

numeracy, cognitive, and behavioral skills than they otherwise would have had. They are more likely to graduate and complete college. They are more likely to live healthy, productive lives as adults. Today, Head Start alumni are strong, resilient individuals who make positive contributions to their communities as doctors, nurses, athletes, parents, entrepreneurs, teachers, police officers, CEOs, authors, artists, and more.

Head Start and Early Head Start are more important now than they ever have been, helping families across the country so tragically hurt by the opioid crisis. Head Start and Early Head Start directors, teachers, aides, and parent leaders are on the frontlines, helping our most at-risk children survive and thrive in the face of the adverse childhood experiences caused by homelessness, neglect, and abuse. They are there in times of natural disaster, community violence, and personal crisis. They are helping parents and grandparents provide stable and nurturing environments. In Native communities, they are helping to revitalize languages and strengthen traditional ways of knowing and living. Our communities and the Nation as a whole are stronger because Head Start and Early Head Start programs help millions of families find their way to strength and resilience.

Head Start staff in Alaska and across the country are dedicated, innovative, caring, and motivated people who work hard each and every day to ensure that the children and families they serve have the tools they need to achieve their full potential. Beyond the voluminous research showing the positive impact of these programs, I know what they do makes a lasting difference. When I visit elementary schools across my State, principals tell me that the students who have participated in Head Start are better prepared in every way for school.

So I take this opportunity to wish every Head Start and Early Head Start staff member and participant. Happy anniversary. As a longtime supporter, I recommit to doing all I can to ensure that our Head Start and Early Head Start programs continue to make a positive difference for many more years to come.

REMEMBERING RICHARD LUGAR

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I wish to honor our former colleague Senator Richard Lugar, who passed away recently and whose memorial service was this week. As the longest serving Senator from his beloved Indiana, Richard Lugar dedicated 36 years of service to his State, the Senate, and our Nation. He was a dear friend and mentor who already had 22 years of Senate service when I joined the Senate.

What I remember most fondly about Senator Lugar is that he combined an extraordinary intellect with good humor. He knew so much about foreign

policy and was also so approachable that new Senators like myself never hesitated to seek his guidance.

Senator Lugar's commitment to bipartisanship guided his engagement on issues from international affairs to agriculture. He sought compromises to achieve results, regardless of the political calculus. He eschewed polarization and cautioned colleagues that, "whatever is won today through division is usually lost tomorrow." Instead he sought to foster good will to bring together opposing sides. He continued this effort after his service in the Senate with the Lugar Center, a nonprofit public policy institution that seeks to improve the quality of debate and bridge ideological divides on important issues.

It is this approach that led to great success in international affairs from South Africa to the Philippines.

Senator Lugar viewed support for democracy and development as a stabilizing force to counter international threats. Around the world, partners trusted his foreign policy expertise and judgment. Perhaps his greatest achievement was his bipartisan work with Senator Sam Nunn in developing the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program to dismantle weapons of mass destruction in the former states of the Soviet Union, eliminating nuclear arms in Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. His work to limit weapons of mass destruction led to the deactivation and destruction of thousands of nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles. Due to Senator Lugar's vision, leadership, and bipartisan approach, we live in a safer world.

Through his contributions to international security, Senator Lugar serves as a reminder of what we can achieve if we work together to face the challenges that pose dangers to world peace and stability and, of course, to the interests of the United States and our international partners. As we reflect on his life and his lessons, I hope my colleagues will honor his legacy by building bipartisan bridges to resolve the pressing problems of today.

TRIBUTE TO MASTER SERGEANT JESSE EDINGER

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week I have the honor of recognizing Jesse Edinger of Fort Harrison, MT, for his impact on the Lewis and Clark County and surrounding areas.

Jesse Edinger joined the U.S. Army directly after graduating high school in 1999. He attended basic and advanced individual training at Fort Leonard Wood, MO. His first duty station was in Fort Drum, NY, where he served as a military police Patrolman, MP. Shortly after, he received orders to go to Korea. There he was immediately assigned to the United Nations Command Honor Guard, providing a variety of missions. In Korea, he met the love of his life Sunwoo. They married and transferred to Fort Riley, KS, in 2003.

