

processing operation soon grew as farmers, hunters, and families across the country relied on a butcher they could trust.

Today, Zeb's Smokehouse offers custom meat and wild game processing, retail cuts of locally raised beef and pork, and an exclusive farm to table service. Zeb's brings a refrigerated reefer trailer straight to the farm to harvest the beef or pork. The animal is processed on the property, then taken back to the locker to be finished. By working directly with area farmers and livestock producers, the shop connects customers with food raised close to home and helps keep Iowa's agricultural traditions strong.

Over the past decade, Zeb's Smokehouse has expanded its product range and now distributes smoked meats and specialty products through additional retail outlets throughout the country. In 2023 and 2025, Zeb's was the winner of the Best of Southwest Iowa Best Meat Locker Award. I have been delighted to see how this team worked together to serve their community and continue the success of Zeb's Smokehouse.

Zeb's Smokehouse is a proud member of the Bedford Chamber of Commerce, and Andrea has participated in the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses program in Iowa, a nationally recognized initiative that champions entrepreneurship and small business growth. Beyond serving local farmers and customers, Zeb's processes wild game for hunters and donates venison to help feed families in need. Their commitment to community runs deep: from contributing to charity auctions to raising money for cancer patients and participating in other local initiatives. In communities like Bedford, businesses such as Zeb's Smokehouse do more than process meat; they help neighbors fill their freezers, support local producers, and preserve traditions that have been part of rural life for generations.

I am pleased to recognize Zeb and Andrea Schuelke, along with the entire team at Zeb's Smokehouse, for their dedication to Taylor County and beyond. I look forward to their continued success and wish them the very best in the years ahead.●

#### REMEMBERING JOHN HENRY CASHWELL III

● Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to take a few minutes to remember and celebrate the life of John Henry Cashwell III, one of my oldest friends and a great friend to Maine.

John passed away on November 24, 2025, leaving behind a legacy of love for his family, for our country, for the communities where he lived and served, and also for our great forests.

All who knew John will remember him for his thick New England accent, his unyielding candor, his brilliant and at times irreverent sense of humor, and a warmth of heart that made him an

instant friend to all, especially the disadvantaged and those in need of a little extra encouragement and confidence.

John loved his daughters Morgan and Mollie, and he raised them as the proverbial "acorns that didn't fall far from the tree." Each is a strong, virtuous, and independent-minded woman who is not afraid to do hard things and to put their shoulders to worthy causes. I know this firsthand because Morgan served as my legislative director and helped me through some tough moments, most especially the "Christmas Miracle" that saved our lobster industry from death by regulation several years ago.

He loved his grandchildren and made sure they knew it. As a father and grandfather, he instilled in his family laughter, belonging, and the belief that they could do anything they put their mind to.

John was a devoted husband to his wife of 42 years, Julie Norton. John demonstrated his determination and unique power of persuasion by asking his future father-in-law for Julie's hand while taking him on a helicopter ride. Looking out the window at 1,500 feet, Julie's father felt that a positive response to John's request was prudent. John and Julie made their first home in Calais, ME, in a house they built in a blueberry field and where their daughters were born. John and Julie were devoted to each other and their daughters and filled their home life with adventure, friends, and a respect and awe for the wonders of nature.

John was a patriot to his country. He served as an Army helicopter pilot during two tours of Vietnam delivering provisions and ammunition wherever they were needed, evacuating wounded soldiers, and eventually commanding the air as a gunship pilot with the call sign "Stingray 56." John's service was fearless and heroic. He courageously logged 1,800 combat hours in his second tour of duty, earning him two silver stars, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Army Soldier's Medal, a Bronze Star, the National Defense Service Medal, 44 Air Medals, a Purple Heart, and the Army Good Conduct Medal. John was and will always be remembered with gratitude by the many who owe their lives and posterity to him.

John was a civil servant who cared for the people and places in which he lived. He served on the city council and eventually mayor of Calais, where he worked tirelessly to improve the quality of the community and quality of life of its citizens. John befriended those he served and made them lifelong friends. After moving to Bangor, John became a member of the city council and soon chaired that council, where he helped make performing arts, entertainment, and the Bangor waterfront more vibrant and available to all.

To those who knew him professionally, John was always the champion of the forest. John received his forestry degree in 1979 and used it for

the ensuing 46 years to steward the forests of Maine. Using his piloting skills, John fought fire, fertilized trees, protected forest health, restocked rivers with salmon, and ensured our forests were managed sustainably for future generations. John served as director of the Maine Forest Service, where he led the drafting and passage of the Maine Forest Practices Act and modernized the State's fire control air fleet. He later led the Seven Island Lands Company and BBC Land, LLC. One of John's forest legacies was helping the Pingree family and New England Forestry Foundation create the largest conservation easement in the country. John's leadership in forestry earned him the prestigious Albert D. Nutting Award from the Maine Forest Products Council, recognizing his many contributions to sustainable forest management and environmental stewardship.

John leaves behind a legacy that will bless the citizens of Maine for generations. He always said that "he was what he was." To those who knew him best, he was a "hero's hero." We honor that heroism today as we pay tribute to John for a life lived well in the service of his family, our Nation, and the friends, communities, and forests he loved.●

#### TRIBUTE TO CORPORAL ANDY McDUFFIE

● Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, the days following 9/11 were a scary time for our country and world. Yet even in those dangerous times, many brave young men and women ran toward danger, instead of away from it. That is true for U.S. Marine Corps CPL Andy McDuffie of Dothan. Andy was a junior in high school when the Twin Towers fell. He felt it was his duty to join the Marines to defend our country and deployed to the Middle East shortly after his high school graduation in 2003.

