

I thank President John Blackburn for his leadership at Lincoln College and congratulate the institution on 150 years of providing Illinois students with a quality affordable education.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CALIFORNIA CASUALTIES

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to 12 servicemembers from California or based in California who have died while serving our country in Operation Enduring Freedom and in Operation Inherent Resolve since I last entered names into the RECORD.

CW2 Edward Balli, 42, of Monterey, CA, died January 20, 2014, in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, of wounds from small arms fire when he was attacked by insurgents. Chief Warrant Officer Balli was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, U.S. Army Europe, Vilseck, Germany.

SPC Daniela Rojas, 19, of Los Angeles, CA, died May 3, 2014, in Homburg, Germany, due to a noncombat related illness. Specialist Rojas was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, CO.

CW2 Deric M. Rasmussen, 33, of Oceanside, CA, died May 11, 2014, in Mazar-e Sharif, Afghanistan, as the result of a noncombat incident. Chief Warrant Officer Rasmussen was assigned to the Company C, 1st Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, Fort Hood, TX.

SPC Adrian M. Perkins, 19, of Pine Valley, CA, died May 17, 2014, in Amman, Jordan, from a noncombat related injury. Specialist Perkins was assigned to 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, CO.

SPC Terry J. Hurne, 34, of Merced, CA, died June 9, 2014, in Logar Province, Afghanistan, from a noncombat related incident. Specialist Hurne was assigned to the 710th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, NY.

SSG Scott R. Studenmund, 24, of Pasadena, CA, died June 9, 2014, in Gaza Village, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered while engaged in a combat operation. Staff Sergeant Studenmund was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group, Fort Campbell, KY.

Sgt Thomas Z. Spitzer, 23, of New Braunfels, TX, died June 25, 2014 while conducting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. Sergeant Spitzer was assigned to 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Twentynine Palms, CA.

PFC Keith M. Williams, 19, of Visalia, CA, died July 24, 2014 in Mirugol Kalay, Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when the

enemy attacked his vehicle with an improvised explosive device. Private First Class Williams was assigned to 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, CO.

SGT Christopher W. Mulalley, 26, of Eureka, CA, died August 22, 2014 in Gardez, Afghanistan, as the result of a noncombat related incident. Sergeant Mulalley was assigned to 1st Battalion, 3rd Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX.

Cpl Jordan L. Spears, 21, of Memphis, IN, was lost at sea October 1, 2014 while conducting flight operations in the North Arabian Gulf. Corporal Spears was assigned to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-163, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, CA.

LCpl Sean P. Neal, 19, of Riverside, CA, died October 23, 2014, in Baghdad, Iraq, from a noncombat related incident. Lance Corporal Neal was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force, Crisis Response, Central Command, whose headquarters element deploys from Camp Pendleton, CA.

CDR Christopher E. Kalafut, 49, of Oceanside, CA, died October 24, 2014, in Doha, Qatar, of a noncombat related incident at Al Udeid Air Base. Commander Kalafut was assigned to Naval Amphibious Liaison Element, Combined Forces Air Component Center, U.S. Central Command.●

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING LORETTA'S AUTHENTIC PRALINES

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, small businesses across the country have the unique opportunity to put their special stamp on the traditions that mark their communities. In honor of Black History Month, I would like to recognize Loretta Harrison, owner and operator of a successful New Orleans-based praline company. Through the hardships of starting a business to persevering and even expanding through one of the most tragic natural disasters to hit the United States, this small business has gone above and beyond the past 35 years to carry the tradition of this special treat to the people of New Orleans. It is my pleasure to recognize Loretta's Authentic Pralines as this week's Small Business of the Week.

Before she felt the calling to bring her family's special praline recipe to her community, Loretta—who serves as president and CEO—worked as a medical librarian at Louisiana State University. Pralines are a common Louisiana dessert, with roots that go all the way back to the original French settlers. They are made of ingredients that are plentiful to the region, which include an intricate mix of sugar, butter, cream, and pecans. Through Loretta's hard work and determination,

what started as a praline stand at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival has now grown into a storefront in both the Marigny and the French Market. Not only does Loretta's Pralines serve a wide variety of signature pralines, but it has expanded the menu to include other delicious desserts, such as king cakes, coconut macaroons, fudge, and oatmeal raisin cookies. The store in the Marigny also doubles as a café for breakfast and lunch, serving sweet and savory favorites like sweet potato pancakes and shrimp and grits.

