Question 2. How many 501(c)(4) organizations which appear to be primarily engaged in political activity have been notified by the IRS within the last 6 months that they may lose their tax-exempt status?

When the IRS examines a section 501(c)(4) organization, the objective of the audit is to determine whether that organization qualifies for tax-exempt status as a social welfare organization. As discussed in our June 4, 2012 response to your March 30, 2012 letter, that determination looks to whether the organization is primarily engaged in activities that promote social welfare, not organized or operated for profit, and the net earnings of which do not inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual. The examination looks at the activities engaged in during the complete taxable year at issue. Although the promotion of social welfare does not include direct or indirect participation or intervention in political campaigns on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office, a section 501(c)(4) social welfare organization can engage in political activities as long as it is primarily engaged in activities that promote social welfare.

If the IRS believes that an organization does not meet the requirements under section 501(c)(4), the IRS notifies the organization of its intent to revoke the organization’s exempt status, explaining the law and reasoning behind the revocation if applicable. The organization has 30 days from the date of that letter to protest or appeal the determination before a final revocation letter is issued to the organization.

During the past six months, no notices of proposed or final revocation were issued to section 501(c)(4) organizations. Note that the IRS currently has more than 70 ongoing examinations of 501(c)(4) organizations. This includes examinations for a variety of issues, some of which may include whether the organization is engaged in activities that promote social welfare. It is also important to note that the Service also maintains a determination process to review the operations of an organization to determine whether it should be recognized as tax exempt. In this area, we also review compliance with the legal requirements, including whether an organization is primarily engaged in activities that promote social welfare. There are currently more than 1,600 examinations of 501(c)(4) organizations which appear to be primarily engaged in activities that promote social welfare.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Catherine Barre.

Sincerely,

STEVEN T. MILLER,
Deputy Commissioner for Services and Enforcement.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Jona Olsson, fire chief of the Latir Volunteer Fire Department located near Questa, NM. Olsson was recently honored as the 2012 Volunteer Fire Chief of the Year by Fire Chief for her tireless work at the Latir Volunteer Fire Department and her commitment to diversity in the local fire service. She was honored on August 3, 2012, during the opening session of the International Association of Fire Chiefs’ Fire-Rescue International Conference and Exhibition in Denver, CO.

After moving to New Mexico in 1999, Olsson was recruited to join the Latir Volunteer Fire Department. She quickly became integrated in the fire department, rising through the ranks, serving as a training officer, deputy chief, and eventually fire and EMS chief for the department in 2006. Olsson has facilitated training to individual departments and fire conferences across North America, as well as the United Kingdom.

During tough economic times, Olsson and other volunteers continued to expand the fire department, increasing training hours and the number of qualified volunteers. All 18 of Latir’s volunteer firefighters are structure trained, 13 are qualified with wildland Red Cards, and nine have EMS licenses. The Latir Volunteer Fire Department also has an active junior firefighter program. In addition, the fire department recently built a new addition to the fire station and purchased another fire engine.

I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Jona Olsson and the excellent work of the Latir Volunteer Fire Department. The dedication of Olsson and the community will ensure the delivery of vital services to New Mexico residents.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, over 2 years have passed since I last included the names of our troops who have lost their lives serving in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. I wish to honor their service and sacrifice by including their names in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Since I last included the names of our fallen troops on July 13, 2010, the Pentagon announced the deaths of 1,020 troops in Iraq and in Operation Enduring Freedom, which includes Afghanistan. They will not be forgotten, and today I ask unanimous consent that their names be printed in the RECORD. There being no objection, the material ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

TRIBUTE TO JONA OLSSON

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Jona Olsson, fire chief of the Latir Volunteer Fire Department located near Questa, NM. Olsson was recently honored as the 2012 Volunteer Fire Chief of the Year by Fire Chief for her tireless work at the Latir Volunteer Fire Department and her commitment to diversity in the local fire service. She was honored on August 3, 2012, during the opening session of the International Association of Fire Chiefs’ Fire-Rescue International Conference and Exhibition in Denver, CO.

