

and orientations. Finally, the legislation would include new grant accountability measures and emphasize the implantation of evidence-based practices.

It is time we address mental illness in our country through treatment, not incarceration. Passing this common-sense bill would reduce recidivism, save taxpayer money, and make our communities safer. That is why I support this bill and I urge its speedy passage.

#### REMEMBERING ROBERT GRIFFIN

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to a towering figure from Michigan's political past: former Senator Robert Griffin, who died Friday at the age of 91.

Senator Griffin was born in Detroit and was educated in the Wayne County Public Schools. By the time he graduated high school, the United States was embroiled in World War II. And in 1943—a year when so many American families came to fully comprehend the horrors of modern warfare—young Bob Griffin enlisted in the U.S. Army, joining the 71st Infantry Division.

For 3 years, Bob Griffin served our country in a time of war unmatched in its intensity, including 14 months fighting Nazis in Europe. After returning from war, like so many of our surviving soldiers, he turned his attention to his education, attending Central Michigan University, then getting his law degree at the University of Michigan.

Bob Griffin decided to begin his legal career in Traverse City.

After practicing law for several years, Bob Griffin felt compelled to practice public service, so in 1956 he ran and won office to the U.S. House of Representatives. He distinguished himself in Congress over the next decade, and following the death of Michigan Senator Patrick McNamara, then-Governor George Romney appointed Bob Griffin to finish the 7 months remaining in McNamara's term.

It did not take Senator Griffin long to earn the support of Michigan voters: They elected him to a full 6-year term that fall of 1966. Senator Griffin served the people of Michigan loyally for the next 12 years.

He authored major pieces of legislation during his career in this Chamber, and he was a member of the Republican leadership from 1969 to 1977. But he is being remembered most for the role he played in helping our Nation overcome the shock of the Watergate scandal.

In August 1974, as that scandal worsened, it became clear that President Nixon was in danger of being impeached. The impeachment process would be an embarrassing spectacle, not just for President Nixon, but for the institution of the President and for our Nation's political system.

Senator Griffin was a close friend of President Nixon, but it was the Senator's devotion to the country that led

him to write a letter strongly suggesting that the President resign and spare the Nation from having to endure impeachment. That letter is said to have played a major role in Nixon's decision to finally step aside.

At a time when our Nation's political system was teetering, it was Senator Griffin who helped it to recover its balance by doing what was best for the country.

That is the mark of true leadership. Even those who disagreed with Senator Griffin's policies never found fault with his integrity or his character.

Although Senator Griffin left office in 1979, he still had a desire to serve the people of Michigan, and for 8 years he applied his wisdom and judgment on Michigan's Supreme Court, retiring in 1994. Today the Grand Traverse County courthouse bears his name.

Senator Griffin's devotion to our State was rivaled only by the devotion he had for his wife, Marjorie, with whom he spent nearly 68 years, and their four children: Paul, Richard, James, and Jill. The couple has 13 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.

Senator Griffin's loss will be felt not only by his loving family, but in his home of Traverse City and in every corner of the State he served during his career. Senator Griffin will be remembered for his leadership, his fierce integrity, and his unwavering allegiance to the State of Michigan and the United States of America.

#### RECOGNIZING MICHAEL G. VICKERS

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the tremendous contributions of Dr. Michael G. Vickers, the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence. Secretary Vickers is retiring this month from the Federal Government having served with distinction in two critical leadership positions in the Department of Defense: Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict and Independent Capabilities, ASD SO/LIC&IC, from 2007 to 2011, and Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, USD(I), since 2011. His dedicated service has spanned the administrations of both President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama. Moreover, he has helped shape national security for three decades.

Secretary Vickers is the Department's longest serving USD(I). During his tenure he has led a comprehensive, mission-focused transformation of defense intelligence, and has provided policy and operational oversight for numerous sensitive intelligence and counterterrorism operations. He played a critical policy and planning role in the operation that brought justice to Osama bin Ladin. Of note, we are only days away from the fourth anniversary of that successful operation, which occurred on May 2, 2011.

