

of 2013, would improve the most efficient, most effective retirement program we have—Social Security—in three ways. First, it would increase benefits by about \$65 per month for all beneficiaries. Second, it would ensure that annual cost of living adjustments more accurately reflect the cost of living experienced by seniors by adopting the CPI-E. And, finally, it would remove the wage cap so that the payroll tax applies fairly to every dollar of wages. According to the Social Security actuaries, my proposal would increase benefits for current and future beneficiaries while also extending the life of the Social Security Trust Fund through 2049.

Recently, an organization that I have worked closely with for many years, the National Committee to Preserve Social Security & Medicare, launched a campaign in support of a proposal that would boost Social Security benefits, including my legislation. I deeply appreciate the support of the national committee, and commend them for their work to strengthen and expand Social Security. I look forward to continuing to work with them, and other supportive organizations, to confront our Nation's retirement crisis. Strengthening and expanding Social Security is the crucial first step.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN CHINA

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, today I would like to draw attention to a disturbing trend impacting the work of journalists in China.

On January 30, 2014, New York Times reporter Austin Ramzy was forced to leave China due to processing delays for his press credentials. Unfortunately, this is not an isolated event. In 2013, Reporters Without Borders ranked China 173rd out of 179 countries in terms of press freedoms. Over the past year, we have seen China increase efforts to curb the work of foreign news organizations, including extended delays in processing journalist visas, restrictions on access to "sensitive" locations and individuals, pressure on local staff, blocked Web sites, and reports of cyber hacking of media organizations.

To call attention to this suppression, I, as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, along with subcommittee ranking member MARCO RUBIO, Senate Foreign Relations chairman BOB MENENDEZ, and ranking member BOB CORKER, introduced S. Res. 361. This resolution urges the People's Republic of China to take meaningful steps to improve freedom of expression in China as fitting of a responsible international stakeholder.

The ongoing crackdown on journalists and members of the press reporting in China is of grave concern to me. A country that engages in routine censorship and online blocking; harassment, reprisals, and detention of jour-

nalists; and visa delays or denials for journalists not only fails its own people but also fails the international community. A vibrant and free press instills trust in one's government, creates a more transparent environment for business investments, develops an engaged community, and builds legitimacy as a secure, global leader. We expect our partners to strive for these standards.

As we look to rebalance our policy toward the Asia-Pacific region, the United States has a responsibility to promote respect for universal human rights. We urge President Obama to use all appropriate tools to improve and promote freedom of the press in China.

I would like to thank my colleagues for joining me in support of press freedom in China.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DR. MOHAMMAD YOUSAF

• Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I wish to recognize one of West Virginia's finest cardiologists, Dr. Mohammad Yousaf, on receiving the 2013 Heart of Gold Award, which was presented by the West Virginia American Heart Association on February 23, 2013. There is truly no one more qualified, more compassionate or more devoted than Dr. Yousaf, who has been practicing in West Virginia for more than 20 years.

A native of Pakistan, Dr. Yousaf made his way to West Virginia to complete his residency at Marshall University. During his fellowship, he was assigned rotations in our beautiful State's capital, Charleston. Thankfully, he never left and his unwavering commitment to the cardiology field at South Charleston Cardiology, where he continues to practice today, has consistently saved West Virginian lives across our State.

With the help of Dr. Yousaf's momentous contributions and medical expertise, the quality of West Virginia's medical community has strengthened throughout the years and the health and well-being of the people of West Virginia continue to improve.

There are a myriad of doctors across this Nation that diagnose and treat patients every day. However, what distinguishes a good doctor from a great doctor starts and stops with patient care. Dr. Yousaf always puts his patients first and takes the time to build the trust and confidence necessary that leads to positive and long-lasting doctor-patient relationships. Long days and sleepless nights never obstruct from the compassion and dedication Dr. Yousaf devotes to each one of his patients.

Dr. Yousaf is also no stranger to prestigious awards, including the Distinguished West Virginian award, which was created to honor those who have contributed significantly to West

Virginia and those who have brought positive attention to our great State. After more than two decades practicing as a cardiologist in the Mountain State, it is unquestionable that his integrity and work ethic know no bounds. And today, I am proud to commemorate the success of such a wonderful person and such a talented physician.

