

of Washington, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Washington.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND KENNETH MARTIN

• Mr. OSSOFF. Mr. President, I rise to commend Rev. Dr. Kenneth B. Martin of Antioch Baptist Church in Augusta on his retirement and lifelong service to the Augusta community.

For 37 years, Rev. Martin has led a life of service and devotion as Antioch Baptist Church's longest serving pastor. He also served as a former president of the 10th district of General Missionary Baptist Convention. Under his leadership and spiritual guidance, the Antioch Baptist Church community has been able to establish more than 30 ministries that give members of the community access to vital transportation, nutrition, and healthcare services. Rev. Martin has made it his mission to serve those around him, and his inspiring work, rooted in spiritual growth and development, has transformed the lives of many in his community.

As Georgia's U.S. Senator, I commend and recognize Rev. Dr. Kenneth B. Martin for his service to the Augusta community and the State of Georgia and join his family, friends, congregation, and the entire community in celebrating his retirement.●

TRIBUTE TO WANDA OKUNOREN-MEADOWS

• Mr. OSSOFF. Mr. President, I rise to commend Wanda Okunoren-Meadows for her commitment to early childhood education and development for families in Forest Park and across metro Atlanta.

As executive director of Little Ones Learning Center, Ms. Okunoren-Meadows oversees the early childhood education center providing services to more than 175 children. Her passion for childhood development has allowed her to create programs to promote wellness and boost education for the youngest members of the community.

A graduate of Emory University, Ms. Okunoren-Meadows' leadership has produced invaluable preschool, after-school, and pre-kindergarten education programs for the children of Forest Park, providing them valuable knowledge and skills for a brighter future.

As Georgia's U.S. Senator, I commend and recognize Wanda Okunoren-Meadows for her dedication to Georgia's youth and years of service to her community.●

REMEMBERING MAXWELL "MAX" EMERSON

• Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, today I rise to pay tribute to the remarkable

life and enduring legacy of Maxwell "Max" Emerson, a cherished teacher, coach, mentor, and dear friend to many whose compassion, kindness, and dedication touched the hearts of all who knew him.

Over the recent Fourth of July weekend, Max, a vibrant 25-year-old teacher and coach at his alma mater Oldham County High School, traveled to Washington, DC, for his upcoming professional development hours at the Library of Congress. He was assigned these hours to fulfill the requirements for a grant he had been awarded, which would afford him the opportunity to immerse himself in Vietnam's educational system. With both his father, a retired principal of South Oldham High School, and his mother, a dedicated teacher at Oldham County Middle School, education was truly in his blood.

On the morning of July 5 in Washington, DC, Max set out for his professional development hours, but he never reached his destination. Instead, his light was tragically extinguished. Max fell victim to a senseless act of violence, robbed at gunpoint on the campus of Catholic University, ultimately losing his life.

Max was the true representation of a champion to the Oldham County community. He was a beacon of inspiration and led his very accomplished life through kindness, dedication, and faith. Max was a natural-born leader and a talented athlete who was admired by all who had the privilege of crossing paths with him. His unwavering dedication and genuine care for his students, athletes, friends, and community were evident in every action he took. Countless individuals can testify to Max's willingness to lend a helping hand and put a smile on their face.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Max took on the responsibility of overseeing the credit recovery program, ensuring that no student fell behind and that everyone remained on track academically despite the school closures. It is worth noting that Max achieved an outstanding 100 percent pass rate.

Max devoted his life to serving others, and his extraordinary impact will forever remain etched in the Oldham County community. Anyone who had the privilege of meeting Max can attest to the profound positive influence he had on their lives. His legacy will be remembered by the very phrase he lived his own life by: "Champions Find a Way!"

While his untimely departure has left an immense void that will be challenging to fill, his students and athletes carry his memories and legacy forward. Today I stand in solidarity with his grieving family, friends, and the entire Oldham County community as we mourn the tragic loss of a remarkable soul.●

RECOGNIZING THE KENTUCKY CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS

• Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, the Kentucky Chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners—NAWBO—connects women to resources, people, information, and organizations that can help them achieve their personal, business, or political goals. It is composed of women of all ages and levels of experience from all sectors of the marketplace.

Each year, NAWBO Kentucky recognizes women for their achievements in business and this year is no exception. In addition to their annual recognitions, they have added a new award, the Legacy Award, which will be presented at this year's ceremony. The Legacy Award is to be given to a woman who is a role model to other women, has achieved excellence in her field, has promoted other women, has broken barriers for women in her field, and has held leadership roles in her community. The inaugural recipient of this award is Ann B. Bakhaus, former president of Kentucky Eagle, Inc.

Ann Bakhaus served as the president of Kentucky Eagle, Inc., a total beverage and spirit distributor based in Lexington, and ran day-to-day operations for the company for 20 years before passing the business to her daughter. She still owns the company and serves as the chairman of the corporation board. This company has been in the Bakhaus family since 1948, and Ann is glad to be able to carry on the family legacy.

In her role with Kentucky Eagle, Inc., Bakhaus achieved many goals including the expansion of product distribution and the construction of the company's new headquarters which was the first official Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Anheuser Busch distributorship in the country.

