

is allegedly being charged with treason and other crimes against the state and has reportedly been denied access to a lawyer. Reports suggest he is one of several dozen detainees being held by the NSS at the infamous Blue House prison in Juba.

Mr. Ajak's detention is consistent with a pattern of abuses by the NSS, which has been implicated in the arbitrary arrest and detention of journalists, national staff of the United Nations, academics, civil society activists, and young business leaders like Kerbino Wol; the forced disappearance of human rights lawyers and members of the political opposition, such as Dong Samuel Luak and Aggrey Idri, respectively; and other human rights violations and denials of due process. Although President Kiir has previously announced that he would release all political prisoners and his government has committed under a recent deal to release detainees, human rights monitors continue to report that dozens of people remain detained without charge at the Blue House and other detention sites in the capital.

No matter what documents are signed to move the country beyond its civil war, true peace and stability will not be achieved if the government continues to repress free speech and arrest, detain, and forcibly disappear journalists, politicians, academics, and members of civil society. If and when the U.S. government is again called on to support the government of South Sudan and to help rebuild its security services, their actions in this conflict—and their treatment of people like Peter Biar Ajak—will not be forgotten. I urge all Senators to join me in calling for the immediate release of Mr. Ajak and other prisoners of conscience and accountability for the perpetrators of such abuses.

TRIBUTE TO CLARA AYER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on behalf of all Vermonters, I want to honor Clara Ayer of East Montpelier, VT, who will this month be inducted into the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame, in recognition of her status as an emerging leader in the Vermont agriculture community. Clara is a proud 2010 alumna of Cornell University with a degree dairy science who, after graduation, went to work for Yankee Farm Credit. She began working full time at Fairmount Farm, a third-generation dairy farm, alongside her brother Ricky in 2014. Clara is married to Dana Ayer, and the couple has a little boy, Carson. She is a well-respected advocate for agriculture, both in Montpelier and Washington, DC.

In addition to her membership in several dairy-related organizations, Clara also promotes dairy to young people, through a "Life on the Farm" summer camp, through educational field trips by the local elementary school, and through the formation of a Dairy 4-H Club. As Clara has provided exceptional

service to the Vermont dairy community, further described in her well-deserved nomination to the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame, I ask unanimous consent that the citation of her nomination be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

VERMONT AGRICULTURAL HALL OF FAME 2018 INDUCTEE CLARA AYER

Clara is a third-generation dairy farmer and family farm advocate. She works alongside her family at Fairmount Farm, where she wears many hats from overseeing human resources for their staff of fifty employees, to bookkeeping, to marketing, and events management. She plays an active role in shaping agricultural policy through her advocacy at the Vermont Statehouse, and in Washington D.C. as part of her work as an Agri-Mark Young Cooperator and member of the National Milk Producers' Federation. She currently serves as the secretary of the Vermont Holstein Association, and is a delegate of both Vermont and New England Dairy Promotion. Clara also created and manages a "Life on the Farm" summer camp for youth, which offers kids the opportunity to experience agriculture through fun, educational on-farm activities. Clara graduated from Cornell University in 2010 with a B.A. in Dairy Science. She and her husband Dana are excited to be raising their two-year-old son, Carson, on the family farm.

TRIBUTE TO BOB FOSTER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on behalf of all Vermonters, I would like to honor Bob Foster of Middlebury, VT, who this month will be inducted into the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame in recognition of more than 30 years of outstanding service to Vermont agriculture. For as long as I have served in this body and especially in my work on the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, I have often looked to Bob for input and advice. In addition being a partner in an iconic fifth-generation Vermont dairy, Bob's leadership in Vermont has been extraordinary. During his 37 years of service on the Agri-Mark Dairy Cooperative Board, the co-op has become a critical resource for many Vermont dairy farms and a mainstay of the Vermont economy. Bob is an innovator, taking risks and leading the way in Vermont for bio-digesters and sustainable value-added products and working nationally on renewable energy as an adviser to the 25X25 effort. The extent of his service on local, State, and national leadership teams is exceptional and is further described in his well-deserved nomination to the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame, I ask unanimous consent that the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

VERMONT AGRICULTURAL HALL OF FAME LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT: 30+ YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO VERMONT AGRICULTURE. ROBERT FOSTER, MIDDLEBURY

