity for Americans to spend time with friends and family. As we consider the cost of our freedom, let us also remember the families of our fallen, our Gold Star families. As we remember the sacrifices of our fallen servicemembers, we also recognize the tremendous loss to their families and admire their patriotism and perseverance.

Despite all of these sacrifices, the struggle to preserve our freedom continues. Just as in times past, our enemies seek to threaten the freedom for which our American brothers and sisters have laid down their lives. These enemies don't just fight our troops on the battlefield; they have attacked the integrity of our electoral system and our freedom of speech while seeking to reverse our progress against racial inequity and religious freedom. One of the best ways to honor our fallen comrades is for us to work together to defend our freedom and our American principles. We cannot allow the erosion of the liberties our family members and friends have fought so hard to defend.

As I pray for the fallen and their families this weekend, I will also pray for our men and women currently serving in harm's way and for their families too. I am truly grateful for those who have served our country, past and present, and I will continue to do my very best to serve them in return.

#### TAX REFORM

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, as you know, Congress passed, and the President signed, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act late last year. While much media attention has been focused on certain aspects of tax reform, one topic that has not received due attention is the positive effect that tax reform is already having on small businesses. As chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I strongly supported this legislation because I saw the potential it had to spur investment, create economic growth, and provide tax relief to the millions of small business owners whose resilience and work ethic provide ample evidence that the American Dream is alive and well. This piece of legislation has had a positive impact, not just for small business owners and their employees in

my home State of Idaho, but also for small business owners and employees all across our country. I plan to introduce and highlight these small businesses on a weekly basis for the near future.

While there are more and more uplifting stories of small businesses that are benefiting from tax reform each day, today I wish to share the story of Renaissance Property Management, LLC located in Dearborn, MI. Renaissance Property Management's owner, Rudaina Hamade, and her son Michael operate this successful small business, which specializes in acquiring rental properties, asset management, and 24 hour property maintenance. Through their business, the Hamades and their 5 to 10 employees, some of whom are seasonal, strive to offer tenants affordable and distinguished homes. During the last recession, when so many small businesses were suffering, her determination was on full display. Though the Detroit housing market experienced a steep decline, the Hamades persevered, and after finding financial backing, they continued to invest in the Detroit market even while many others were reducing their footprint in the city.

Ms. Hamade, a Lebanese immigrant, is a prime example of the American Dream, having exhibited an amazing drive and work ethic throughout her life. She received her finance degree from Davenport University while raising her children and running a small business. In addition to running her company and raising a family, Ms. Hamade is also an active member of the Dearborn Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business Council at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Changes in the tax law have offered welcome relief to the Hamades' employees and their families. This new law has enabled the Hamades to provide their employees with bonuses ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000. They have also been able to make capital investments in their company. These investments include upgrades to their computer system and the purchasing of new software, machinery, and tools. Stories like these show that tax reform was a more than worthwhile goal that has improved small businesses' outlook, provided employee bonuses, lowered taxes, and increased investment in many sectors of our economy. In the coming weeks and months, I intend to bring more attention to the positive effects that tax reform has had on small businesses across our great country.

#### HUNGARY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, this week, the Senate is poised to confirm the nomination of David Cornstein to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to Hungary. Against that backdrop, as well as reports that Secretary of State Pompeo will meet with the Hungarian Foreign Minister in Washington at the end of this month, it is timely to con-

sider the troubling situation in Hungary.

Budapest is a fabulous city. The Parliament is regarded by many as one of the most beautiful legislative houses in the world. Hungarians are a warm and generous people, and the United States and Hungary have a shared history dating to the times of Lajos Kossuth, whose bust graces the halls of the U.S. Congress. Hungarians have come to this country as both immigrants and refugees, enriching our national fabric.

The beauty of Budapest masks a growing climate of fear, however. For the past 8 years, Hungary's ruling Fidesz party has tried to pass majoritarianism off as democracy. Media pluralism has disappeared. The government plays favorites with religions, preferring some while discriminating against others, like the Hungarian Evangelical Fellowship. Moreover, the checks and balances that are essential for democracy are missing in action. To say that the ruling party now exercises unchecked legal power is not an exercise in hyperbole, but merely a concise analysis of the facts.

