

School and Saint Thomas Aquinas communities, and I wish them continued success in the future.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RAYMOND, NEW HAMPSHIRE

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to the town of Raymond, NH, which is celebrating the 250th anniversary of its founding this month. I am proud to recognize this historic milestone.

Located in Rockingham County along the Lamprey River in southeast New Hampshire, the geographic area that Raymond now occupies was originally a parish of Chester called Freetown by its early settlers who came from nearby Exeter. Later, in 1764, the town was incorporated by colonial Governor Benning Wentworth and was officially named Raymond.

Since its incorporation in 1764, the population in Raymond has grown to approximately 10,000 residents, whose dedication to preserving the town's unique character and historical charm is a testament to their patriotism and pride. Raymond is also a hub for commerce with a vibrant downtown.

Raymond's town common serves as a central gathering place for the community and helps makes this town a quintessential New England treasure. Each year Raymond's residents come together for the annual Christmas parade and tree lighting, the Fourth of July parade, Veterans Day, and other special events. The town is also home to several historic sites, including the Raymond Congregational Church, which was established in 1874, the Dudley-Tucker Library, and the old Raymond Railroad Depot, which now houses the Raymond Historical Society.

The theme for Raymond's 250th anniversary celebration is "My Town, Your Town, Our Town." These words reflect the deep pride and spirit of citizenship that have defined Raymond over the course of the past 250 years—and which will continue to guide the town's future. Among the many activities planned as part of Raymond's 250th celebration is a parade that will bring together local residents, community organizations, businesses, veterans, and students. I am truly honored to be joining residents of Raymond for this special and historic event.

On behalf of the people of New Hampshire, I am delighted to congratulate the citizens of Raymond on this important occasion in the town's history and commend them for their many contributions to our State and their spirit of community—which will endure for the next 250 years and beyond.●

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL SIELICKI

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the exceptional public service of my good friend Police Chief

Michael Sielicki. Mike Sielicki has worked as a New Hampshire law enforcement officer for more than 26 years, retiring as the chief of police of the Kensington Police Department.

After serving in the U.S. Army with the 82nd Airborne Division from 1979 to 1983, then as a combat engineer in Germany from 1983 to 1986, Chief Sielicki returned to New Hampshire to serve in the New Hampshire criminal justice system. He first joined the Hillsborough County Department of Corrections in 1986 and then the Coos County Department of Corrections in 1987. Mike Sielicki began his law enforcement career with the Colebrook Police Department in 1987 and attended the New Hampshire Police Academy in 1989. Through his hard work and dedication, he rose through the ranks and became the chief of the Colebrook Police Department in 1993, serving in that capacity until 1999, when he accepted the chief's position in Hancock, where he worked from 1999 to 2003. In 2003, he was appointed the chief of police of the Rindge Police Department, where he served until accepting the chief's position in Kensington in 2012.

In a career that has spanned three decades, Mike has established a reputation as a knowledgeable, respected and compassionate public safety professional and engaged community member. He established the Colebrook Police Athletic League in 1994. Chief Sielicki became a foster parent and subsequently served as the president of the New Hampshire Foster Parent Association from 1999 to 2004. He led the Law Enforcement Torch Run for NH Special Olympics from 2008 to 2011.

During my tenure as New Hampshire's attorney general, it was my privilege to work directly with Chief Sielicki on many important law enforcement initiatives. Mike earned the respect and admiration of his peers and has been a thoughtful, effective leader in efforts to improve the criminal justice system and public safety in New Hampshire. Active in the New Hampshire Association of Chiefs of Police, Chief Sielicki rose through the executive board chairs and served as its president from 2013 to 2014, a term he just completed. A courageous and respected leader, Mike often spoke out on important public policy issues, such as opposing the legalization of marijuana, and the expansion of gambling.

As Chief Sielicki celebrates his retirement, I want to commend him on a job well done and ask my colleagues to join me in wishing him, his wife Kim, and their family well in all future endeavors.●

REMEMBERING COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR HOWARD A. MCRAE

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, it is my pleasure to memorialize a decorated veteran from the Alaska community of Haines, CSM Howard A. McRae. Born in 1929, he wanted to see more of the

world, so, with his buddy Dave Berry, he made his way to Seattle. In that short distance, the two young men found themselves broke, so they joined the U.S. Army, where they received training in electronics. That was 1948.

For Howard it was a turning point. Described by a family member as "a little disheveled," the Army changed his life. He was now on his way to a 23-year military career, including 11 in the Green Berets.

Howard got his wish to see more of the world, although perhaps not as originally intended. Assignments took him to Korea, Japan, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam. He did four tours of duty in Korea and three in Vietnam.

Described as courageous and disciplined, Howard McRae received many citations and medals for his bravery, his dedication to duty, and his leadership. Among them: an Army Commendation Medal with three Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters to include a "V" for valor; a Korean Service Medal with four Bronze Service Stars; a Vietnam Service Medal with three Bronze Service Stars, a United Nations Service Medal given by the U.N. for participation in the Korean war; and an Army Commendation Medal and Oak Leaf Cluster for meritorious service as chief instructor of the Advance Training Committee and as sergeant major and director of instruction at Fort Bragg, NC.

Exemplifying the military's own respect for Command Sergeant Major McRae, he was among the 44 Special Services soldiers chosen to stand guard over President John F. Kennedy's body as he lay in State in the White House. McRae had said that this was his proudest moment.

In his later military career, McRae was command sergeant major of the Special Forces School and the High Altitude Low Opening Military School, parachute at Fort Bragg, NC. As the highest ranking noncommissioned officer at the post, he was in charge of oversight for those who taught tactical training skills. Truly, he was a leader among leaders.

Unfortunately, and likely due to the effects of agent orange connected to his service in Vietnam, Command Sergeant Major McRae was medically retired in 1971. With wife Sarah Elizabeth, whom he met at Fort Bragg, he returned to Haines. There, he continued in service but this time through the city and borough of Haines, where he served in the borough assessor's office. In 1976 he and Sarah moved to Juneau, where he served as a budget analyst for the Alaska Department of Education.

Every inch a soldier, McRae raised his blended family of 8 children and 34 grandchildren to serve. His son Guy served in the Army, as did grandsons Steven and Joshua. Grandson Thomas joined the Marines and, given his grandfather's indomitable spirit, survived serious injuries in Afghanistan.