

John 15:13: "Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."

His family also said of Scott that he "loved his country and was a volunteer career service-member that was proud and honored to serve his country." Our Nation will be forever grateful for Scott Nisely's loyal service and sacrifice. His loss is tragic, but he will be remembered as an American hero.

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I rise to express my sympathy over the loss of U.S. Army National Guard SFC Scott Nisely of Nebraska. Sergeant Nisely died during a firefight with insurgents near Asad, Iraq, on September 30. He was 48 years old.

Sergeant Nisely was born in Syracuse, NE. After high school, he attended Doane College in Crete, NE, where he competed in track and cross country. He would later settle in Marshalltown, IA, with his wife Geri. In addition to his service in the Armed Forces, Sergeant Nisely also worked for the U.S. Postal Service in Iowa for 12 years.

While at Doane, Sergeant Nisely enlisted with the Marine Corps Reserve and served 22 years with the Marines on active duty and as a reservist. He was a veteran of Operation Desert Storm. In July, 2002, Sergeant Nisely accepted a demotion in rank to fill a vacancy in the Iowa Army National Guard and served in that capacity until his death.

Sergeant Nisely will be remembered for his strong faith and his desire to serve his country. In honor of Sergeant Nisely, Doane College will rename an annual track and field event the Scott Nisely Memorial Track Classic.

In addition to his wife, Sergeant Nisely is survived by his son Justin and his daughter Sarah.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Americans in honoring SFC Scott Nisely.

A MALL MEMORIAL FOR DR. KING

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, this morning, our Nation took an important step toward honoring one of our most preeminent leaders. The National Mall in Washington, DC, is graced with memorials to America's greatest presidents. Today we broke ground on a memorial to honor the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Although never elected to national office, Dr. King courageously led the Nation through a crucial chapter of American history and became the voice of the entire civil rights movement.

In his famous "I Have A Dream" speech on the National Mall, Dr. King noted that "[w]hen the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir."

This past summer we reaffirmed and reauthorized one of the most important methods of enforcing this promise and

upholding the Constitution—the Voting Rights Act. Over the course of dozens of Judiciary Committee hearings and markups, we recalled the great historic struggle for civil rights led by American heroes of vision and strength, including Martin Luther King, Jr., and his widow, Coretta Scott King.

The pervasive discriminatory tactics that led to the original Voting Rights Act were deeply rooted. As a Nation, this effort to ensure equal protection dates back more than 135 years to the ratification of the 15th amendment in 1870, the last of the post-Civil War Reconstruction amendments. It took the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 for people of all races in many parts of our country to effectively begin exercising the rights granted 95 years earlier by the 15th amendment. Despite the additional gains we have made in enabling racial minorities to participate fully in the political life of our country, the work of the Voting Rights Act is not yet complete, and the dream of Dr. King has not yet been fully realized. But his dream lives on, as vital and as inspirational as the day it was delivered.

Just last week, we had an historic national election. Men and women of every color and creed came to polling places around the country to have their voices heard. Nonetheless, some citizens experienced problems casting their votes. The Senate Judiciary Committee will hold a long-overdue oversight hearing this week to examine shortcomings in the enforcement of our civil rights laws and the guarantees of political equality enshrined in the 14th and 15th amendments. In doing so, we continue to honor the promissory note written to all Americans.

I look forward to bringing my children and grandchildren to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial when it is completed in 2008. I trust it will be a moving tribute befitting one of our Nation's greatest leaders.

NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS ACT

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise to celebrate final passage of the National Heritage Areas of 2006. I am grateful that Congress finally has recognized the Upper Housatonic Valley in Connecticut and Massachusetts for its special contribution to the American experience. This new law designates the Upper Housatonic Valley as a National Heritage Area and authorizes \$10 million to preserve its historic and cultural assets.

Today's victory has been a long time in coming. In 2000, I sponsored legislation directing the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of the feasibility of establishing the Upper Housatonic Valley as a National Heritage Area. After the Interior Department completed that report, Senator DODD and I in 2003 introduced the first bill to create the Upper Housatonic National Heritage Area. Last Congress, a

bill that would have created that area and a dozen others passed the Senate but died in the House. In this Congress, we reintroduced the Senate bill, and Representative NANCY JOHNSON reintroduced its House companion. Finally, after 6 years of hard work, I can stand announce that legislation to create the Upper Housatonic National Heritage Area has passed the Senate and the House. The act now goes to the President, who is expected to sign it into law without delay.

