

democratic values. Commencing on June 14, 1775, the Continental Army led our historic revolution and has continuously served America at home and abroad defending the cause of liberty. As the greatest land force this world has ever known, I firmly believe that the U.S. Army will maintain this proud duty.

The Continental Army had humble beginnings. It was originally comprised of rebellious colonists who had little to no experience in soldiering. Under the leadership of GEN George Washington, the soldiers of the Continental Army overcame overwhelming odds against them to defeat the more seasoned and well-equipped British military and mercenary forces. Since then, our Army has become the standard that all other nations use to measure their forces.

The Army's birthday coincides with Flag Day, a holiday that commemorates our Nation's adoption of the U.S. flag. This is a fitting marriage, as our Nation's flag would not exist were it not for the bravery and sacrifice of our Army; and since the adoption of our flag in 1777, the Army has always carried the flag, the symbol of our most sacred values, into battle. I am reminded of Francis Scott Key's hallowed words after witnessing the bombardment of Fort McHenry by British ships in the Chesapeake Bay during the War of 1812. In describing the sight of Old Glory still flying after the bombardment, Key wrote, "Oh, say does that star-spangled banner yet wave O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

In celebrating the Army's birthday, I would like to highlight a particular Army unit that served our Nation with distinction under the most challenging of circumstances. The unit that I am referring to is the segregated 726th Transportation Truck Company, a part of the Maryland National Guard. The 726th existed as a segregated unit within the Guard well after President Truman integrated the U.S. armed services in 1948 because Maryland, like many other States at the time, had not yet integrated its National Guard units. The 726th was the only Maryland National Guard unit that served in Korea during the Korean war. While in Korea, the 726th Transportation Truck Company was attached to the 70th Transportation Truck Battalion as an integrated unit and served with distinction.

Upon returning to Maryland, the members of the 726th Truck Battalion learned that their unit would be reverted back to its original segregated status. Unwilling to return to segregation, the officers and enlisted personnel of the 726th Truck Battalion resisted, and worked to end segregation within the Maryland National Guard. In November of 1955, the men of the 726th achieved their goal when Maryland's then-Gov. Theodore McKeldin issued an order to end racial segregation in the Maryland National Guard. This order

made Maryland the first State below the Mason-Dixon line to integrate its National Guard. The united efforts of the men of the 726th Transportation Truck Company marked an important step towards realizing equal rights in our military and in our society.

With the withdrawal of our military forces in Iraq and the departure of those forces in Afghanistan by the end of 2016, I am concerned that our heroes who have recently entered or who are about to enter—civilian life will not be provided with the tools they need to adapt to life here at home. My concerns have been exacerbated by the recent discoveries of substandard care in the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). Millions are helped each year by the VA health care system, but more than a decade of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has overwhelmed a system already bursting at the seams. Veteran unemployment, post-traumatic stress, and suicides continue to be serious issues that require immediate action. Maryland is home to over 30,000 military members and 460,000 veterans. The Army gives our soldiers the focus and diligence to excel in any and every field they choose, but we have to provide our servicemen and women with the tools they require to recover and adapt to civilian life. Doing so is not just a good idea, but rather our solemn obligation that strengthens our great Nation. As these heroes serve and defend our citizens, rights and values, it is our duty to return the service, as it is the least we can do. Ultimately, we have to continue to give these men and women a stake in their own country, the country they are so willing to dedicate their lives to serving.

I am eternally thankful for our brave men and women, both active and retired, for their willingness to serve domestically and internationally. For 239 years these patriots have been the strength of the Nation. Their steadfast dedication to duty, to our country, and to all Americans is embodied in the Army motto, "This We'll Defend." For 239 years, our Army has lived by these words, protecting our most revered values: freedom, equality, independence, and democracy. Let us remember and celebrate our Army soldiers for this achievement today, and wish them a happy 239th birthday.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING LEWIS KATZ

• Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I wish to remember and honor Lewis Katz, a business and civic leader, who passed away tragically on May 29, 2014. Mr. Katz was a man of great integrity and ambition, and his contributions to the City of Philadelphia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the entire Nation leave a lasting legacy. I was honored to join his family, friends, colleagues, and admirers in celebrating his extraordinary life last week at his memorial service.

Throughout his remarkable career, Lewis Katz ventured in to the fields of law, business, sports, education and media. After graduating from Temple University and the Dickinson School of Law, Mr. Katz established the New Jersey based law firm Katz, Ettin, and Levine. He found further success by investing in and leading a number of enterprises, including Kinney Parking Systems, the YES Network, the New Jersey Nets, the New Jersey Devils, and most recently Interstate General Media, which owns the Philadelphia Inquirer and Philadelphia Daily News. In pursuing these endeavors, his ingenuity and proficiency was without equal.

Yet this professional career was only a segment of the larger work Lewis Katz embarked on in his life. A dedicated family man and a deeply charitable patron, Mr. Katz's most important contributions came through his boundless interest in helping others. He gave generously to a number of causes and institutions, notably Temple University and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. He also directed the Katz Foundation, which continues to support a number of charitable, educational, and medical causes. To these efforts, Lewis offered not only money, but a great portion of his energy and spirit.

Mr. Katz came from humble roots, yet he was grateful for all that he had been given. He honored his own life and the life of those around him by living with passion and purpose. Although we mourn his passing, I find solace in knowing that Lewis leaves behind a substantial legacy that will allow us to honor him back for many years to come. My thoughts and prayers are with his son Drew, and his daughter Melissa during this difficult time. •

JEFFERSON COUNTY, IOWA

• Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State, and it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills, but I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.