

First, this administration's Department of Veteran Affairs has shown little interest in, or commitment to, assisting veterans in exercising the fundamental right to vote. Since 2004, the Department has often sided in Federal court against allowing third-party organizations to conduct voter registration drives at VA hospitals. Until this past April, the Department's national policy was silent on whether it could assist disabled veterans access and complete voter registration forms. Indeed, court findings appear to indicate that in some instances, the Department may have even prohibited its own staff from providing such assistance.

Second, although the Department has made recent strides to allow veterans more access to voter registration forms, it has not gone far enough. Three months ago, the Department issued a written directive requiring all VA facilities to develop voter registration plans that would assist patients in registering to vote. I applaud this action as a positive first step. However, I am concerned that the new directive stops short of mandating that VA facilities affirmatively offer disabled veterans a chance to register to vote. To paraphrase Paul Sullivan, the Executive Director of Veterans for Common Sense, the new directive only changed the Department from being in active opposition to veterans' voter registration to passively supporting it.

Third, and perhaps most troubling, the new directive prohibits third-party organizations and state election officials from conducting nonpartisan voter registration drives among veterans at VA facilities. I am concerned that this ban will not only undermine the Department's goal of assisting disabled veterans in registering and voting, but will also make it more difficult for these Americans to participate in the political process.

The Veterans Voting Support Act would address these concerns. This important measure would designate VA facilities as voter registration agencies, thereby ensuring that the Department actively offers veterans the assistance they need to vote and register to vote. This provision would also protect disabled veterans from being disenfranchised by a procedural technicality. In addition, the bill provides our veterans with information relating to the opportunity to request an absentee ballot, ensure the ballots are available upon request, as well as provide assistance in completing them.

It would also require a meaningful opportunity for nonpartisan groups and election officials to provide voter registration information and assistance at VA hospitals. The Department was founded on the principle that its first duty to veterans was to meet their medical, social, and civic needs, including the full participation of veterans in our society. As a corollary, this provi-

sion will strengthen that mandate and send an important message to our veterans: our country will make every effort to ensure that those who sacrificed so much to expand democracy around the globe are involved in our democracy at home.

Finally, to ensure that the Department does not backslide from its critical function of expanding the civic involvement of disabled veterans, the bill also provides reporting requirements to ensure that the Department complies with this important goal.

The Nation's disabled veterans have given extraordinary service to our country. These courageous men and women deserve our help to ensure that they receive the necessary assistance to guarantee their full participation in our democracy. I look forward to Senate passage of the Veterans Voting Support Act, and I hope the House and the President will act quickly on this legislation to ensure the implementation of this important measure in time for the upcoming national election.

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

**SENATE RESOLUTION 617—HONORING THE LIFE AND RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ERIC NORD, CO-FOUNDER OF THE NORDSON CORPORATION, INNOVATIVE BUSINESSMAN AND ENGINEER, AND GENEROUS OHIO PHILANTHROPIST**

Mr. BROWN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

S. RES. 617

Whereas Eric Nord, an Amherst, Ohio, native was born on November 8, 1917;

Whereas Eric Nord graduated from Amherst High School in 1935 and received a bachelor of science in mechanical engineering from the Case Institute of Technology, now known as Case Western Reserve University;

Whereas Eric Nord co-founded Ohio-based Nordson Corporation with his father and brother;

Whereas Eric Nord served as President of Nordson Corporation from 1954 to 1974, Chairman and CEO from 1974 to 1983, Chairman of the Board of Directors from 1983 to 1997, and Chairman Emeritus from 1997 to 2008;

Whereas Eric Nord was awarded 25 United States patents;

Whereas Eric Nord oversaw the early growth of Nordson Corporation from a local business with less than \$1,000,000 in annual sales to a multinational corporation with annual sales of \$121,000,000;

Whereas Eric Nord's creativity and vision merited numerous honors and awards, including an honorary doctorate of science from Oberlin College and the Case Alumni Association Gold Medal Award in recognition of outstanding technical innovation, successful business management, and dedicated public service;

Whereas Eric Nord established the Nord Family Foundation, the Nordson Corporation Foundation, the Community Founda-

tion of Greater Lorain County, and the Eric and Jane Nord Foundation;

