

than that. This legislation is an investment in America's security, an investment to ensure the safety of our firefighters, our families, our homes, and our businesses.

Both the International Association of Firefighters and the International Association of Fire Chiefs have expressed their strong support for this legislation.

MCI/WORLDCOM

Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, I rise today to express my grave concerns about the actions of MCI/Worldcom. MCI committed fraud on a scale that is offensive. It deceived everyone—its employees and retirees, its shareholders and State and Federal officials. The SEC took a step in the right direction by punishing this company with the largest fine in corporate history.

But I fear the rest of the Federal Government may not be following the lead of the SEC. For example, I understand that MCI has been given a contract, valued between \$23 to \$35 million, to build advanced wireless networks in Iraq. The Federal Government should not be rewarding bad actors with precious government contracts.

Other press reports indicate MCI is also using the Tax Code to reap benefits that should not be available to companies that have committed such egregious fraud. I urge the Senate Finance Committee to investigate these allegations as soon as possible.

CONSTITUTION DAY

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, each and every Member of the Senate has taken an oath to uphold and protect the sacred document that has guided Our nation well over 200 years: the Constitution. Indeed, we all hold the Constitution near and dear to our hearts here in the Senate, and yet I rise today to let my colleagues know that the students of Lynchburg-Clay High School in Highland County, OH, have done us one better.

You see, I received several letters late last year from students at Lynchburg-Clay High School asking me a simple question: "Why don't we have a holiday to pay tribute to the Constitution?" We have commemorative days to celebrate a great many things in this country, but amazingly enough, we don't have one to honor what is one of our Nation's greatest contributions to democracy. The students at Lynchburg-Clay High School set out to change that, and I was honored to recently introduce a resolution, cosponsored by my friend and colleague from Utah, Senator HATCH, to give life to the idea these student wrote to me about not long ago. I am very pleased that yesterday my Senate colleagues agreed to pass this very important resolution.

Our resolution is simple: It recognizes the special place the Constitution has in our National history, as well as

the extremely vital role it continues to play today. Also, it formally designates September 17, 2003, as "Constitution Day." September 17th, of course, marks the anniversary of the day in 1787 when 39 brave men signed the final draft of the Constitution at the final meeting of the convention.

An appropriate tribute to the Constitution requires more than simply attaching a name to a day on the calendar, however. The students from Lynchburg-Clay High School wrote to me, one of the two Senators representing them in the Senate and one of 20 Ohioans fortunate enough to serve on their behalf in Congress, about their respect for the Constitution. In doing so, the students embraced exactly the kind of democratic values and citizen involvement that the Constitution stands for, and I congratulate them for their effort.

It is my intention that by passing this resolution, many more Americans might come to learn about the Constitution, and that as a result, their love and respect for the Constitution might come to match that held by the fine students and fellow Ohioans at Lynchburg-Clay High School.

SENATOR AND MRS. ROBERT C. BYRD'S SIXTY-SIXTH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today I would like to congratulate Senator and Mrs. ROBERT C. BYRD on their 66th anniversary, which they will celebrate on May 29. What a wonderful occasion this is—a truly joyous celebration.

Senator and Mrs. BYRD's devotion to one another is truly powerful. In a world that is far from old-fashioned, they have shown that old-fashioned dedication and commitment can go a long way. The Byrds have risen from humble beginnings, and proven to our State and country that honesty and devotion comes first. Senator BYRD said earlier this year on the Senate floor, "There are only two duties that will exceed my duties in the Senate. One is my duty to God and the second is duty to my family. I think my duty is to my wife." Many of us heard this speech and were struck by that line. We know that with Erma's recent illness, Senator BYRD on occasion had to request an absence from the Senate to be by the side of his lifelong sweetheart. The devotion he has shown to Erma is plain, and these last few weeks have simply been an extension of 60-plus years of love between these two people. This couple is a real gift to the State of West Virginia. We are more than lucky to have them as leaders of our State.

I have had the honor of serving in the Senate with Senator BYRD for the last 18 years, and in that time I have had the pleasure of getting to know Erma as well. Erma is a positively delightful woman. Senator and Mrs. BYRD's dedication to one another is genuine and should be inspiring to us all. They have

been devoted to one another from an early age. In recalling his high school days when he got a candy from a classmate to give to his sweetheart Erma, Senator BYRD said, "I never chewed the gum; I never ate the candy. But when the classes changed, I found Erma in the hall and gave her that candy and chewing gum. I never told her someone had given it to me, but that's the way you court a girl—with another boy's bubble gum." Erma and their family has been the top priority in the Senator's life from the start.

When the valedictorian of Mark Train High School married his sweetheart, Erma Ora James, in May of 1937, no one knew that the coal miner's daughter and adopted young boy would together become one of the most influential couples in the history of West Virginia. Even though Senator BYRD could not afford to go to college, he persisted as a young West Virginian working for his family—pumping gas, working as a produce salesman, and serving his country as a shipbuilder and welder. Mrs. Byrd became the head of the family's finances, and the glue that held their household together as she remains today. Starting as a family of two, the couple worked together to succeed.

While Senator BYRD was spending endless hours at the Capitol building serving his State and country, Mrs. Byrd raised their two lovely daughters, Mona and Marjorie. To this day, Mrs. Byrd continues to remain the stronghold in her family, proudly helping to raise their six grandchildren, and three great-granddaughters. Mrs. Byrd quietly stays out of the spotlight, and instead focuses on her responsibilities as a wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. Senator BYRD once said, "She [Erma] has been my anchor all of these years. I don't know what I would have amounted to if it wasn't for her steadfastness, her integrity, her strength." It is evident that the Senator and Mrs. BYRD have so much respect for one another, and enjoy their lives together every day. Senator and Mrs. BYRD have devoted their lives to better their family and fellow West Virginians. They have proven that working together as a team, husband and wife, can accomplish so much.

It is positively refreshing to see such an amazing couple recognized for their leadership and because of their caring. They truly exemplify a loving and happy marriage. The BYRDS are both leaders, grandparents, and great-grandparents, and compassionate and honorable West Virginians. Senator and Mrs. BYRD have set a great standard. Please join me in congratulating this wonderful couple on their 66th year together.

SALUTE TO LIBERTY: MANY JOURNEYS, ONE DREAM

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the achievements and experiences of Asian Pacific Americans in