

On July 26, 1990, when he signed ADA into law, President George Herbert Walker Bush spoke with great eloquence. And I will never forget his final words before taking up his pen. He said, "Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down."

Mr. President, today, that wall is indeed falling. And we must join together, on a bipartisan basis, to continue this progress.

VA AND NIH JOINT PARKINSON'S DISEASE RESEARCH

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I would like to take a moment to recognize the Department of Veterans Affairs and the National Institutes of Health, NIH, for their research into an innovative surgery that has demonstrated success in improving the stability of muscle movement for veterans with Parkinson's disease. VA and NIH's joint research collaboration regarding deep brain stimulation therapy has furthered the medical community's understanding of Parkinson's disease and will be incredibly valuable to doctors and Parkinson's patients throughout the world.

For many individuals, medication alone is insufficient when it comes to dealing with neurological diseases such as Parkinson's disease. VA and NIH conducted research into an alternative treatment option known as deep brain stimulation therapy to test the long-term outcomes of the treatment. Deep brain stimulation therapy is a surgical procedure that implants electrodes into specific stimulation sites within the brain. These electrodes are then able to send electrical pulses to areas of the brain that controls movement and motor control and helps mitigate the symptoms of Parkinson's disease as well as reduce some of the side effects caused by medication. Thanks to deep brain stimulation therapy, thousands of individuals suffering from Parkinson's disease have experienced a dramatic improvement in their quality of life.

Since deep brain stimulation therapy was approved by the Food and Drug Administration, FDA, as a therapy for Parkinson's disease in the late 1990s, there has been an ongoing debate about which stimulation sites within the brain provide the best and most durable treatment outcomes and how long those results last. To better understand the role that stimulation sites play in deep brain stimulation therapy, VA and NIH conducted a 3-year clinical trial. The trial ultimately found that the benefits gained from deep brain stimulation therapy remained after 3 years and the benefits from the surgery were not dependent by which stimulation site was selected for implantation.

This is the type of research that is crucial to providing the care that our Nation's veterans need and deserve. Thanks to the hard work of VA and NIH researchers, the 40,000 veterans

living with Parkinson's disease whom VA cares for along with Parkinson's patients across the world will be better equipped to make informed decisions about their treatment options.

In closing, I commend VA and NIH for their efforts to combat a disease that affects so many of America's veterans.

TRIBUTE TO AMBASSADOR L. BRUCE LAINGEN

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to honor an accomplished diplomat and distinguished public servant, Ambassador L. Bruce Laingen. On August 6, Bruce will celebrate his 90th birthday. I want to take this momentous occasion to reflect on his contributions and efforts in support of our Nation. Despite the personal sacrifice, Bruce honorably served the United States with expert skill and dedication throughout his long career.

Bruce was born and raised on a farm in southern Minnesota. He joined the U.S. Navy, and served our Nation during World War II. Bruce received his officer training at Wellesley College in 1943, and attended the University of Dubuque in Iowa for general Naval training. He was a commissioned officer in the Naval Supply Corps. Bruce served in the Pacific with amphibious forces in the Philippine campaigns. After World War II, Bruce graduated from St. Olaf College in Minnesota in 1947. He went on to further his education at the University of Minnesota, where he received a Master's degree in International Relations in 1949.

As a result of his passion and interest in what was happening across the globe, Bruce dedicated 38 years to the Foreign Service. He joined the Foreign Service in 1949, and served this Nation across the world in Germany, Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. The United States was very fortunate to have Bruce serve as U.S. Ambassador to Malta from 1977 to 1979.

In June 1979, Bruce returned to Iran to serve as the U.S. Charge d'Affaires in the wake of the Iranian revolution. Within a few months of his arrival, a group of demonstrators took over the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. The students and militants were protesting the United States' relationship with the government of Iran and the Shah's entry into the United States on humanitarian grounds. On November 4, 1979, Bruce was taken hostage along with more than 60 other Americans. For a total of 444 days, he and 51 other Americans were held hostage in Iran. Throughout the entire ordeal, he worked diligently to protect the hostages and resolve the crisis. He showed true professionalism and strength. In his book *Yellow Ribbon: The Secret Journal of Bruce Laingen*, Bruce describes his personal perspective and thoughts about the events that took place over those 444 days.

Shortly after Bruce's capture, his wife Penelope "Penne" Laingen tied a

yellow ribbon around an oak tree on their lawn in Maryland to symbolize her hope for a safe return for her husband and all of the hostages. Penne encouraged others to show their support and determination to be reunited with their loved ones through the use of yellow ribbons. The original yellow ribbon was later donated to the Library of Congress. It is because of her efforts that Penne is credited with founding the yellow ribbon campaign during the Iran hostage crisis.

After his release, Bruce became the Vice President of the National Defense University until he retired from the Foreign Service in 1987. He went on to be the Executive Director of the National Commission on Public Service from 1987 until 1990. Between 1991 and 2006, Bruce was President of the American Academy of Diplomacy.

Bruce continued to share his expertise and knowledge through his efforts on several distinguished Boards of Directors including No Greater Love, A Presidential Classroom for Young Americans, the Mercersburg Academy in Pennsylvania, and the National Defense University Foundation. I had the honor of working with Bruce on the Board of Directors of the Presidential Classroom. He has been a strong advocate for this wonderful program, which encourages students to learn about how their government works and aspire to leadership through public service.

Bruce has received many honors as a result of his brave service to our Nation. He was awarded the Department of State's Award for Valor, the Department of Defense's Distinguished Public Service Medal, the Presidential Meritorious Award, and the Foreign Service Cup.

I am grateful for his willingness to serve our Nation and provide strong leadership in implementing the foreign policy goals of the United States. Bruce, Penne, and their three sons Bill, Chip, and Jim have given so much to our Nation.

CROWDFUNDING

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an issue that I and many of my colleagues are very excited about: crowdfunding, which allows startups and small businesses to harness the power of the Internet to pool investments from ordinary Americans intrigued by their ideas. These ideas can range from revolutionary new technologies to simple projects that can improve communities in need.

If crowdfunding is going to take off, this new market needs to inspire confidence in both investors and small businesses. That is why in December of 2011, I introduced S. 1970 with Senators MICHAEL BENNET and MARY LANDRIEU and in March of this year the bipartisan, compromise crowdfunding amendment with Senators MICHAEL BENNET and SCOTT BROWN. That amendment passed the Senate by a vote of 64 to 35 and was included in the