

States and to draw attention to its heightened significance in this year, the 200th anniversary of the United States' 'Second War of Independence,' the War of 1812. Since its adoption by the Second Continental Congress in 1777, our flag, with its thirteen stripes and fifty stars, has proudly stood as a beacon of liberty and justice throughout the world.

For more than 200 years our flag has stood as a tangible expression of our Nation and the lofty ideals it was created to protect. In 1916 President Woodrow Wilson sought to formally recognize the significant cultural and historical legacy that our flag embodies, proclaiming that the fourteenth of June should be known as Flag Day as a means of commemorating the Flag Resolution of 1777. While Flag Day was celebrated in many communities across the country in the years following Wilson's proclamation, it was not until 1949 that President Truman signed an Act of Congress designating June 14 of each year as National Flag Day and the week on which it falls as National Flag Week.

My State of Maryland plays a prominent role in the rich and storied history of our national Flag. Shortly after the British sack of Washington, D.C., the Royal Navy turned its gaze north, moving in force towards the strategic port city of Baltimore, MD. Despite the lack of formally trained, commissioned soldiers, the citizens of Baltimore diligently prepared the city's defenses and steadfastly stood their ground against the better equipped and trained forces of the British military. Despite their manifold disadvantages, the volunteer militia fought valiantly during the Battle of North Point, holding off the British infantry long enough for reinforcements to arrive. With their ground forces stymied, the British Navy commenced its intense, 25-hour bombardment of Fort McHenry. However, the bombardment was to no avail, as the stalwart American defenders refused to yield and the British were forced to depart.

During the bombardment, American lawyer Francis Scott Key, who was being held aboard an American flag-of-truce vessel in Baltimore Harbor, beheld by the dawns early light the American flag still fluttering in the breeze atop Fort McHenry. At that moment, Key realized the Americans had survived the assault and stopped the enemy advance. Deeply moved by the sight of the American flag after the devastating assault, he immortalized the event in a poem entitled "The Defense of Fort McHenry," which was later set to music and renamed "The Star Spangled Banner." On March 3, 1931, President Herbert Hoover signed a Congressional resolution, formally making the "Star Spangled Banner" the national anthem of the United States.

The flag that flew over Fort McHenry during that fateful night is now a national treasure that remains on display

at the Smithsonian Institution as a stirring inspiration to all Americans. Each year the National Flag Day Foundation of Baltimore sponsors a moving ceremony at the Fort McHenry National Monument and Historical Shrine which brings our community together in celebration and remembrance of our illustrious history.

America's flag graces classrooms, statehouses, courtrooms, and churches, serving as a daily reminder of this Nation's past accomplishments and ongoing dedication to safeguarding individual rights and political freedom. Whether it is being carried into battle by the brave members of our armed forces as they fulfill their missions in defense of democracy and peace or flying over the public buildings, the flag is a badge of honor for all to see—a sign of our citizens' common purpose.

This week and throughout the year let us do all we can to teach younger generations the significance of our flag and to respect the men and women who have fallen to protect it. In red, white, and blue, we see the spirit of a Nation, the resilience of our Union, and the promise of a future forged in common purpose and dedication to the principles that have always kept America strong. As we reflect on our heritage, let us remember that our destiny is stitched together like those 50 stars and 13 stripes, united as one, with liberty and justice for all.

TRIBUTE TO ANGELO ROPPOLO

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, today I wish to ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Angelo Roppolo and extending my appreciation for his extraordinary accomplishments and dedication to the city of Shreveport and the State of Louisiana.

Mr. Roppolo is a modest man who seldom takes credit for his achievements and is known throughout his community as someone who avoids the spotlight. He has an unwavering loyalty to his family and friends and has never been known to abandon his core beliefs and principles.

Mr. Roppolo stands for righteousness and justice, and he has never hesitated to support a candidate who has challenged the norm. Mr. Roppolo has played integral roles in many landmark political events in Louisiana. He was involved in organizing and planning the campaigns of the first African American judge to be elected in Shreveport and in Caddo Parish, along with the campaigns of the first female judge in Caddo Parish and the first female judge on the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals. Mr. Roppolo also served as the north Louisiana campaign chairman for Governor Kathleen Blanco, who was the first female to be elected as Governor of Louisiana.

Along with his love for the political process, Mr. Roppolo is also a strong supporter of entrepreneurs in Shreveport. He was a founder of the South Shreveport Business Association, an

organization dedicated to the success of businesses within the rapidly growing area of his community. He has also helped many individuals gain financing for their endeavors and has seen many of these ventures grow and prosper into successful businesses.

Mr. Roppolo is a kind and caring man who has always given praise and gratitude to the men and women in the armed services who serve and protect this country. Mr. Roppolo is a source of inspiration for all who know him. He is beloved throughout his community and the city of Shreveport, where his family and friends alike respect and admire all he has done for those around him.

It is with a special measure of sincerity and heartfelt commendation for the mark he has left of the State of Louisiana that I ask my colleagues to join me along with Mr. Roppolo's family in honoring and celebrating the life of this most extraordinary person.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING ST. PIUS VEREIN

• Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am pleased to honor St. Pius Verein, a social and fraternal organization in North Dakota that will soon celebrate its 100th anniversary. On June 23 and 24 of this year, the community of Scheffield will host a celebration to recognize St. Pius Verein's history and founding.

The town of Scheffield started with the establishment of the St. Pius Catholic Church, which was built in 1910. The town's name is said to be derived from "schoenfeld," the German word for beautiful field. In 1912, St. Pius Verein was founded by German settlers from Russia. The organization was first started as a way to unite the community. Members especially enjoyed singing and playing instruments together. Today, St. Pius Verein has 440 members. All members pay dues and contribute to a survivor benefit program that pays a benefit to families that experience a loss. St. Pius Verein holds monthly meetings, in addition to an annual picnic held on St. Pius Day. Scheffield takes great pride in the history of St. Pius Verein, and the community is expecting an enjoyable gathering.

To celebrate the 100-year anniversary of St. Pius Verein, Scheffield residents and visitors will participate in many fun-filled activities. Over the span of 2 days, the celebrants will enjoy children's games, a town dance, a citywide mass at St. Pius Verein Hall, a parade, an antique tractor pull, and an old-time jam session. DVDs will also be sold that describe the proud history of the town. Although many St. Pius Verein members no longer live in Scheffield, the town is expecting big numbers for the celebration.

Mr. President, I ask the Senate to join me in congratulating St. Pius