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CW2 Jose L. Montenegro Jr., of Houston, TX; CW2 Thalia S. Ramirez, of San Antonio, TX; PFC Shane W. Canta, of Corumna, MI; L/Cpl R. Tepoch, of Fife, WA; SGT Jeremie S. Border, of Mesquite, TX; SSgt Jonathan P. Schmidt, of Petersburg, VA; SPC Kyle R. Rookey, of Oswego, NY; SSgt Janelle M. Wing, of Monongahela, PA; SGT Christopher J. Birdwell, of Windsor, CO; SPC Mary J. Anders, of Baker City, OR; PFC Patricia L. Horne, of Greenwood, MS; SGT Louis R. Torres, of Oberlin, OH; SGT David V. Williams, of Frederick, MD; SFC Coater B. Debose, of State Line, MS; SGT Richard A. Essen, of Kelseyville, CA; SGT Luis A. Oliver Galbreath, of San Juan, PR; SGT David J. Waresen, of Kentwood, MI; SGT Patrick F. Feeks, of Edgewater, MD; PO1 Sean P. Carson, of Des Moines, WA; CW2 Suresh N. Anrause, of Cathedra Springs, CA; CW3 Brian D. Hornsby, of Melbourne, FL; PO1 Darrel L. Enos, of Colorado Springs, CO; SGT Jerry T. Copes, of Lake Station, IN; SGT James A. J. Upchurch, of Grover, NC; PFC Michael R. Demarsico II, of North Adams, MA; SSG Eric S. Holman, of Evansville, CA; PFC Andrew J. Keller, of Tigard, OR; SGT Scott E. Dickinson, of San Diego, CA; Cpl Richard A. Rivera Jr., of Ventura, CA; LCpl Gregory T. Buckley, of Oceanside, NY; SSgt Sika R. Morgan of El Dorado, CA; Capt Joseph L. Joseph of Henderson, NV; Capt Matthew P. Manoukian, of Los Altos Hills, CA; MSgt Gregory R. Trent, of Norton, MA; SSG John E. Kennedy, of West Point, NY; CSM Kevin J. Griffin, of Laramie, WY; SGT Ethan J. Martin, of Lewiston, ID; Maj Walter D. Gray, of Conyers, GA; PO3 Clayton R. Beauchamp, of Weatherfield, TX; Cpl Daniel L. Linnabary II, of Hubert, NC.

ISG Russell R. Bell, of Tyler, TX; SSG Matthew S. Sitton, of Largo, FL; ILT Todd J. McLane, of Port Charlotte, FL; Cpl Jesus J. Lopez, of San Bernardino, CA; SPC Kyle B. McClain, of Rochester Hills, MI; LCpl Curtis J. Duarte, of Covina, CA; GySgt Jonathan W. New, of Killeen, TX; 1st Sgt Michael J. Price, of Holland, MI; ILT Sean R. Jacobs, of Redding, CA; SGT John E. Hansen, of Austin, TX; SSG Benjamin C. Pleitez, of Turlock, CA; Cpl Bobby L. C Nepveu, of Leomin, CA; SPC Jose Oscar Belmontes, of La Verne, CA; PFC Thomas E. Kennedy, of West Point, NY; CSM Kevin J. Griffin, of Laramie, WY; SGT Ethan J. Martin, of Lewiston, ID; Maj Walter D. Gray, of Conyers, GA; PO3 Clayton R. Beauchamp, of Weatherfield, TX; Cpl Daniel L. Linnabary II, of Hubert, NC.

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September 19, 2012

Alejandro J. Pardo, of Porterville, CA; PFC Trevor B. Adkins, of Spring Lake, NC;

SPC Clarence Williams III, of Brooksville, FL; SPC Erica P. Alecksen, of Eatonton, GA; SSG Robert D. Lewis, of Nashville, TN; PFC Brian D. P. Navarro, of Austin, TX; SPC Jonathan batista, of Kinnelon, NJ; SSG Saul M. Guerra, of Westlake, OH; OH; OSG Rafael M. MacFarlane, of Oviedo, FL; PFC Cody O. Moosman, of Provo, UT; SGT Michael J. Strachota, of White Hall, AR; SSG Robert A. Masson, of Muskegon, MI; OH; OSgt John S. Skalberg Jr., of Cullman, AL; 1LT Stephen C. Prasnicki, of Lexington, VA; SGT Matthew J. Leach, of Ferndale, MI; LCpl Niall W. O’Connor, of Elgin, IL; OH; LCpl D. Hogan, of Norman, IN; PFC Steven P. Stevens II, of Tallahassee, FL; MAJ Paul C. Voelke, of Monroe, NY; LCpl Eugene C. Mills III, of Walls, MS; PFC Jose Rodriguez, of Gustine, CA; 1LT Ryan D. Rawl, of Lexington, SC.

