

are watching. The players on that—Senators SPECTER, LEAHY, KENNEDY, KYL, and others—have recognized they are going to have to work into the night. If we are going to finish this bill next week, we are going to have to work nights, and that doesn't mean 6:30 at night. We have one Senate event that we are locked into Tuesday evening, but that doesn't mean the managers cannot work while we do that. It is an event at the Botanical Gardens for Senators. So we are going to work long, hard hours to complete that most important legislation.

In short, this was a very good week for the Senate and for the American people.

We need a lot more weeks like this, and we hope to do that in the future.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if I can add briefly, I commend the majority leader for this week. I think we did have a good week. I am particularly pleased that we seem to be on a glide-path to completion of the important troop funding bill. There is a bipartisan agreement we need to have a signed bill providing funding for the troops before Memorial Day, and the distinguished majority leader and myself, and the President's representative, Chief of Staff Josh Bolten, have been working toward that end and will continue to do that tomorrow in an additional meeting with the Speaker and Leader BOEHNER from the House.

I, too, am pleased a bipartisan agreement on immigration appears to be coming together. On the day I was elected Republican leader, I said I hope this Congress will do two important things that will make a difference for our country. I thought the divided Government was uniquely situated to tackle both of these issues. One of them was Social Security. I am not as optimistic on that issue as I would like to be. And the other issue is immigration. There is reason for optimism today that the Senate, on a bipartisan basis, will come together and pass a landmark piece of legislation. We will find out next week, but I think the compromise announced today certainly gives room for optimism that might occur.

I did support the majority leader's decision to turn to that issue before Memorial Day. I thought it gave us the best chance of passing legislation, and with those kinds of deadlines, it gave us the best chance of coming together. Hopefully, that process of coming together was achieved earlier today.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ARMED FORCES DAY

HONORING FRANK WOODRUFF BUCKLES,
AN AMERICAN HERO

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, May 19 is Armed Forces Day. This is the day our country sets aside each year to remember and to honor the brave and patriotic Americans who serve today in the United States Armed Forces.

On Armed Forces Day in 1953, President Dwight David Eisenhower noted, "It is fitting and proper that we devote one day each year to paying special tribute to those whose constancy and courage constitute one of the bulwarks guarding the freedom of this nation and the peace of the free world."

More than a half century later, his words still ring true. The survival of freedom still costs the commitment and sacrifice of America's sons and daughters. I want to use this opportunity to let them know that we in the United States Congress are thinking of them, and that we thank them for their service to our country.

I would also like to use this opportunity to pay tribute to another brave and patriotic American, Mr. Frank Woodruff Buckles, who currently resides in the historic town of Charles Town, WV, and who served in the Armed Forces of the United States 90 years ago.

That's right—90 years ago.

Mr. President, last month, April 6 marked the 90th anniversary of the America's entrance into World War I.

That was the "war to end all wars." That was the "war to make the world safe for democracy." We know that did not happen. But World War I was the historic, global conflict that brought the United States onto the international scene. And it marked the emergence of the United States as a superpower.

Mr. President, 4.7 million Americans served in the U.S. military during that war—the "great war" as it was called.

Of the 4.7 million Americans who served in World War I, only 4 are still living. One of them is Mr. Frank Woodruff Buckles of Charles Town, WV.

Mr. Buckles was born in Harrison County, MO, on February 1, 1901, about 40 miles from the birthplace of his future commander, GEN John J. Pershing, the commander of the American Expeditionary Force in World War I.

Mr. Buckles was only 16 years of age when the United States entered the war.

Therefore, when he went to enlist in the Marines in order to fight the kaiser, he was rejected because he was too young.

So he then tried the Navy. This time he was rejected because he was flat-footed.

Determined to serve his country, Mr. Buckles went into the Army. This time, he was successful in enlisting because he lied about his age. On August 14, 1917, Mr. Buckles enlisted in the United States Army. Four months later, in December, 1917, he sailed "over there" aboard the RMS *Carpathia*, the vessel that had rescued the survivors of the *Titanic* 5 years earlier.

