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ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING GEORGIA'S VIETNAM VETERANS

• Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, as we approach the 25th Anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War, I rise today to pay tribute to those in my home state who answered the call of duty and were part of this great conflict.

The Vietnam War took place over the course of seventeen years, from the first formal American involvement in 1958 to the fall of the South Vietnamese government in 1975. Perhaps no other conflict in American history presented greater challenges to those who fought. A forbidding climate, combined with a tenacious opponent and attempts by some back home to undermine our effort, conspired to present our troops with near-impossible challenges.

My home state has a fine military tradition forged over the last 225 years. This legacy was upheld with honor throughout the Vietnam conflict. All told, Georgia sent 228,000 of its finest men and women to serve during the war. 1,584 were killed in action, and 8,534 were wounded. Twenty-one were held as prisoners of war, and to this day, thirty-nine remain missing in action. Youth from places like Snellville and Americus were thrown into an environment that was both unknown and very deadly. To say they did their duty well and with honor would be an understatement.

To honor its Vietnam veterans, my state dedicated a three-figure statue on Veterans' Day, 1988. In 1997 the Georgia Vietnam Wall was dedicated, listing the names of the 1,584 Georgians who died in the war.

Earlier this year the Georgia General Assembly passed a resolution commending Vietnam veterans and their families for their outstanding service to Georgia, America, southeast Asia, and the world. In addition, the General Assembly recognized that these brave troops did not lose the war, but rather that they simply were not allowed to win, and that their duty was just and honorable. I could not agree more.

Georgians have long recognized that freedom is not free and that we must always honor those who were willing to give their lives for it. As this era in our nation's history fades ever farther into the past, it is our duty to ensure that

the people of all ages recognize and honor those who fought for the freedom they enjoy today. More so than winning or losing, the soldiers of the Vietnam war proved through their sweat and blood that we are willing to fight to defend the freedom we cherish and enjoy, no matter what the circumstances.

Mr. President, my state will observe the 25th Anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War on May 5-7, 2000. I encourage all Americans to take time during these dates to honor and remember those who served in Vietnam and the name of freedom.●

INVITING THE NATION TO SAIL BOSTON 2000

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I rise today to extend an invitation to the nation to join Massachusetts and the City of Boston in celebrating the gathering of tall ships for Sail Boston 2000.

The tall ships represent a nautical history that stretches across the globe. The International Sail Training Association, jointly with the American Sail Training Association, is organizing the Tall Ships 2000 Race. I am proud to say that Boston Harbor has been granted the opportunity to be the only official United States Race Port.

Beginning in April 2000, two races will start from Southampton and Genoa, finishing in Cadiz. The second leg will be a transatlantic race to Bermuda, and from there, the fleet heads north to Boston. This journey will replicate the routes taken by mariners and explorers over the last five centuries.

On July 11th, 2000, the Tall Ships will parade into Boston Harbor, and they will be led by the oldest ship in the U.S. Navy; America's Old Ironsides; the U.S.S. *Constitution*. This national treasure was originally built in Boston between 1794 and 1797, and was charged with the task of defending a young American nation. This ship, the oldest commissioned warship in the world, set to sea in 1798, and in July 1999, the U.S.S. *Constitution* operated under her own sail for the first time in 116 years.

This international fleet will be one of the finest gatherings of tall ships. Among the Sail Boston 2000 fleet are historic ships such as: *Mir* of Russia; *Concordia* of Canada; *Juan Sebastian De Elcano* of Spain; *Pogoria* of Poland; and the *Amerigo Vespucci* of Italy.

Massachusetts and the historic Boston Harbor, which offers the perfect setting for this occasion, will open itself up to visitors from around the world, and over six million spectators are expected to visit us and enjoy the festivities. The history that the Tall Ships represent belongs to all of us, and it is my hope that visitors from every state in the nation will take the opportunity to visit Massachusetts and participate in this historic celebration.●

NATIONAL PARK WEEK

• Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to speak for a few minutes about National Park Week and the value of National Parks to our nation's citizens.

