

make it possible for more of the young people who go to these schools to get to graduation. Her amendment would help identify the struggling schools and provide some fresh approaches to help turn them around—a smart idea that I believe warrants bipartisan support.

Finally, I have just a couple other approaches that I think are particularly valuable in terms of this debate and particularly how we can use the machinery of the Federal Government to play a constructive role in terms of education at the local level.

Senator BOOKER and I have worked for an amendment that tries to help homeless children and foster youngsters graduate from high school. Once again—and we can see it in kind of what undergirds my remarks here—the focus is on trying to create opportunity for young people who constantly are out there swimming upstream. The hurdles these youngsters face are obviously large. Many of them move frequently, constantly, from one place to another throughout their lives. As a result, it is hard for them to feel any connection to the school, to feel some sense of stability. What Senator BOOKER and I would seek to do is to make it easier for school districts and policymakers to try to help those school districts provide additional support for those youngsters who are homeless and those children who are in the foster care system.

Finally, Senator FRANKEN has offered an important proposal—the Student Non-Discrimination Act—that provides strongly needed protection for LGBT students. Schools ought to be safe and welcoming places that assist every child in getting ahead and thriving. If schools—particularly for the youngsters I have talked about in my remarks—aren't challenging enough, it is hard to imagine how much harder it gets for a youngster who faces harassment or discrimination because of their sexual orientation. The Franken amendment goes a long way to protect LGBT students and their friends at school and prevent them from feeling they have to skip class to avoid bullying.

In wrapping up, the kinds of proposals I have outlined—starting with the effort to try to prevent students from dropping out and getting up the graduation rates—this is all about helping students get ahead through education, to expand opportunities for these young people throughout their lives through education.

What the focus of the Senate ought to be is to make sure that no matter where a child lives or how much his or her parents earn or what obstacles they face—the message ought to be, here in the Senate, with every Democrat and every Republican, picking up on what Chairman ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY have said, that this bill will help to drive home the principle that hard work in school leads to success. I believe the Every Child

Achieves Act is a good step in that direction. I urge my colleagues to support these important amendments.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SECRET SERVICE

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the U.S. Secret Service and to commemorate its 150th anniversary.

In 1865, Congress created the Secret Service to combat the production and distribution of counterfeit currency in post-Civil War America. At the time, currency counterfeiting was a fast-growing and serious threat to our Nation's financial and economic stability.

In 1901, following the assassination of President William McKinley, Congress further directed the Secret Service to take responsibility for the protection and safety of the President of the United States.

Today, 150 years after the Secret Service's founding, the men and women of the Secret Service continue to serve with quiet confidence across the United States and around the world as they protect our Nation against threats both foreign and domestic. From ensuring the security of the President, other senior government officials, and events of national significance, to protecting the integrity of our currency and investigating crimes against our financial system, the U.S. Secret Service plays a critical role in our Nation's safety and continued success. The contributions, sacrifices, and achievements of the Secret Service over the last 150 years have made the agency an indelible part of our Nation's identity.

The five points of the Secret Service star represent the Service's core values of duty, justice, courage, honesty, and loyalty. These values have been the Secret Service's foundation for the past century and one-half and will continue to be the foundation on which the Service's next 150 years—and the Nation's security—are grounded.

On this, the 150th anniversary of the U.S. Secret Service, I call upon my colleagues and upon all Americans to recognize the tremendous contributions the Secret Service has made to our Nation's safety and well-being. I also express my thanks to the thousands of dedicated Secret Service agents and employees who devote their time and energy to keeping our Nation, and our leaders, safe and secure.

REMEMBERING PRESIDENT BOYD K. PACKER

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the memory of Presi-

dent Boyd K. Packer—a man of integrity, kindness, courage, and candor whose commitment to Christ defined a lifetime of service. President Packer passed away peacefully in his home last week with his loving wife and children gathered at his bedside. Along with his family, I join millions of Christians worldwide in mourning the loss of a man who served faithfully for many years as the president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As an apostle, President Packer's teachings brought strength to the weary and hope to the hopeless. For those of us who mourn, we turn to these teachings to find peace amid the sadness of his passing.

