

offered a formal apology from the government for the internment program and provided compensation to victims. This is a great legacy and it will be well remembered.

Another of the areas in which Bob excelled is his knowledge and expertise of Social Security as well as tax and trade policy. He had an influential place on the House Ways and Means Committee. His leadership there will be missed.

Bob did what he did extraordinarily well. Throughout his career he showed that he was a skilled politician as well as a great policymaker.

In addition to his duties as a House Member, he took on heading the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee this past election cycle—a particularly demanding and grueling position. Despite the enormous challenges he faced, he did a superb job in guiding the committee through the elections.

Throughout his long and distinguished career Bob Matsui proved to be a dedicated public servant and his constituents considered themselves lucky to have his representation. I consider myself lucky to have known him.

We will truly miss him.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues in expressing sympathies to the family of Representative Bob Matsui, who passed away over the weekend. I was shocked and saddened to hear the news about our old friend.

While few Montanans may know Bob Matsui, he did embody one trait Montanans are familiar with. He was always willing to reach out to those across the aisle to get the job done. He and I shared this work philosophy on free trade especially. He was a tireless advocate in the Congress for America's trade agenda and was essential to the enactment of many historic international agreements.

We will surely miss his leadership on critical issues this next Congress, such as Social Security, one issue where the American people expect and deserve a healthy, vigorous, and open debate. And for that type of debate, you could certainly count on Bob Matsui to deliver.

Despite starting his life as a child unjustly interned by his own Government during World War II, Bob later rose to serve in that very Government at its highest echelons, as a Member of Congress. How proud his family must have been to see this dynamic man elected to public office, where he championed legislation to apologize for the internment of Japanese American families such as his. Overcoming obstacles and injustices to rise to a level of public admiration, respect, and trust may sound like a Hollywood story; to Bob, though, it was his life story.

Wanda and I send our prayers and sympathies to his family; his wife Doris, son Brian, daughter-in-law Amy, and granddaughter Anna. He will be greatly missed by us all.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, it is with great sorrow that I mark the pass-

ing of Representative Robert Matsui. In his quarter-century of service representing California's Fifth District in the House of Representatives, Robert Matsui won the deep respect and affection of everyone who ever worked with him. When he first ran for Congress, in 1978, he pledged to bring to the office "a new form of statesmanship." For more than 25 years, on a daily basis, he fulfilled that promise, and his constituents honored him for it. This past November they returned him to the Congress for his fourteenth term, with 71 percent of the vote.

Bob Matsui was a third-generation Japanese American. Like so many of us, he was part of a family that had come to the United States for the great opportunities this country offers, to build a better life for their children. Because Bob Matsui's family was Japanese-American, however, he and his parents were taken from their home in Sacramento in 1942, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. They were interned for more than three years at Tule Lake, in one of the "relocation centers" specifically created for Japanese Americans. Bob Matsui himself was very young at the time—barely 6 months old at the time of internment, not yet 4 years old when the war ended but he felt deeply the confusion and anguish of the adults around him. Yet he never lost faith in his country and in himself. Inspired by the Kennedy administration to enter public service, he dedicated his professional life to serving and protecting the rights of all Americans, first as a lawyer and then as a public official. He served 8 years on the Sacramento City Council before entering the Congress. But the experience of his early childhood never left him, and in 1988 he was instrumental in ensuring enactment of the Japanese American Redress Act, which offered recognition of the terrible, unconstitutional wrongs done to Japanese Americans.

As a senior member of the House Ways and Means Committee, Bob Matsui worked unstintingly to assure the safety net for those most in need: children, seniors, the disabled, the poor and others who needed an advocate. As the ranking minority member of the Social Security Subcommittee, he was one of the Social Security system's best-informed and most eloquent advocates in the Congress. No one understood better than he the indispensable role that Social Security plays in assuring basic standards of security and dignity to Americans when their working years are over, and no one was more dedicated to keeping the system intact. Robert Matsui believed in the social insurance system that Rockefeller created to care for retirees, but we as a society expanded to care for younger citizens in need, the disabled, widowed and survivors. He made politics personal, and because he cared so deeply for others, he was able to be a real leader in this realm. His voice will be sorely missed.