As families and individuals throughout our nation know, America's national parks are the envy of the world and considered by many to be our national treasures. In our nation's parks, wildlife flourish, scenic beauty remains abundant, and families escape the pressures of everyday life. Our parks are truly one of our nation's best investments—an investment that will provide generations of Americans with the same recreational and educational opportunities we now enjoy.

President Clinton has designated April 17-23, 2000, as National Park Week. The National Park Service now estimates that over 285 million Americans visit our 378 national parks every year. At each site, visitors find themselves confronted with important moments in our nation's history, wonderful natural scenic sites, and cultural treasures which remind us of our distinguished, and sometimes difficult, past. Our parks, in many ways, are a microcosm of our nation and of ourselves, and they continue to document for future generations those qualities about America which must be preserved for eternity.

In the 105th Congress, I was proud that Congress took a significant step forward in updating the management of our Nation's parks and improving visitor services by passing the "Vision 2020 National Park System Restoration Act," a bill I cosponsored. The Vision 2020 Bill, authored by Senator CRAIG THOMAS of Wyoming, is a commonsense approach to improving both the management and facilities of national parks by bringing everyone to the table and seeking consensus. The passage of the Vision 2020 bill was an important first step toward bringing accountability to park management, addressing the tremendous backlog of park projects, and improving visitor services.

I was also proud to obtain \$2 million in last year's appropriations bills for the National Park Service's portion of the Mississippi River National Center in Minnesota's new Science Museum. The exhibit will include information on the importance of the Mississippi River to Minnesota's array of interests. This is a partnership between the Park Service and the Science Museum that will give Minnesotans a greater appreciation for all aspects of recreation and commerce on the Mississippi River.

My home state of Minnesota is home to five units of the National Park Service. They are Voyageurs National Park, which on April 8 celebrated its 25th anniversary, Pipestone National Monument, Grand Portage National Monument, the Mississippi National

River and Recreation Area, and the Saint Croix National Riverway. I've urged Minnesotans to visit these sites during this week and to gain a greater appreciation for opportunities they offer.

Mr. President, our parks remain one of America's most important legacies for future generations and a constant reminder of the progress, splendor, and triumphs of our past.●

PROFESSOR ROBERT KERN

● Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Robert Kern, a longtime professor at the University of New Mexico where he is head of the European section of the history department. With a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, Dr. Kern's studies, teachings, and writings are centered on Iberian history, and the history of labor in various societies. In nearly 35 years of teaching at UNM, he has earned a well-deserved reputation as a thoughtful professor and a distinguished writer.

Believing that teaching is just about the noblest profession anyone can undertake, and coming from a family of teachers myself, I admire more than I can say what Professor Kern has done in this career. As a father, I admire more than I can say the fine job he did raising his sons, one of whom, Josh, worked on my staff for several years. The love, care, and attention Robert Kern gave his boys is reflected in their own lives and I suspect that of all of his achievements in a life well-lived, they are his pride and joy.●

COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA'S FIRST CHAPTER IN RUTLAND, VERMONT

● Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President. Two years ago, I stood before you as the proud sponsor of a resolution commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). Today I am here to honor the 20th anniversary of VVA's first chapter—born and raised in my home town of Rutland, Vermont.

Twenty years ago, Vietnam Veterans were suffering under the wave of anti-Vietnam sentiment that had swept the nation. Little recognition was given to their sacrifices during the war. And in fact, there was even a great deal of official denial about the extent of the price that had been paid by these veterans, both physical and emotional. It would be years before Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder would be a recognized condition for many veterans and years before the Federal Government would admit that use of Agent Orange had left a terrible legacy of continued suffering for our veterans. The founders of the VVA felt that they must have an

organization to speak directly to those needs. The outpouring of enthusiasm from the veterans themselves demonstrated the depth of these feelings.