As ASD SO/LIC&IC, Secretary Vickers served as the "Service" Secretary

for all Special Operations Forces, and as the senior civilian advisor to the Secretary of Defense on all counterterrorism, irregular warfare, and special activities. He played a central role in shaping U.S. strategy for the war with Al Qaeda and the war in Afghanistan, and conceived of and led the largest expansion of SOF capabilities and capacity in history.

From 1973 to 1986, Secretary Vickers served as an Army Special Forces non-commissioned officer, Special Forces officer, and Central Intelligence Agency operations officer. He had operational and combat experience in Central America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Central and South Asia. His operational experience spans covert action and espionage, unconventional warfare, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and foreign internal defense. During the mid-1980s, Secretary Vickers was the principal strategist for the largest covert action program in the CIA's history: the paramilitary operation that drove the Soviet Army out of Afghanistan.

Because of Dr. Vickers' selfless service, hard work and tireless dedication, our Nation is a safer place. I want to thank him for his service and wish him and his family all the best as he begins his next adventure.

#### REMEMBERING BETH THOMASSON

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the life and achievements of Beth Thomasson following her passing last month. Beth was a dear friend and a tireless advocate of housing and homeownership in her position as executive officer at the Home Builders Association of West Virginia. Beth's commitment to her work, her community, and her family embodied the values that we as West Virginians hold dear.

A graduate of Texas A&M, Beth was a "Kelly Girl" when she started at the Home Builders Association in 1978. In just ten years, Beth became executive officer and during this time the organization experienced a period of exceptional growth. A prodigious advocate for her cause, Beth also advanced initiatives of the Home Builders Association at the statehouse on issues relating to business development, homeownership, and consumer education. Her strong work ethic was recognized numerous times when she received the HBA Eastern Panhandle's Appreciation Award, the HBA WV Meritorious Service Award, and the HBA WV Presidential Award.

In addition to her role at the Homebuilders Association, Beth also served in various capacities at the West Virginia Business & Industry Council, the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce, the West Virginia Housing Policy Framework, and the West Virginia Housing Trust. Above all, Beth was a devoted wife and mother of 4 daughters, as well as a grandmother of 10.

Beth was relentless in her dedication to serving her community and her

State. Those who were lucky enough to have called her their friend can attest to this fact. Her ethos is best described in her favorite saying:

You can be a part of the problem or a part of the solution. By doing nothing, you are choosing to be a part of the problem.

I am proud to honor my friend Beth, and I encourage my colleagues to join me in celebrating her memory.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### REMEMBERING MICHAEL JOHNSON

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Officer Michael Johnson, a 14-year veteran of the San Jose Police Department who was tragically killed in the line of duty while responding to a call for help on March 24, 2015.

Michael Johnson was born in Herlong, CA, where his father served as a military police officer before becoming a deputy for the Calaveras County Sheriff's Department. After moving to San Jose as a teenager, Officer Johnson graduated from Gunderson High School in 1995 and joined the San Jose Police Department in 2001, continuing his family's commitment to law enforcement.

Those who knew Officer Johnson fondly remember him as a caring and trustworthy colleague who was passionate about his work and loved the community he served. An experienced patrol officer, he was recently promoted to serve as a field training officer and advise new members of the police force. Outside of work, Officer Johnson found joy in hobbies ranging from jujitsu and baking to scuba diving and world travel. He was also an outstanding marksman, winning several awards from the Police and Fire Games.

Above all else, Officer Johnson is remembered as a loving husband and devoted family man. In 2013, he married the love of his life, Nicole, and they planned to celebrate their marriage this summer with a large formal ceremony in Santa Cruz before starting a family. My heart goes out to Nicole and Officer Johnson's parents Daniel Johnson and Katherine Decker, his step-parents Dann Decker and Penny Johnson, his sister Jamie Radack, his brother-in-law Steve, and his niece Ami and nephew Eli.