Andy loved being part of his high school football team and joining the military gave him the opportunity to be part of a team with a deeper meaning. He served as the squad leader of four units that acted as security for Navy EOD units, better known as the "bomb squad." They performed many successful missions and saved many lives by securing the areas so that bombs could be defused. In 2006, Andy was on a routine mission when an IED blast was set off, killing multiple of his team members, who had become like brothers to him. Andy also sustained serious wounds to his right arm, ending his plans of having a career in the military.

After medically retiring from the Marine Corps, Andy went back to school and graduated from Troy University. As Andy healed from his injury, he also battled with survivor's guilt. He rededicated his life to Christ and set out to help other veterans in the Wiregrass. Through his involvement with Jeep Sullivan's Wounded

Warrior Outdoor Adventures, he was able to overcome his survivors' guilt and pour into veterans who share similar stories as his own. Andy leads hunting trips across the country through this program, which serve as a time to talk through the tragedies of war and what they have endured on the battlefield.

Seeing the positive effect of these trips sparked a flame in McDuffie's heart to keep finding opportunities to uplift his neighbors in the Wiregrass. Andy has become a leader in everything he is involved in. From serving on the security team as his local church, being a board member at Habitat for Humanity, chairing the local Mardi Gras parade, coordinating a back-to-school event that helps students get haircuts and shoes before the year begins, or speaking to fraternity members at Troy during their annual philanthropy event, Andy keeps the legacy of his fallen marines alive with the support of his wife Brittany. And he continues to share his love for our country with his three children: Hill, Brooks, and Mary Hollis.

Andy is a shining example of turning tragedy into something purpose. It is my honor to recognize him as the April Veteran of the Month.●

#### TRIBUTE TO PHOU VONGKHAMDY

● Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I rise today to honor my constituent Phou Vongkhamdy, my favorite Lao cowboy.

Phou is the former USDA NRCS State Conservationist for Rhode Island. Since moving to Rhode Island in 2009 and joining the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Phou has become a cornerstone of the northeast agricultural community. His journey, from his beginnings as a student intern to over 15 years leading the State's conservation efforts, is a testament to his dedication to the land and the people who steward it. His leadership and knowledge have led the service to bring exemplary conservation practices to many farmers, forest landowners, cities and towns across the State. A respected leader, Phou has aggressively worked to maximize the effectiveness of the service and, in doing so, has always given 110 percent to everything he works on. While others would often say something could not be done, Phou always strove to find a way to say yes. He made NRCS in Rhode Island the little engine that could.

His commitment is defined by his inclusive approach to conservation, ensuring that the benefits of soil health, water quality, and sustainable forestry are accessible to all. A tenacious public servant, he has actively built the capacity of the conservation districts by developing cooperative agreements with associations. His signature hands-on approach ensured swift and effective collaboration. Under his leadership, the service has seen a substantial increase in utilization of its most popular pro-

grams, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Conservation Stewardship Program. These programs are particularly useful for specialty crop growers and forest land managers, who represent the vast majority of Rhode Island agriculture.

Phou has also been an indispensable partner in our mission to protect Rhode Island's natural beauty and strengthen our communities against the growing threats of climate change. Together, we secured critical investments for our State, most notably the landmark \$48.5 million Federal project to prevent flooding along the Pocasset River, a transformation that will protect families in Cranston and Johnston for generations to come. From our early days restoring migratory fish passages on the Pawtuxet River to his steady leadership in the wake of the historic 2010 floods, Phou has consistently turned Federal resources into real-world results. His dedication as State conservationist preserved thousands of acres of our farmland and wetlands and ensured that the Ocean State remains resilient and vibrant for all who call it home.

I thank and applaud Phou for his work, his devotion, and his friendship. Under his guidance, Rhode Island has seen transformative growth in climate-smart agriculture and farmland protection, securing a more resilient future for the Ocean State.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Hanley, 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 and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

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

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

##### ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2025, the Secretary of the Senate, on April 2, 2026, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker Pro Tempore (Mr. VAN EPPS) has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 1884. An act to clarify the Holocaust Expropriated Art Recovery Act of 2016, to appropriately limit the application of defenses based on the passage of time and other non-merits defenses to claims under that Act.

S. 3971. An act to extend the SBIR and STTR programs, and for other purposes.

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 3, 2025, the en-

rolled bills were signed on April 2, 2026, during the adjournment of the Senate, by the Acting President pro tempore (Mr. THUNE).

#### MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 4280. A bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to reauthorize and reform certain authorities and to provide greater transparency and oversight.

#### ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on April 2, 2026, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 1884. An act to clarify the Holocaust Expropriated Art Recovery Act of 2016, to appropriately limit the application of defenses based on the passage of time and other non-merits defenses to claims under that Act.

S. 3971. An act to extend the SBIR and STTR programs, and for other purposes.

#### PRIVILEGED NOMINATION REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

On request by Senator MARIA CANTWELL, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Edward Eppler, of Connecticut, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of Transportation.

#### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. CRUZ, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2351. A bill to supplement existing lease authorities available to the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to support research, education, and training, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 119-117).

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. KELLY:

S. 4278. A bill to prohibit funding for the Board of Peace that is not authorized by Congress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 4279. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent the abuse of life insurance tax rules, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 4280. A bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to reauthorize and reform certain authorities and to provide greater transparency and oversight; read the first time.

By Mr. RICKETTS (for himself, Mr. KIM, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. SCHUMER):