Even as we grieve the loss of a leader, we celebrate the life of a friend. President Packer was a man whose selfless nature often masked his greatness, but not even his humility could hide a lifetime of achievement. From humble beginnings in Brigham City, UT, President Packer developed as a teacher and later as a leader in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

President Packer's upbringing was modest to say the least—his father was a service station operator and his mother was a homemaker. Raised against the backdrop of the Great Depression, he learned from an early age never to take anything for granted, especially the freedoms we enjoy as Americans.

President Packer would later defend those freedoms when he enlisted in the Army Air Corps during World War II. As a pilot serving in the Pacific Theater, President Packer flew dozens of dangerous missions and continued to serve after the war when he and his fellow soldiers worked to rebuild the shattered nation of Japan. Although President Packer dreamed of flying planes as a young boy, it was during his military service that he discovered his true life calling: to become a teacher.

When he returned to the United States, President Packer pursued that goal through his studies, eventually earning a doctorate in education administration from Brigham Young University. He quickly distinguished himself as an LDS Seminary teacher and later became the chief supervisor over the Church's seminary programs and Institutes of Religion. When President Packer was just 45 years old, he became an apostle—a calling he would serve in and magnify until the day he died. Even as an apostle, President Packer still saw himself as a teacher, and he endeavored to expound truth in simple ways that all could understand. The candor and clarity of his teachings touched the hearts of millions, as did President Packer's genuine love for those he served.

As a soldier and an educator, an administrator and an apostle, President Packer served in many different capacities throughout his life. But first and foremost, he served as a husband and a

father. For President Packer, fatherhood was a sacred responsibility that took precedence over everything else. He was a father of 10, a grandfather of 60, and a great-grandfather of 103. Neither work nor church service could keep him from caring for those he loved most. President Packer always set aside time for his family, and at every opportunity, he sought to educate his children and instill in them the anchor of faith—the same enduring faith that inspired all who heard his teachings.

President Packer's devotion to God was steady and unwavering, but just as sure and steadfast as his faith was his wife, Donna, his constant companion and able helpmeet who stood by his side for more than 67 years. In his final address to members of the LDS Church, President Packer expressed tender feelings for Donna:

When it comes to my wife, the mother of our children, I am without words. The feeling is so deep and the gratitude so powerful that I am left almost without expression . . . I am grateful for each moment I am with her side by side and for the promise the Lord has given that there will be no end.

I know Donna finds peace in that promise, and I pray that her family does too. May God's love might abide with them at this difficult time, and may His love be with all of us who mourn the passing of President Boyd K. Packer.

FIFTY YEARS LATER, RECALLING THE VIETNAM WAR AND THOSE WHO FOUGHT IN IT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this week the United States held a special ceremony to commemorate one of the longest wars in our Nation's history—the Vietnam war. It was a ceremony to honor the men and women who served in that long and searing conflict, especially the more than 58,000 young Americans who did not come home from the battle.

The Congressional ceremony was held to commemorate what organizers, including the Department of Defense, call the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam war. The milestone is a little ambiguous. You see, it was 50 years ago, on March 9, 1965, that the first U.S. combat forces—3,500 members of the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade—arrived at the port city of Da Nang, in what was then the Republic of South Vietnam.

The arrival of those young Marines marked the beginning of a massive U.S. military buildup that lasted nearly a decade. But America's military presence in Vietnam actually began several years earlier, with the deployment of military advisors to assist the South Vietnamese armed forces.

All told, 9.2 million Americans served in uniform during the Vietnam war; 7.2 million Vietnam-era veterans are still with us, along with 9 million families of Vietnam-era veterans.

Most of the men who served in Vietnam came home to build successful ca-

reers and strong families. More than a few went on to serve in Congress and we have benefited greatly from their wisdom and continued commitment to duty.

I think of my friend, Senator JOHN MCCAIN, who endured unspeakable cruelty for years as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam. He could have been released from that hell years earlier but he refused to leave while other American servicemembers remained captive.

Senator MCCAIN has been a powerful voice in calling for America to honor our commitments under the Geneva Conventions to never use torture—to remain true to our word and our values even in war. I respect him deeply for his principled stand.