Congressman MATSUI leaves a legacy of extraordinary integrity, commitment and strength. It is fitting that in his memory Bob Matsui's family and friends have established The Matsui Foundation for Public Service, which will carry forward the principles to which he dedicated his life. I express my deepest sympathies to his wife, Doris Okada, his son Brian, daughter-in-law Amy, and granddaughter Anna, and thank them for sharing him with us these many years.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE PLANNING REGULATIONS

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, on December 22, 2004, The U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service published a final rule that will streamline the process used by the Forest Service in revising forest management plans.

I am pleased that the Department completed work on this important regulation. Ultimately, this rule will help local forest managers provide future generations with healthier forests, cleaner air, cleaner water and more abundant wildlife through more efficient management of our forests and grasslands. I am also pleased that this regulation builds upon one of the important lessons we learned during consideration of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act in the 108th Congress: emphasis on actual forest management rather than administrative paperwork. This will result in our forest managers being able to undertake important forest health projects rather than be overburdened with administrative processes.

Although the final planning rule is very comprehensive, I would like to point out several key components: It will for the first time incorporate implementation and outcome assessment into the forest planning process, which will ensure that the forest planning process is a dynamic one that can quickly adjust to changing conditions. As we learned with the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, a dynamic management system allows the Forest Service to address the most time-sensitive forest health issues such as wildfire, invasive species, or disease. It incorporates meaningful public participation throughout the planning process, and ensures that the best available scientific information will be used in decision making. It contains a process that will fairly and objectively allow us to see whether the Forest Service is getting the job done. This reporting process will rely on independent reviews of Forest Service land management, will measure actual results against intended outcomes, and will incorporate an audit process to produce publicly available results. Finally, and most importantly, this rule will streamline the planning process, which in turn will save the Forest Service both time and money. The current forest plan takes between 5 and 7 years; under the new regulation the anticipated timeframe is between 2 and 3 years. These

savings in both time and money will allow our land managers to more quickly complete on-the-ground projects to improve the health of our Nation's forests.

For too long our Nation's forests have been imperiled because of a planning process that is too cumbersome and takes too long, and usually results in forest plans that are out-of-date by the time they are finished. I applaud the efforts of the U.S. Forest Service to streamline our Nation's forest planning process to reduce red tape and paperwork. I am hopeful that this final rule will provide further tools for the U.S. Forest Service in appropriately managing our Nation's forests.

MAKING A COMMITMENT

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, as we begin a new Congress, I am hopeful that the Senate will consider and pass sensible gun safety legislation for the benefit of our families, communities, and police officers. The 109th Congress has the opportunity to act together on a bipartisan basis to pass legislation that will make our streets safer for all Americans.

In order to achieve a reduction in gun violence, we must commit ourselves to enacting legislation that supports this goal. The 108th Congress missed numerous opportunities to have a positive impact on safety in our communities across the nation. In the last Congress, we did not close the gun show loophole, we did not reauthorize the 1994 assault weapons ban, and we failed to make needed improvements to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System that would have made it more difficult for convicted criminals to gain access to guns.

Combating gun violence also requires a commitment to funding effective gun violence prevention and enforcement programs. Unfortunately, the Fiscal Year 2005 omnibus appropriations bill signed by the President in December eliminated much of the funding for one of these programs, known as Project Safe Neighborhoods.

The Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative focuses on increased enforcement of existing gun laws, vigorous prosecution of crimes committed with handguns, and gun violence prevention education. The project supports organizations working against gun violence and has provided over \$1 billion in funding to help prosecute gun crimes, hire personnel, provide training, and assist with community outreach activities. It is critical that we provide adequate resources to programs like the Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative in order to more effectively address the gun violence epidemic in this country.

I urge my colleagues to join me in working to adequately fund effective gun violence reduction programs and enact sensible gun safety legislation that will help to make our communities safer.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CORPORAL JASON SCOT CLAIRDAY

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I rise today, to honor a young man from Arkansas who had a passion for life, a gift for bringing smiles to the faces of those around him, and a sense of duty toward the country and the people he would serve with honor. Jason Scot Clairday was a loving husband, son, brother and friend. He was also a brave soldier who died a hero, trying to bring freedom to a people he had never met in a country he had never known.

