

world, and we try to provide food to those parts of the world where kids are in danger of going hungry. We ought to do at least the same here for the children of this country.

Democrats have been clear that we will come to the table, negotiate, and reach a solution. It could be done this afternoon if Speaker JOHNSON would bring the House back to town from its paid vacation, if Donald Trump would show leadership and seek a solution, and if Leader THUNE would be a part of that constructive process.

It is not an inevitable consequence that SNAP be shut down. It is a choice. It is a failure. It is a purposeful and conscious failure, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture has a moral and a legal obligation to use the vast produce and output of our agricultural system so that we in America can sleep at night with a clear conscience, knowing our country puts feeding hungry children above politics and refuses to use them as pawns.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. LUMMIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO MANUEL HEART

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the leadership of Manuel Heart, who recently retired after serving 15 years as Chairman of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe and 27 years on Tribal Council.

Chairman Heart led the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, a sovereign Nation of the Weenuche band of Utes, with reservation land in Southwest Colorado, as well as New Mexico and Utah, with humility, perseverance, and a deep love for his people. Over several decades, Chairman Heart grew from a young council member to a respected statesman in Towaoc and across the Southwest, setting an example for Tribal and non-Tribal leaders alike. He balanced cultural perseverance with forward economic and social progress for the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe and dedicated his service to fighting for a better future for all of its members.

As Chairman, he strengthened the Tribe's sovereignty and advanced its voice in State and national policy. He helped establish Bears Ears and Camp Hale National Monuments, raised the voice of tribes in the Colorado River Basin, and advocated for the protection of the Dolores River Basin. He also led the effort to secure full Federal trust status for the Tribe's Pinecrest Ranch in Gunnison County, an area he knows well from countless seasons running the Tribe's cattle below the Uncompahgre Mountains.

It was an honor to work with Chairman Heart over the years. We met many times on the Ute Mountain Ute reservation and across the ancestral homeland of the Ute Tribes in Colorado and Utah. Throughout our time in office together, we have had the pleasure of rafting the Colorado River to discuss water policy and climate change, visiting cultural sites in the Dolores River Basin, and gathering along the Continental Divide to discuss how the Camp Hale National Monument should tell the story of the Ute people and their long ties to that land. He was a regular visitor to my office in Washington, DC, and in 2021, we visited the White House together to celebrate the restoration of the Bears Ears National Monument.

In Towaoc, Chairman Heart led with conviction and compassion. He guided the Tribe through the COVID pandemic, protecting the Tribe's elders and most vulnerable members. He has also sought solutions to on-reservation gun violence and substance abuse issues and advocated for better access to healthcare and law enforcement. He brought that same vision and steadfast leadership to complex water negotiations, where he advocated for the Tribe's right to access and benefit from their full water rights, which are essential to the Ute Mountain Farm and Ranch.

When we wrote the Tribal Access to Clean Water Act, the Chairman testified before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on the Federal Government's obligations to provide the Tribe—and all of Indian Country—their sovereign right to access clean, reliable drinking water.

Chairman Heart also understood that the sovereignty of a Tribal nation also lies in the preservation and vitality of culture and language through future generations. He led the effort to create the Kwiayagat Community Academy, the first charter school on a reservation in Colorado, focused on instilling Ute history, language, and culture in children from kindergarten through 5th grade. The academy embodies the exemplary values and leadership style Chairman Heart carried throughout his tenure: prioritizing the health and well-being of the Tribe while looking to the future. It was an honor to visit the school with him and hear the students speak in Ute and share pride in their heritage.

Chairman Heart never let the United States forget its promises to Tribal nations. He ensured that national conversations about water, education, economic development, healthcare, and justice include the voices of sovereign Tribes. He taught me what true government-to-government respect means. I remain deeply grateful for his friendship, his wisdom, and his example.

Colorado and the United States owe Chairman Heart profound gratitude for his decades of service and leadership. We also thank his wife Marie and his entire family for their support of his

leadership. His heart of service for his people has inspired me, and working with him remains one of the greatest honors of my time in the Senate. I wish him well in his retirement as he enjoys well-deserved time with his entire family, including his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DONNA JEANNE GUNCKEL VILLERE

• Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Donna Jeanne Gunckel Villere, who is celebrating her birthday on December 1, 2025. She has dedicated her life to family and community service.

