

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 and 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