Whereas the charitable work of Eric Nord contributed more than \$100,000,000 to worthy causes;

Whereas Eric Nord was a strong advocate for civil rights, fighting to establish fair housing practices for minorities in Oberlin, Ohio, during the 1960s;

Whereas Eric Nord was a beloved member of the community, philanthropist, husband, and father;

Whereas Eric Nord was an advocate for education, the arts, and social services; and

Whereas Ohio has lost an exemplary citizen and innovator with the passing of Eric Nord on June 19, 2008: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate honors the life and recognizes the accomplishments of Eric Nord, a civic-minded business leader, compassionate humanitarian, and dedicated family man.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 618—RECOGNIZING THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOMBING OF THE UNITED STATES EMBASSIES IN NAIROBI, KENYA AND DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA, AND MEMORIALIZING THE CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES, KENYA, AND TANZANIA WHOSE LIVES WERE CLAIMED AS A RESULT OF THE AL QAEDA LED TERRORIST ATTACKS**

Mr. LUGAR (for himself and Mr. BIDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 618

Whereas on August 7, 1998, the al Qaeda terrorist group, led by Osama bin Laden, organized nearly simultaneous vehicular bombing attacks on the United States embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam;

Whereas approximately 4,000 people were injured in the Nairobi bombing, including 14 United States citizens, 13 Foreign Service Nationals, and 2 contractors;

Whereas 213 people were killed in the bombing in Nairobi, including victims who were employees of the United States Government, or were family members of employees of the United States Government, namely—

(1) the following United States citizens: Nathan Aliganga, Julian Bartley, Sr., Julian Bartley, Jr., Jean Dalizu, Molly Hardy, Kenneth Hobson, Prabhi Kavaler, Arlene Kirk, Dr. Mary Louise Martin, Michelle O'Connor, Sherry Olds, and Uttamlal (Tom) Shah;

(2) the following Foreign Service Nationals: Chrispin W. Bonyo, Lawrence A. Gitau, Hindu O. Idi, Tony Irungu, Geoffrey Kalio, G. Joel Kamau, Lucy N. Karigi, Francis M. Kibe, Joe Kiongo, Dominic Kithuva, Peter K. Macharia, Francis W. Maina, Cecelia Mamboleo, Lydia M. Mayaka, Francis Mbugua Ndungu, Kimeu N. Nganga, Francis Mbogo Njunge, Vincent Nyoike, Francis Olewe Ochilo, Maurice Okach, Edwin A.O. Omori, Lucy G. Onono, Evans K. Onsongo, Eric Onyango, Sellah Caroline Opati, Rachel M. Pussy, Farhat M. Sheikh, Phaedra Vrontamitis, Adams T. Wamai, Frederick M. Yafes; and

(3) the following contractors: Moses Namayi and Josiah Odero Owuor;

Whereas 85 people were injured in the Dar es Salaam bombing, including 2 United States citizens and 5 Foreign Service Nationals;

Whereas 1 Foreign Service National working at the Dar es Salaam embassy, Saidi Rogarth, is still listed by the Department of State as missing;

Whereas 11 people were killed in the Dar es Salaam bombing, including—

(1) Yusuf Ndange, a Foreign Service National; and

(2) the following contractors: Abdulrahman Abdalla, Paul E. Elisha, Abdalla Mnyola, Abbas William Mwilla, Bakari Nyumbu, Mtendeje Rajabu, Ramadhani Mahundi, and Dotto Ramadhani;

Whereas damage to both buildings was extensive, rendering the facilities unusable;

Whereas the outpouring of aid and assistance from the people and Governments of Kenya and Tanzania was widespread and greatly appreciated by the people of the United States;

Whereas security guards at both embassies acted bravely on the day of the bombings, protecting the lives and property of citizens of the United States, Kenya, and Tanzania;

Whereas the United States embassies in both Nairobi and Dar es Salaam have been rebuilt;

Whereas the United States Government is partnering with the people and Governments of Kenya and Tanzania to help both countries obtain a more democratic future;

Whereas 12 of the suspects indicted in the case have either been killed, captured, or are serving life sentences without parole; and

Whereas the United States Government continues to search for the remaining suspects, including Osama bin Laden: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the historic significance of the tenth anniversary of the al Qaeda bombings of the United States embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania;