The Upper Housatonic Valley's history is this Nation's history in microcosm—spanning Native American civilization, European settlement, the industrial revolution, and the present day. In contrast to many other areas of the country, the Upper Housatonic Valley's early historical and natural landscape remains largely intact. What is more, the area presents excellent opportunities for outdoor recreation, on waterways and greenways or trails, and a wide range of other activities for visitors or residents. For example, the section of the river below Falls Village, Connecticut is one of the Northeast's most prized fly-fishing centers.

This unique 950-square-mile region encompasses 29 towns in the Housatonic River watershed, extending 60 miles from Lanesboro, MA, to Kent, CT. The valley brims with more than 100 historically important sites—some dating back to pre-Revolutionary times—including five National Historic Landmarks and four National Natural Landmarks.

The Iron Heritage Trail celebrates the valley's distinctive role in iron production. During the Revolutionary War, cannons and rifles were forged for Gen. George Washington's Army from abundant local iron ore, and iron used in the USS *Constitution* also came from this area. More than 40 iron blast furnaces in the region fueled the Industrial Revolution.

Within Upper Housatonic Valley, the African-American Heritage Trail celebrates the region's significant contributions to our Nation's African-American history, including the abolitionist and civil rights movements. For example, the valley was home to Elizabeth "Mumbet" Freeman, a pioneer in the fight against slavery, W.E.B. Du Bois, a father of the modern civil rights movement, NAACP leader Mary White Ovington, and Frank Grant of the Negro Baseball League.

The valley has produced writers, painters, sculptors, photographers, and musicians, among them Herman Melville, Edith Wharton, Norman Rockwell, Daniel Chester French, James VanDerZee, and James Weldon Johnson. These artists have left the Nation a rich cultural inheritance. Today, the region remains a vibrant center for ongoing literary, artistic, musical, and architectural achievements.

Coordinated efforts to preserve the natural and cultural resources of this region are already well underway. The designation of the Upper Housatonic

Valley National Heritage Area supports and enhances these local efforts to interpret, preserve, and showcase the diverse historic, cultural, and natural resources of the valley.

In closing, I would like to congratulate the many dedicated advocates in Connecticut, whose dogged efforts led to today's achievement.

LONG ISLAND SOUND STEWARDSHIP ACT

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I rise to celebrate final passage of the Long Island Sound Stewardship Act. I am proud to have coauthored and introduced this bill in the Senate in April 2004. This body passed the bill that October, but then the bill died in the House. So we reintroduced it in the Senate last January, and Representative ROB SIMMONS reintroduced its House companion. The House passed its bill on Wednesday, and we in the Senate have just followed suit. Now the bill will go to the President, who is expected to sign it into law without delay. Today's final passage will ensure expanded protection and restoration of a national treasure.

A healthy Long Island Sound is crucial to our region's economy, quality of life, and heritage. I am deeply gratified that Congress has acted to support a new way for communities and citizens to work together to preserve this ecologically important estuary for years to come. The Long Island Sound Stewardship Act, or LISSA, will help protect the sound by providing financial incentives for land owners within the sound area to preserve the environmental quality of and public access to this endangered habitat.

Long Island Sound is a unique estuary with profound economic, ecological and cultural importance for the United States. This critical resource contributes approximately \$6 billion annually to the economy of the region, and it is especially important to the tens of millions of people who live within 50 miles of its shores.

We have come a long way in restoring the Sound and its rich biodiversity. Take, for example, the osprey—a bird that has come to symbolize the Sound. In 1940, there were approximately 1,000 osprey nests along the Sound shoreline. But by 1974, pollution reduced the number of osprey nests to just nine. Because of proactive conservation measures, the osprey has rebounded. That is real progress.

Despite our efforts, however, the sound remains in a diminished condition. It suffers from hypoxia, habitat loss, and contamination by toxic substances, pathogens, and solid waste, all of which negatively affect the health of all the organisms, including humans, who live in or near the sound.

