

home and abroad. We here in the Senate will miss Aiko's extensive knowledge and extraordinary work ethic as she returns to the Department of Defense. I also want to take this opportunity to thank Aiko's husband, Haru, and their children, Callea and Kent, for sharing her with us this past year. The Senate schedule isn't always the most "family friendly" but Aiko has been able to juggle the competing demands masterfully. I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking Aiko Lane for her outstanding service to our Nation.

RECOGNIZING THE 240TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAVY CHAPLAIN CORPS

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, 240 years ago, the Navy Chaplain Corps was established. Chaplains serve our Nation by serving the members of our military—providing prayer, comfort, support, healing and restoration.

Chaplains go into the darkest places on earth to serve those who risk their lives for our Nation. They have seen the worst, but still provide hope for something greater. Over the course of their ministry, 16 Navy chaplains have given the ultimate sacrifice. Additionally, two chaplains have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for their devoted service.

After over a decade of conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, chaplains today continue to bring support and hope to those affected by war. Protecting and advancing the religious liberty of both chaplains and servicemembers is essential to preserve our honored heritage.

On the 240th anniversary of the Navy Chaplain Corps, we recognize their dedication and devotion, their service to a cause greater than themselves, and their selfless sacrifice for our nation. We also recognize the importance of protecting their right and the right of every servicemember to practice their religious beliefs.

On this day, we recognize all Navy chaplains who have answered the call to serve where it matters, when it matters, with what matters since 1775.

TRIBUTE TO BOB FORD

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Bob Ford, who is retiring from Senate service. Bob is a valued, longtime member of my staff and dear friend.

In September of 2002, Bob joined my staff as the State director for business, economic, and rural development. Bob, originally from the Sunny Slope area of Canyon County, brought to the position a profound knowledge of rural and economic development shaped by his service as the State manager of rural development for the Idaho Department of Commerce, where he worked for 17 years in various capacities.

To say that Bob assisted me in a number of issue areas is an understatement. He has worked on far too many efforts to count. In addition to his

work on rural and economic development issues, he has worked on initiatives related to housing, labor, trade, veterans, energy, banking, budget, taxes, immigration, water resources, transportation, and much more.

Highlights of his contributions as a member of my staff include his successful work to stop the transfer of the terminal approach control radar, known as TRACON, from the Boise airport. Bob spent countless hours working with affected parties to build an overwhelming justification for retaining TRACON at the Boise airport. He also worked heavily on trying to restore a key Amtrak corridor between the Midwest, the Intermountain States, and the Pacific Northwest.

As a fellow veteran, Bob has utilized his shared understanding of serving our Nation to connect with Idaho's veterans community and help improve veterans' access to quality services. He has attentively and efficiently administered the presenting of the Spirit of Freedom Award, which is an annual award to veterans and volunteers to recognize their great contributions to our armed services and veterans.

Bob is pragmatic and witty. He brings his calm, commonsense approach to any task, and I will miss his logical counsel and good humor. Bob is so widely admired that there has been no shortage of Idahoans who have shared fond memories of times they have worked with Bob over the years and the achievements he has made for the people of our great State.

Bob, you have done "not bad for a kid who grew up on a farm in Sunny Slope on the banks of the Snake River." I hope that retirement will provide much-deserved time fishing, and that I will still get to benefit from your wise assistance from time to time. Thank you for your outstanding, committed service. Congratulations on your retirement. I wish you all the best.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO VIRGIL COURNEYA

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Virgil Courneya on being selected as National President of the Fleet Reserve Association, FRA. It gives me great pleasure to recognize his achievement in being selected to lead an organization that does so much for our Nation's military community.

Mr. Courneya enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1972 and served his country for nearly a quarter century. Throughout his military career, he received numerous assignments across the country, where he served in California, Nevada, North Carolina, Hawaii, and Pennsylvania. He also served overseas in Japan and Bolivia. Before retiring in 1996, he achieved the rank of master gunnery sergeant. Mr. Courneya's service is invaluable to our country, and I am grateful for the sacrifices he made for our freedoms.

The FRA is a congressionally chartered military and veterans service organization that serves active members and veterans of the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. In his new role, Mr. Courneya will work to strengthen the organization and increase national recognition of the work being done by the FRA on behalf of our Nation's heroes. He will also serve as an advocate for the issues important to sea service members and their families.

Mr. Courneya has been a member of the FRA since 1982 and is currently a member of the FRA Branch 274 in Reno. Throughout his service to this organization, he has held numerous important roles on the local, regional, and national levels, including serving as both the association's west coast regional president from 2004 to 2006 and national vice president from 2012 to 2013.

I am grateful for Mr. Courneya's many contributions to sea service members and veterans throughout our Nation and State. His actions represent only the greatest of Nevada's values and place him among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly defended our Nation. I would also like to recognize his wife, Helen, who was selected as the national president of the auxiliary. Our State is fortunate to have role models such as Mr. and Mrs. Courneya serving Nevada's brave.

As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I recognize Congress has a responsibility not only to honor the brave individuals who serve our Nation, but also to ensure they are cared for when they return home. I remain committed to upholding this promise for veterans in our State and across the country. I am grateful to have Nevadans like Mr. Courneya working towards a common goal: fighting to ensure the needs of our military community are met.

Mr. Courneya has demonstrated professionalism, commitment to excellence, and dedication to the highest standards of the U.S. Marine Corps. I extend my greatest gratitude for his service to defending our freedom and his work on behalf of the FRA. I am humbled and honored by his service and am proud to call him a fellow Nevadan. Today I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Courneya on being selected as national president of this important organization.●

CONGRATULATING PAT SKORKOWSKY

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Clark County School District Superintendent Pat Skorkowsky on being named National Superintendent of the Year by Jobs for America's Graduates, JAG. This award is truly prestigious and attained by only the most influential educators across the country.

JAG is a nonprofit organization that is focused on improving the educational outcome of America's youth