

other vertical integrators won't engage in packer ownership. Agricultural concentration is not inevitable, it is sweeping the rural landscape because of the choices we make. Given the Justice Department's reluctance to address this merger, Congress must take some responsibility to recommend ways to strengthen our competition and anti-trust laws. I believe S. 142 is one step Congress can take.

Last year, several major farm organizations endorsed my bipartisan effort to prohibit meatpackers from owning livestock prior to slaughter. I would like to thank them for their support. These grassroots groups include the National Farmers Union, South Dakota Farmers Union, the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association, the Iowa Pork Producers Association, Illinois Farm Bureau, the Center for Rural Affairs, the Organization for Competitive Markets, and the Ranchers—Cattlemen's Action Legal Fund, R-CALF.

The members of these organizations believe that packer ownership and captive supply arrangements by meatpackers result in less competition for all sellers in the market, even though producers or feeders who have these arrangements often enter into them voluntarily. As a consequence of having slaughter livestock supplies locked up through captive supplies, meatpackers do not have to bid competitively for all of their slaughter needs. This may depress the marketplace and restrict access to producers and feeders without the arrangements. Packer ownership of livestock increases the likelihood of price manipulation in the marketplace. When packers own livestock, they have the ability to push forward or hold back captive supplies in response to market price. My bipartisan legislation is one way to achieve a more competitive bidding process in the cash market.

So today, almost a century after President Teddy Roosevelt used a big stick to give livestock producers a square deal, we again face a choice between corporate takeover of agriculture and a fight for free enterprise. I proudly cast my lot with free-enterprise family farm and ranch agriculture that has served our country so well.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO HOWARD BILLIMAN, JR.

• Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay homage to Howard Billiman, Jr., a decorated war hero, proud father and grandfather, and loyal servant of this country. It is with profound sympathy and respect that I commemorate the passing of this honorable man. He exemplified the true spirit of an American hero, humbly

willing to place his loyalty to this country before his own life.

Howard will be remembered as one of the celebrated Navajo Code Talkers of World War II, a dedicated Marine of the 2nd Marine Division who answered his country's call to duty and served with distinction.

In reflection of his life, Howard's family has said that he never forgot his roots, beginning in the small town of Buell Park, Arizona. He grew up in a small town, attending schools at Ft. Defiance and Ft. Wingate, hardly known by most outsiders. Howard, at the young age of 16, voluntarily enlisted in the Marine Corps, leaving behind his family, town, and childhood. He would face trials that would change his life forever.

As one of 420 Navajos selected by the military, Howard quickly excelled, and was appointed as one of the first instructors of the Navajo Code Talkers. With other young Navajos, Howard helped to create an unbreakable code that baffled the Japanese. Military experts now estimate that these code-talking efforts shortened the war in the Pacific by at least one year—and some have even speculated that the war may have turned out differently, had it not been for their heroic deeds.

During World War II, Howard participated in every campaign of the 2nd Marine Division including the invasions of Saipan, Tinian, the Battle of Okinawa, and the occupation of Japan at Nagasaki. Howard did not seek credit nor praise, but quietly and modestly amassed a memorable record of brave acts and passionate service to his country and family. As a tribute for his valiant service, Howard received numerous awards and honors including the Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, a Presidential Unit Citation with Star for Combat Action at Tarawa, the Navy/Marine Corps Occupation service Medal, and the Purple Heart for wounds received in combat. He was honorably discharged as a Corporal on January 18, 1946.

After returning to the Navajo reservation, Howard settled down at Buell Park and then Sawmill, where he raised 10 children with his spouse, Mary Louise. He later became a proud grandfather of 42 grandchildren.

In later years, as a member of the Navajo Code-Talkers Association, Howard received several more awards during travels with the group to Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. He was the last surviving original Navajo Code Instructor.

Until recently, the American public was not aware of the tremendous sacrifice and contribution of Howard and other Code Talkers. Without the Navajo Code Talkers, one can only imagine what tragedies might have occurred at that pivotal time in history. As Americans, we owe a debt of gratitude to the sacrifices of selfless patriots like How-

ard whose noble service teaches us valuable lessons of duty and honor.

Howard Billiman, Jr. will be missed by his family and friends, but his remarkable courage and patriotism will be long remembered by his country. •

TRIBUTE TO CAROL DIBATISTE

• Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, It is an honor to take this opportunity to recognize Carol DiBattiste, under Secretary of the Air Force, who departed office last month. During her tenure, Under Secretary DiBattiste served with honor and distinction, providing exceptional leadership, and ensuring a promising future for the Department of Defense, the Air Force, and for American aerospace power.

Under Secretary DiBattiste earned a respected reputation for her energy and enthusiasm, focused directly on improving quality of life for Air Force members and their families. She quickly became the Air Force's key leader in the fight against retention shortages and recruiting shortfalls; her successes in these endeavors are both impressive and renowned.

Because of her immense talent and dedication, Under Secretary DiBattiste was selected to lead a special Department of Defense task force to formulate anti-harassment policy—an emotionally and politically charged subject. She delivered, as always, a brilliant solution, and then returned her sharp focus back to her visionary and aggressive campaign against recruiting shortfalls. The Air Force met its goals in recruiting last year mainly because of her visionary solutions to create an Air Force Recruiting and Retention Task Force, an Air Force Marketing and Advertising Office, and a Strategic Communications Outreach Program. Under Secretary DiBattiste is a leader we respect because she leads by example. In a short, 12-month stretch of time, she delivered almost 100 speeches; and she traveled to over 85 bases and locations throughout the world during her tenure.

Carol DiBattiste has set a high standard of leadership, commitment, energy, and service to country. I know my colleagues in Congress and our grateful nation join me in thanking her for her dedication and distinguished service to our country; and we wish her continued success in the future. •

TRIBUTE TO WHITTEN PETERS

• Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I want to take a few minutes to recognize the contributions of a patriot, a leader, and a good friend of this institution who has departed government service to return to life as a private citizen.

During his four-year tenure as Under Secretary, Acting Secretary, and Secretary of the Air Force, F.