Robert is a partner in Foster Brothers Farm, a fifth-generation dairy, who served

on the Agrimark Board of Directors for 37 consecutive years, before retiring in 2015. He also chairs the University of Vermont, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences' Board of Advisors. Sustainability has always been one of Robert's passions. Foster Brothers Farm was the first in the state to install and operate a methane digester. Robert is also co-owner and operator of Vermont Natural Ag Products, a sustainable business which supplies wholesale products, formulated from cow, horse and poultry compost, to the horticultural, agricultural, and turf industries. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for The Soil Health Institute. Within the Agrimark Co-op, Robert has been a champion for renewable energy and sustainability, helping to pioneer the Vital Capital Index, which helps member farms measure and manage their impact on their community, the environment and their bottom line. He has been a tireless advocate for Vermont agriculture, and a mentor and leader to young farmers, over the course of his prestigious career. Together with his wife, Nancy, he has three grown daughters; Robin Cole, Jennifer Foster, and Heather Foster-Provencher, and six grandchildren.

TRIBUTE TO BETH KENNETT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on behalf of all Vermonters, I want to honor Beth Kennett of Rochester, VT, who this month will be inducted into the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame in recognition of her multifaceted leadership of agriculture in the Green Mountain State. Beth, with her husband, Bob, and their family, have for many years run a multigenerational diversified dairy farm in the White River Valley. I have often looked to Beth for her advice and insights into Vermont agriculture. She has been a strong leader on many fronts, including serving on the USDA Farm Service Agency State Committee, as founding member of the Connecticut River Watershed Farmers Alliance, as founding member of the White River Partnership, and especially as a leader in agritourism in Vermont, nationally and internationally.

Beth's induction into the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame is well earned, and I ask unanimous consent that her nomination for this honor be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

VERMONT AGRICULTURAL HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE BETH KENNETT

Beth is a dairy farmer and innkeeper who helped forge the path for Vermont's agritourism industry. For more than 30 years, she has helped educate Vermont farmers, government officials, and the public about the economic, social, and educational benefits of agri-tourism. As the former president of Vermont Farms!, she has traveled and spoken both nationally and internationally to build awareness for agri-tourism and create new opportunities for Vermont farmers. Her tireless outreach and desire to educate has enabled many farms to diversify and realize the economic advantages of connecting directly with the public. Since 1984, Beth, her husband Bob, and three generations of her family have opened their home for farm stays, providing educational, hands-on vacations for thousands of domestic and international guests.

TRIBUTE TO DICK SEARS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is my honor to recognize a true friend of Vermont, State Senator Dick Sears of Bennington, who has been named by FiscalNote as the sixth most productive State senator in the United States.

Senator Sears, who was first elected in 1992, and as cited by FiscalNote, has sponsored 314 bills and has a 60 percent bill passage success rate. This recognition of Senator Sears' effectiveness comes as no surprise in Vermont, where he is respected and is a fixture on the nightly news during the legislative session.

In the Vermont Senate Judiciary Committee, where Senator Sears serves as chair, he has acted courageously on issues including civil rights, marriage equality, human trafficking, and adoption. He himself highlights his work on corrections and criminal justice reform, as well as his successful involvement in the 2010 rewrite of sex offender laws, as major accomplishments; yet he also attributes his success in these important issue areas to teamwork.

In addition to chairing the judiciary committee, Senator Sears also serves on the appropriations committee, the joint fiscal committee, is vice chair of the joint legislative child protection oversight committee, is vice chair of the joint legislative justice committee, and is a member of the legislative committee on judicial rules and the legislative council committee.

Clearly, Senator Sears is a legislator who deserves recognition, yet doesn't seek recognition. In honor of Senator Sears' outstanding accomplishments, I ask that the article by Christie Wisniewski from the July 31 edition of the Bennington Banner, "Sears ranked 6th in productivity for U.S. state senators," be printed into the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

BENNINGTON BANNER, JULY 31, 2018

SEARS RANKED 6TH IN PRODUCTIVITY FOR U.S. STATE SENATORS

This story by Christie Wisniewski was published by the Bennington Banner on July 31. BENNINGTON.—State Sen. Dick Sears of Bennington is the sixth most productive state senator in the United States, according to an analysis released Monday by a Washington, D.C.-based software startup. Each year, FiscalNote creates a list of the top 10 state senators using "unique data analytics software," the company said in a press release. The list ranks all senators and representatives in accordance with their legislative productivity, which is defined as how successful the legislator is at sponsoring and steering bills through each stage of the legislative process.

This research also ranks the quality, endurance and substantiveness of the bills each legislator sponsored and introduced. For example, legislators score higher if they sponsor a higher number of bills and if their bills make it further in the legislative process. A bill that is enacted is weighted more than a bill that does not make it past the Senate floor. Finally, legislators score higher if their bills are substantive a bill that at-

tempts meaningful change rather than a memorial or commendation.