Prime Minister Viktor Orban has allowed corruption to flourish, enriching his own friends and family. The government has recentralized, and more of the economy is either under state control or in the hands of Orban's cronies. Once Fidesz won two-thirds of the seats in Parliament in 2010, the party changed the election system to perpetuate that outcome. As Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, OSCE, elections observers concluded, separation of state and party is no longer respected. For a country that suffered under a one-party regime, that is a deeply disturbing conclusion.

In 2013, I chaired a Helsinki Commission hearing on the trajectory of democracy in Hungary. Frankly, I did not think things would get this bad, in part because I did not think the ruling Fidesz party would become more extremist than Hungary's strongest opposition party, Jobbik, but after 2010, with Jobbik's anti-Semitic and anti-Roma rhetoric serving as a Greek chorus, Fidesz leaders carved out their own revisionist bona fides, worked to rehabilitate fascist-era figures, and repeatedly awarded, elevated, and amplified one of the country's most extremist polemicists. They determined that they could get away with further escalating hate-mongering against racial and religious minorities with one tweak: call them Muslims and migrants. Hatred, it seems, is fungible.

Not surprisingly, the politics of fear, historical revisionism, and national grievances have found expression in the ruling party's foreign policy too. The most alarming example has been Hungary's opportunistic approach to Ukraine following Russia's 2014 invasion, with Hungary's rhetoric often echoing Moscow's. Overall, the Hungarian Government's approach suggests that it is not interested in a dialogue about the Hungarian minority in

Ukraine, but in finding a new political enemy. The fact that this is music to Vladimir Putin's ears may be just a coincidence.

In any case, Hungary's posture regarding Russia is unusual in the region, to say the least. As suggested in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Report we issued on "Putin's Asymmetric Assault," Russian disinformation isn't just creeping in over the transom; the Hungarian Government has opened the door and put out a welcome mat. Paradoxically, however, while Prime Minister Orban may tilt his country to east, Hungarians themselves remain among the most pro-European Union of Europeans and many still vote with their feet, forming a steady exodus west. In fact, the outward exodus is contributing to an emerging labor shortage.

It is not surprising that Hungary gets compared to Russia: the nongovernmental organization, NGO, Law adopted in Budapest last year was inspired by Russia, proposed by Jobbik, and passed by Fidesz, but there are still big differences between Hungary and Russia. Journalists are not murdered in Hungary, and no one goes to jail for his or her opinions. Instead, Hungary is using a fist in a velvet glove to silence civil society and thwart political dissent without ever leaving a mark. Viktor Orban has mastered nonviolent means of repression. He has used the renationalization of segments of the economy, the recentralization of state authority, and the kleptocratic control of putatively private business to stymie opposition and dissent. I know political analysts are using a lot of different terms to describe the specific system that has emerged in Hungary under Orban—illiberal or mafia state? Oligarchy or kleptocracy? One of the most apt may be "goulash authoritarianism."

There are worrying signs that things may get worse before they get better. Viktor Orban now appears set to fulfill his campaign pledge to extract "moral, political and legal" retribution from those who opposed him. He welcomed the publication of an "enemies list" containing some 200 names—including numerous American citizens—and urged the close-to-Orban media to do more to root them out. This is the kind of smear campaign that often comes just before the gloves come off and the blows begin.

Under these challenging circumstances, the United States needs to speak with a clear and unambiguous voice. As Senator CORKER said at the confirmation hearing last week, "Mr. Cornstein will have the important task of reminding the Government of Hungary that its future lies not in a return to the dark days of the past but in remaining an active member of the community of liberal democracies." Messages delivered behind closed doors are likely to have little effect or may even be completely misrepresented in public by Hungarian officials.

