

NATIONAL COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
WEEK, APRIL 19-25

• Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise today to salute the work of the 3,072 county governments nationwide, and in particular, the work of the 87 counties in my home state of Minnesota. Counties are often an invisible, but extremely important part of our inter-governmental system. County officials in my home state have also taken leadership roles in their national organization, namely Commissioner Randy Johnson, who chairs the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners and serves as the President of the National Association of Counties (NACo), and his colleague, Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin, who chairs NACo's Large Urban County Caucus which represents the interests of the nation's 100 largest counties.

Counties can trace their roots to the English shire of a thousand years ago. Serving a dual function, the shire acted as the administrative arm of the national government as well as the citizen's local government. The structural form of the shire was adopted along the eastern seaboard of North America by the colonists and adapted to suit the diverse economic and geographic needs of each of the colonists.

Traditionally, counties performed state-mandated duties which included assessment of property, record keeping such as property and vital statistics, maintenance of rural roads, and administration of election and judicial functions. Today, counties are moving rapidly into other areas, undertaking programs relating to consumer protection, economic development, employment training, planning and zoning, and water quality, to name just a few.

This week, counties across the country are celebrating National County Government Week. This celebration is an annual event for counties. First held in 1991, the goal of National County Government Week is to raise public awareness and understanding about the roles and responsibilities of the nation's counties.

There have been activities at the national, state and local levels this week. More than 1,000 counties annually participate in National County Government Week by holding a variety of programs and events. These include tours of county facilities, presentations in schools, meetings with business and community leaders, recognition programs for volunteers, briefings on environmental projects, and adoption of proclamations.

There is a theme each year for National County Government Week. This year, the theme has been "Creating Sustainable Communities." Counties are being encouraged during National County Government Week to make their communities more livable by engaging their citizens in a process that promotes job growth and environmental stewardship.

I know that NACo has encouraged counties this week to hold a town

meeting or launch a series of community-wide dialogues to solicit citizen participation to identify the community's most pressing issues and to establish a comprehensive vision for the future.

NACo has also suggested that counties develop a public participation strategy to identify and solve local problems that bring local government officials, business leaders, and community representatives together.

Counties have brought their citizens closer to their government by getting them to come to county facilities to learn about county services—or by going where the people are. Some counties this week held an open house at the county courthouse and administration building. They created displays by county departments showing what each department does. Employees were on hand to describe the services they provide and their responsibilities.

Some counties focused on their county's history as well. Local historical societies and libraries put together presentations or displays to inform citizens about the county's history.

Mr. President, I am pleased to rise today to support the efforts of our county governments throughout the country, and in particular, my home state of Minnesota. National County Government Week has been successful in attempting to raise public awareness of the good work of our nation's county governments and how they help improve the lives of their residents. •

MEASURES PLACED ON THE  
CALENDAR—H.R. 3565 AND S. 1985

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that two bills that are at the desk, H.R. 3565 and S. 1985, be placed on the calendar.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR  
NOMINATIONS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that on Monday, April 27, at 6 p.m., the Senate turn to the nomination of Scott Fleming, to be Assistant Secretary for Legislation at the Department of Education, and that the Senate proceed to an immediate vote on the confirmation of the nomination without intervening action or debate and that it be in order now to order the yeas and nays on the nomination.

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

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Ms. COLLINS. I further ask unanimous consent that immediately following the confirmation, the Senate pro-

ceed to the following additional nominations, that they be confirmed, that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and that the Senate resume consideration of the NATO treaty. Those nominations are: Garr King, of Oregon, to be a district judge in Oregon; Gregory Sleet, of Delaware, to be a district judge for Delaware; and Cheryl Thomas to be a member of the Railroad Retirement Board.

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

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, APRIL 27,  
1998

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until 11 a.m., on Monday, April 27. I further ask unanimous consent that on Monday, immediately following the prayer, the routine requests through the morning hour be granted, and the Senate then proceed to 1 hour of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the following exceptions: Senator THOMAS, 15 minutes; Senator FEINSTEIN, 20 minutes. I further ask unanimous consent that following morning business, at 12 noon the Senate proceed to executive session and begin debate on the NATO treaty.

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

PROGRAM

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, the Senate will begin debate on the NATO treaty at 12 noon on Monday. At 6 p.m., the Senate will conduct a rollcall vote on the confirmation of Scott Fleming to be an Assistant Secretary at the Department of Education. It is the leader's hope that before and after that vote the Senate can conduct a vigorous debate on the NATO treaty and possibly have amendments offered during Monday's session of the Senate.

As previously ordered, the vote on the conference report to accompany the State Department reorganization legislation will occur on Tuesday at 2:25 p.m. And I announce to the membership that the vote scheduled for Monday, April 27, will occur at 6 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11 A.M.,  
MONDAY, APRIL 27, 1998

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 3:23 p.m., adjourned until Monday, April 27, 1998, at 11 a.m.