

## ARMED FORCES DAY

Mr. MARTINEZ. Madam President, over the course of this Nation's history, generations of Americans have made tremendous sacrifices to protect the freedoms we hold dear. Every May, we honor these courageous Americans on Armed Forces Day.

Just a few years after the close of World War II, President Harry S. Truman led the effort for this holiday. 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.

This is a day for all of us as Americans to come together to recognize our brave military men and women for their service, sacrifice, and dedication to our Nation. On this Armed Forces Day, we are reminded of the important contributions our service men and women are currently making overseas to help others come to know the freedom we enjoy.

Let us not only remember all of the service men and women who have served our country so bravely, let us appreciate those serving at home and their families who sacrifice so much. On this day we thank members of our military for their selfless dedication to working everyday to protect our liberty and freedom.

As the home to more than 20 military installations and nearly 2 million veterans, this past Saturday was a proud day for many Floridians. I salute all those who have given up so much for our Nation, and express my tremendous gratitude for their service.

## HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

## SERGEANT ISAAC PALOMAREZ

Mr. SALAZAR. Madam President, I rise today to honor the life of Army Sergeant Isaac Palomarez of Loveland, CO. Sergeant Palomarez was killed last Friday in Kapisa Province, Afghanistan. He and his unit were working to root out Taliban cells and insurgent networks when his patrol ran across a roadside bomb and was then attacked with grenades and small arms. Isaac Palomarez was 26 years old.

Those who knew Sergeant Palomarez describe him as a gifted student, a spirited competitor and successful athlete, and a soldier committed to honoring his country and fulfilling his duty.

He was an honor student at Loveland High School who excelled in math, was an avid reader of military history, and filled his free time with sports. He helped Loveland High School's football team win a State championship in 2000, using his talent, work ethic, and heart to outcompete opponents who outweighed him by 50 or a hundred pounds.

After graduating from high school in 2001, Isaac took classes at Colorado State University, but was uncertain about which path to choose. In 2004, sensing a responsibility to serve his

country and his community, he enlisted in the Army, following in the footsteps of his father. He was assigned to A Company, 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, out of Fort Campbell, KY.

Sergeant Palomarez's first deployment was to Iraq, in 2005. After a year, he returned safely, in answer to the prayers of his family and friends.

Earlier this year he deployed again, this time to Afghanistan. Kapisa Province, in northwest Afghanistan, remains an outpost for Taliban and insurgent forces, and is a strategic link between the border regions and Afghanistan's capital, Kabul. Sergeant Palomarez was working with his unit and coalition forces to deny extremists a foothold in this critical area. It was a dangerous mission in an unforgiving place.

Sergeant Palomarez served in the finest tradition of America's soldiers. He was professional, compassionate, and committed to his country, community, and family. Shortly before he was killed, he borrowed a cell phone from another soldier, called his mother, and wished her a happy Mother's Day in advance. It was the last time he spoke with his family—news of Isaac's death reached his family before Mother's Day arrived.

The sense of duty and purpose that inspired Sergeant Palomarez's service is fundamental to our Nation's liberty and our democracy. The strength of our union stems from the willingness of American citizens to work and fight for the rights and freedoms of others, no matter the danger or the cost.

This was the message that William Allen White, the famous newspaper editor, delivered to Northwestern University graduates in 1936 as the specter of fascism loomed over Europe and Asia. "Liberty, if it shall cement man into political unity," said White, "must be something more than a man's conception of his rights, much more than his desire to fight for his own rights. True liberty is founded upon a lively sense of the rights of others and a fighting conviction that the rights of others must be maintained. Only when a people have this love of liberty, this militant belief in the sacredness of another man's self-respect, do races and nations possess the catalyzer in their political and social organism which produces the chemical miracle of crystallized national unity and strength. We Americans have had it for three hundred years on this continent. It was in the blood of our fathers. It was the basis of our faith in humanity when we wrote our constitution."

In Isaac Palomarez's honorable service we find the same love of liberty that has bound our union, generation after generation. In his courage and commitment to helping others, we are inspired to a greater faith in humanity. And in his sacrifice, we are humbled and indebted.

To Sergeant Palomarez's parents, Elma and Candido, to his three older

brothers, and to all his friends and family, I know no words that can assuage the pain you feel. I hope that in time your grief will give way to the pride you must feel for your son, to the joy that he stirred among those who knew him, and to the knowledge that his country will always honor his legacy. He will never be forgotten.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

## RECOGNIZING CHARLES RUCH

• Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, I wish to recognize the contributions of Dr. Charles Ruch to my home State of South Dakota.

I have known Dr. Ruch since he became president of the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in 2003. During his tenure, technology, innovation, and collaboration were continually the focus, and the School of Mines and the students there are the beneficiaries of Dr. Ruch's commitment to this vision. Dr. Ruch was instrumental in bringing the School of Mines and the community together to increase opportunities for research, scholarship, and economic development in Rapid City and across the State of South Dakota.

Dr. Ruch's emphasis on collaboration led to the Black Hills Development Center being located on the campus and the campus coming together to achieve the goals that were established in the Strategic Agenda of the School of Mines. I was consistently impressed by his love of the school, as well as his desire to improve programs and research opportunities for students and professors. Dr. Ruch is leaving the School of Mines just as funding commitments have been made to support the new Chemical and Biological Engineering building. The new building was one of the School of Mines' goals when Dr. Ruch arrived in 2003, and it is only fitting that the project is being realized as Dr. Ruch retires. As South Dakota established the Sanford Laboratory and we work with the National Science Foundation to establish a Deep Underground Science Laboratory, Dr. Ruch leaves the South Dakota School of Mines well-equipped to partner in these research projects.

Dr. Ruch has been an exceptional partner in improving collegiate opportunities in my home State and constantly sought new innovative programs, research grants, and post-graduate opportunities for students at the School of Mines. I would like to thank Dr. Ruch for his excellent service to students, the school, and the State of South Dakota. We all congratulate him on a very successful 5 years. His vision and enthusiasm for the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology will be sorely missed.●

## TRIBUTE TO KENNETH L. TYSON

• Mr. LAUTENBERG. Madam President, I wish to pay tribute to Kenneth