I have been working to defend the sound since I arrived in the Senate. In 1989, I sponsored legislation that established a Long Island Sound office within the U.S. Environmental Protection

Agency. EPA's Long Island Sound Office went on to identify the sound region as vulnerable to degradation and, with my support, established the Long Island Sound Study to develop a plan for protecting the sound. In 2000, I kicked off a "Listen to the Sound" campaign, which focused on establishing a comprehensive network of open space and natural areas along the sound's rim, as well as creating more opportunities for public access and habitat restoration. More than 1,500 Connecticut and New York residents attended those meetings. In 2002, the EPA released the results of its Long Island Sound study, which concluded that coordinated action to save the sound was necessary.

Building on several of the EPA study's recommendations and on feedback from my Listen to the Sound meetings, I introduced LISSA in April 2004 with Senators DODD, SCHUMER, and CLINTON as cosponsors.

LISSA establishes a broad-based Long Island Sound Stewardship Advisory Committee comprised of all sound stakeholders, including Federal, State, local governments, tribal interests, nongovernmental organizations, academic interests, private interests including land, agriculture, and business interests, and recreational and commercial fishing interests. The advisory committee is charged with evaluating the parcels of land within the sound region and recommending crucial parcels for designation by the Environmental Protection Agency as Stewardship Sites eligible for special preservation funds. LISSA authorizes \$25 million per year for fiscal years 2007 through 2011 to the EPA Administrator to carry out this act.

By enacting this legislation, we aim to preserve the natural beauty and ecological wonder of this majestic waterway between New York and Connecticut. LISSA will ensure that our children and grandchildren can enjoy the sound's beauty, ecology, and recreational opportunities.

In closing, I wish to acknowledge the many Long Island Sound advocates in Connecticut and New York who have worked so hard to achieve today's great success.

TRIBUTE TO ALTHIA HARRIS

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today I rise to honor a longtime member of my staff, Ms. Althia Harris, who has served over 30 years in the Senate. Ms. Harris has reached an incredible benchmark in her career, and I stand today to reflect on her service.

Ms. Harris began working in the Senate on April 30, 1975, for distinguished Senator Philip A. Hart of Missouri. Just a few days before the end of his term, Senator Hart lost his battle with cancer on December 26, 1976. Ms. Harris then served Senator Adlai E. Stevenson III of Illinois for 5 years. Upon Senator Stevenson's retirement, she joined the office of his successor, Senator Alan J.

Dixon. I was then lucky enough to inherit a most loyal and experienced Senate employee when Ms. Harris joined my staff in 1984.

Upon joining my team, Althia initially helped with my transition from the West Virginia Governor's office to Capitol Hill. An immeasurable and invaluable aide, I am sure without Althia's able assistance the job would have taken much longer to accomplish. I know it would have been more difficult without a seasoned Senate staffer knowledgeable in how to really make things work in the Senate.

On September 12, 1986, Althia began working part time in my office so she could take on new challenges in the private sector and other areas of government. She first worked for the Advertising Council and then for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA. At NASA, she continues to work as a contractor for the Office of Education. As an active member of her community, she has never abandoned her work here in the Senate.

With continual service in my office for over 20 years, Althia is someone who has helped keep my office operation running with important day-to-day tasks. She is a lover of urban gardening, a collector of African art, and a domestic and international traveler.

As Senators, we are each here to represent our respective States and to work on the needs of our constituents. But the work we do is directly dependent on those who support us—our staff who are always there, always pushing behind the scenes. Each and every devoted member of my staff helps me accomplish the job I am here to do, and Althia has made a real contribution to my work for over 20 years.

I am honored to recognize Althia's devotion and service and to extend my deepest appreciation for her ongoing contributions. Althia is a true gem—the kind of person you are lucky to find and retain for what time they can give. It has been a wonderful 20 years.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, in honor of the seventh annual International Education Week, November 13 to 17, 2006, I would like to talk about the importance that international education and exchange programs play in establishing closer relations between the United States and the world.

The U.S. Government has a proud tradition of supporting international education and exchange programs, and we must continue that tradition. Why? First of all, international education is necessary for our children to remain competitive in the increasingly global economy. Second, exchange programs also attract future leaders from abroad, exposing them to the opportunities and freedoms afforded by our democratic system. Third, international education and exchange programs expand horizons and change the