Officer Johnson's dedicated and courageous service will not be forgotten. On behalf of the people of California and San Jose, whom he served so bravely, I extend my gratitude and deepest sympathies to his family, friends, and colleagues.●

##### CONGRATULATING GALENA HIGH SCHOOL

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today, I wish to congratulate Galena High School on its team of students selected as a national winner in the Samsung

Solve for Tomorrow contest. The high school competition was judged based upon how well teams applied science, technology, engineering, and math, STEM, in helping the local community. Seventeen students competed on the core team; however, 85 students from Galena High School contributed to 21 projects that continue to develop as a result of the contest. The team competed with 3,100 other applicants, winning a total of \$138,000 for its achievement in being selected as a national winner. This money will be used to purchase new technology for the high school, a contribution that will help future students for years to come.

Galena High School students chose to address difficulties faced by fellow peers with disabilities. Specifically, they worked alongside two students with disabilities to bring firsthand experience and realistic application to the project. The students utilized their STEM knowledge to create innovative equipment capable of adapting to difficult scenarios relating to those with disabilities and motor skill restrictions. The students spent hours researching current technology and worked tirelessly, brainstorming and creating solutions to different scenarios and ultimately chose two successful projects. The first, a tool to help special-needs students with typing, and the second, a portable table space making it easier for students with disabilities to carry lunch. These are only 2 of 21 projects that continue to develop and will be distributed to the local community. The students are shining examples of how compassion and hard work can make a difference in the lives of others and stand as role models for future Galena Grizzlies.

I am excited to see local students bringing recognition to both Nevada and to Galena High School for their advancement in a national competition. These students should be proud to call themselves top contenders in a competitive environment. I ask my colleagues to join me and all Nevadans in congratulating Galena High School for its success and honorable representation of Nevada.●

##### TRIBUTE TO WILLIE CARL MARTIN

• Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to Coach Willie Carl Martin of the University of Alabama. After 42 years of coaching football in the Alabama public school system and at the University of Alabama, Coach Willie Carl Martin is retiring. During his high school playing days, he was such an outstanding athlete that the late Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant offered him a full scholarship to Alabama. He was the first African-American to be offered an athletic scholarship to the university. He declined the offer and went to college at Northeastern State University, where he was a second team All-American. He then played professional football in Canada for 6 years. He returned to his hometown,

Alexander City, AL; where he began his coaching career as an assistant coach, and then as head football coach at Benjamin Russell High School. In 2001, he led Benjamin Russell High School to their first and only State Championship. After 25 years of a truly outstanding and impressive career in high school coaching, Coach Martin was hired as an assistant coach and for player development by Alabama's new coach, Nick Saban, in 2007. During his 8 years at Alabama, he had an instrumental part in Alabama winning three SEC championships and three national championships.

Willie Carl has demonstrated exceptional academic and professional careers both in teaching and coaching young students. He is a loyal, dedicated individual who has always had time for his students and players. He is generous with his time with others, regardless of their station in life. He is fortunate enough to have a wife, Leslie, as well as two lovely daughters and grandchildren, who have stood by him in all of his endeavors. I know they, along with his other numerous friends and family, will join me in proclaiming May 12, 2015, as Willie Carl Martin Day in Alexander City, AL.●

##### RECOGNIZING HUNTSVILLE UTILITIES 75TH ANNIVERSARY

• Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Huntsville Utilities, a public utility located in Huntsville, AL. Huntsville Utilities is owned by the city of Huntsville and provides water, gas, and electricity to Madison County and parts of Marshall County.

Huntsville Utilities serves a total of 49,786 gas customers, 90,665 water customers, and 174,959 electric customers. In total, Huntsville Utilities meets the utility needs of more than 300,000 customers in North Alabama. Moreover, Huntsville Utilities has more than 600 employees throughout the service area.

Water, gas, and electricity are of vital importance to families and businesses in our communities. I am honored to commemorate Huntsville Utilities for 75 years of providing this important service to the Huntsville area.●

##### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

##### EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)