I think of other friends and former members of this Senate who served in Vietnam. Bob Kerrey, the former Governor and U.S. Senator from Nebraska, lost a leg while serving as a Navy SEAL in Vietnam. He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Chuck Hagel, another Nebraskan, served as an Army sergeant in Vietnam alongside his brother Tom. He came home to build a successful business career, got elected twice to the U.S. Senate, and went on to serve as America's Secretary of Defense.

John Kerry was a diplomat's son—truly, a "fortunate son"—who served with distinction in Vietnam as a Navy lieutenant from 1966 to 1970. When he returned home, he became an eloquent voice among those calling for an end to the war in which he had fought. He went on to serve his State of Massachusetts as Lieutenant Governor and then represented his State for nearly 30 years in this Senate. He now represents our Nation's interest on the world stage as U.S. Secretary of State.

One of the bravest men I have ever met served in Vietnam and then served in this Senate. His name is Max Cleland. Max went to Vietnam as a 6-foot, 2-inch marine. One day in Vietnam he stepped on a landmine. The explosion ripped off both of his legs and one of his arms. Max Cleland went on to serve in the Veterans Administration under President Carter and later as a member of this Senate—an amazing man.

In all, more than 153,000 U.S. servicemembers were gravely wounded in Vietnam—wounded seriously enough to require hospitalization.

Others sacrificed even more; 58,220 American servicemembers were killed in action during the Vietnam war.

The Americans who died in Vietnam ranged in age from 6 years old to 62. Six in 10 were just 21 years old or younger. Their names are carved into that sacred slab of black marble, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, on the National Mall in Washington, DC.

In the four decades since the end of the war, thousands more Vietnam veterans have died from physical and psychic injuries suffered in that war—dying from causes ranging from cancers caused by exposure to the deadly

chemical defoliant Agent Orange, to the agonies of post-traumatic stress.

Fifteen years ago, Congress authorized the placement of a plaque near "The Wall" to honor these "men and women who served in the Vietnam War and later died as a result of their service." We remember and honor their service, too.

Every American my age and a decade or so younger knows someone who died in Vietnam or a friend whose father, brother or husband never came home. These young men are still missed deeply by their families and friends and remembered by a grateful nation.

The city I grew up in, East St. Louis, IL lost 56 young men in Vietnam.

The City of Chicago lost 959 young men in the Vietnam war. Let me tell you about one of them: Marine Lance Corporal Mike Badsing. He was among those first 3,500 Marines who landed at Da Nang 50 years ago—a rifleman in the 3rd Marine Division, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, C Company. The 1st Battalion suffered the highest casualty rate of any Marine battalion in any war—a grim distinction that led North Vietnam's Communist President Ho Chi Minh to call them "The Walking Dead." The nickname stuck.

Mike Badsing attended St. Edward grammar school, where he played football, basketball, and Chicago 16" softball. He was the youngest of five kids. One of his older sisters is a nun today.

He left Chicago for Vietnam on Christmas Eve 1964. About 10 months later, Sept. 6, 1965, his platoon came under fire and Lance Corporal Badsing was hit in the abdomen by a sniper shot, becoming the first Chicago-area Marine killed in combat in Vietnam.

He was buried in All Saints Cemetery in Des Plaines, IL. A half-century later, Marines still visit his grave, often drinking a few Old Style beers in their friend's memory.

My adopted hometown of Springfield, IL—also President Lincoln's adopted hometown—lost 40 young men in combat during the Vietnam war. Among them was an Army helicopter pilot named Captain Michael Davis O'Donnell.

Mike O'Donnell died on March 24, 1970, when a rescue helicopter he was piloting crashed in dense jungle in Cambodia, 14 miles over the Cambodia-Vietnam border. He had gone into Cambodia to rescue a Special Forces reconnaissance team that was about to be overrun by enemy soldiers. He and his crew had gotten all eight members of the Special Forces team safely on board and were taking off when their "Huey" helicopter was hit twice by enemy missiles. It was 1 week before President Nixon announced publicly that American forces were even in Cambodia.

All 12 men aboard Mike O'Donnell's Huey died, but it wasn't until 2001 that their remains were identified and returned. Today, they lie buried together at Arlington Cemetery.

Mike O'Donnell was 24 years old when he died. He was promoted posthumously to the rank of major.