

TRIBUTE TO MARK PRYOR

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, today we honor the dedicated public service of my dear friend and colleague, Senator MARK PRYOR from Arkansas.

For MARK PRYOR, public service is a calling—one that goes to the roots of who he is. MARK PRYOR is the fifth generation in his family to serve in public office.

Beholden to no party, no special interests, Senator PRYOR's singular objective in Washington has been to make lives better for the people of the State his family calls home. The sign on his desk says "Arkansas comes first." It was his father's campaign slogan a generation ago, and that's the priority that guided MARK PRYOR from the day he arrived in the Senate.

When Senator PRYOR learned that a widow in Greenwood, AR, was being deprived death benefits because her husband died at home, instead of in combat, Senator PRYOR crafted an amendment to change that Pentagon rule, restoring the full death benefit for the widow—and fixing it permanently so it would be available to other surviving spouses.

A deeply patriotic man, with a profound respect for those who serve, Senator PRYOR is the author of the HIRE At Home Act, which encourages companies to consider military experience for servicemembers reentering the workforce.

But he has also fought to bring down the costs of Arkansans' prescriptions and to protect the social safety net. When FEMA demanded back pay for Federal disaster aid it provided to Arkansans, Senator PRYOR made sure the rule got changed.

And I was honored this past year to partner with Senator PRYOR on the Bring Jobs Home Act, to prevent companies from being rewarded for shipping jobs overseas and giving them an incentive to bring those jobs that have left our borders back home again.

Of course, Senator PRYOR served as chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies. So as author of the 2014 Farm Bill, I relied on Senator PRYOR as a partner. He introduced the Forest Products Fairness Act, which helps timber farmers in Arkansas and across the Nation qualify for USDA's BioPreferred Program.

During an age of partisan strife, Senator PRYOR has provided sanctuary for those who seek compromise. I share the sentiment he expressed in his farewell address—it is imperative that we come to work not wearing jerseys of red or blue but ones that have red, white and blue.

It saddens me that my dear friend, Senator PRYOR, cannot join us in this enterprise, because he has truly been a voice of civility and reason. But I have no doubt he will find new ways to serve the country and the State that he loves.

I wish him Godspeed in his future efforts.

SSCI STUDY OF THE CIA'S DETENTION AND INTERROGATION PROGRAM

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I would like to personally commend Senator FEINSTEIN for releasing this report today. We have all heard the Justice Louis Brandeis quote that "sunlight is the best disinfectant" but occasionally we need a real world reminder. Today, Senator FEINSTEIN and the members and staff of the Intelligence Committee have provided that. The findings of this report are truly remarkable, laying bare that the CIA interrogation program was simultaneously far more brutal and far less effective than previously claimed.

This 600-page report is long overdue and makes clear that the CIA's so-called "enhanced interrogation techniques" failed to produce any otherwise unavailable intelligence that saved lives. At no time were these coercive interrogation techniques effective.

But more critically, this report makes clear to all Americans that what took place was not in keeping with our ideals as a nation. We have no greater duty than to protect the American people and our national security. But the single best way to do that is—and always has been—to do that in a manner consistent with our laws and our traditions. Horrific and torturous practices are explicitly prohibited and are never necessary. I thank Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator UDALL and other members of the committee for the months and years they have committed to making this release a reality.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on the release of the declassified Senate Select Intelligence Committee report on the CIA's past rendition, detention and interrogation practices.

As a longtime member of the committee, I strongly support today's release of the declassified Executive Summary, Findings, Conclusions and Additional and Minority Views of the committee's report. With the release of this report, the American people finally have the information they need to understand the CIA's interrogation practices that spanned 2001 through 2009, when President Obama put an end to the Bush-era program.

The CIA's practices went against our values as Americans and damaged America's global reputation. The committee's report shows not only that torture did not extract the "otherwise unavailable" intelligence that some CIA officials claimed, it did not work as a policy or in practice.

I have consistently opposed the repugnance, legality and efficacy of torture. I supported FBI Director Robert Mueller's directive saying FBI agents may not participate in torture. I have repeatedly and publicly expressed my frustration about being lied to and ma-

nipulated by some CIA officials over many years. As I said during the Intelligence Committee's hearing confirming John Brennan as CIA Director, "I'm going to be blunt and this will be no surprise to you, sir—but I've been on this Committee for more than 10 years, and with the exception of Mr. Panetta, I feel I've been jerked around by every CIA Director."