Immediately after arriving Fort Riley, Jesse received orders to deploy to Iraq. In Iraq, he completed a wide range of military police battlefield functions and was able to return safely to the U.S. In 2004, Jesse left Active Duty and decided to serve his home State in the Montana Army National Guard.

After 3 years in the Guard, he was once again called back to Iraq as an MP. He spent a year there and again returned safely to his family. In 2006, he volunteered for the Montana Army National Guard honor guard team and 1 year later was hired as the non-commissioned officer in charge of the military funeral honors team. He worked hand in hand with the State coordinator to ensure fallen veterans received the most professional honors possible. He was one of Montana's first nationally certified honor guard instructors. In 2014, Jesse Edinger once again volunteered to deploy to Afghanistan as a military police investigator. After serving another yearlong deployment, he returned to his military funeral honors position at Fort Harrison, MT, where he became a certified instructor as a casualty notification officer. These officers notify next of kin and assist family members of a soldier killed in action or that has died in the line of duty. Jesse was recently promoted to the rank of master sergeant and has conducted around 1100 funeral honors missions for Montana veterans and soldiers killed in action.

For 20 years, MSG Jesse Edinger has served his country proudly and has honored the lives of more than 1,000 Montana veterans. His wife Sun also serves in the Montana Army National Guard. Together they have three children. MSG Edinger is the epitome of a military leader, and I am proud to recognize him during Military Appreciation Week.

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF THE SRI LANKAN WAR

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, May 18 marks the 10th anniversary of the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka. In May 2009, the war between the government and the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, LTTE, ended. The civil war was a 27-year-long assault on the coexistence of the Sri Lankan people, leaving scars that remain today. Both the Sri Lankan state and the LTTE targeted dissidents and members of other ethnic communities, indiscriminately bombing places of worship, hospitals, and public transport. On this 10th anniversary, I urge the people of Sri Lanka to renew their commitment to peace, reconciliation, and accountability for human rights violations and crimes committed during the conflict. In the wake of the devastating terrorist attacks last month, the international community should also renew its commitment to supporting those Sri Lankan citizens committed to a peaceful and democratic society where the rights of all are protected under the law.

The final years of the war saw heightened intensity of fighting and soaring human rights abuses, including hundreds of enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings of aid workers, arbitrary arrests, torture, and the use of child soldiers. The government labeled any reporters critical of the government's war against the LTTE as "traitors" and "terrorists," and the LTTE tolerated no dissent in areas it controlled. The last few months of fighting resulted in the deaths of as many as 40,000 civilians in the final assault against the LTTE. Victims' groups say the fates of more than 100,000 people remain unknown. UN satellite images showed that the government repeatedly and indiscriminately shelled no fire zones, where it had encouraged civilians to concentrate, and where estimates show that as many as 330,000 civilians were trapped. UN investigations determined that "gross violations" of international rights law occurred on all sides of the conflict, including the thousands of civilian deaths in the military assault that ended the rebellion. Many deaths and tens of thousands of disappearances remain unaddressed.

For many Sri Lankans, the terrorist attacks last Easter Sunday, evoked emotions reminiscent of war times. I express my deepest condolences to the families who lost loved ones and denounce in the strongest terms this vile attack on the Sri Lankan people. As families recovered bodies of loved ones and buried and cremated them, they felt a pain that is sadly too familiar to so many Sri Lankans. While the perpetrators of the Easter Sunday attacks sought to sow hatred between communities and bring chaos to Sri Lanka, the government bears the responsibility to respond swiftly to retaliatory attacks against Muslim communities and ensure communal harmony and national unity. To be Sri Lankan is to be Buddhist, to be Hindu, to be Muslim, and to be Christian. All these communities have the right to exercise their religious identity and to live in peace and security in Sri Lanka.

On January 9, 2015, the Sri Lankan people voted to unseat President Mahinda Rajapaksa. A few months later, the government of Maithripala Sirisena cosponsored United Nations Human Rights Council, UNHRC, resolution 30/1 on "Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka," ushering in what appeared to be a new era dedicated to justice and reconciliation. This enthusiasm and hope has unfortunately faded over the years. In 2017, Sri Lanka received a 2-year extension to implement the commitments in the resolution. This past March, the UNHRC adopted a new resolution again cosponsored by the government of Sri Lanka, extending the timeline to implement outstanding promises another 2 years.