Apart from the legacy of being some of the best pralines in New Orleans, which is no easy feat, Loretta's Pralines is known for its strength and support during the rebuilding of the city after Hurricane Katrina. With the blessing of minimal damage to her store, Loretta recognized that there was an important void in her community that she immediately stepped in to fill. By temporarily changing the business model from a sweet shop to a restaurant, Loretta was able to feed the volunteers, workers, and reporters who were helping to rebuild the city she knew and loved. Loretta's Pralines also became a sort of haven for those whose lives had changed dramatically, a familiar meeting place as part of a larger community during the recovery. This act of benevolence in the midst of the hardship cemented Loretta's Pralines as a New Orleans institution.

Small business owners like Loretta Harrison are what make our State truly unique—indeed, we would not be the same without their examples of courage and kindness. I am honored to recognize a small business that has shown compassion during the devastating times, as well as ingenuity and success in expanding their business across the city. Congratulations again to Loretta's Authentic Pralines. I wish you all the best and more in the future.●

RECOGNIZING ED HUNTER

• Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today, I rise to honor Ed Hunter, on the occasion of his retirement as the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Washington office.

Ed has had a long career in public service. He has served the Nation for over 40 years at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC. He began his career at the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics in 1975 while he was still a student at the University of Maryland.

In this role, Ed helped establish a national health information infrastructure that is critical to making evidence-based public health policy. He, along with two of his colleagues, conceived and edited "Health Statistics: Shaping Policy and Practice to Improve the Population's Health," the first textbook to cover the development, use, and improvement of health statistics.

In his work on data policy, Ed created and led a cross agency committee to develop recommendations on the health data collection program of the entire Federal Government. His efforts have led to greater efficiency, increased emphasis on statistical rigor, and greater data usability. When you read a health statistic in a newspaper article, it is more trustworthy because of Ed Hunter.

Most recently, as the Director of the CDC's Washington office, Ed has been essential in keeping Members of Congress and their staffs informed about urgent public health crises and communicating critical public health information. From ricin in the halls of Congress to Ebola on the other side of the world, Ed helped us make policy decisions based on sound science.

Today, I want to recognize Ed for his 40 years at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for his dedication to public service, and for a lifetime of work that has truly made a difference in the health of our Nation and around the world. On behalf of the U.S. Congress, your fellow statesmen in Maryland, and a grateful nation, I want to thank Ed for all of the important work he has done and wish him the very best in his next phase of life. ●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As 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.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:31 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 50. An act to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1024(a), and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Speaker appoints the following Member of the House of Representatives to the Joint Economic Committee: Mrs. MALONEY of New York.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 50. An act to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 596. An act to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and health care-related provisions in the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 405. A bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. COCHRAN, from the Committee on Appropriations:

Special Report entitled "Further Revised Allocation to Subcommittees of Budget Totals for Fiscal Year 2015" (Rept. No. 114-2).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. GRASSLEY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Michael P. Botticelli, of the District of Columbia, to be Director of National Drug Control Policy.

Jeanne E. Davidson, of Maryland, to be a Judge of the United States Court of International Trade.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

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. COONS (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. KING, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. FRANKEN, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 379. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand and modify the credit for employee health insurance expenses of small employers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. BENNET):

S. 380. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an exemption from the tax on early distributions for certain Bureau of Prisons correctional officers who retire before age 55, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 381. A bill to improve the response to missing children and victims of child sex

trafficking; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 382. A bill to eliminate the automatic inflation increases for discretionary programs built into the baseline projections and require budget estimates to be compared with prior year's level; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. RISCH):

S. 383. A bill to provide for Indian trust asset management reform, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. GARDNER):

S. 384. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to facilitate water leasing and water transfers to promote conservation and efficiency; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. CARPER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. 385. A bill to provide for a biennial appropriations process with the exception of defense spending and to enhance oversight and the performance of the Federal Government; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 386. A bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. WYDEN, and Ms. HEITKAMP):

S. 387. A bill to require the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to use the definitions in section 40125 of title 49, United States Code, in determining whether an unmanned aircraft conducting aeronautical research flights qualifies for public aircraft status under that section, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 388. A bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to require humane treatment of animals by Federal Government facilities; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Ms. HIRONO:

S. 389. A bill to amend section 1111(h)(1)(C)(i) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require that annual State report cards reflect the same race groups as the decennial census of population; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TESTER:

S. 390. A bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to ensure that amounts in the land and water conservation fund are made available for projects to provide recreational public access, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. PAUL (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. HATCH, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. HELLER, Mr. LEE, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. SCOTT):

S. 391. A bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 392. A bill to combat heroin and methamphetamine trafficking across the Southern border of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.