

Studies show that 50 percent of pregnancies in the United States are unplanned and many women consume alcohol before they realize they are pregnant, resulting in 40,000 children every year being born with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and subject to a lifetime of cognitive and behavioral impairments. Tragically, Alaska has the highest rate of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders in the Nation. Among Alaskan Native communities, the rate is 15 times higher than non-Native areas in the State. Prenatal alcohol exposure can result in low IQ and difficulties with learning, memory, attention, and problem-solving as well as impairment of mental health and social interactions. Prenatal alcohol exposure can also result in growth retardation, birth defects involving the heart, kidney, vision and hearing, and a characteristic pattern of facial abnormalities. The lifetime health costs for an individual with fetal alcohol syndrome are estimated at \$1.4 million for medical care and treatment interventions. In the United States, approximately \$9.7 billion is spent annually for individuals afflicted with FASD, according to government reports.

There is a great need for research, surveillance, prevention, treatment, and support services for individuals with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and their families. It is for these reasons that I rise today to dedicate this Wednesday, September 9 as National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Day. All Americans are encouraged to promote awareness of the effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol; to increase compassion for individuals affected by prenatal exposure to alcohol; to minimize further effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol; and most importantly to bring greater awareness to a disease that is 100 percent preventable!

On behalf of the millions of individuals suffering from the lasting and detrimental effects of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and advocates for eliminating FASD, I encourage all Americans to observe a moment of reflection on the ninth hour of September 9, to remember that during the 9 months of pregnancy a woman should not consume any alcohol.

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize September 9, 2009, as National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, FASD, is an umbrella term describing the varied range of alcohol-related birth defects that may result from the use of alcohol during pregnancy. The effects of this disorder may be mental, behavioral, and/or involve learning disabilities. FASD is the leading known cause of preventable cognitive impairment in America. It is estimated FASD affects 1 in 100 live births each year.

I have great concern about the impact in South Dakota and across the country of FASD. We must move past the stigma of this devastating disease to truly help those and their families

who are affected by FASD get the health, education, counseling and support services they need and deserve. We must also address the tragedy of FASD at the source, by increasing awareness that any amount of alcohol during pregnancy can have heartbreaking, lifelong effects. We must work to ensure this is understood by all women of childbearing age and that treatment and counseling services are available for these women.

One of the most distressing facts regarding FASD is that it is entirely preventable. I have joined several of my colleagues in the Senate to introduce a resolution designating September 9, 2009, as National FASD Awareness Day. It is my hope these efforts progress toward global awareness of FASD and an end to this destructive disease.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF NASCOE

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, this year the National Association of Farm Service Agency County Office Employees, NASCOE, is celebrating its 50th anniversary. NASCOE was founded in Memphis, TN, in 1959 in an effort to provide a nationwide association through which county committee employees of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, ASCS, could render better service to American agriculture by having a national network for the exchange of ideas and information and to facilitate closer cooperation in working toward solution of mutual problems.

In the USDA Reorganization Act of 1994, Congress combined the ASCS, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, and the agricultural lending programs of the Farmers Home Administration into a single Farm Service Agency. Today, NASCOE continues to represent the county office employees of the "new" FSA. In Tennessee last year, 250 NASCOE employees provided valuable assistance to 90,000 producers through a wide range of Federal programs from conservation to price support and helped them cope in times of emergency and disaster.

I think we can all recognize the value of the local Farm Service Agency office to farmers and ranchers, and I commend NASCOE on its dedication to FSA county employees and the farmers they serve. I congratulate NASCOE on its 50th anniversary and hope that they will continue to assist in conserving and improving our Nation's natural resources and agriculture industry. •

##### REMEMBERING JUDGE ROBERT M. TAKASUGI

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to honor the life of Judge Robert M. Takasugi, the first Japanese American appointed to the Federal bench. Judge Takasugi passed away on August 7, 2009, at the age of 78.

Robert Takasugi was born in Tacoma, WA, on September 12, 1930, to Japanese parents who had immigrated to the United States in search of a better life. His family moved to Los Angeles in 1942 in the wake of anti-Japanese sentiment following the Pearl Harbor attack. That same year, Robert and his parents were sent to an internment camp at Tule Lake, CA, 3 of 130,000 Japanese Americans who were interned during the war. In the years since, Judge Takasugi often called the experience "an education to be fair."

After being released from the internment camp in 1945, Robert returned to Los Angeles where he resumed his studies and graduated from Belmont High School. He went on to earn a bachelor's degree from UCLA in 1953. Robert was then drafted into the U.S. Army during the Korean War, where he served as a criminal investigator. Upon discharge, he went on to earn a law degree from USC in 1959 with the aid of the G.I. bill.

After graduating from USC, Robert joined his only Latino classmate, future Superior Court Judge Carlos Velarde, and together they opened a law practice in East Los Angeles. The firm represented many indigent minorities, including arrestees from the 1965 Watts riots, East Los Angeles riots, and other civil rights demonstrators in the 1960s.

Robert's first judicial appointment, by then-Governor Ronald Reagan, landed him on the Los Angeles Municipal Court in 1973. Two years later, then-Governor Jerry Brown promoted him to the Los Angeles County Superior Court and in 1976, Judge Takasugi became the first Japanese American to be appointed to the Federal bench after being named by President Gerald Ford.

Throughout his career, Judge Takasugi was known for his fairness and compassion. In his spare time, he served as a mentor to thousands of young lawyers. He founded a free bar review course, which he taught from his living room for many years, for students who were having trouble passing the bar exam. In 1999, the Robert M. Takasugi Public Interest Fellowship was created by his colleague to honor Judge Takasugi and ensure that his courage and vision of equal justice are carried out by generations to come.

Judge Takasugi was a trailblazer for Asian Americans in the field of law. His dedication to justice and equality was evident in everything that he did throughout his 36-year judicial career on the Federal bench. His many years of service to the City and County of Los Angeles, to the State of California, and to our Nation will not be forgotten.

Judge Takasugi is survived by his wife Dorothy; his son Jon; his daughter Lesli; and his two grandchildren. I extend my deepest sympathies to his family.

Whether he was fighting for our country or fighting for integrity and equality under the law, Judge Robert