Resolution 30/1 contains 36 actionable commitments. The Sri Lankan Government has fulfilled only six over a pe-

riod of 4 years. These include recent decisions to criminalize enforced disappearances, create an office on missing persons, and appointing commissioners to the office for reparations. Why did these few steps require 4 years of time?

Despite the long list of promises, there has been little to no progress in establishing a commission for truth, justice, reconciliation, and nonrecurrence. Despite commitments made by the government, Sri Lanka has not adopted constitutional reforms that would address the long held grievances of communities across the country. The government has failed to strengthen the victim and witness protection law. Security sector reforms, including repealing and replacing the Prevention of Terrorism Act, have not taken place. The lack of accountability with respect to war crimes suspects remains a serious concern. Limited legal action has been taken to prosecute and hold alleged perpetrators to account. There is a lack of trust and confidence in domestic structures, so I echo the UN Human Rights Commissioner's calls that the international community use the principle of universal jurisdiction to hold accountable those who face allegations of serious human rights violations.

Sri Lankan people deserve justice, peace, and protections. The country cannot move forward, rebuild, and prosper without a timebound plan for the government to fully implement its HRC commitments. Accountability, transitional justice, and reconciliation are hard, but left unresolved, these issues fester over time and could lead to renewed instability. Clearly, such an outcome should be avoided as it benefits no one in or outside of Sri Lanka.

The war in Sri Lanka was a terrible episode in a country with a proud past. How Sri Lanka finally decides to deal with the legacy of the conflict is critically important for its future. My hope is that the government of Sri Lanka delivers on all its stated commitments, and that the international community maintains its focus on these postwar promises. As the country contends with the impact of reprehensible violence last month, it must renew its focus on the fundamentals of an inclusive multireligious and multi-ethnic society. I call on the friends of Sri Lanka around the world to support true reconciliation and healing as those constructive elements of society work hard to chart a positive future for all of the country's people.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING BILL WILLIAMS

• Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to Bill Williams of Saxman, AK, a businessman, community leader, an Alaska statesman, and my friend, who died on Sunday, May 12, just short of his 76th birthday.

Bill's story exemplifies how far one can go in Alaska if one works hard and exhibits a devotion for community service. Bill was lifelong Alaskan and a graduate of Ketchikan High School. He was a longshoreman, a proud member of the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union. He was a business leader, serving as president of the Cape Fox Corporation, his ANCSA village corporation. He was a fisherman. He served on the Saxman City Council and was mayor of Saxman. Bill was a leader in the Alaska Native Brotherhood and Tlingit and Haida.

In 1993, Bill was elected to the Alaska House of Representatives, serving until 2004. A strong advocate for development of Alaska's natural resources and preservation of the traditional subsistence way of life, Bill distinguished himself in the Alaska Legislature. He rose to cochair the finance committee of the Alaska House of Representatives, one of the most powerful positions in the State of Alaska. Bill knew how to make deals, and because his word was his bond, he knew how to keep a deal. I proudly served alongside Bill throughout my tenure in the Alaska Legislature. He was both a friend and a mentor to me.

Tributes are pouring in from those who knew and loved Bill Williams. State Senator Bert Stedman, who is cochair of the senate finance committee in the current legislative session, had this to say about Bill: "He understood that political differences don't need to divide Alaskans. In the Capitol, he was known for keeping his words and putting Alaska's interests above politics. He took the lead on both subsistence and development issues. He was known for working with our federal delegation and governors to keep jobs in the Tongass. He was a strong voice on Alaska Native issues."

The Ketchikan Daily News, in an editorial, remembered Bill as an honorable man who represented the community and the region with quiet, steadfast dignity: "Those who met Williams would not likely forget him. He was quiet and humble, possessing eyes of both twinkling good humor and the glint of iron resolve. Others in public life learned quickly not to underestimate the good representative from Saxman."

Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy has also reflected on the loss of Bill Williams this week. Governor Dunleavy said, "Real leaders do not come along very often, so it is especially tough when we lose one with the ability and character of Bill Williams. He worked both hard and smart for the constituents and communities he represented." Governor Dunleavy has ordered flags to be lowered to half-staff this week in Bill's memory.

From the central council of Tlingit and Haida Tribes, "Gunacheesh, Haw'aa to Bill for his lifelong dedication to Southeast Alaska and its people."