As a doughboy, Private Buckles drove dignitaries around England and an ambulance around France. Mr. Buckles usually downplays his wartime experience, explaining: "There was nothing dramatic about it. Sometimes

I was driving in Winchester, England, sometimes France." But his experience was indeed dramatic and it was important. Once war was declared, Mr. Buckles did not wait for his country to call him. He went from one military service to another until he was able to enlist, even if it meant fabricating his age. It was the willingness of 4.7 million brave and patriotic Americans to enter the military and to serve our country that won that war. On this Armed Forces day, we need to remember them as well as the men and women currently wearing our Nation's uniforms. We must keep all of them in our hearts and prayers, and make sure our country serves them, just the way they have served our country.

Mr. Buckles was discharged from the Army in 1920 at the age of 18. He attended business school, and then worked in various jobs in the United States and Canada, including a stint in the bond department at Bankers Trust in New York City.

But his love of adventure and sense of excitement eventually led him out to sea again, this time working for different shipping lines as a purser and quartermaster. He first worked off the coast of South America, then on to Europe.

In the 1930s, his work on a steamship line took him to Nazi Germany, where he attended the 1936 Olympics in Munich. Here he saw the great Jessie Owens win a gold medal to the great embarrassment of German Chancellor Adolph Hitler, who he also saw at the games.

In 1940, his work on steamship lines then landed him in the Philippines. He was working in Manila when the Japanese invaded. Mr. Buckles was captured and spent the next 3½ years in Japanese prison camps. Although he was a civilian, he was treated as a prisoner of war. At dawn, February 23, 1945, the same day that the American flag was raised on Iwo Jima's Mount Suribachi, the 11th Airborne Division liberated Mr. Buckles and his fellow prisoners.

After his release from prison camps, Mr. Buckles finally decided he had enough adventure and excitement. "I had been bouncing around from one place to another for years at sea," he explained. "It was time to settle down." So he married Audrey Mayo.

I am pleased to point out that in 1954, Mr. Buckles and his wife settled on a 330-acre farm in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia, the same area where his ancestor, Robert Buckles, had settled in 1732.

For the next five decades—that's right, five decades—Mr. Buckles has continued to operate his beloved farm.

Maybe it is from breathing that good, clean West Virginia mountain air, or, perhaps, it is his own eternal youth and vigor. Whatever the reason, at the age of 106, this hardy West Virginian is still going strong. He will serve as grand marshal of the World War I section of the Memorial Day parade, here in Washington DC. A few years ago, the

President of France presented Mr. Buckles with the Legion of Honor at a ceremony honoring World War I veterans at the French embassy here in Washington, DC. And he has been the subject of feature stories in USA Today, the Charleston Daily Mail, and "America's Young Warriors," and a number of other newspapers and magazines.

Mr. President, on this Armed Forces Day, I salute this brave and patriotic American. And I again salute and thank all those men and women serving in our Armed Forces today for their commitment and their sacrifice.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, this Saturday, May 19, is Armed Forces Day. Celebrated annually on the third Saturday of May, this is a day for all of us as Americans to rally around our military members—wherever they are serving—and thank them for their patriotism and duty to country. This day has a long and proud history. With President Harry S. Truman leading the effort for this holiday, it came to fruition just a few years after the close of World War II. It was at the end of August 1949 that Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson announced the creation of Armed Forces Day to replace separate days of celebration for the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force. While the roots of this celebration may have resulted from the unification of the Armed Forces under the Department of Defense, it serves much more than a consolidative purpose.

The account of the first Armed Forces Day is particularly riveting—as recorded in a page on the official web site of the Department of Defense: "The first Armed Forces Day was celebrated by parades, open houses, receptions, and air shows. In Washington DC, 10,000 troops of all branches of the military, cadets, and veterans marched pas[t] the President and his party. In Berlin, 1,000 U.S. troops paraded for the German citizens at Templehof Airfield. In New York City, an estimated 33,000 participants initiated Armed Forces Day "under an air cover of 250 military planes of all types." In the harbors across the country were the famed mothballed "battlewagons" of World War II, the *Missouri*, the *New Jersey*, the *North Carolina*, and the *Iowa*, all open for public inspection. Precision flying teams dominated the skies as tracking radar [was] exhibited on the ground. All across the country, the American people joined together to honor the Armed Forces."