Cpl. Clairday was the type of person others were naturally drawn to. He showed a genuine interest in their well-being and his gentle nature and infectious smile could brighten the darkest of moods. It was apparent to everyone around him that he approached every day with a rare enthusiasm and love for life. The youngest of three boys was often found playing sports or fishing and hunting along a nearby creek, enjoying the outdoors and the time spent with his friends and family. After moving to the small northern Arkansas town of Salem, he did what he did best, made friends, and quickly distinguished himself by excelling in high school athletics and becoming an active member of the First Baptist Church.

Cpl. Clairday enlisted in the United States Marine Corps shortly after graduating from Salem High School in 2001. It was a decision he was proud to make and members of the First Baptist Church remember the pride with which he wore his Marine dress blues while attending service. On July 30, just weeks prior to his deployment to Iraq, Cpl. Clairday married the love of his life, Sarah. After his military service, he looked forward to returning home to be with her, attending Arkansas State University at Mountain Home, and building a family life. He felt his experience in the Marine Corps was a way to better prepare him for that future.

While in Iraq, Cpl. Clairday sometimes spoke with friends and loved ones of liberating the war-torn country and making a better life for the Iraqi people. While he never talked much about the war, he preferred instead to talk about the end of his enlistment in the spring, the future and coming home to be with his new wife and his family. Sarah last spoke with her husband on December 3rd, when he was scheduled to enter Fallujah for 10 days with his fellow marines in an attempt to bring greater stability to the city prior to the Iraqi national elections slated for January. At the conclusion of the 10 days, he was to be granted a 2-day leave. Tragically, he was killed by enemy fire on December 12th, a day before he was to leave the area.

At his memorial service in Camp, Arkansas, more than 600 people would come to pay their respects to their fallen Arkansas soldier. At the conclusion of the service, Cpl. Clairday was buried with full military honors. The flag that had draped his casket was presented to

his young widow with the Purple Heart that he had posthumously earned for his gallant service on behalf of a grateful nation.

When we think of Jason Clairday, we will remember that he gave himself completely to every aspect of his life; his family, his community, and his country. The legacy of his 21 years is a testament to who he was. The love, the humor, the selflessness, and the passion with which he taught us to live our lives, will remain with us forever. My thoughts and prayers go out to his wife, Sarah, to his family, and to all those who knew and loved him.

SERGEANT MICHAEL A. SMITH

Mr. President. Today, I humbly rise to pay tribute to the life of Michael A. Smith and to honor the sacrifice he made on behalf of a grateful nation. Sergeant Smith was a friendly, easy-going young man who had one of those rare personalities that allowed him to quickly make friends with everyone he met. He was also a brave soldier, who died a hero, fighting for the beliefs, the people and the country he cared for deeply.

Sgt. Smith was born and raised in the small, southern Arkansas town of Camden. There, he is remembered by those who knew him best as a good and gentle soul, who was always concerned about the welfare of others, and often went out of his way to help them whenever they were in need. Upon his 1999 graduation from Camden Fairview High School, Sgt. Smith set his sights on Southern Arkansas University Tech. Attending the university would allow him to stay close to his family in Camden while pursuing his interest in computers. To help pay his way through college, Sgt. Smith joined the Arkansas Army National Guard. Once he completed his military service, he had plans to return home and begin his education.

Sgt. Smith became a member of the Guard's 39th Support Battalion. He was later called up to serve in Operation Iraqi Freedom, where he was stationed at Camp Taji, about 16 miles northwest of downtown Baghdad. To his comrades in the 39th, "Smitty" quickly became one of the guys; a dedicated soldier who never complained, always did his duty, and could be entrusted with the lives of those around him.

This November, family and friends of Sgt. Smith were excited with the news that he would be taking his leave of service, and would possibly be home before Thanksgiving. Tragically, 5 days before he was set to return to Arkansas, he was shot by a sniper while conducting patrols in Baghdad. As a result of the injury, he was flown to Landstuhl Army Medical Center in Germany and then to Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, DC. His parents, Donald Ray and Deborah and his sister, Lai, came to visit him in the hospital's intensive care unit. Although Sgt. Smith never regained consciousness in his 2 weeks at Walter Reed, his family was with him in his