SPC Matthew B. Thomas, of Travelers Rest, SC; SGT John D. Meador II, of Columbia, SC; PFC Jarrod A. Lailler, of Spokane, WA; SPC Trevor A. Pinnick, of Lawrivelle, IL; SGT Joseph M. Lilly, of Flint, MI; SGT Nicholas C. Frediani, of Sun Diego, CA; SFC Baret W. McNabb, of Chino Valley, AZ; CPL Taylor J. Braune, of Andover, MA; SGT J. Lazmuk, of Windsor, IL; PFC Nathan T. Davis, of Yucaipa, CA; MCPo Richard J. Kessler Jr., of Gulfport, FL; PFC Brandon D. Goodvine, of LaGrange, CO; LCpl Antz E. Mccombe, of Moreno Valley, CA; CPT Scott P. Pace, of Brawley, CA; 1LT Matthew G. Fazzari, of Walla Walla, WA; PFC Vincent J. Ellis, of Toledo, OH; LCpl Jashua E. Witsman, of Covington, IN; SCI Gerardo Campos, of Miami, FL; SCI Kedith L. Jacobs, of Denver, CO; PFC Leroy Deronde III, of Overland Park, KS; PO1 Ryan J. Wilson, of Eric D. Warren, of Shawnee, OK; Cpl Keaton Tofiga J. Tautolo, of Wilmington, CA; HN CW5 John C. Pratt, of Springfield, VA; SPC Alex Hernandez III, of Round Rock, TX; SPC Vilmar Galarza Hernandez, of Salinas, CA; SPC Robert E. Robinson, of Beverly Hills, CA; SPC David M. Whitmore, of Easley, SC; SPC Moises J. Gonzalez, of Huntington, CA; SPC Jason K. Edens, of Franklin, TN; SPC Manuel J. Vasquez, of West Sacramento, CA; SGT Don R. Shaffer, of Pekin, IL; SGT Joseph D. Johnson, of Danville, VA; SGT Michael C. Viray, of Waipahu, HI; CW2 Nicholas S. Johnson, of San Diego, CA; PFC Michael J. Metcalf, of Boynton Beach, FL; 1LT Jona- than P. Fankhauser, of Tallahassee, FL; SFC Joseph H. Fankhauser, of Mason, CT; SPC Michael C. Braden, of Lock Haven, PA; CPL Aaron M. Lowery, of Fort Rucker, AL; SPC David K. Nowaczyk, of Dyer, IN; SGT Tannier S. Hig- gins, of Yantis, TX; LCpl Abraham Tarwoe, of Providence, RI; PFC Paul J. Schiller, of The Colony, TX; LCpl Ramon T. Kaipat, of Tacoma, WA; EOCN Tervor J. Stanley, of Virginia Beach, VA; SGT Tyler J. Smith, of Licking, MO; SGT Thomas D. Falls, of Grove City, OH; SFC Joshua C. Lyon, of Menlo Park, CA; SGT Thomas F. Johnson, of Westminster, CA; SGT Jason D. Hyland, of Plymouth, MA; SGT Joseph L. Rozanski, of Columbus, OH; CPL Christopher D. Borden, of Ita, NY; SGT Christopher L. Brown, of Columbus, OH; SGT Michael J. Palacio, of Lake Elsinore, CA; SGT James E. Dutton, of Checotah, OK; SPC David W. Tay- lor, of Dixon, KY; CPL Roberto Cazarez, of Los Angeles, CA; SFC Tami M. Davis, of Mayfield, KY; CA; SGT Francis D. Imlay, of Vacaville, CA; SGT Joseph D'Augustine, of Waldwick, NJ; SGT William R. Wilson III, of Gettysburg, PA; SGT John W. Wray, of Marietta, GA; SGT Daniel J. Brown, of Jersey, ID; CPT Aaron D. Istre, of Vinton, LA; SPC Dennis P. Weichel Jr., of Providence, RI; SGT Jamie D. Jarboe, of Frankfort, IN; LCpl T. Ray, of San Antonio, TX; SPC Daquane D. Rivers, of Marianna, FL; SSG Jesse J. Grindley, of Hazel Green, AL; SPC Edward J. Acosta, of Hesperia, CA; SGT Brandon J. Best, of Den- ver, CO; PFC Payton W. Jones, of Marble Falls, TX; CPL Conner T. Lowry, of Chicago, IL; SGT Ahmed K. Altaie, of Ann Arbor, MI; MAJ Robert J. Marchant Iii, of Baltimore, MD; Lt Col John D. Loftis, of Paducah, KY; SGT Joshua A. Brown, of Niceville, FL; CPL Timothy J. Conrad Jr., of Roane, VA; SGT Allen R. McKenna Jr., of Noble, OK; Capt Ryan P. Hall, of Colorado Springs, CO; Capt Nicholas S. Whitlock, of Newman, GA; Capt John G. Willsen, of Bend, OR; SGT Jason C. Wise, of Super Marion, SC; PFC Paris S. Pough, of Columbus, GA; SGT Jerry D. Reed II, of Russellville, AR; PO1 Kyler L. Estrada, of Queen Creek, AZ; SGT Brandt C. North, of North Ar-lington, NJ; PFC Cesar Corte, of Oceanside, CA; SFC Billy A. Sutton, of Tupelo, MS; BG Terence J. Hildner, of Fairfax, VA; LCpl Edward J. Dycus, of Greenville, MS; SGT Wil- liam C. Stacey, of Redding, CA; 1LT David A. Johnson, of Horicon, WI; Capt Joshua C. Jaffe, of Franklin, WI; CPL Christopher O. Singler, of Temecula, CA; Capt Daniel B. Bartle, of Ferndale, WA; Capt Nathan R. McWine, of Crystal Lake, IL; MSG Travis W. Hidell, of Manteno, IL; Capt Jesse W. Stites, of North Beach, MD; CPL Kevin J. Reinhard, of Colombu, NJ; CPT Joseph D. Logan, of Willis, TX; CPL Philip D. McGeath, of Glendale, AZ; SFC Keith D. Benson, of Brockton, MA; CPL Jon-Luke Bateman, of Tulsa, OK; LCpl Kenneth E. Cochran, of Wilder, ID; SGT De La Roble, of Treasure Island, FL; AR; ARCP Nellie I. Turner, of Tacoma, WA; PFC Michael W. Pyron, of Hopewell, VA; PFC Dustin P. Na- pier, of London, KY; SGT Jonathan M. aliment, of Ramseur, NC; SPC Robert J. Tauters Jr., of Hamlet, NC; SGT Christian A. Patterson, of Aurora, IL; SGT Brian J. Leonardt, of Merrillvi, MIR; SGT Ivan R. Kniatt, of Oak Grove, MO; SGT Edward J. Schwartz, of Traverse City, MI; AIC Matthew R. Seidler, of Westminster, CA; PO1 Chad R. Regelin, of Cottonwood, CA; SPC Fornell J. Herrera, of Espanola, NM; PO1 Stacy O. Johnson, of Rolling Fork, MS; SGT Noah M. Korte, of Lake Elsinore, CA; SGT Kurt W. Gates, of Clark, WA; PFC Justin M. Whitmore, of Easley, SC.