Donna was raised in Harahan, LA, and now resides in Metairie. She has been married to Roger Villere for 56 years and is the proud mother of three sons, four granddaughters, two great-grandsons, and two great-granddaughters. Donna and Roger have two more great-grandchildren on the way, one expected in November and another in February. Few things bring her more joy than babysitting her great-grandchildren.

Besides caring for her family, Donna has spent decades mentoring young people. She coached volleyball for nearly 30 years at Lakeshore Playground in Metairie, sharing her love for the game and teaching lessons in teamwork, perseverance, and leadership. She also served as a den leader in the Cub Scouts, where she helped instill the values of integrity and service.

Donna's commitment to her family and community is inspiring. On behalf of the people of Louisiana and all Americans, I wish Donna Villere a happy birthday. May her birthday celebration be filled with love, joy, and appreciation.●

RECOGNIZING IRON HORSE AVIATION

• Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as chair of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to honor Iron Horse Aviation of Jasper County, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week for National Veterans Small Business Week.

Founded in October 2016, Iron Horse Aviation of Newton, IA, is a veteran-owned aviation company built on faith, service, and dedication to excellence. Established by husband and wife Colt and Emily Zesch, Iron Horse Aviation provides a wide range of aerial services, including pipeline and powerline patrol, frost control and drying, firefighting support, construction assistance, aerial photography, airborne tactical operations, and cattle mustering—just to name a few. With its

four employees, this small but powerful team continues to advance Iowa's aviation and agricultural sectors.

Colt, a U.S. Army veteran who served with the 82nd Airborne Infantry Division at Fort Bragg and fifth-generation farmer, brings decades of experience in military, security, and operational leadership. Having completed 22 deployments to the Middle East, Colt embodies the precision, discipline, and commitment that define Iron Horse Aviation. His attention to detail and passion for flight ensures that every client's mission is handled with safety and professionalism. Emily plays a vital role in building relationships and shaping the company's community-centered mission. The business' guiding principle, "Built on a Rock," reflects their belief that trust, integrity, and faith form the foundation of every successful partnership. At Iron Horse Aviation, clients are treated like family, and every project is an opportunity to strengthen bonds and serve others.

Since opening its hangar doors, Iron Horse Aviation has maintained steady growth and built a reputation for dependability and innovation in aerial services. Through the nonprofit Iron Horse Guardians Foundation, Colt and Emily Zesch maintain a ready helicopter fleet and expert crew dedicated to lifesaving missions. This includes everything from delivering supplies and conducting search-and-rescue operations to providing humanitarian support and reconnaissance for ground crews. Whether responding to natural disasters or supporting local emergency efforts, Iron Horse Guardians stand ready to serve with the same precision, discipline, and compassion that define the company's core values.

Iron Horse Aviation is a proud member of the Greater Des Moines Partnership and continues to represent the values of hard work, service, and faith that define Iowa's small business community. The team is committed to combating human trafficking, especially by participating in events across the country to support prevention and advocacy efforts. Iron Horse Aviation exemplifies the spirit of American entrepreneurship, rising from dedication, grounded in purpose, and working toward a stronger future for their clients and community alike.

It is my honor to recognize Colt and Emily Zesch and the entire Iron Horse Aviation team for their outstanding work and dedication to their community. I look forward to their continued success and wish them the very best in the years ahead.●

RECOGNIZING THE PEASE GREETERS

● Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I am honored to recognize Frank LaSorsa of Stratham, Larry Larkin of Dover, Junious and Bette Owens of Stratham, and members of the Pease Greeters as October's Granite Staters of the Month. As part of the Pease Greeters,

Frank, Larry, Junious, and Bette have made sure that servicemembers traveling through Portsmouth International Airport see a friendly face when they are in New Hampshire.