My views against torture have been consistent with those of Senator JOHN MCCAIN, whose stance against torture is particularly compelling given his own experiences as a prisoner of war. I have also supported the use of interrogation techniques as laid out in the Army Field Manual and have decried the use of contractors by the CIA in the torture of detainees.

Some people have raised concerns about the timing of the release of this report and that our enemies could use it as a pretext for violence. Long before the release of this report, however, terrorist groups made their violent intentions towards America clear. They hate America and our freedoms. They use violence for the sake of violence. No public action is without risks, whether by President or Congress, but we also risk who we are as Americans by suppressing the facts in this report.

I would like to reiterate that this report was reviewed and redacted in conjunction with the CIA and White House, and the Director of National Intelligence approved its declassification. It was a difficult process that took over a year, but we finally got to a place where the narrative of the report was adequately preserved while ensuring that CIA personnel and operations were not compromised. The DNI weighed the risks and ultimately certified the declassification of the report.

To be clear, my support for this report in no way diminishes my respect for the men and women of the CIA, who are faithfully and legally doing their duties. The CIA's intelligence professionals put their lives at risk for our country. They deserve our support and respect.

I would like to thank Select Committee on Intelligence Chairman DIANNE FEINSTEIN for her leadership, as well as my committee colleagues from both sides of the aisle who supported this investigation. Throughout the frustrating and sometimes contentious process of producing this report, we never gave up on pursuing the truth. Thanks also to the committee staff who worked tirelessly on this report at great sacrifice to themselves and their families.

This report sheds light on a complicated episode in America's history, but it is also a testament to the value of never giving up on the search for truth and accountability. I hope that future generations will read it, study it, learn from it and make sure that torture is never again used by the U.S. government.

TRIBUTE TO CLEMENCIA
SPIZZIRRI

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to take this time to honor an extraordinary Iowa teacher who has had a positive impact on a great many students. Ms. Clemencia Spizzirri was recently announced as the 2015 Iowa Teacher of the Year. This award honors the great work she has done as a foreign language teacher at Merrill Middle School in Des Moines, IA.

Ms. Spizzirri has been teaching Spanish to eager young minds at Merrill Middle School for 5 years. Despite her relatively short time there, her profound impact is evident. The high praise she receives from her students, colleagues, and community members are a testament to the work ethic and passion she displays in her classroom every schoolday.

As an immigrant herself, Ms. Spizzirri embodies the importance of a broad-based education that helps students understand the world beyond their own country. Born in Quito, Ecuador's capital city, Ms. Clemencia was the youngest of seven children. She learned quickly that success was nearly impossible without a quality education. This drove her to become a teacher. She witnessed firsthand the struggles that accompany poverty and knew she could make a difference through teaching. She started her career teaching English in Quito. When the conditions in her country began to worsen, she obtained a visa and moved to the United States. After immigrating to this country, Ms. Spizzirri received a bachelor's degree in New York. She then moved to Des Moines, IA, where she received her master's degree from Drake University.

Ms. Spizzirri attributes her passion for educating young minds to unfortunate circumstances she has witnessed in her own life. This passion ensures a quality education for all her students and contributes well-rounded citizens to the community. Great teachers are an invaluable resource to all of our communities and Ms. Spizzirri deserves nothing but praise for her tremendous work. I thank Ms. Spizzirri for her service to the people of her community and wish her nothing but the best in her future school years and beyond.

REMEMBERING MARK HESSE

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I wish to remember an upstanding Coloradan and accomplished mountaineer who passed away unexpectedly this year while doing what he was so passionate about: climbing. Mark Hesse was a man of exceptional character, exhibited a strong sense of adventure, and was a devoted admirer of nature; all of which are qualities of a true conservationist. He was an inspiration to many of us in the great State of Colorado.

Mark grew up in Colorado Springs, CO, where he became an Eagle Scout.

