

and Daniel Inouye, Charlie retired April 6, 2013. Today, on his one month retirement anniversary, we reflect on his quiet and steady leadership which was so important to the work of the Appropriations Committee and the Senate.

Charlie began his career on the Appropriations Committee as a professional staff member for the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee in 1987. He was quickly promoted and assumed the role of democratic clerk starting in 1995. In that capacity, Charlie worked on nearly every issue in the defense area from purchasing weapons to personnel issues.

Charlie's work on the Defense Subcommittee enabled our Nation's military to transform itself from a Cold War-era force to the agile and quick response force that exists today. Charlie played a major role in helping modernize our weapon systems, including helping secure funding for the development of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles—UAVs. Funding for UAVs helped to change the tide of the latest conflict in our favor and will continue to play a major role as we continue to prosecute and disrupt terrorist activities worldwide.

The role of UAVs in today's warfare is especially evident in my home State of Nevada. Creech Air Force Base is home to the famed Predator and Reaper aerial vehicles. For decades, Creech Air Force Base was comprised of a few buildings and a single runway, but Charlie's hard work on the Appropriations Committee led to significant investment in infrastructure and increases in Nevada military personnel. These additional resources have transformed Indian Springs Auxiliary base to Creech Air Force Base, the premier UAV installation in the world, supporting air and ground combat, reconnaissance, and search and rescue.

In 2009, Charlie assumed his current role as the staff director for the Senate Appropriations Committee. As our Nation was dealing with the effects of the great recession, Charlie helped develop policies to invest in American infrastructure and jumpstart the economy. His in-depth knowledge about the intricacies of the legislative process, coupled with his sense of humor, allowed him to keep order among the various subcommittees and continue the bipartisan nature of the Committee.

Charlie played a major role in nearly every appropriation issue during the last 5 years. From continuing resolutions to omnibus appropriations measures, Charlie helped navigate the Congressional landscape to ensure passage into law. In particular, Charlie worked with my staff to help avert a government shutdown and enact the Budget Control Act. I will always be grateful for Charlie's hard work on this piece of legislation.

Although the Senate and Nevada will miss Charlie's deep institutional knowledge about the appropriations process and the Federal budget, I am

confident that Charlie's work left a lasting mark on our Nation and on Congress. I am happy to thank Charlie for his three decades of service and wish him well in his retirement.

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, more than 20 years ago, family members of workers killed on the job joined with safety advocates to launch Workers Memorial Day—a day of remembrance and advocacy. To honor the creation of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, OSHA, April 28 was chosen as Workers Memorial Day.

The passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, which created OSHA, was one of the monumental legislative achievements of the 20th century. This landmark legislation, passed over four decades ago, reflects the values that all Americans share: that workers shouldn't have to risk their lives to earn their livelihood, and that workers, employers, and the government must all work together to keep people safe and healthy on the job.

Since that time, workplace safety and health conditions have improved dramatically. In the year the OSH Act was enacted, our country saw 13,800 on-the-job deaths. Forty years later, in 2010, that number is down by more than 60 percent. It is without dispute that this legislation has saved the lives of hundreds of thousands of American workers in its 40-year lifespan, a remarkable accomplishment.

In addition to saving lives, OSHA saves our country money. The total financial cost of job injuries and illnesses is enormous—estimated at \$250 billion to \$300 billion a year. Preventing illnesses and injuries before they happen makes economic sense, in addition to being the right thing to do.

So today, on Worker's Memorial Day, we celebrate the success of OSHA. But we also must acknowledge its limitations. Too many workers remain at serious risk of injury, illness or death on the job, as demonstrated by the recent fertilizer explosion in West Texas that killed at least 14 and injured over 200. In 2011, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 4,693 workers were killed on the job—an average of 13 workers every day—and nearly 3 million nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses were reported that same year. In our great State of Iowa, 93 workers died on the job in 2011. Additionally, 43 Iowans died from injuries sustained while working, and untold numbers of Iowans were injured from exposures in the workplace. We absolutely can—and must—do better.

That's why I am a co-sponsor of the Protecting America's Workers Act, a piece of legislation that would build on OSHA's successes and save the lives of countless additional workers. The bill makes commonsense reforms to bring our workplace safety laws into the 21st century, with minimal burden on the vast majority of employers that comply with the law.

One critical aspect of the Protecting America's Workers Act is that it will enhance the protection provided to workers who blow the whistle on unsafe conditions in the workplace. OSHA does not have the necessary resources to inspect every workplace in the country on a regular basis, so whistleblowers play an essential role in identifying dangerous conditions. Because OSHA enforcement is aided by whistleblowers, it is in all of our interests to protect whistleblowers from unfair retaliation so they are not afraid to come forward. But the whistleblower provision in OSHA has not been significantly amended or improved since it was enacted and has fallen far behind similar retaliation protections in other worker protection, public health, and environmental laws. The Protecting America's Workers Act will remedy that problem by strengthening whistleblower protections so more workers will feel comfortable reporting dangerous conditions and work environments can improve for all.

In addition to protecting whistleblowers, the Protecting America's Workers Act also extends OSHA protections to more workers, increases penalties for employers who break the law, enhances public accountability, and clarifies the duty of employers in providing a safe work environment. These changes together comprise a critical step towards providing a safer workplace for every worker in our country, and I plan to do everything possible to fight for this important legislation.

While we have made tremendous progress in that last 40 years under OSHA, there is much more work to be done. All Americans have the right to a safe workplace, and we should not rest until all of our fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, families, and friends can go to work each day knowing they will come home safely again each night.

TRIBUTE TO ART GRATIAS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to congratulate Art Gratias of Mason City, IA on receiving the Legion of Honor from the French Government for his contribution to the liberation of France. Art Gratias enlisted in the U.S. Army in January of 1942, having begun the enlistment process before the attack on Pearl Harbor that led to the formal participation of the United States in World War II. As a member of the 2nd Infantry Division, he participated in the D-day invasion of Normandy, which took place on his first wedding anniversary. Art fought in numerous campaigns in France and Central Europe, including the Battle of the Bulge. He was wounded on August 16, 1944, receiving the Purple Heart and later returned to combat.

The French Government has expressed its gratitude to Art Gratias for what he did for their country. I would