Since 2005, the Pease Greeters have shown up day and night to greet servicemembers both leaving and reentering the United States on military deployments, welcoming and seeing off more than 2,600 flights from all branches of the military. Portsmouth International Airport is often the last airport in the United States for soldiers who are deploying and the first stop back in the country on their way home. The Pease Greeters ensure that these servicemembers are met with a smile and a kind word during their journey.

The Pease Greeters have been powered by many volunteers over the years, and some of their longest serving volunteers have helped make the organization the mainstay that it is today for servicemembers. Frank LaSorsa, a Vietnam-era veteran, has been a member of the Pease Greeters since 2009, when he was invited to join the group at a funeral for a soldier. He has been with the Greeters ever since and says that the most rewarding part of greeting is seeing the smile on a returning servicemember's face. Larry Larkin and Junious and Bette Owens have all been with the Pease Greeters for 20 years. All of the Pease Greeters emphasize that greeting is a team effort and that it would not be possible without each volunteer's help.

Frank, Larry, Junious, Bette, and the rest of the Pease Greeters' dedication to our servicemembers is a true example of the Granite State spirit of honoring those who serve. Their commitment to greeting servicemembers at any time of day or night is why I am honored to name them October's Granite Staters of the Month.●

REMEMBERING KENT WONG

● Mr. PADILLA. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the life of Kent Wong, a champion for working people, defender of immigrants, and tireless advocate for nonviolent protest and civic participation in America.

A fifth-generation Chinese American, Kent Wong was born to Delbert and Dolores Wong and raised in the community of Silver Lake, CA. His mother was a psychiatric social worker, and his father was the first Chinese American judge in the continental United States, which meant Kent spent a lifetime committed to empowering working people and communities of color in California.

After graduating from the People's College of Law in 1984, Kent became the first staff attorney for the Asian Pacific American Legal Center for Southern California and, later, staff attorney for SEIU Local 660. It was then that, alongside other Los Angeles-based activists, Kent began studying nonviolence under a titan of the Civil Rights Movement, James Lawson.

Over the course of the 8 years from 1992–2000, putting his training into action, Kent founded the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance and the Tourism Industry Development Council, co-founded the economic justice and tenants' rights group Strategic Actions for a Just Economy, and helped create the United Association for Labor Education to help promote labor education across the Nation.

But to countless friends and mentees, Kent was best known as professor of labor and Asian American studies, and as the beloved longtime director of the UCLA Labor Center, which he led from 1991–2023. Under his tenure, he grew the organization from 3 to 42 staff members, helped secure funding for its permanent home in MacArthur Park, and spread the labor center model to seven other University of California campuses.

During his time at UCLA, he also created the first class in the Nation focused on the unique barriers undocumented students encountered in higher education—and went on to work alongside undocumented immigrants to launch "Dream Summer," the "first paid, national fellowship program for and by undocumented youth."

In the final months of his life, Kent was organizing—training the next generation of activists to meet hatred and division with peaceful protest. Today, at a time of heightened tensions and division, we should all strive to be more like Kent Wong: principled, passionate, but through it all, peaceful.

Angela and I send our love to Kent's wife Jai Lee; his sons Ryan and Robin; and his siblings Shelley and Marshall.●

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN DEREK BAKER

● Mr. SCHMITT. Mr. President, I rise today to commend the quick response and lifesaving work of Captain Derek Baker of the Kansas City Fire Department.

Captain Baker has long demonstrated an outstanding dedication to protecting our fellow Missourians and helping them out in times of crisis through his work, but his heroism doesn't stop off the clock. When Derek was vacationing in Mexico, he noticed an individual face-down in the ocean. Acting quickly, Captain Baker swam out to rescue the nonresponsive victim and performed lifesaving CPR for several minutes until local healthcare workers could escort them to the hospital. Thanks to his decisive action, the victim survived and regained consciousness shortly after.

Captain Derek Baker is truly a Champion of Missouri. His bold heroism, even during his well-deserved downtime, embodies the spirit of service that has made our Republic great. I thank him for his continued service as a devoted firefighter, and I am proud to call him a fellow Missourian.●