The United States will always have a relationship with Hungary, but the question is: What kind of relationship will that be? One built on deeply shared values or only fleeting transactional interests? Our strongest alliances are with countries where human rights are respected and democracy is strong, and that is the kind of relationship I hope Mr. Cornstein will help build.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO DENNIS AND BARBARA RAINEY

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and honor Dennis and Barbara Rainey. The Rainey family are residents of Little Rock in my home State of Arkansas. They are cofounders of FamilyLife, a Christian ministry committed to helping marriages and families.

Dennis and Barbara have been married since 1972. They have six children and a growing number of grandchildren. Their ministry, which is focused on strengthening marriage and the family, has grown into a nationally recognized brand that includes marriage conferences and cruises, books, devotionals, and public speaking engagements. FamilyLife reaches an estimated 60,000 people each year with its "Weekend To Remember" events for couples.

Dennis can be heard daily as host of the nationally syndicated radio program "FamilyLife Today" on more than 1,100 radio stations/outlets in nearly all 50 States. Together, they have authored or coauthored more than 35 books, and Barbara recently launched a new home decor line and teaching resource to help families and especially women express their faith in their homes. FamilyLife has grown into a dynamic ministry that has reached more than 109 countries across the world.

Dennis and Barbara truly live out their faith every day in their roles as teachers, speakers, parents, grandparents, mentors, friends, and neighbors. They have been pivotal members of the faith community in Little Rock, as well as throughout our State and the country.

My wife, Cathy, and I have been blessed by and treasured the friendship and mentorship of Dennis and Barbara since the start of their ministry.

We are very proud of the important, affirming work that they have been doing for decades. Taking this opportunity to celebrate Dennis and Barbara and their legacy shows just how much of an impact they have had on their community and beyond over many years.

We are grateful for them and wish them well in the years ahead. May God bless the Rainey family and the work they have left to do in service of His Kingdom. Our marriages and families are certainly better for it. •

##### TRIBUTE TO CHRIS KOLSTAD

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I have the honor of recognizing Chris Kolstad of Liberty County for his years of dedication to Montana agriculture.

Chris is a fourth-generation farmer in Montana's Golden Triangle. For the past 100 years, wheat has paid the bills for his family and put food on people's plates, and that will continue moving forward with his son Cory as a partner on the family farm. Chris and his wife, Vicki, have four children, and Chris's father Allen Kolstad served as Montana's Lieutenant Governor from 1989–1991.

While Chris runs an impressive and successful operation on the farm, it is his involvement in the community that makes him stand out. He has been an active member of the Montana Grain Growers Association, as well as the Montana Farm Bureau. In February of 2016, Chris was elected secretary-treasurer of U.S. Wheat Associates. Most recently, Chris was elected chairman of the U.S. Wheat Associates.

Chris works hard to ensure that U.S. wheat is the best in the world. While pushing for that, he proudly represents Montana's farmers and ranchers. I congratulate and thank Chris for his years of hard work and dedication to Montana's farmers and ranchers. •

##### TRIBUTE TO VAUGHN GRAHAM

• Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize my good friend Mr. Vaughn Graham as he nears the end of his term as the 113th chairman of the Nation's largest insurance association, the Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of America, also known as the Big "I." He was installed as chairman of the Big "I" in September 2017 in Chicago, IL, and over the past year, he has done an amazing job of piloting the association as a strong and thoughtful leader for independent insurance agents across the country.

Vaughn graduated from the University of Oklahoma and is currently the president of Rich & Cartmill, Inc., headquartered in Tulsa, OK, and with offices in Oklahoma City; Ozark, MO; Olathe, KS; and Greeley, CO. He is a past chairman of the Independent Insurance Agents of Oklahoma, IIAO, and has served as the Oklahoma director to the Big "I" national board of directors. He was recognized in 2012 with IIAO's highest honor, the Eagle of Excellence Award.

On the national association level, Graham has chaired the Membership Services, Inc., board and has served on several Big "I" committees and boards including the Big "I" advantage board, InsurPac board of trustees, and the Large Agents and Brokers Council. In addition, he has been engaged as a member of several insurance companies' agent advisory councils.

I would also like to recognize Candace Graham, Vaughn's esteemed