SSG Joseph J. Altmann, of Marshfield, WI; SGT Robert J. Leid, of Monroe, WI; MAJ Samuel M. Griffith, of Virginia Beach, VA; Private Jared F. Vaquero, of Apoka, FL; SGT Christopher L. Muniz, of Elgin, IL; PFC Brian D. Cabera, of Ramseur, NC; of Blairstown, NJ; LCpl Christopher P. J. Levy, of Rariton, NJ; SFC Clark A. Corley Jr., of Oxnard, CA; SGT Ryan M. Lamley, of Youngstown, OH; SSG Brian H. Riddles, of Springville, CA; SGT Ryan D. Sharp, of Idaho Falls, ID; SSG Victor J. Bell, of De- troit, MI; SPC Dennis P. Red Bolding, of Springs, TN; Cpl Adam J. Buyles, of Salem, OR; Cpl Zachary C. Reiff, of Preston, IA; PFC Jackie L. Diener II, of Boyne City, MI; PFC Adam E. Dobereiner, of Milone, IL; SGT Sean M. Walsh, of San Jose, CA; SGT James R. Burnett Jr., of Wichita, KS.

PO3 Michael L. Ashley L. White, of Alliance, OH; SGT Kristoffer B. Domeji, of San Diego, CA; PFC Christopher A. Horns, of Colorado Springs, CO; CPO Raymond J. Border, of West Valley, UT; SPC Dara A. Currier, of Newark, NJ; SGT James R. Leaf, of Rich- mond, TX; SGT Michael D. Elm, of Phoenix, AZ; SSG Houston M. Taylor, of Hurst, TX; SGT Joseph P. Shaffer, of New Britain, CT; SSG Robert N. Cowdrey, of Atwater, CA; LCpl Scott D. Harper, of Winston, VA; SGT Michael C. Thomas, of University Place, WA; SGT Nathan L. Wyrick, of Enumclaw, WA; CW3 James B. Wilke, of Ione, CA; CPT Joshu- a S. Lawrence, of Nashville, TN.

