

FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION
CELEBRATES ITS 80TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, November 11 marked the 80th anniversary of the Fleet Reserve Association, FRA, whose original charter was issued in Philadelphia, PA. FRA is the oldest and largest professional military organization representing the men and women serving in, or retired from the United States Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard.

The Fleet Reserve Association is named after the Fleet Naval Reserve program, which allows sailors with 16 or more years of active enlisted service to separate from the Navy, but remain "on call" for periods of national emergency.

From its inception, FRA's purpose was to advocate for sailors' rights. The association started with the efforts of a few enlisted men in 1919, who pooled their monies to send two Navy chief petty officers to testify before Congress on pay reform. Since that time, FRA has established an enviable track record of promoting favorable legislation for members of the Naval Service.

In 1923, FRA's efforts resulted in legislation that allowed WWI veterans to count their commissioned or warrant service toward time requirements for transfer to the Fleet Naval Reserve.

In the 1930's, the FRA helped with legislation that eliminated the requirement for enlisted retirees to pay for rations while hospitalized in Government treatment facilities, mandated death gratuities be paid to the estate of recalled servicemembers who died on active duty, authorized commissary privileges for military widows, and restored reenlistment bonuses.

FRA's "Hospital Rights" and "Widow's Equity" studies also helped foster the creation of the Civilian Health Program of the Uniformed Services, CHAMPUS, in 1966 and the adoption of the Uniformed Services Survivor Benefit Program, USSBP, in 1972.

FRA's 1999 study on military pay also set the stage for the targeted pay hikes for mid-grade enlisted personnel over the last few years, the repeal of the 1986 military retirement system (Redux), authorization of sea pay for junior enlisted personnel, and the reduction of additional "out-of-pocket" housing costs for servicemembers living in civilian housing.

On top of its award-winning legislative advocacy work, the FRA continues to promote community service at their 300-plus branches located throughout the world. In 2004 they awarded \$90,000 in college scholarships and \$75,000 to worthy students who competed in the FRA's Americanism Essay Contest.

Mr. President, I thank the Fleet Reserve Association for its eight decades of service to the men and women of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. As we close the 108th Congress, and look ahead toward the 109th Congress, I wish the Fleet Reserve Association continued success and look forward to working with them to support the past, present, and future member of all of

the military services who protect our great Nation.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN LITTLE

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today I rise to pay tribute to an outstanding staffer who has worked for me for the past 7 years. John Little came to my office as a legislative correspondent in August of 1997 after working on my first Senate campaign. He was a young lawyer who had just graduated from Cumberland School of Law in Alabama and was looking for a job in politics. I doubt at the time that he knew where this road would take him. He continued to work his way up the ladder in my office—becoming a research assistant, legislative counsel, and deputy legislative director. Then last year I asked him to take on the responsibility of being my legislative director. I'm pretty sure he didn't know what he was getting into when he said yes.

Since that time, I have had the privilege to work closely with John and see up close what many people notice when they first meet him. John is one of those people who epitomizes Teddy Roosevelt's adage "speak softly and carry a big stick." In fact, a quotation hangs in his office that says "a closed mouth gathers no feet." While he is often quietly working in the background, John has consistently demonstrated his desire to serve the people of Alabama through hard work and determination. He has served me well throughout his tenure in my office and has earned my respect, along with that of his colleagues, Members of Congress, and countless constituents. I have watched him grow from a young staffer into a strong leader with a sound foundation in policy and the knowledge of the inner workings of Congress.

John has come a long way since his first days on the Hill. I've witnessed many of the accomplishments of his life, both personal and professional. I've seen him learn the ways of Alabama politics, pass the bar exam, staff his first Senate hearing, and meet and marry his wife. In fact, I have to take some credit for his marriage. John met his future wife, Mary Catherine, while he was working for me and she was working for Senator LOTT. Our offices were next to each other at that time, which led to more than one romance and marriage, including that of John and Mary Catherine.

John has worked hard and effectively on a number of important issues. He has contributed significantly to much legislation. His work on the No Child Left Behind Act and on the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, just a few weeks ago, was most noteworthy. John met with education officials, teachers, parents of disabled children, and lawyers to fully understand this important act and how to improve it. At the end he was ably assisted by my legislative assistant, Prim Formby, but I know he was very proud to see this important bill become law. He received great praise, and his work was favorably

mentioned by Senator GREGG and Senator KENNEDY.

Throughout all of these achievements and life experiences, John maintained his humility and strong work ethic and never wavered in his loyalty to me, my office, or the State. While I have shared in John's accomplishments to this point, his most recent achievement is bittersweet for me. John has accepted the Chief of Staff position with Senator-elect MEL MARTINEZ. This is a tremendous opportunity for John and a testament to his skill and knowledge as one of the finest staff members in the Senate. While I am sad to see him go, I am confident that he will serve Senator MARTINEZ in the same outstanding manner he has demonstrated over the past 7 years. From being elected president of his high school fraternity to serving as my legislative director, John has shown the strength of character and depth of knowledge which sets him apart as a truly great staffer. Phillip Brooks once said, "character may be manifested in the great moments, but it is made in the small ones." I have seen John's character in the small and great moments, and I know that he is ready to face this next challenge. John will be missed. I thank him for his service and wish him all the best in his new endeavor.

THANKING STAFF

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. President, I recently came to the Senate floor to publicly thank my staff. Unfortunately, not all staff names were listed in the RECORD. Therefore, I enter the following names of my staff for the RECORD.

Tracy L. Allen; Laurie G. Armstrong; William O. Austin; Alexis Bar; Victoria Bassetti; Jared J. Bataillon; William Beane; Austina L. Bennett; Crystal M. Bennett; David G. Berard; Sonceria Ann Berry; Joshua L. Brekenfeld; Michael D. Briggs; Erica Buehrens; Derek H. Chollet; Marilyn J. Dixon; Charles R. Dorrier; Paul D. Dryden; Robert W. Elliott.

Justin E. Fairfax; Colette Forrest; Alice D. Garland; Katherine L. Garland; Laura Godwin; Robert Gordon; Steven K. Gryskiewicz; Wanda Haith; Peter Harbage Emma Harris; Kate G. Heath; Robert Hines; Lisa Hyman; Morgan Jackson; Stephanie Jones; Mildred J. Joyner; Jeremy Kyle Kinner; Jeffrey I. Kovick; James R. Kvaal; Miles M. Lackey.

Jeffrey Lane; Louise D. Learson; Lawrence (Andy) Magill; Maureen Mahon; Sharyn J. Malone; Kenneth F. Mansfield; Kathryn J. Marks; John J. Maron; Cory S. Menees; Heather L. Messera; Sophie Milam; Blair B. Milligan; Joyce Mitchell; Carlos A. Monje; Kevin A. Monroe; Robert Morgan; Matthew L. Nelson; Elizabeth E. Nicholas; Ashley I. O'Bryant; Sacha M. Ostern.

Joseph W. Parry-Hill; Lauren Partner; Elizabeth Pegrarn; Philip J. Peisch; Sarah L. Pendergraft; Anthony Petty; Aaron S. Pickrell; Lesley Pittman; Sally Bussey Plyler; Mary Margaret Propes; Hunter L. Pruette; Jacqueline F. Ray; Karen A. Robb; David E. Roberts; Judith M. Rossabi; David A. Russell; Craig J. Saperstein; Heidi Schneble.