In 1979, during a trip to Vermont, VVA founder Bobby Muller met Don Bodette. Don supported the notion of an organization of and for Vietnam era veterans, but felt that it would only be truly successful if they mobilized locally and established chapters. The power of Don's logic and commitment persuaded Bobby Muller to adopt his model. On April 13, 1980, VVA Chapter One was established in Rutland, Vermont. Taking up the challenge, Don was joined by Jake Jacobsen, Albert and Mary Trombley, Mike Dodge, Dennis Ross and Mark Truhan, to name a few. Today, April 13, 2000, VVA Chapter One has 120 members hailing from 19 states and 3 other countries.

I would like to add my voice to the multitudes both in and outside of Vermont who are celebrating this auspicious anniversary. I join in recognizing the tremendous work done by the VVA, both in Vermont and nationally. As a Vietnam era veteran myself, we all owe a debt of gratitude to VVA Chapter One's farsighted founders and the committed members who have followed their lead. Happy 20th Birthday, Chapter One! May you have many more!●

THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEN UP DAY

● Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, nearly 30 years ago, my predecessor, the late Senator George D. Aiken, rose to report to the Senate on a new Vermont initiative called "Green Up Day." He described an effort, then in its second year, in which thousands of Vermont citizen volunteers of all ages combed the streets, highways, back roads, and village greens to pick up litter and beautify their state.

Another distinguished colleague of mine, Senator Robert Stafford, kept these same Vermonters' thoughts in mind when he courageously led this Senate in the fight to build strong national environmental policies—including Superfund—to protect public health, air, water, and land.

The very first Green Up Day was a simple initiative born on April 18 of 1970—a few days before the first Earth Day. Today it is an annual Vermont tradition. On May 6, 2000, thousands of Vermonters will celebrate the official 30th anniversary of "Green Up Day" just as they have for so many years—by picking up trash bags and devoting their day to the beautification and clean up of our Green Mountain State.

Over the years, one organization, Vermont Green Up, has diligently coordinated volunteers and spread the ideas of Green Up Day. Vermont Green Up has sponsored annual poster contests for students, cleaned up several

illegal dumps, and helped other states—and even other countries—organize their own "Green Up" efforts.

In fact, my own daughter, Alicia, thought so much of Vermont Green Up that she served as their Executive Director for a few years. Alicia had the pleasure of serving in that position with Bob Stafford on the board. She also made sure her father was out picking up trash with her on Green Up Day!

I congratulate Vermont Green Up, the financial sponsors supporting Green Up Day, and the thousands of Green Up Day volunteers. These are the people who continue to make the first Saturday in May an extraordinary day for Vermont's environment. The fact that we are now celebrating the 30th anniversary of Green Up Day is a testament to these Vermonters untiring dedication to the environment of our Green Mountain State.●

CALHOUN COUNTY CELEBRATES CHARACTER EDUCATION AWARENESS WEEK

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a very special event taking place next week in the State of Michigan. The city of Battle Creek and the greater Calhoun County are officially recognizing April 17–21, 2000, as Character Education Awareness Week. Character Unlimited, a group which works to raise awareness of the importance of good character and to train others to integrate character development in their organizations and areas of influence, and the Battle Creek Chamber of Commerce are cosponsors of the event.

Four goals have been set for the week: first, to inform the public about character education initiatives throughout Calhoun County; second, to raise awareness and interest in the importance of mentoring and role modeling; third, to address youth about the importance of character based decision making and non-violent conflict resolution; and, finally, to raise community awareness of Character Unlimited and the work of the organization.

Increasingly, the notion of character has found a place in the national dialogue, particularly in this, an election year. What is getting lost in the debate, I feel, is a look at where character comes from, how it is developed within children and adults alike, and the role communities can play in developing character within their youth. Good character is not innate, Mr. President, it requires conscientious education, effort and role-modeling.

While it goes without saying that parents hold the most important role in this process, they are not the only cog in the wheel. Schools, youth organizations, churches, synagogues, temples, civic organizations, even governmental organizations, all of these groups have the opportunity to set