CPT Drew E. Russ, of Scotts MI; SPC Ricardo Cerro Jr., of Salinas, CA; LCpl Ben- jamin W. Schmidt, of San Antonio, TX; Private Danny Chen, of New York, NY; 15th Armored Division, OK; Lt Col Caleb A. Nelson, of Omaha, NE; SGT JAMES A. Bocin, of Porter, IN; SGT Adrian G. Mills, of Newman, CA; SGT Nicholas A. Sprovato, of Davison, MI; SGT Christopher Diaz, of Al- buquerque, NM; 1LT Ivan D. Lechovich, of Valrico, FL; PFC Steven E. Gutowski, of Plymouth, MA; PFC David A. Drake, of Lecompte, TX; 1LT Mark D. San Antonio, TX; LCpl John R. Wimpie Cagle, of Tucker, GA; LtLt Ryan K. Iannelli, of Detroit, MI; SGT Jonathan M. Atwood, of American Canyon, CA; LCpl Franklin N. Watson, of Vonore, TN; SFC Francisco J. Briseño-Alvarez Jr., of Oklahoma City, OK; SPC Charles N. Holtz, of San Juan, Pr.; PFC Carlos A. Aparicio, of San Juan, Pr.

("..."
L. Zerbe, of York, PA; TSGT Alessandro L. W. Harvell, of Long Beach, CA; TSGT Daniel Spencer C. Duncan, of Olathe, KS; TSGT John Martin D. Hamburger, of Lincoln, NE; SGT Spehar, of Saint Paul, MN.

Workman, of Blanding, UT; SGT Mark R. Lamb, of Providence, NC; PFC Alberto L. J. Daniels, of Kuna, ID; SGT Colby L. Richardson, of Deltona, FL; SGT Devin Christopher J. Scott, of Tyrone, NY; SPC Coker, of Mount Pleasant, SC; SPC R. Shumaker, of Livermore, CA; James W. Crawford, of East Concord, NY; SPC Kevin Potter Jr., of Okmulgee, OK; SPC HI; SOC Brian R. Bill, of Stamford, CT; SOC AR; EODCS Kraig M. Vickers, of Kokomo, IN; LCpl Mark R. Goyet, of Sinton, TX; LCpl Nicholas P. Bernier, of East Kingston, NH; SGT Chad D. Frokjer, of Maplewood, MN; Cpl Robert G. Tenney Jr., of Warner Robins, GA; SFC Terryl L. Mendez Hernandez, of Logan, UT; SGT Chris-"
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CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE
September 19, 2012
Justin A. Officer, of Wichita, KS; LCpl Timothy M. Jackson, of Corbin, KY; SrA Mark Forester, of Tuscaloosa, AL; LCpl Ralph J. Fabbri, of Gallatin, PA; SGT Mark A. Simpson, of Preble, OH; PFC Donald S. West, of Cincinnati, OH; PFC William B. Dawson, of Tunica, MS; PFC Jaswine P. S. Petree, of Yigo, GU; SPC Marc C. Whisenant, of Bolly Hill, FT; SGT Fabiola N. Pham, of CA; PFC Gebrah F. Noonan, of Watertown, CT; PFC Clinton E. Springer II, of Sanford, ME.

LCpl Anthony J. Rosa, of Swanton, VT; LTC Robert F. Baldwin, of Muscatine, IA; CWO Matthew G. Wagstaff, of Orem, UT; CWO 4, of St. Louis, MO; MN; SSG Joshua D. Powell, of Pleasant Plains, IL; SGT Marvin R. Calhoun Jr., of Elkhart, IN; LT Brendan J. Loomey, of Owing Mills, MD; SPC Michael D. Thomasville, GA; SO2 Adam O. Smith, of Hurland, MO; SOS Denis C. Miranda, of Toms River, NJ; SRA Michael J. Bursa, of Faisal, GA; PFC Joshua S. Ose, of Henderson, KY; SPC Jordyn L. Johnson, of Randolph, NY; SFC Ronald A. Vieyra, of Mesa, AZ; SPC Timothy Gerald, GA; PFC Joshua S. Ose, of Henderson, KY; SPC Alexis V. West Danville, VT; SPC Pedro A. Millet VA; SGT Steven J. Deluzio, of South Glens Falls, NY; SGT Christopher D. Greer, of Ashland City, TN; SGT Christopher N. Karch, of Indianopolis, IN; SGT Jose L. Saenz III, of Pleasonton, TX; SGT Jennifer A. Andrade, of San Antonio, TX; LCpl Paul O. Cuzzo, of Plant City, FL; LCpl Kevin M. Cornelius, of Ashtabula, OH; LCpl Vincent E. Gammone III, of Christiana, PA; SGT truck, VA; SGT Mark A. Bock, of Lessesburg, FL; Cpl Kristopher D. Britton, of Grand Ledge, MI; SFC Faith R. Hinkley, of Colorado Springs, CO; Cpl Max W. Donahoe, of Highlands Ranch, CO; SSG Jared N. Van Aalst, of Laconia, NH; SGT Kyle B. Stout, of Texarkana, TX; SGT Michael L. Stanbrough, of Mount Juliet, TN; CPT Jason E. Holbrook, of Sour Lake, TX; SGT Matthew W. Weikert, of Manchester, NH.

