

HONORING DR. PATRICK J. SCHLOSS

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to publicly recognize the inauguration of Dr. Patrick J. Schloss as the 15th President of Northern State University in Aberdeen, SD.

A dedicated scholar, diligent educator and attentive family man, Dr. Schloss certainly deserves this great honor and responsibility. After obtaining both his bachelors degree in special education and his masters degree in counseling from Illinois State University, Patrick went on to earn his doctorate in rehabilitation psychology from the University of Wisconsin.

Dr. Schloss is a man of great scholarship and knowledge. A prolific writer and frequent contributor to professional literature, his writings about special education methods relating to vocational education and community integration are studied in colleges and universities throughout the Nation.

Prior to joining the faculty of Bloomsburg University in Pennsylvania, Dr. Schloss held numerous administrative and academic positions at the University of Missouri and Pennsylvania State University. While at Bloomsburg, he served as assistant vice president and dean of graduate studies from 1994 until 2000, when he was appointed provost and vice president for academic affairs. Under Patrick's direction, Bloomsburg's enrollment not only increased 12 percent, but the university launched its undergraduate engineering and doctoral programs, as well.

In addition to his passion for education, Dr. Schloss served as president of the Pennsylvania Association of Graduate Schools, and also held board, committee, and task force appointments on behalf of the Council for Exceptional Children and the Association for Retarded Citizens.

It is an honor for me to share Dr. Schloss's accomplishments with my colleagues and to publicly commend him for his extraordinary academic career. Serving as president of Northern State University is an honor he richly deserves, and I am certain he will prove to be a tremendous asset to the university and the entire Aberdeen community. On behalf of all South Dakotans, I would like to congratulate Dr. Schloss and wish him all the best.●

HONORING THE SPEARFISH HIGH SCHOOL PARTICIPANTS IN THE "WE THE PEOPLE" COMPETITION

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, on April 30–May 2, 2005, more than 1,200 students from across the United States will visit Washington, DC, to compete in the national finals of We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution Program. This is the most extensive educational program in the country developed specifically to educate young people about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Administered by the Center

for Civic Education, the We the People program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education by act of Congress.

I am proud to announce that the class from Spearfish High School will represent the state of South Dakota in this national event. These young scholars have worked conscientiously to reach the national finals by participating at local and statewide competitions. As a result of their experience, they have gained a deep knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles and values of our constitutional democracy.

The 3-day We the People national competition is modeled after hearings in the U.S. Congress. The hearings consist of oral presentations by high school students before a panel of adult judges on constitutional topics. The students are given an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge while they evaluate, develop, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues. Their testimony is followed by a period of questioning by the judges, who probe the students' depth of understanding and ability to apply their constitutional knowledge.

The We the People program provides curricular materials at upper elementary, middle, and high school levels. The curriculum not only enhances students' understanding of the institutions of American constitutional democracy, it also helps them identify the contemporary relevance of the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Critical thinking exercises, problem-solving activities, and cooperative learning techniques help develop participatory skills necessary for students to become active, responsible citizens.

The class from Spearfish High School is currently preparing for their participation in the national competition in Washington, DC. It is inspiring to see these young people advocate the fundamental ideals and principles of our Government, ideas that identify us as a people and bind us together as a nation. It is important for future generations to understand these values and principles that we hold as standards in our endeavor to preserve and realize the promise of our constitutional democracy. Congratulations to Bethany Baker, Brandon Bentley, Hannah Bucher, Meghan Byrum, Joe Cooch, Jenna Eddy, Elise Foltz, Amber Ginter, Meggan Joachim, Frankelly Martinez Garcia, Lauren Meyers, Jason Nies, Emily Oldekamp, Aly Oswald, Jessica Richey, Lauren Schempf, Lindsay Senden, Janette Sigle, Nick Smith, Brent Swisher, Calli Tetrault, Kaysie Tope, and their teacher, Patrick Gainey. I wish these young constitutional scholars the very best at the We the People national finals.●

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (DRCOG)

• Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a model of intergov-

ernmental cooperation from my home State of Colorado: the Denver Regional Council of Governments, known as DRCOG.

DRCOG is a nonprofit, cooperative effort of the 51 county and municipal governments in the Denver metropolitan area, representing two and a half million residents, with another million expected by 2030, across eight counties: Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Gilpin and Jefferson. It was founded 50 years ago as the Inter-County Regional Planning Association, conceived as a place where local officials could work cooperatively to solve the region's problems. And it is a voluntary organization—the members are choosing to work together for mutual benefit.

DRCOG champions efforts in a number of areas, including services for seniors, transportation and commuter solutions, public safety training and testing, where it has repeatedly benefited from the highly successful COPS Program, as well as regional growth and water quality plans. It has focused on long-term plans to solve these issues, including developing understandable, fair and objective project selection processes for regional projects eligible for Federal, State and local funds and a long-term regional growth plan.

Last night was DRCOG's Annual Awards Dinner, where it will hand out a number of awards, including the John V. Christensen Memorial Award. Named after one of DRCOG's cofounders, the late John Christensen was a county commissioner for Arapahoe County and one of the Denver area's biggest proponents of cooperative problem solving for the metro area. The Christensen award will go tonight to a regionalist who has displayed outstanding commitment to working for the region's common good. Past award recipients have included Colorado State legislators, mayors, county commissioners, as well as county planners, regional leaders, and others during the award's 32-year history.

DRCOG has strived to speak, as its motto says, "With One Voice." Its members have eschewed partisanship and ideological bickering to focus on a single goal: Cooperative problem solving that benefits all of the people of the Denver metro area. By coming to the table with the commitment to work towards a common solution, DRCOG has exemplified what we seek in our leaders: Thoughtful consideration and deliberate action.

DRCOG is exactly the kind of effort to which we all aspire, a place for ideas and insight, for working in a non-partisan fashion across jurisdictional lines. I applaud the accomplishments and efforts of the Denver Regional Council of Governments and look forward to its continued success.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to