

it needs to operate. Even if this fictitious worldwide embargo of U.S. oil imports that my colleagues contemplate ever took place, this Nation's military would have all the oil it needs. I don't want any suggestion that our military is unprepared because of a shortage for oil to stand.

There are real energy security issues this Nation must address, but we do not need to exaggerate the threat. We need to be reasonable, in the process and the substance of this bill. I support the Majority Leader's decision and look forward to participating in the broader effort to craft a sound bill.

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#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

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#### THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SLOVAK CONSULATE IN KANSAS CITY, MO

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the official opening in Kansas City, MO, of the Consulate of the Slovak Republic.

Slovakia is a country full of rich history and tradition. It became a free and independent republic in 1993 and opened their new embassy in Washington, D.C. in June of 2001. Ross P. Marine, DHL, who is the Honorary Consul of the Slovak Republic to the States of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska was appointed by Eduard Kukan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, in September of 2000 and with approval by the United States Department of State established a Consulate of the Slovak Republic in Kansas City, Missouri. Currently there are consulates of the Slovak Republic in Colorado, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Ohio, California, Florida, and Michigan.

The Honorable H.E. Martin Butora, PhD, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Republic to the United States and his wife, Zora Butorova, PhD, will be visiting the Kansas City area the week of October 16-19, for the purpose of officially opening the Consulate of the Slovak Republic. There are a number of outstanding events planned to mark this exciting opening and the visit by Ambassador Butora. On behalf of the citizens I represent, I am pleased to welcome them to the great state of Missouri. Kansas City is a city that continues to experience tremendous growth and advances toward the future, while still recognizing and celebrating its proud history and vibrant culture. The added presence of the Slovak Republic will only serve to enhance Kansas City's history and culture. Once again, welcome and please accept my very best wishes on this special occasion.●

#### HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MINNESOTA TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

• Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the Minnesota Taxpayers Association, for its long and proud history of working to disseminate accurate, nonpartisan fiscal information to the citizens of Minnesota. The Minnesota Taxpayers Association celebrates its 75th anniversary this year, as one of the Nation's most acclaimed taxpayer organizations.

Its membership has been comprised of thousands of Minnesota's business leaders, government officials and concerned citizens. Its stellar leadership, on both its Board and its staff, has consistently been populated by Minnesota's most able and intelligent citizens.

The Minnesota Taxpayers Association, MTA, was founded in 1926 when America was in the middle of a strong recovery from World War I, and we were on a "return to normalcy" path in both foreign relations and domestic policies.

The Association started as part of a larger government research movement in the country aimed at bringing more professionalism to government, particularly local government. The first steps toward launching the Minnesota Taxpayers Association were taken at a meeting in Minneapolis on February 25, 1926. It was planned that the Association's core would consist of representatives of 15 local taxpayers groups. The first objective of the new nonpartisan association was to reduce taxes. Three other objectives were to eliminate extravagance, reduce public debt, and stop misuse of public funds.

On November 22, 1926, the Association became a permanent organization at a meeting at the Nicollet Hotel in Minneapolis. In short order, representatives of 28 counties formed the South Central, Southeast, and Southwest Taxpayers Associations at meetings in Mankato, Rochester, and Worthington, MN, respectively. They were so successful that by April of 1927 there were 45 county taxpayer groups across the State. By World War II, the MTA had grown to be an association of 81 county taxpayer groups.

In August of 1956, the MTA merged with the Minnesota Institute of Governmental Research, MIGR, another nonpartisan government research organization. The institute's research bulletins covered such topics as property tax issues; the merits of a sales taxation, more than 30 years before the State's first sales tax in 1967; and an analysis of the new Social Security Act and its implications for Minnesota.

Because government itself did little research in those days, MIGR had a tremendous impact on Minnesota State government. MIGR's work inspired the creation of the 1939 Reorganization Act under Governor Harold Stassen. This

act received national attention as it produced major improvements in the administration of State government, saving millions of dollars in the first 10 years after enactment.

It was through the Reorganization Act and the work of MIGR that the Departments of Taxation and Administration were created and the spoils system was replaced with civil service. As a follow-up to the Reorganization Act, MIGR staff was loaned to the "Little Hoover" Commission of the early 1950s to study areas for further reform in State government.

Within two years of the merger, in August of 1958, MTA became incorporated. At that time, it moved away from being an umbrella organization for county-level taxpayer groups to being an organization with its own board of directors and a statewide membership of individuals and companies. Its focus also changed to monitoring State fiscal matters and advocating for sound fiscal policy.

In 1957, MTA started publishing "Fiscal Facts for Minnesotans," a popular handbook of State and local fiscal data that continues to be published today. A widely read and discussed publication series was begun in 1969 with the first release of "How Does Minnesota Compare?" a State-by-State comparison of key tax and spending aggregates.

The Minnesota Taxpayers Association has steadfastly stressed the importance of good information and citizen involvement in government. As evidence of its commitment to these goals, the Association continues to focus on research publications aimed at educating the public, publications like its award-winning "Understanding Your Property Taxes" and its "Guide to State Government Spending," as well as on countless public presentations and frequent legislative consultations.

As State and local governments take on more responsibility for designing, funding, and delivering public services, and as taxpayers look for greater value for their tax dollars, the need for organizations like the Minnesota Taxpayers Association increases. The Association's work over the past 75 years has been a great asset to the people of Minnesota, and its reputation for excellence and integrity assures a prominent and vital role for this outstanding organization in the improvement of Minnesota State and local government in the years ahead.●

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#### TRIBUTE TO FRAN FLANIGAN

• Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and honor an extraordinary Marylander and steward of the Chesapeake Bay, Fran Flanigan. Fran is stepping down from a long and distinguished career as executive director of the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and I want to express my personal