Upon graduating from the University of Colorado at Boulder with a master's degree in special education and teaching, Mark took to traveling abroad in pursuit of climbing peaks around the world. In 1976, he became the first person to climb the completely vertical southeast face of Mount Asgard on Baffin Island. In 1986, he made the first ascent up the northeast buttress of Kangtega in Nepal, a prominent Himalayan peak with a summit of over 20,000 feet. These ascents, among countless others, inspired him to advocate for conservation and accomplish so much for Colorado's environment.

He is survived by Julie Asmuth, his wife of 30 years, his two daughters Hartley and Laurel, his mother Florence, brothers Jon, Paul, Phil, and sisters Anne Ness and Maria Hesse Vasey.

Mark was a loyal and devoted husband and father. He had a warm personality and a great sense of humor. He also had an amazing knack for turning ordinary outings into epic adventures, and thus was well known for adventure stories that seemed almost too absurd to be true. These qualities enabled him to inspire and educate his children and their peers, as well as the friends and colleagues he had through climbing and service projects he was part of. Mark was devoted to taking his family on trips to some of the most remote places possible, including the rainforests in South America and the ocean reefs of South East Asia. He believed in supporting ecotourism and educating himself and his family about different cultures and natural wonders of the world before they disappeared.

Mark loved the environment, believed in a higher standard for managing public spaces, and was committed to preserving the natural beauty of our great Nation. He received several distinguished awards for his work, such as the American Alpine Club's David Brower Award for Mountain Conservation in 1995, the Bob Marshall Champion of Wilderness Award presented by the U.S. Forest Service in 2005 and 2007, and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's Making a Difference National Volunteer Award for outstanding service on public lands in 2014. He was the co-founder and executive director of the Santa Fe Mountain Center from 1977 to 1980, the program director of the Southwest Outward Bound School, and co-founder of the Colorado Fourteeners Initiative Program. He worked with the Bureau of Land Management to preserve two popular climbing destinations: Shelf Road and Penitente Canyon. Perhaps most notably, Mark founded the Rocky Mountain Field Institute in 1982, which has engaged more than 16,000 volunteers to contribute 200,000 hours to public land stewardship projects. These efforts amounted to more than \$4 million in on-the-ground restoration efforts.

One of Mark's final projects, and a dream he had been nurturing for many years, was to create a hot-shot trail crew with high-end rock working skills

that could build climbing access trails in the steep, rocky, and unstable terrain where climbers travel. At the time of his passing, Mark was collaborating with the Boulder Climbing Community and the Access Fund, two non-profits based in Boulder, to develop the Front Range Climbing Stewards trail crew. The project moved forward, inspired by Mark's lifetime of work, and in 2014 the trail crew performed more than \$120,000 worth of work, in both Eldorado Canyon and the Flatirons, including the spectacular rebuild of the iconic Royal Arch Trail that was destroyed in the flood of 2013.

Colorado lost an irreplaceable individual with the passing of Mark Hesse. I, along with many others, have lost a respected leader, visionary, and friend. Let his life be a reminder of what every American is capable of accomplishing.

I ask that my colleagues join me in remembering Mark Hesse for his passion for the outdoors, his vast wealth of experiences, and his leadership in showing us how to be good stewards of our public lands.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES NIX

● Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I wish to honor Charles Nix, who will retire as the Poinsett County judge after three terms of honorable service to the citizens of Arkansas in this elected position.

As Poinsett County judge, Charles faced and overcame several disasters including the 2011 flood and multiple tornadoes. Charles played a pivotal role in leading the county through the storms, repairing the damages and restoring the livelihood of the citizens.

Beyond his county judge duties, Charles served as a member of the County Judges Association of Arkansas, Crowley's Ridge Development Council Board, Eastern Arkansas Planning and Development Council Board, and Northwest Arkansas Workforce Investment. He also presided as president of the Harrisburg Area Chamber of Commerce and served in the Army National Guard for 6 years.

Charles Nix has displayed honor, perseverance, and an eagerness to serve his community that we can all admire. I am truly grateful for his years of dedicated service and commitment to Poinsett County and the State of Arkansas.●

RECOGNIZING ST. PATRICK
SCHOOL

● Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, I wish to applaud St. Patrick School of Chesterton, IN for being recognized as a 2014 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education.

Established in 1982, the National Blue Ribbon Schools program has recognized over 7,000 public and nonpublic schools that demonstrate a vision of educational excellence for all students, regardless of their social or economic