

Those pivotal figures climbed over mountains, crossed raging rivers, tumbled through thick forests, and fought against bondage and oppression to be free. Their resilience succeeded, and because of their bravery and patriotism the “mountaineers” are still always free.

Ever since our historic beginning, we, the people of West Virginia, have never failed to answer our country’s call. We have almost more veterans per capita than any other State in the Nation. When 9/11 happened to our great country, there were more West Virginians percentage-wise who signed up to enter all branches of our Armed Forces to fight for our country. I am so proud of each and every one of our West Virginians and our veterans and the people serving today.

Ever since we chose the stars and stripes and chose to live under a Constitution that promised a constant pursuit of “a more perfect Union” of States, no demand has been too great, no danger has been too daunting, and no trial has been too threatening.

Our State’s abundance of natural resources, coupled with the hard work and sacrifice of our people, have made America stronger and safer. Since our birth, we have mined the coal that fueled the Industrial Revolution, powered our railroads across the continental United States, and produced the steel that built our ships, skyscrapers, and our factories. Our little State has given every ounce of blood we have.

To this day, West Virginians continue to generate the electricity that lights our cities, heats our homes, and powers our businesses. We have also filled the ranks of our military forces in numbers far greater than should be expected from our little State of less than 2 million people.

West Virginia’s population holds one of the highest percentages of veterans among all States. As I always say, West Virginia is one of the most patriotic States in the country. We always have been and we always will be.

“The best steel comes from the hottest fires.” My father always told me that, and the fires of the Civil War transformed us. We forever branded ourselves to the ideals of the Declaration of Independence and the guarantees of the U.S. Constitution—and, as the “mountaineers” who will always be free.

We are tough. We are independent. We are inventive. We are honest. Our character has been shaped by the wilderness of our State. With welcoming mountains, countless hollers, rushing streams, boundless blue skies, and dense green forests, we have it all. West Virginia is a place of coal mines and soaring eagles, Boy Scouts and community leaders, sparkling lakes and captivating mountains, winding backcountry and smoky barbecue joints, battlefields, and hidden trails, college towns and small towns, and it goes on and on. West Virginia is a place of power, pulse, and passion—a special

place I get to call home, along with other West Virginians.

Yes, we have had our ups and downs, our setbacks and triumphs, famous family feuds, neighborly fights, timely trials, and unexpected challenges have been thrown our way, but the spirit of West Virginia has never been broken, and it never will. I learned a long time ago, growing up in the small coal-mining town of Farmington, WV, with hardworking men and women, when things get tough, by God, we just got tougher. That is the way it had to be to survive.

Tomorrow, as people across West Virginia celebrate West Virginia’s 151st birthday, a day we now also know as West Virginia Day, I encourage all West Virginians to remember who we are, from where we have come, and where we are going to go. I encourage us all to remember the first mountaineers and the brave leaders and strong laborers who paved the way for us and for future generations to come.

We have so many reasons to be proud of our beautiful State, its kind and compassionate people, powerful landscapes, unique customs, rich culture, and fascinating history.

John Kennedy, in 1963, when he came for our centennial celebration and spoke on the capitol steps, once said: Sometimes it is raining cats and dogs. Sometimes the Sun doesn’t always shine in West Virginia, but the people always do.

He was so correct, as he felt the heartbeat of our State.

Every West Virginian contributes to our State’s amazing story, and on West Virginia Day I encourage all West Virginians to seize this opportunity to imagine the future of this great State—and this Nation—and be proud of how far we have come and how far we will go together.

We are West Virginians. Even in the darkness and the gloom, we look to a just God who directs the storm, and similar to the brave loyal patriots who made West Virginia the 35th star on Old Glory, West Virginians’ love of God and country and family and State remains unshakable, and that is well worth celebrating every year.

So God bless every West Virginian. God bless those who came before us and who will come after us. Happy birthday, West Virginia.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KAINÉ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. KAINÉ pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 479 are located in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

Mr. KAINÉ. Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MARYLAND AGRICULTURE

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, about 2 weeks ago I had a chance to meet with the leaders in the agricultural community to go over certain issues that are available to our farmers. I met with the NRCS chief Jason Weller. I met with the Maryland State agriculture secretary Buddy Hance and Lee McDaniels, who is a Harford County, MD, farmer and president of the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts.

We were talking about ways in which the agricultural community, and those citizens who are concerned about our environment, can work together so we can have a clean environment and a healthy agricultural industry in our State. I found the discussion to be extremely helpful. We talked about the Regional Conservation Partnership Program.

I thank Senator STABENOW for her incredible leadership on the farm bill. When we reauthorized it, we consolidated a lot of the conservation programs—particularly for specific great water bodies—into the Regional Conservation Partnership Program. It provided new energy and tools available for conservation within agriculture so we can have a clean environment and also have sustainable agriculture in our country.

Recently, the Chesapeake Bay watershed was designated as one of the critical conservation areas. That becomes important because that allows a certain amount of the funds under the Regional Conservation Partnership Program to be available to the critical conservation areas in our country and will be used by our farmers to conserve their land, and to be better stewards of the land and our environment, and at the same time have a sustainable agricultural program.