(2) mourns the loss of those who lost their lives in these tragic and senseless attacks, especially those who were employed by the embassies;

(3) remembers the families and colleagues of the victims whose lives have been forever changed by the loss endured on August 7, 1998;

(4) expresses its deepest gratitude to the people of Kenya and Tanzania for their gracious contributions and assistance following these attacks;

(5) reaffirms its support for the people of Kenya and Tanzania in striving for future opportunity, democracy, and prosperity; and

(6) reaffirms its resolve to defeat al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 619—EX-PRESSING SUPPORT FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND BAHRAIN**

Mr. SESSIONS (for himself and Mr. COLEMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 619

Whereas Bahrain is a friend of the United States and a critical partner in the war on terrorism, as demonstrated by Bahrain's designation as a major ally outside of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the completion of the United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement in 2006, and the continued presence of United States forces in Bahrain;

Whereas the strategic relationship between the United States and Bahrain should not prevent the United States from speaking honestly to the Government of Bahrain about concerns regarding human rights issues in a mutually respectful dialogue; and

Whereas numerous reports, including the Department of State's 2007 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Bahrain, detail potential shortcomings by the Government of Bahrain in the areas of human rights and democracy, including—

(1) the use of torture and undue force against political activists;

(2) systematic discrimination by the Sunni government against the Shi'a majority, including forbidding Shi'a from joining the military and discriminating against Shi'a in public sector employment;

(3) the denial, in practice, of the right to a fair trial; and

(4) gerrymandering of political districts in order to support favored candidates: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports a constructive dialogue on human rights issues as an integral part of the bilateral agenda between the United States and Bahrain;

(2) expresses support for efforts to promote human rights, democracy, and the rule of law in Bahrain; and

(3) calls upon the President and the Secretary of State to aid in those efforts.

**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 94—RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTEGRATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES**

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. OBAMA) submitted the following concurrent resolution, which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 94

Whereas service members representing a wide diversity of races and nationalities have fought in every war in the history of the United States;

Whereas, on July 26, 1948, President Harry Truman signed Executive Order 9981, ordering the racial integration of the Armed Forces;

Whereas President Truman declared that there should be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the Armed Forces, without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin;

Whereas the United States could not maintain an all-volunteer force without the service of, and critical role played by, service members representing a wide diversity of races and nationalities;

Whereas service member diversity brings a unique perspective and experience to the Armed Forces;

Whereas the Armed Forces led the way in social integration prior to the signal achievement of the legal victory in the Supreme Court decision of *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954), which rejected separate white and colored schools;

Whereas the Armed Forces led the way in social integration prior to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which banned discrimination in employment practices and public accommodations, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which restored and protected voting rights, and the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which banned discrimination in the sale or rental of housing;

Whereas the integration of the Armed Forces enhanced the combat effectiveness of the military 60 years ago, and that still holds true to the current day;

Whereas the efforts of the Armed Forces to ensure equality of treatment and opportunity for their personnel significantly assisted in the advancement of that goal for all Americans; and

Whereas, in 2008, members representing a wide diversity of races and nationalities serve in senior leadership positions throughout the Armed Forces, as commissioned and warrant officers, as senior noncommissioned officers, and as civilian leaders: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring)*, That Congress—

(1) recognizes the historic significance of the 60th anniversary of the integration of the Armed Forces of the United States;

(2) reaffirms the commitment of the Federal Government to ensuring diversity in the military; and

(3) commends African-Americans, Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Native Americans, and service members of all races and nationalities for their remarkable achievements, sacrifices, and contributions to our Armed Forces in all conflicts in United States history in the face of discrimination, hostility, and other obstacles.

**NOTICE OF HEARING**

**COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public the hearing previously scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on Thursday, July 24, 2008, at 10 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building has been canceled.

The purpose of the hearing was to discuss current policy related to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

For further information, please contact Tara Billingsley at (202) 224-4756 or Rosemarie Calabro at (202) 224-5039.

**AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET**

**COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 22, 2008, at 9:30 a.m.

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

**COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS**

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 22, 2008 at 10 a.m. in room 406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to hold a hearing entitled, "An Update on the Science of Global Warming and its Implications."

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