It is fitting that Dr. Yousaf was presented with the Heart of Gold Award last year, for he once described "the personal satisfaction you get" as a physician who has the means and opportunities to save lives every day. So today, I congratulate a remarkably intelligent and gifted cardiologist on receiving such an esteemed honor. I know he will continue to save lives in the great state of West Virginia for years to come.●

REMEMBERING MICHAEL A. STEPOVICH

• Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I wish to give tribute to Alaska's last Territorial Governor, Michael A. Stepovich, who unfortunately died early on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, at the age of 94.

Mr. Stepovich was a war veteran, a legislator, a local government leader, the first Governor of the Territory born in Alaska and the last prior to statehood in 1957 and 1958, a lawyer, a civic leader, businessman and a true statesman. He also was a good man, and great friend to my entire family. When my family moved to Fairbanks, AK in the early 1970s, Mike and his wife Mathilda and their children were our earliest and closest friends. The Stepovichs raised a large and loving family, and while most Alaskans will remember Mike as an Alaskan statesman, I will always think of him first as a true family man.

Michael was born in Fairbanks on March 12, 1919, the son of Michael A. and Olga S. Stepovich. He graduated in 1940 from Gonzaga University—which in 1966 honored him with the DeSmet medal for being an "outstanding graduate and layman." He earned a law degree from Notre Dame in 1943, and after service in the Navy, he completed postgraduate work at Santa Clara College in 1946.

Stepovich opened a private law practice in Fairbanks in 1948, serving as the city attorney of Fairbanks from 1950 to 1952, as a delegate to the Territorial House of Representatives from 1951–1953 and in the Territorial Senate from 1953–1957. While in the Senate he served as minority leader and was a strong supporter of statehood. He worked tirelessly on the 1956 referendum for statehood. President Dwight Eisenhower appointed Stepovich to be Territorial Governor after Alaskans went to the ballot box in support of joining the Union. He was to be Alaska's last Territorial Governor—within a year Congress would approve Alaska as the 49th State.

After statehood, Governor Stepovich turned his attention to representing Alaska in the U.S. Senate. He lost his bid in 1958 to be one of Alaska's first Senators to Ernest Gruening, who had served in Washington as one of Alaska's first two "shadow" Senators since 1956. Stepovich later ran and lost races to be Governor, first against William A. Egan and later against Walter Hickel. But his defeats did not diminish his interest in or dedication to Alaska. And he remained especially committed to Fairbanks and the rest of the Interior region.

From chairing the Fairbanks Planning and Zoning Committee in 1952 and 1953, through the 1980s, Mike Stepovich was always ready to serve to better Alaska. He was active in the Pioneers of Alaska, the Elks, Eagles, American Legion and the Tanana Valley Bar Association. And that was not always easy given that he was a devoted family man to his wife Matilda and 13 children: Antonia, Maria Theresa, Michael, Peter, Christopher, Dominic, Theodore John, Nicholas Vincent, James, Laura, Nada, Andrea and Melissa. All 13 of the Stepovich children were able to be together with Mike before he passed.

While I could tell many stories about Mike, let me just say to my fellow Senators that Mike Stepovich was a man who would have given the shirt off his back to help a neighbor in need. He was one of the most honorable, decent, and wise men I have had the distinct honor to know in my life. I can only offer my sincere condolences to his family upon his death, just a month shy of his 95th birthday.

Alaska is a much better place because of Mike Stepovich. Those of us who were lucky enough to know him understand how great a loss this is for Alaska. We will always remember his efforts that helped make Alaska, and his hometown of Fairbanks, what it is today.●

REMEMBERING ELIZABETH AND ROY PERATROVICH

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I wish to honor Elizabeth Peratrovich, her husband Roy Peratrovich, and their relentless pursuit of equal civil rights in the territory of Alaska. Elizabeth and Roy lived and worked long before Alaska became a State and still longer before the United States passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. February 16, 2014 marked the 25th year Alaskans celebrated Elizabeth and the passage of the Alaska Anti-Discrimination Act of 1945. I would like to take a moment today, to once again, share the Peratroviches' story and reflect on the legacy of their work.

Elizabeth, a member of the Lukaaxádi clan, in the Raven moiety of the Tlingit tribe, was born on Independence Day in Petersburg, AK in 1911. One year later, Alaska gained a territorial legislature in Juneau made up of 8 senators and 16 representatives, none of whom were Alaska Native. In

the same year a group of Alaska Natives from Southeast formed the Alaska Native Brotherhood to advocate for a right to U.S. citizenship for Alaska Natives. In 1915, Alaska Native women came together and established the Alaska Native Sisterhood to work alongside the brotherhood. Although Elizabeth was very young for the creation of these bodies, each came to play a great role in her fight for equal rights.