Beyond serving on the board for Kentucky Eagle, Bakhaus is also heavily invested in community development. One of her biggest passions currently is the addition of Town Branch Park to downtown Lexington and the benefits it will provide to the community. Her desire is to see the Lexington community continue to flourish and is committed to being a part of that progress. I am proud to recognize the Kentucky Chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners and to honor Ms. Bakhaus for her many achievements.●

CELEBRATING ALASKA RAILROAD'S CENTENNIAL BIRTHDAY

• Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, the Alaska Railroad Corporation—ARRC—is a renowned institution in my State, and I would like to first congratulate the Alaska Railroad on its 100-year birthday and take a few minutes to discuss the immense impact the railroad has had not only within Alaska, but

also across our Nation. The Alaska Railroad, its builders, operators, and leaders have been foundational to Alaska's development for a century. Throughout its storied history, the railroad has supported war efforts, transported passengers between Alaska's largest cities, helped build the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, invested in real estate, and facilitated tourism and commerce across miles of my State's remote and wild landscapes.

It took decades of twists and turns before the Alaska Railroad Corporation charged forth. What would later become the ARRC laid the first track in Alaska in 1903, starting in Seward and extending 50 miles north. In 1914, the U.S. Congress, acknowledging the national importance of expanding the railroad, funded construction and operations from Seward to Fairbanks at an estimated construction cost of \$35 million.

On July 15, 1923, President Warren G. Harding drove a golden spike into the ground at Nenana, uniting the track and marking the completion of the Alaska Railroad. During World War II, from 1940–1943, the railroad played a key role in moving military and civilian supplies that were essential in supporting the war efforts. In 1943, two tunnels were built through the Chugach Mountains to allow rail access to Whittier, a military port and fuel depot essential to the Nation's defense. This important partnership with the U.S. military continues to this day.

In 1962, the railroad established its first car-barge service in Whittier, followed by train-ship service, revolutionizing Alaska by enabling rail cars from the lower 48 to be shipped to any point along the Alaska Railroad. In the early to mid-1970s, the railroad supported construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline; shipping and storing pipeline between Valdez, Seward, and Fairbanks, from where it was then trucked to the North Slope. In 1981, the railroad entered into agreements with Fairbanks and Anchorage school district career centers for a tour guide program that trained high school students to serve as hosts onboard summer passenger trains.

In 1983, President Ronald Reagan signed into law the authorization of the transfer of the Alaska Railroad to the State of Alaska. Shortly thereafter, the Alaska Railroad Corporation was born. By 1996, the ARRC showed a profit of \$8.0 million and passenger ridership had grown to 512,000. Former Governor Bill Sheffield became CEO in 1997. In the early 2000s, the Alaska Railroad Corporation's real estate operations exceeded \$11 million in profits for the first time and a web-based passenger reservation system was implemented. Simultaneously, the Alaska Railroad began a program to reduce diesel emissions and noise. 2003 was the railroad's most profitable and safe year in its history up until that point.

In 2013, the Railroad's own Bill O'Leary was named CEO, becoming the

first lifelong Alaskan to lead the railroad. Today, the ARRC operates a regularly scheduled public transportation service connecting Alaskans and visitors to communities from Seward to Fairbanks. Passengers gain access to wonderfully remote regions and areas off the road system including Alaska's Chugach National Forest and Denali National Park, which are visited by hundreds of thousands of people annually.

Like Alaska itself, the Alaska Railroad's story is full of peaks and valleys. Every mile of this legendary railroad was earned through grit, bravery, skill and sweat. Alaska Railroad Corporation trains are iconic symbols, in Alaska and around the world, of the "can do" spirit of Alaskans. The railroad's irreplaceable team, as much as the iron and steel of the locomotives, have served as foundational infrastructure driving economic development in The Last Frontier. I respectfully urge my fellow Members of the 118th Congress to join the proud Members of the Alaska Delegation in congratulating and thanking the Alaska Railroad Corporation for 100 years of service to our State and to our Nation.●

RECOGNIZING THE TRINITY SCHOOL OF DURHAM AND CHAPEL HILL 6TH GRADE HISTORY BOWL TEAM

● Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Trinity School of Durham and Chapel Hill 6th grade history bowl team consisting of Devlin Smith, Chloe Blumhofer, Shya Khosla, and Joshua Glass. This team proudly represented the great State of North Carolina at the 2023 National History Bowl Championships, which is one of the largest quiz bowl tournaments in the world.

Qualifying for the national championships is a great achievement in itself. The young scholars were required to pass a rigorous qualifying test of 50 questions that needed to be completed within 20 minutes. Exceptional performers were then invited to compete in the regional finals, and the most highly qualified participants at the regional finals were invited to the national championships.

North Carolina is proud of the accomplishments of these young scholars and their representation of our State at the national championships, where they finished in the top 20 and came so very close to qualifying for the world championship in Rome, Italy.

It was an incredible performance and a testament to their skills and dedication to expanding their knowledge. I wish them all the best as they continue to pursue their academic endeavors in the next school year. We all can't wait to see what you do next.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to

the Senate by Mrs. Stringer, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT OF THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO HOSTAGE-TAKING AND THE WRONGFUL DETENTION OF UNITED STATES NATIONALS ABROAD THAT WAS GLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 14078 OF JULY 19, 2022—PM 19

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to hostage-taking and the wrongful detention of United States nationals abroad declared in Executive Order 14078 of July 19, 2022, is to continue in effect beyond July 19, 2023.

Hostage-taking and the wrongful detention of United States nationals are heinous acts that undermine the rule of law. Terrorist organizations, criminal groups, and other malicious actors who take hostages for financial, political, or other gain—as well as foreign states that engage in the practice of wrongful detention, including for political leverage or to seek concessions from the United States—threaten the integrity of the international political system and the safety of United States nationals and other persons abroad. Hostage-taking and the wrongful detention of United States nationals abroad continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 14078 with respect