It is that last sentence that stands out to me: "All across the country, the American people joined together to honor the Armed Forces." Let this Saturday be another one of those days. Wherever our brave military men and women are this Saturday—be it on the front lines in Iraq or Afghanistan, stationed along the DMZ that divides North and South Korea, on the open sea across the globe, or training in the great American skies above, let's honor them. Let us not forget their service

and dedication to protecting our freedoms and defending our way of life this Saturday and every Saturday, this day and every day.

To all our brave men and women in uniform and your families: thank you for your selfless service and sacrifice.

WE THE PEOPLE: THE CITIZEN AND THE CONSTITUTION NATIONAL TEAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, from April 28 to 30, 2007, approximately 1,200 students from across the country participated in the national finals of We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution, an educational program developed to educate young people about the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. The We the People program is administered by the Center for Civic Education and funded by the U.S. Department of Education through an act of Congress.

During the 3-day competition, students from all 50 States demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles. The students testified before a panel of judges in a congressional hearing simulation focusing on constitutional topics. I am pleased to announce that Damonte Ranch High School from Reno, NV, won their statewide competition and earned the opportunity to compete in the national finals.

The names of these outstanding students from Damonte Ranch High School are as follows: Fabien Dior-Siwajian, Ashley Fanning, Morgan Holmgren, Stephanie Kover, Tony Miller, Amy O'Brien, Stephany Pitts, Austin Wallis, and Eben Webber.

I would also like to commend the teacher of the class, Angela Orr, who donated her time and energy to prepare these students for the national finals competition. Also worthy of recognition is Marcia Stribling Ellis, the state coordinator, and Shane Piccinini, the district coordinator, who are among those responsible for implementing the We the People program in Nevada.

Please join me in congratulating these students on their outstanding achievement at the We the People national finals and wish them the best of luck in the years ahead.

COPS IMPROVEMENTS ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, this Congress has been making important efforts to show our support and commitment to our Nation's law enforcement officers. This week marks the 44th year that we have celebrated National Police Week. On May 1, the Senate passed a resolution sponsored by my colleague Senator SPECTER, the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, and myself, marking May 15, 2007 as National Peace Officers Memorial Day. Earlier this week, I was honored to participate in that ceremony here at the Capitol hosted by the Grand Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police and its auxiliary. As we do each year, we gathered with

the families of those who lost loved ones in 2006 while serving in the line of duty. We commemorated their sacrifice to keep us safe and secure.

On Tuesday, the House passed H.R. 1700, the COPS Improvements Act of 2007, by an overwhelming vote of 381 to 34. The Senate Judiciary Committee has voted to report the Senate's companion bill which I joined with Senator BIDEN to introduce. Despite tremendous support for this legislation, a Republican objection to passing the House bill has prevented this important legislation from passing the Senate. I am disappointed that Senate action on these vital improvements to the COPS Program has stalled, and I hope the objection is withdrawn so that the Senate can pass H.R. 1700.

This legislation would reauthorize and expand the ability of the Attorney General to award grants aimed at increasing the number of cops on the streets and in our schools. To accomplish this goal, this bill would authorize \$600 million in designated funds to hire more officers to improve and expand community policing, which will in turn help reduce crime. In Vermont, for example, passage of the COPS Improvements Act would likely mean that 110 new officers would be put on the beat. Additionally, the COPS Improvements Act would authorize \$200 million annually for district attorneys to hire community prosecutors and \$350 million annually for technology grants.

The COPS Program has been a resounding success, and the improvements to the program that are contained in this bill would help our State and local law enforcement agencies cope with the substantial reductions in funding they have endured in recent years. Despite these reductions in funding, law enforcement officers have an increased role in homeland security responsibilities. H.R. 1700 includes "Terrorism Cops," officers who are focused specifically on homeland security, and would also include the Troops to Cops Program to help soldiers returning from the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan. In short, this legislation gives our law enforcement officers the tools they need to reduce crime and protect our citizens.

The Government Accountability Office has reported that between 1998 and 2000, COPS hiring grants were responsible for 200,000 to 225,000 less criminal acts—one-third of which were violent. With violent crime on the rise and our State and local law enforcement officers stretched thin with new responsibilities, it is essential that we pass this legislation. I urge those on the other side of the aisle to withdraw their objections and support our State and local law enforcement agencies by passing H.R. 1700.

340B PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AND INTEGRITY ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, this Chamber has spent a good deal of time