

the input of farm bureau leadership, staff and members. I look forward to continuing to work with this seasoned Idaho organization in shaping agriculture and natural resources policy to ensure that it best meets the needs of Idaho producers.

Congratulation to the Idaho Farm Bureau and its membership on this significant milestone. I wish you continued success.●

#### TRIBUTE TO BENJAMIN CHARLES STEELE

● Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I wish to honor Benjamin Charles Steele, a veteran of World War II.

On behalf of all Montanans and all Americans, I stand to say “thank you” to Ben for his service to our Nation.

It is my honor to share the story of Ben’s service in World War II, because no story of bravery—especially not one from our “greatest generation”—should ever be forgotten.

Ben was born on November 11, 1917, in Roundup, MT. The son of ranchers, Ben loved the outdoors. Sometimes he would sneak out of school by pretending to go to the bathroom, but instead would jump on his horse and head for the ranch.

Ben was 22 when he enlisted in the Army Air Corps in Missoula, MT on September 9, 1940.

In September of 1941, Ben was assigned to serve in the Philippines.

Ben had barely arrived in country when the Army gave him a rifle and told Ben “now you’re in the infantry.”

The Japanese attacked on December 8. A few weeks later, Ben’s unit was evacuated from Clark Field and ordered to the Bataan Peninsula. In January 1942, Ben was sent to the front lines.

Three months later, the front lines collapsed. Soon after, Ben’s unit was captured and he and his fellow soldiers began the infamous Bataan Death March.

Ben marched for 6 days and was fed only two cups of rice. The American captives were tormented by the Japanese soldiers. They were forced to walk closely together, and if a prisoner stumbled, or worse, fell, they were bayoneted or shot and killed.

Ben was a prisoner for three and one-half years. During this time, at great risk to himself, he secretly made drawings of the torture and cruelty he and his fellow prisoners endured. On one construction project, 324 prisoners started work beside Ben. By the end, Ben was one of only 50 surviving prisoners.

Ben then was sent to Japan where he did hard labor in the Japanese mines. He was liberated once the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, with Ground Zero less than 80 miles from Ben’s coal mine. When he was freed, Ben had dysentery, pneumonia, malaria, blood poisoning and beriberi.

Ben was discharged from the U.S. Air Force on July 10, 1946. After beginning

his art career drawing on the concrete floor of a prison in the Philippines, Ben pursued a formal art education. In 1955, he received a master’s in art from the University of Denver.

Ben then taught art at Montana State University-Billings. To this day, he continues to recreate the images of his imprisonment through drawings and paintings.

Ben was never “officially” assigned to the infantry; the military just handed him a weapon and told him to go fight—and he did. He fought for months before he was captured.

Ben is now 97 years old, living in a nursing home in Billings, MT, fighting his last battle—and still painting. Ben never requested any medals or recognition for his brave and incredible service. A true World War II veteran, Ben feels he simply did the job he was sent to the Philippines to do.

But today, it is my honor to honor Ben Steele’s true heroism, sacrifice, and dedication to service by including his story in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Thank you, Ben.●

#### MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:56 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 2759. An act to release the City of St. Clair, Missouri, from all restrictions, conditions, and limitations on the use, encumbrance, conveyance, and closure of the St. Clair Regional Airport.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1378. An act to designate the United States Federal Judicial Center located at 333 West Broadway in San Diego, California, as the “John Rhoades Federal Judicial Center” and to designate the United States courthouse located at 333 West Broadway in San Diego, California, as the “James M. Carter and Judith N. Keep United States Courthouse”.

H.R. 5059. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide for the conduct of annual evaluations of mental health care and suicide prevention programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to require a pilot program on loan repayment for psychiatrists who agree to serve in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5086. An act to amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating the Chief Standing Bear National Historic Trail, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5185. An act to reauthorize the Young Women’s Breast Health Education and Awareness Requires Learning Young Act of 2009.

H.R. 5701. An act to require that certain Federal lands be held in trust by the United States for the benefit of federally recognized tribes in the State of Oregon, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5705. An act to modify certain provisions relating to the Propane Education and Research Council.

H.R. 5764. An act to authorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5781. An act to provide short-term water supplies to drought-stricken California.

#### MEASURES DISCHARGED

The following measure was discharged from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and referred as indicated:

H.R. 5471. An act to amend the Commodity Exchange Act and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to specify how clearing requirements apply to certain affiliate transactions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

#### MEASURES REFERRED ON DECEMBER 9, 2014

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 579. An act to designate the United States courthouse located at 501 East Court Street in Jackson, Mississippi, as the “R. Jess Brown United States Courthouse”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 5146. An act to designate the United States courthouse located at 700 Grant Street in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, as the “Joseph F. Weis Jr. United States Courthouse”; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 5385. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 55 Grasso Plaza in St. Louis, Missouri, as the “Sgt. Amanda N. Pinson Post Office”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 5562. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 801 West Ocean Avenue in Lompoc, California, as the “Federal Correctional Officer Scott J. Williams Memorial Post Office Building”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 5687. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 101 East Market Street in Long Beach, California, as the “Juanita Millender-McDonald Post Office”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 5794. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 16105 Swingley Ridge Road in Chesterfield, Missouri, as the “Sgt. Zachary M. Fisher Post Office”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 5086. An act to amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating the Chief Standing Bear National Historic Trail, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 5781. An act to provide short-term water supplies to drought-stricken California; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.