

people died and thousands were hurt in crashes involving a distracted or inattentive driver.

Along with distracted driving, Mariah's Act addresses NHTSA's two core missions: vehicle safety and highway safety. By improving these areas, we hope to continue to reduce traffic fatalities and reduce damage when accidents do occur.

While I was pleased to hear that the number of traffic fatalities fell 3 percent between 2009 and 2010, there were still over 32,000 traffic fatalities throughout our country in 2011. I believe we can do better to lower the number of deaths on our roadways by consistently improving safety.

Lifesaving protections for children and young drivers are key components of this bill. This is important because motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for all Americans ages 5 to 34. As a parent of two teenagers, I know the fears of first transporting your children, and then seeing them get behind the wheel. Because vehicular accidents are so deadly to our young people, I was pleased to introduce a bill with strong protections for our youth.

Another specific issue that Mariah's Act addresses is a problem we have been facing for a long time, impaired driving. Impaired driving still remains a deadly problem across the country. In 2010, 31 percent of all fatal crashes were alcohol-related, and more than 10,000 people were killed in alcohol-impaired driving crashes. We, as a country, should be taking a strong stance for ending this behavior and Mariah's Act helps develop the laws and technology to do it.

Other provisions in this bill include updates and consolidation of highway safety programs; ensuring emerging electronics and technologies in vehicles are safe; and improved transparency and accountability in vehicle investigations.

Along with NHTSA, the Commerce section of this Highway bill includes provisions of two bills I introduced last year, the Commercial Driver Compliance Improvement Act and the Safe Roads Act of 2011.

The Commercial Driver Compliance Improvement Act will help authorities improve compliance with hours-of-service regulations that keep fatigued commercial truck and bus drivers off the road.

The Safe Roads Act will establish a national clearinghouse for verified positive alcohol and drug test results of commercial motor vehicle operators. This will prevent a bad actor from failing a drug test in one State and simply going across a State line to try to beat the test.

Our safety is compromised everyday by those bad acting truck and bus drivers that are fatigued or under the influence of drugs or alcohol. We needed to strengthen our current regulations to ensure these drivers cannot bypass the law. These provisions are a practical

way to ensure that the commercial driving industry is reducing the number of unsafe drivers on the road.

Last year, there were over 5 million accidents on our roads resulting in over 32,000 lives lost. That is why we need to continue to fine tune highway safety programs to better target prevention, enforcement and oversight. I am pleased that all three of these provisions were included in this Highway bill and that they will help reduce the number of tragedies families face due to automobile related deaths and injuries.

I would like to thank everyone for their input and believe that we have a bill that will complete the goal of increasing safety on our roadways.

#### TRIBUTE TO INDIANA CHIEF JUSTICE RANDALL T. SHEPARD

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Indiana Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard, who is retiring this month after 25 years of distinguished service as Indiana's Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

Justice Shepard was appointed to the Indiana Supreme Court by Governor Robert Orr in 1985 and became Chief Justice in 1987, then the youngest chief justice in the nation. During his career, he has authored nearly 900 civil and criminal opinions and 68 law review articles. His writings have been cited hundreds of times by law journals and other courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court.

Justice Shepard's leadership and idealism are recognized beyond his legal opinions. Under his tenure, the court adopted a more balanced workload of civil and criminal cases and began webcasting all of its oral arguments. In 2001, he created the Courts in the Classroom program, which helps students learn about the judiciary, and was a driving force behind the Indiana Conference for Legal Education Opportunity program which promotes diversity in the legal profession. In 2007, Justice Shepard was appointed by Governor Mitch Daniels as co-chair of the Indiana Commission on Local Government Reform, and several of the Commission's recommendations have been implemented.

A seventh-generation Hoosier, Justice Shepard grew up in Evansville, IN, and graduated cum laude from Princeton in 1969. He received his law degree from Yale Law School in 1972. Among other awards, Justice Shepard has received the Indiana Chamber of Commerce Government Leader of the Year, the American Judicature Society's Opperman Award, and the Indiana Black Expo Lifetime Achievement Award. He has honorary degrees from the University of Southern Indiana, the University of South Carolina, the University of Notre Dame, and the University of Evansville.

I appreciate this opportunity to recognize Justice Shepard, and I wish him every continuing success as he pursues new challenges and opportunities.

#### RECOGNIZING CIRCUS SMIRKUS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to Circus Smirkus, the award-winning international touring youth circus based out of Greensboro, VT. A treasured Vermont institution, renowned well beyond our borders, this year Circus Smirkus is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

Circus Smirkus was founded by Rob Mermin, who ran away to join the circus at the age of 19 when summer camps for aspiring performers did not exist. Upon moving to Greensboro in 1987, Rob started the program to promote the culture and skills of the circus and to inspire youth to enter the arts and experience the adventure of a traveling show.

Today Circus Smirkus is the only youth circus in America to put on a full-season tour under its own big top, a 750-seat, one-ring, European-style circus tent. Every summer, a company of talented troupers, ages 10 to 18, arrives and rehearses the show at Smirkus's headquarters in the Circus Barn in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom. Then 30 young clowns, aerialists and acrobats take the show on the road, staging more than 70 performances across New England in just 7 weeks.

The program is a complete immersion in circus life, including long hours, rigorous training, and daily chores. Most graduates—known as Smirkos—describe their experiences as life-changing and as having forged some of their most cherished memories. The young performers come from as far away as Mongolia, New Zealand, and Siberia. Since its founding the circus has fostered youth exchanges with more than 25 nations.

Marcel Marceau, the famed French mime, broke his silence to call Circus Smirkus “an absolutely wonderful task: to bring children hope for the future, to create an entirely new form of circus and make it universal.” He was so right. I see the skill they develop in young performers and the joy they bring to every audience—including Marcelle and me when we take our grandchildren each summer in Vermont. I wish Circus Smirkus the best for this special milestone season and in all the years to come.

#### TRIBUTE TO REVEREND HURMON E. HAMILTON, JR.

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the Reverend Hurmon E. Hamilton, Jr. of Roxbury, MA, a remarkable pastor, teacher and leader. Reverend Hamilton grew up in Louisiana, the son of a preacher. He attended Grambling State University and went on to earn a Master of Divinity Degree from San Francisco Theological Seminary.

In 1994, Reverend Hamilton began his career in Massachusetts when he was elected Senior Pastor of Boston's Roxbury Presbyterian Church. In this