

one of her life's major goals and Dr. King's birthday is now celebrated annually in over 100 nations.

I wish to commemorate the incredible message of this woman. Recent celebrations commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Supreme Court's landmark ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* and the 40th anniversary of the enactment of the Voting Rights Act, remind us of just how far our country has come.

Mrs. King once remarked, "Struggle is a never ending process. Freedom is never really won—you earn it and win it in every generation." Our country has lost a giant who took on the struggle for freedom. If we truly wish to honor her, we must all assume the responsibility to fight injustice and inequality.

I thank Mrs. King for her incredible contributions to this country and to the world. Her family will continue to be in my thoughts and prayers. While she will be deeply missed, her message will never be forgotten.●

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### HONORING PHILIP A. FRANCIS, JR.

● Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, today I want to honor Philip A. Francis, Jr., on his promotion as superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway, and his departure from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Since 1994, Philip A. Francis, Jr., has served as assistant superintendent of America's busiest national park. For more than 11 years, Phil did an exemplary job of keeping the Smokies on track and moving forward during a very dynamic period of the park's history. Phil served under a succession of three different Smokies superintendents and acted as superintendent himself for well over 2 years of his tenure. His leadership provided an essential element of stability to the park's operations and to improving its relationships with its many partners and surrounding gateway communities.

In recognition of his organizational management talents and his ability to work with numerous and diverse stakeholders, Phil has recently been chosen to become superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway. With over 9 million annual visitors, the Smokies is the most visited national park in the country. But the 470 mile-long Blue Ridge Parkway, with nearly 19 million travelers a year, is the National Park Service's busiest management unit.

While at the Smokies, Phil provided oversight and continuity to National Park Service managers at all levels as they negotiated through the complexities of making far-reaching decisions regarding the future of the immensely controversial Cades Cove and Elkmont Historic Districts in the Tennessee portions of the park. And he has played a key role in striving for a resolution to a 60 year-long debate over a proposed

new road through the Smokies in North Carolina. Despite the often heated debate among the parties to these contentious discussions, Phil has gained a reputation for his willingness to listen to the concerns of all sides and to look for solutions that recognize their needs while still protecting the park's natural and cultural resources.

Phil has also been an influential proponent for the Smokies in communities outside the park's boundaries and in working with its ever-expanding circle of support groups. Since their founding in 1993, the Friends of the Smokies has raised in excess of \$15.5 million in support for improvements at the Smokies. By combining Friends support with assistance from the Great Smoky Mountains Association, the park has been able to broaden its educational programs, undertake the world's first all species biodiversity inventory, and expand environmental education opportunities. Phil has been a key participant in helping develop those new programs, and in creating new nonprofit organizations to manage them.

In 2002, the National Park Service faced a challenge in finding a new superintendent for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. For those who care about the Smokies, as I do, there was lots of interest in who would be selected. Director Fran Mainella made a great choice when she appointed Dale Ditmanson, and we have grown to appreciate Dale's abilities and passion over the last few years. One of the reasons for Dale's strong start is the help he has gotten from Phil, and I look forward to working with Dale to preserve and carry on Phil's legacy in the Smokies.

I join the park's many neighbors and friends in thanking Phil for his hard work and professionalism while at the Smokies. I extend my congratulations and best wishes to Phil on his new assignment at the Blue Ridge Parkway.●

##### RETIREMENT OF DALLAS L. HAYDEN

● Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, on December 24, 2005, Dallas L. Hayden, a native son of Kansas retired from Federal service with 26 years with the Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General. Mr. Hayden retired as the Special Agent-in-Charge of the Great Plains Region of which Kansas is included.

Mr. Hayden exemplified all that a Federal law enforcement agent should: integrity, loyalty, and above all, the belief that the laws of the land are paramount. Politics never played a part in any investigation under his control. Only the facts mattered.

I want to publicly commend Mr. Hayden for his service and wish only the best for him and his family in the years to come.●

##### SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY—GIVE KIDS A SMILE DAY

● Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, on February 3, 2006, the University Of Mississippi Medical Center School of Dentistry hosted "Give Kids A Smile Day/National Children's Dental Access Day." This event is part of a national initiative by the American Dental Association to focus attention on the epidemic of untreated oral disease among disadvantaged children. As part of this program, 40,000 dental professionals and volunteers provided free educational, preventive, and restorative dental services to children from low-income families at 2,000 locations across the country. In Mississippi, more than 1,200 children from elementary schools in Jackson, MS, and the Mississippi Delta visited the dental school and the School of Nursing Mobile Dental Van for dental services. The event was co-sponsored by the Mississippi Dental Association, the Medical Center School of Health Related Professions, the Medical Center School of Nursing, the School of Dentistry's ACT Center, and the Jackson Medical Mall Foundation. Events such as this raise public awareness of dental disease and highlight the ongoing challenges faced by disadvantaged children in accessing dental care.

I applaud the efforts of the University of Mississippi Medical Center School of Dentistry, the Mississippi Dental Association, and other supporting organizations for their efforts to combat childhood dental disease in Mississippi.●

##### ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA

● Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, on January 12-15, 2006, the State of Mississippi hosted the Alpha Kappa Alpha, AKA, Sorority's 98th National Founders Day Weekend which celebrates the founding of the first Greek-letter organization of African-American college women in 1908. AKA was created to encourage high scholastic and ethical standards and to enrich the social and intellectual aspects of college life for African American women. AKA is now a 17,000 member organization with a broad mission to improve conditions in communities through volunteer service. AKA has made great strides in helping individuals and communities develop and maintain constructive relationships with others. National Founders Day Weekend also serves to recognize and commemorate the Mississippi Health Project.

The Mississippi Health Project, sponsored by AKA, brought primary medical care to the rural Black population across the state of Mississippi for 2 to 6 weeks every summer from 1935 to 1942. During the 98th National Founders Day Weekend, a historic landmark was dedicated in Mound Bayou in the Mississippi Delta to commemorate the success of the Mississippi Health Project and to serve as a reminder of AKA's continuing commitment to provide health services to families across the world.