

our service personnel. And, if this care can be provided closer to veterans' community and family support networks, then it is a win-win as families can be kept together and servicemembers can more easily transition back into their daily routines.

I have included language in this bill requesting the Department of Veterans Affairs to report to Congress on the conditions and criteria used for contracting with civilian rehabilitation providers, and outreach efforts being conducted to inform veterans and those who advocate on their behalf about such treatment options. I look forward to working with the VA and my colleagues to make sure our veterans have access to the care their sacrifices and personal injuries require.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT JON BONNELL, JR.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I speak today with great sorrow as we have lost a great American. A Fort Dodge native, Marine Sergeant Jon "J.J." Bonnell died while serving his country in Iraq on August 7, 2007. Sergeant Bonnell stepped on a roadside bomb while on duty between Baghdad and Fallujah. He was part of the 1st Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, based in Camp Pendleton CA. My prayers and deepest sympathy go out to J.J.'s parents, Jon Bonnell, Sr., and Denise Roark, as well as to his three sisters and all his family and friends. I also wish to express my sympathy to the community of Fort Dodge, who not only lost a fine young man, but an exemplary soldier.

J.J. will be remembered fondly and missed dearly. Only 22 years old, multiple students at Fort Dodge Senior High School referred to J.J. as a "hero," a label he greatly deserves. Making the ultimate sacrifice, J.J. deserves the gratitude of every American. An uncle described J.J. by saying "He loved doing what he did, and he gave the ultimate sacrifice. He said he was ready for the ultimate sacrifice." This speaks volumes for J.J.'s character, and we as Iowans and Americans are fortunate and honored to have a man with J.J.'s devotion and dedication serving our Nation.

J.J. enlisted in the Marine Corps as a senior in high school in 2003. He assisted victims of the 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia after his first tour in Iraq. A deeply dedicated marine, his grandmother recounted that J.J. "thought all the marines were heroes." On behalf of all Iowans, I offer my most

sincere appreciation for J.J.'s service to our Nation. I ask my colleagues in the Senate, and every American, to take a moment and remember with honor and gratitude the ultimate sacrifice of a true patriot, Sgt. Jon Bonnell, Jr.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO THE EASTERN KENTUCKY CONCENTRATED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM, INCORPORATED

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program, Incorporated, EKCEP, for their recent accomplishments at the 2007 Workforce Innovations Conference.

The 2007 Workforce Innovations Conference provides the opportunity for State and local government officials, workforce and economic development officials, as well as private sector representatives to assemble and discuss new ideas about workforce development issues. During this conference, Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program's Coal Services Program was awarded the U.S. Department of Labor's Recognition of Excellence Award for "Leveraging the Power of e3 Partnerships." The U.S. Labor Department's Employee and Training Administration presents Recognition of Excellence honors in five different categories. The e3 partnerships category presents value in projects that demonstrate sustained partnerships between employers, educators, and economic development leaders.

The EKCEP's Coal Services Program uses a variety of services that tackle the needs of employers and job seekers, such as crucial training for new coal miners and seasoned miners who need new training to increase mine productivity. Training is easily accessible for miners through Kentucky Community and Technical College System locations as well as a mobile miner training unit equipped with a high-tech classroom that features a computerized three-dimensional mining simulator.

I now ask my fellow colleagues to join me in congratulating the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program for their achievements and commitment in helping Kentucky's largest industry and our Nation's largest energy source.●

##### TRIBUTE TO ALEX SOTO

• Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, today I congratulate Mr. Alex Soto as he nears the end of his term as the 102nd president of the Nation's largest insurance association, the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America, IIABA. Mr. Soto was elected to the IIABA's executive committee in 2001 and was installed as the association's president last September.

Founded in 1896, IIABA, or the Big "I" as it is better known, is the Na-

tion's oldest and largest association of independent insurance agents and brokers, representing a network of more than 300,000 agents, brokers, and their employees. During his term as president of the Big "I," Alex Soto has been a leader on a number of issues for the association including natural disaster insurance, regulatory reform, and producer compensation. He is a national leader on enhancement and enforcement of building codes, which is an important issue in our home State of Florida. Notably, as chairman of the National Branding Committee and president of the IIABA, Alex devoted significant time and energy to the development and promotion of the "Trusted Choice" brand for independent agents. Thanks to his leadership, the Trusted Choice initiative has successfully created a distinctive mark that conveys the virtues of the independent agent insurance delivery system.

Alex Soto is also a great American success story. He came to the United States as a political refugee after fleeing communist Cuba in 1960 at the age of 11. When he arrived in this country, he did not speak any English and had to completely start over, learning the language, customs, and assimilating. Alex has gone on to achieve numerous accomplishments and is now the president of InSource, Inc., a successful and growing independent agency in Miami. He holds a degree in international affairs from Florida State University, the Chartered Property and Casualty Underwriter, CPCU, designation, and the Associate in Risk Management, ARM, designation. Alex has served as the chairman of the Florida Association of Insurance Agents, FAIA, and before that, as president of the Independent Insurance Agents of Dade County. He was vice chairman of the Florida Property Casualty Joint Underwriting Association, FPCJUA, in 1995-1996, as well as a member of the Governor's Commission on the Florida Insurance Crisis in 1993, and the Insurance Fraud Task Force in 1997.

In addition, Alex is active in his community. He has taught numerous insurance courses with the FAIA and at the University of Miami. He also serves as a trustee of the Archdiocese of Miami Trust. He was a member of St. Hugh Catholic Church Parish Council and a member of the Grove Outreach Center.

I sincerely thank Alex Soto for his work with the IIABA over the years and for his commitment to his profession, his community, and our State of Florida. His efforts are greatly appreciated. I am proud to count Alex as both a constituent and a friend. I wish him, his wife Patt, and their family all the best in their future endeavors.●

##### TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF MACDONALD GALLION

• Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to MacDonald Gallion, who passed away on Saturday, August 11,