

exemplifies the company's commitment more than its support of our veterans and their families.

In the years 2003 and 2004 combined the Home Depot hired 25,000 veterans, and was recognized by G. I. Jobs magazine as America's No. 1 military-friendly employer. In 2004, the company launched Operation Career Front with the departments of Defense, Labor, and Veterans Affairs to provide career opportunities to military personnel and their spouses.

Since the tragic terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, our Nation has depended on our military Reserves and National Guard in waging the war on terror, and no American company has been a bigger supporter of the Reserves and Guard than the Home Depot. In March of 2003 the company enhanced its military leave policy to provide active duty associates with full pay and an extension of their health benefits.

In April 2003 the Home Depot launched Project Homefront, donating more than 1 million hours of volunteer service and \$1 million to help repair the homes of deployed military families. In September of 2004 the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves presented the Home Depot with its Freedom Award.

In June of this year the company established a program for returning veterans to provide associates with the critical resources needed for a smooth transition back to work.

For all these reasons and so many more, Home Depot was recognized this year by the Marine Corps Law Enforcement Foundation and the Partnership for Public Service with awards for leadership and distinguished service to America's veterans.

I am very proud to recognize CEO Bob Nardelli and the men and women of Home Depot for their leadership in employing and assisting America's active duty and veteran military personnel and their families.●

#### TRIBUTE TO JOHN WALTON

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Mr. John Walton, 58, an Arkansas native and Wal-Mart heir who on June 28, was killed when his aircraft crashed on landing outside of Jackson, WY.

John lived a varied and interesting life. John was born on October 8, 1946, the second oldest son of Sam and Helen Walton of Bentonville, AR. He attended high school in Bentonville and began his undergraduate studies at the College of Wooster in Wooster, OH.

As a young college student during the Vietnam era, John enlisted in the Army and volunteered for combat as a medic with the Green Berets. During his time in Vietnam, he was often in firefights with the enemy and performed heroically as a part of his special operations unit. He was awarded the Silver Star for saving the lives of several members of his unit while under enemy fire.

After returning from Vietnam, John pursued a variety of interests, including working as a crop duster in the 1970s and building boats in the 1980s. He had a passion for all things mechanical and was an avid motorcyclist and pilot.

More recently, John took a great interest in education. He took \$67 million of Walton Foundation money and founded the Children's Scholarship Fund. Scholarships from the fund have benefitted 67,000 children. He, along with his family, also made the largest contribution to a public college when they gave a \$300 million gift to the University of Arkansas.

Our condolences and prayers go out to John's wife Christy of Jackson Hole, WY; to his son, Luke, and to his mother Helen; as well as to his siblings Rob, Jim, and Alice.

John's life exhibited his commitment to his country in so many ways. He defended his country on the battlefields of Vietnam and he invested in his country by funding a better education for thousands of children. I am sure the entire Senate will join with me to honor the life of John Walton.●

#### HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF GARY L. NEALE

● Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, today I call to the attention of my colleagues the retirement of a pillar of the energy industry for many years in my home State of Indiana, Mr. Gary L. Neale. On June 30, 2005, Mr. Neale stepped down from his post of chief executive officer of NiSource Inc.

Prior to bringing his talents and dedicated work ethic to Northwest Indiana, Mr. Neale earned both his B.A. and M.B.A. from the University of Washington. In addition to this impressive education, he also took time to broaden his experiences by serving his country as an officer in the U.S. Navy. Mr. Neale remains not only an astute student but also a valued teacher contributing articles to Business Week, Harvard Business Review, and Public Utilities Fortnightly.

Supplementing his impressive academic and military careers, Mr. Neale became a consistent force in the energy industry in Indiana and nationally. Before joining NiSource in 1989, Mr. Neale was chairman, president and executive officer of Planmetrics Inc., an energy industry management consulting firm, for 17 years. Additionally, he held management positions at Wells Fargo Bank and Kaiser Industries.

Mr. Neale has displayed tremendous leadership in multiple capacities. He has served as chairman of both the American Gas Association and the North American Electric Reliability Council. He was appointed to the U.S. Department of Energy's National Petroleum Council and also the Department's Electricity Advisory Board. Mr. Neale graciously accepted the appointment of the Governor of Indiana to serve on our State's Economic Development Council, Energy Policy Forum

and Clean Air Advisory Committee. He headed the Northwest Indiana Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory Board and the Lake Area United Way Campaign. Mr. Neale also sits on the boards of directors of Associated Electric & Gas Insurance Services Limited, AEGIS, Modine Manufacturing Company, Chicago Bridge and Iron Company, and Valparaiso University.

As he begins this new chapter in his life, I simply wanted to highlight a few of Mr. Neale's extensive accomplishments. I am pleased to have this opportunity to join his wife Sandy, two children, five grandchildren, and many friends and colleagues in congratulating him on a fine career.●

#### TRIBUTE TO JACKSON T. STEPHENS

● Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a legendary Arkansan. Jackson "Jack" Stephens was a businessman, financier, and philanthropist whose work has touched the lives of countless individuals in and outside of Arkansas, and his contributions to the state will live on for generations to come.

Described by Scott Ford, CEO of Alltel Corporation, as "the most brilliant businessperson that the state has ever produced," Jack Stephens has many accomplishments and accolades to his credit. Jack grew up on a farm in Grant County, AR. He attended the U.S. Naval Academy, and soon thereafter he joined his brother Witt's investment firm, which became the financial vehicle for his success over the years. Jack's good business instincts and fabled work ethic led Stephens, Inc. to the forefront of Arkansas business. The financial clout that the Stephens brothers were able to amass allowed Jack to play an essential role in the development of some of Arkansas' most successful businesses, including Wal-Mart, Tyson Foods, and Alltel Corporation. The Stephens name is virtually inseparable from economic development in Arkansas over the last half century, and rightfully so.

Jack Stephens was also a philanthropist who truly believed in the values of charity and community service. His love for the people of Arkansas led him to invest not only in for-profit ventures to contribute to our State's economic well-being but also in many nonprofit causes for the benefit of the people of Arkansas. He helped build the distinguished Jackson T. Stephens Spine and Neurosciences Institute at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. Jack's support of the arts, health and education also made a notable difference in lives of so many Arkansans.

Perhaps one of the best known causes that Jack promoted was related to one of his lifetime passions: golf. In 1991 Jack was chosen to be chairman of the Augusta National Golf Club, home of the Masters tournament, where he served until 1997. It is here that Jack