LCpl Shane R. Martin, of Spring, TX; P03 Jared Newlove, of Benton, WA; LCpl Abram L. Howard, of Williamstown, PA; P02 Justin McNeely, of Wheatridge, CO; LCpl Frederik E. Vazquez, of Mezbroe Park, IL; SSG Conrad A. Mora, of Sinaloa, CA; SGT Del Linn, of Cypress, CA; SPC Joseph A. Bauer, of Cincinnati, OH; SGT Andrew L. Hand, of Enterprise, AL; LTCol Mario D. Carazo, of Spring-field, OH; SGT Mark D. Automation, of Tuscarawas, OH; SGT James J. Ogin, of El Dorado Springs, MO; SGT James J. Ogin, of El Dorado Springs, MO; LT Michael L. Runyan, of Newark, OH; Cpl Joe L. Wrightsman, of Jonesboro, LA; Cpl Julio M. Santos, of Rota, MP; SFC John H. Jarrell, of Laredo, TX; SGT Christopher E. Charte, of Goffstown, NH; LCpl Ross S. Todd W. Weaver, of Hampton, VA; Cpl John Ryan J. Hopkins, of Livermore, CA; 1LT SrA James A. Hansen, of Athens, MI; SGT Aaron K. Kramer, of Salt Lake City, UT; SrA Daniel R. Sanchez, of El Paso, TX; SGT Christopher N. Karch, of Indianapolis, IN; SGT Jose L. Saenz III, of Pleasonton, TX; PFC Vincent E. Gammone III, of Christiana, PA; SGT truck, VA; SGT Mark A. Bock, of Lessesburg, FL; Cpl Kristopher D. Britton, of Grand Ledge, MI; SFC Faith R. Hinkley, of Colorado Springs, CO; Cpl Max W. Donahoe, of Highlands Ranch, CO; SSG Jared N. Van Aalst, of Laconia, NH; SGT Kyle B. Stout, of Texarkana, TX; SGT Michael L. Stanbrough, of Mount Juliet, TN; CPT Jason E. Holbrook, of Sour Lake, TX; SGT Matthew W. Weikert, of Manchester, NH.

I applaud not only the students, but also the administrators, teachers, staff, and parents of Solon Elementary School. Together, they are succeeding in their mission to generate momentous learning and helping them make a difference in the lives of their students, helping them reach their full potential as independent, responsible learners and engaged citizens.

I am pleased that the U.S. Department of Education has selected Solon Elementary School for this well-deserved honor, and I congratulate the entire community for this outstanding achievement.

RECOGNIZING HOPE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am delighted to commend the Hope Elementary School of Hope, ME, on being named a 2012 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. This prestigious recognition of high accomplishment was bestowed by Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

Created in 1982, the Blue Ribbon Schools award is considered the highest honor an American school can obtain. Schools singled out for this national recognition reflect the goals of our Nation's education reforms for high standards and accountability. Specifically, the Blue Ribbon Schools Program is designed to honor public and private schools that are either academically superior in their States or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement.

This award recognizes that Solon Elementary students achieve at the highest level academically. Solon Elementary School is a top-performing school on State-required assessments, and staff at the school use assessments throughout the academic year as a tool for improving and customizing instruction. The school works closely with families to forge a strong school community where students are connected and encouraged to pursue their interests.

We cannot forget these men and women and their great sacrifice. These brave individuals left behind parents, spouses, children, siblings, and friends. We will work to make sure this country pays tribute for the memory of our fallen soldiers who gave their lives for our country.

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