The Chesapeake Bay Program first started many years ago under the leadership of then-Governor Harry Hughes of Maryland, who worked with the Governors of Pennsylvania and Delaware and then expanded to include the States of New York, West Virginia, and of course Virginia, to establish the Chesapeake Bay Program. They understood that in order for the program to be successful, they had to deal with development issues and storm runoff, the hardened surface, the loss of forestry land in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, and the causes of the pollutants in the soil and our environment through

surges which rush into our water system, our streams, and rivers, and into the Chesapeake Bay. We have to do a better job of development in dealing with storm runoff.

It also recognized the responsibility of local governments. They are the primary entity responsible for how we treat our waste with the wastewater facility plants and how we can do a better job of preventing pollutants from entering our water system.

We also dealt with business growth and the pollution coming in through business activities.

One of the major focal points was how do we deal with agriculture. In one sense agriculture is very positive for our environment. Maintaining open space is important, and agricultural activities are generally open space. That can be good because it gives us a larger tract of land in order to filter rainwater, to filter the pollutants from perhaps never entering the bay but, if they do enter the water system, they enter in a way that has already been filtered. So in that sense agricultural preservation is important for the conservation of the bay, but because of farming activities that use nitrogen and phosphorus, it can cause significant challenges for the bay.

I think Maryland farmers have done a good job. They have done a good job for many years. But I wish to speak about one farmer particularly because I was very pleased—before this meeting, I had a chance to meet Hank Suchting. He is a farmer in Baltimore County, MD. That is pretty close to the urban centers. The Presiding Officer was referring to me as being the Senator from Baltimore. I am a proud resident of Baltimore, and Mr. Suchting's farm is only a few miles from my house. It is interesting. He has a beef-farming cattle activity. It is in the Oregon branch of the Gwynns Falls River, which has been dammed to provide for the Loch Raven Reservoir to deal with our water supply. In other words, that stream, which is part of his cattle production, is in the watershed that goes into the drinking water that the Presiding Officer and I drink in the Baltimore region. So we all have a significant interest in making sure that water supply is kept safe and that when we turn on our tap and when we drink our water, it is fresh water.

Mr. Suchting's farm activities produce about 30 beef calves a year. That is an important number because in order for that cattle population to be properly grazed, it needs to have a water supply, and it needs to have a place where the cattle can cool off, particularly on a hot day like we had yesterday. So the traditional farming activities for this cattle production were to allow the cattle—as I said, the stream goes right through his property—to use the stream for the purpose of cooling off and for the purpose of the drinking water for the cattle. However, that was not the best way to do it for the purposes of protecting the water

supply of Baltimore and to deal with the Chesapeake Bay and to deal with our environment because, as the Presiding Officer knows, free access for the cattle to the river meant that the cattle manure, the phosphorus would go into the waters, causing a challenge for the water system, and it caused significant erosion to the streambed itself.

So Mr. Suchting felt a commitment to help the environment, so he said: Look, why don't I look at fencing in the riverbed so my cattle do not get direct access to the stream and producing a supplemental water system through a water trough—as we see in the photograph. It works through gravity. It uses the aquifer, works through gravity, and produces direct water for the cattle to drink.

Here is the interesting part. His principal motivation was that he wanted to do something that would help the environment, but he still wanted to be able to produce his cattle. He felt an obligation to do this.

The State of Maryland had help for him. In partnerships with the Federal Government and conservation programs, there were funds available to help him fence in the property to have a sensible crossing—because he was on both sides of the creek—so that he could have a way for the cattle to cross safely and still protect the water bed itself. That program made it more financially advantageous for him to put in the fencing so the cattle did not have direct access to the stream and to put in the water trough so they could get fresh water.

But guess what. He put a pencil to it and found out it was better economically for him to do this. It actually made his farming practices more financially viable. How did that happen? Well, he was losing calves every season to storms when there were water surges and they would get caught in the stream and they would actually drown. He was losing calves because of extreme weather. Being in the stream caused hypothermia for the calves, and they would die. Every time he lost a calf, he also lost about \$1,000. This was a sound investment from the point of view of the financial viability of his cattle production.

Also, he found it was healthier for his cattle in two respects. First, the water supply did not include the pathogens that can be found in the streams, so he found it was healthier for his cattle to get water through the trough rather than through the stream itself. Secondly, he said the growth around the stream increased dramatically because the cattle were not in the stream, and it gave better shade on the property to allow the cattle to be able to cool off in the shade in a more efficient way than going into the stream itself.

My point is this: This is just one example. I could give hundreds of examples where conservation makes sense for agriculture and our environment.

My reason for being at this farm and my reason for bringing together the

leaders in agriculture in Maryland is to talk about this new program that is now available. It is the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, which is available under the farm bill, which makes hundreds of millions of dollars available competitively—it is not earmarked—for farmers to be able to do what Mr. Suchting did through similar types of programs to help themselves and help our environment so we can have a safer environment for our community.

Working together, we can have a cleaner environment and successful agriculture. There are now new tools available. We want people to know about them. We want farmers to know about them. We want conservation districts to get this information out to our farming community because, quite frankly, agriculture is critical to Maryland, it is critical to New Jersey, it is critical to this country. It is the largest single part of our local economy, and I expect it is the same in New Jersey and around the Nation. We want viable agriculture. We outcompete the world in production. We want to be able to continue to do that, but we also want to pass on a cleaner environment to our children. We can do both.

Thanks to the leadership of Senator STABENOW and thanks to the leadership of this body, we now have new tools available to help our farmers in conservation. I hope they will take advantage of them for the sake of our environment and for the sake of agriculture.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 4660, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to the consideration of H.R. 4660, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.