Many Americans are familiar with the history of discrimination and presence of Jim Crow laws at this time in the South. Probably fewer Americans are familiar with the existence of similar discrimination towards Alaska Natives. In Juneau, Alaskan Natives were restricted to purchasing homes in only certain parts of town and their children restricted to segregated Indian schools. Local business displayed signs in their store fronts reading, "No Natives Allowed," "We cater to white trade only," or "No Dogs, No Natives" and restaurant signs read, "Meals at all hours—All white help." The U.S. Congress granted citizenship to Native Americans in 1924, yet signs like these and the discrimination they perpetrated endured.

Elizabeth grew up and attended school in Petersburg, Sitka and Ketchikan. After graduating she continued her education at the Western College of Education in Bellingham, WA. In 1931, Elizabeth married Roy Peratrovich, a fellow Western College student and Tlingit from Klawock, AK. In 1940, Roy was elected to be the Alaska Native Brotherhood's camp president and the following year Elizabeth was elected grand president of the Alaska Native Sisterhood.

Together, with their young family, the Peratroviches moved to Juneau, only to experience discrimination against Alaska Natives first-hand. Elizabeth and Roy picked out a home together and tried to purchase it, but once the owners realized that the Peratroviches were Alaska Native, they would not sell. Their children felt unwelcome at school. Their close family friend, Henrietta Newton, who was not Alaska Native herself but married an Alaska Native man, was told by a local beauty parlor, "I'm sorry we don't cater to Indian trade." When an Alaska Native child had an altercation with the law, their local newspaper published it as front page news. Discrimination towards Alaska Natives remained prevalent. On December 30, 1941, in their capacities as president and grand president of the Alaska Native Brother and Sisterhoods, Roy and Elizabeth wrote a letter to Ernest Gruening, then Governor of the Territory of Alaska. The letter drew attention to the discrepancy between Alaska Natives paying taxes for a public school system from which their children were excluded and also between Alaska Native men fighting in World War II, who upon return were denied rights that other locals enjoyed. Thus

began their public pursuit of equal rights for all people in Alaska.

Elizabeth began to call upon her friends and family to involve themselves in the anti-discrimination movement. She recruited women to meet with a Senator from Nome in order to express to him what it felt like to be discriminated against, left out of the United Service Organization, and forced to read signs in local businesses barring them from entry. Elizabeth and Roy met with Governor Gruening to strategize their movement, and then traveled around Native communities bringing with them sample anti-discrimination legislation from the lower 48. In 1943, State Senator Norman Walker introduced an act that would provide full and equal accommodations to all people within the Territory of Alaska. The vote was defeated, but the Peratroviches were not.

In 1945, the antidiscrimination bill was reintroduced. It passed the house and moved to the senate. The gallery was full, the doors were open and spectators filled the halls outside. Once on the senate floor, the debate began. As senators stood to speak, Elizabeth, along with many other community members listened. They listened as one Senator rose to say:

Far from being brought closer together, which will result from this bill, the races should be kept further apart. Who are these people, barely out of savagery, who want to associate with us whites with 5,000 years of recorded civilization behind us?

Elizabeth looked on as another senator claimed, "Mixed breeds are the source of trouble, it is they only who wish to associate with the whites," and as a church leader declared that it would take at least 30 years before Alaska Natives were equal to white men, Roy rose to speak on behalf of the bill noting that Governor Gruening recognized discrimination in Alaska. He addressed the legislature with these words, "Either you are for discrimination or you are against it accordingly as you vote on this bill."

Once debate on the bill concluded, the public was given a chance to express their views in front of the legislature and a crowd gathered that day. Given this chance, Elizabeth took it. Once on the senate floor, Elizabeth sat next to the president of the senate, where she addressed the predominantly white and all-male body of legislators. "I would not have expected that I, who am barely out of savagery, would have to remind gentlemen with five thousand years of recorded civilization behind them of our Bill of Rights."

When asked if she thought the bill would eliminate discrimination, Elizabeth replied:

Do your laws against larceny and even murder prevent those crimes? No law will eliminate crimes but at least you as legislators can assert to the world that you recognize the evil of the present situation and speak your intent to help us overcome discrimination.