Sears, a Democrat, was first elected in 1992. Since then, he has sponsored 314 bills and has a 60-percent bill passage success rate.

"I'm just flabbergasted," Sears said of the report. "[I'm] really humbled and pleased, quite frankly."

Sears was the only state senator from New England to make the top 10.

State Sen. Brian Campion, who is running for re-election alongside his district mate Sears as a team, lauded Sears for his dedication to the county.

"Bennington County was once the forgotten kingdom of Vermont, but Dick has helped us rid ourselves of that title," Campion said. "He's incredibly hard working, and I'm lucky to have him as a mentor and district mate."

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures website, there are 7,383 legislators across the United States.

"To be ranked in the top 10 of state senators is an amazing thing," Sears said. "... I've worked well with various administrations over the years and sponsored some really tough bills."

Sears has worked successfully with four different Vermont governors and sponsored bills dealing with civil rights, marriage equality, human trafficking, adoption, and other issues. He views his work with reforming state corrections and criminal justice laws—especially with juvenile justice—as a "major accomplishment" and also sees his involvement with the 2010 "complete rewrite" of sex offender laws as a success.

However, Sears doesn't want to take all the credit for the bills that have passed under his watch.

"Like anything else, you never do it alone," he said.

Rep. Timothy R. Corcoran II of Bennington also believes Sears' recognition is well-deserved.

"Dick has always lived by his convictions and never backed down when he faced opposition to issues that weren't universally accepted," Corcoran said. "Bennington County has been extremely lucky to have him represent us up in Montpelier."

Corcoran commended Sears' willingness to fight for Bennington County, "whether it's been PFOA, helping to secure Amtrak bus service funding, fighting for the Vermont Veterans Home, or just securing funds for Bennington County in general."

"Dick has always stepped up to the plate and delivered," Corcoran added. "Congratulations Dick; job well done."

TRIBUTE TO ENID WONNACOTT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on behalf of all Vermonters, I would like to honor Enid Wonnacott of Huntington, VT, who this month will be inducted into the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame in recognition of her more than 30 years of agricultural leadership in Vermont and the Nation. Enid became the executive director of the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont, NOFA-VT, in 1987, the same year that I became chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. Enid has been a national leader in advancing the importance of organic agriculture. She provided important technical and advocacy support as I worked on the National Organic Standards Act as part of the 1990 farm bill—which has in turn

resulted in making organic agriculture a \$60 billion annual industry—with Vermont as a leader. Thirty years later, Enid continues to provide advice on organic agriculture and nutrition issues.

Enid Wonnacott's many accomplishments are presented in detail in her much deserved nomination to the Vermont Agricultural Hall of Fame.

I ask unanimous consent to have the nomination printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

VERMONT AGRICULTURAL HALL OF FAME 2018

INDUCTEE ENID WONNACOTT

Enid has served as the Executive Director of The Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT) since 1987. Over the course of her tenure, thanks to her leadership, Vermont's organic industry has grown immensely, from just 57 certified farms in 1990, to more than 700, today. Enid has worked tirelessly to help ensure all Vermonters have access to local, organic foods, and began a pioneering farm share program more than 20 years ago to provide subsidized farm shares for low-income Vermonters. As the National Organic Program was developed, Enid worked to implement a national certification program that kept the needs of Vermont's family farms at the forefront. Over the past three decades, she has nurtured and guided more than 70 staff and 20 interns, secured consistent grant and donor funding, and led NOFA-VT to become a national leader in organic advocacy, food access, and farm to school education. She has made an indelible mark on both the local, and national, organic movement. Enid grew up in Weybridge, and has lived on a small farmstead in Huntington with her husband, Harry, and children, Lila and Eli, for the past thirty years.

NOMINATION OF LYNN JOHNSON

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, these are incredibly harmful and traumatic times for immigrants and refugees in America. Perhaps there is not greater example of the damaging immigration policies of this administration than the so called zero-tolerance policy that led to the cruel and needless separation of thousands of children from their parents.

Separating a child from his or her parents has lasting, harmful, and traumatizing impacts. These separations have been shown to increase anxiety and depression among children that have already experienced significant trauma in their home countries and along their journey to the United States. Best practices in child welfare promote keeping children and their parents safely together, unless removal is in the child's best interest.

While the Department of Justice ended the family separation policy after an incredible outcry from the public and experts in children's health and well-being, the damage is far from over. The administration is now undergoing a court-supervised process to reunify separated children and families. Significant and self-inflicted obstacles remain in this reunification process, and I and my Senate colleagues will