

My own interest in public service stemmed from a summer internship from my Congressman when I was in college, and I am hopeful that visits like these that the rural electric co-operatives provide for these young men and women—these visits to Washington, DC—will inspire these young people to get involved and work to improve their hometowns, our State, and our Nation.

Each of these 1,700 Youth Tour students should be commended for being in Washington, DC, this week, just as our co-ops should be commended for realizing the need to invest in our future leaders.

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT GENERAL NOEL T. "TOM" JONES

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, in a few short weeks an inspirational military leader will retire after serving his country proudly for over 35 years. Today I recognize and commend Air Force Lt. Gen. Noel T. "Tom" Jones for his exceptional leadership and service over those 35 years, most recently as the vice commander of U.S. Air Forces in Europe, Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

Born to Margaret and Lem Jones, General Jones was no stranger to military service. His father was an F-4 fighter pilot in the U.S. Air Force and retired after 23 years as a lieutenant colonel. His older brother, Lem Jones, Jr., served in the U.S. Army and retired as a major. The second oldest son, Ron Jones, served as an enlisted member in the U.S. Air Force for 6 years. Finally, General Jones' younger brother, James "Rev" Jones, recently retired as a major general after a distinguished career as an Air Force fighter pilot as well. In fact, at one point in time, all four Jones boys were serving in the military at the same time. All told, General Jones moved around to nine different States or countries before even entering college.

With a calling to serve and fly like his father, General Jones was commissioned in 1980 following graduation from the U.S. Air Force Academy with a bachelor of science degree in political science. He completed undergraduate pilot training in 1981 and began a long career flying the F-16 Fighting Falcon under the call sign "Honez." During his career, he served as an instructor pilot and operations officer as well as holding numerous operational command positions.

An outstanding leader throughout his distinguished career, General Jones' service has spanned the country with assignments in 12 States and across the world with tours at Torrejon Air Base, Spain, Kunsan Air Base, South Korea, Baghdad, Iraq, and Ramstein Air Base, Germany. He has commanded a fighter squadron, operations group, and a fighter wing. Additionally, General Jones commanded the 332nd Expeditionary Wing at Ahmed Al Jaber Air Base, Kuwait, during Operation Iraqi

Freedom and served for a year in Iraq as the director of strategic plans and assessment for U.S. Forces-Iraq.

General Jones has also held staff assignments at North American Aerospace Defense Command, Air Combat Command, and the National Security Agency. Prior to his current assignment, he was the director, operational capability requirements, deputy chief of staff for operations, plans and requirements, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, DC. In his current capacity, General Jones serves as the vice commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, the air component to U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command. The major command is responsible for providing full-spectrum warfighting capabilities to the combatant commanders throughout the entire area of responsibility, which encompasses 104 countries in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East, the Arctic and Atlantic Oceans, and possesses more than a quarter of the world's population and more than a quarter of the world's gross domestic product.

General Jones is a command pilot with more than 3,500 flying hours, including combat sorties over Iraq in operations Southern Watch, Desert Fox and Iraqi Freedom. His military decorations include the Air Force Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Legion of Merit with two oak leaf clusters, and Bronze Star Medal, among many others.

Mr. President, Lt. Gen. Tom "Honez" Jones epitomizes the Air Force core values of integrity, service, and excellence, and has dedicated his life to serving our Nation. I am proud to say he plans to retire with the rest of the extended Jones Family in Coushatta, LA. Today I join my colleagues in honoring his admirable service to our Nation and all the airmen, sailors, soldiers, marines, and civilians, who have served alongside him. We offer our heartfelt appreciation to Tom, his wife Debbie, and their children, Tommy and Danielle, and a hearty congratulation on his retirement from the U.S. Air Force.

RECOGNIZING KATHY MERCHANT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Kathy Merchant, a friend and an accomplished community leader in Greater Cincinnati over the past nearly two decades, on the occasion of her receiving the 2015 Northern Kentucky University Lincoln Award.

Kathy Merchant's professional accomplishments are noteworthy, having served as the president/CEO of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, GCF, from 1997 until her retirement in May 2015. Prior to joining GCF, Ms. Merchant was director of the Pew Charitable Trusts' Neighborhood Preservation Initiative and a partner in the consulting firm Holt, Wexler & Merchant.

Recognized as a national leader in her field, Ms. Merchant serves on the

board of the Boston-based Center for Effective Philanthropy and in 2012 joined the national board of the New York-based Local Initiatives Support Corporation.

Ms. Merchant has served on a number of nonprofit boards, including the National Center for Arts and Technology, Cincinnati USA Chamber, Council on Foundations, Community Foundations of America/GivingNet, Ohio Grantmakers Forum, and the SC Ministry Foundation.

An advocate for the underserved, Ms. Merchant chaired the Strive Partnership's cradle-to-career initiative in Cincinnati—2009 to 2013—where she continues to serve as a member of the executive committee and as an advisor to the national Strive Network.

Ms. Merchant has earned many professional awards, including the YWCA Career Woman of Achievement, 2005; Ohio Philanthropy, 2006; Girl Scouts Woman of Distinction, 2009; Council on Foundations' Distinguished Grantmaker, 2011; Kentucky Commonwealth, 2012; WE Celebrate Woman of the Year—Nonprofit, 2012; and the Cincinnati Public Relations Society of America's Blacksmiths CEO Communicator of the Year, 2013. She was also named a "Top 50 Power and Influence" leader by The NonProfit Times, 2008.

I would like to congratulate Kathy Merchant on the many contributions she has made to the Greater Cincinnati community and beyond.

RECOGNIZING BOSMA ENTERPRISES 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize Bosma Enterprises on the 100th anniversary of its founding. I commend Bosma for remaining steadfast in its mission to decrease the unemployment rate among those who are blind or visually impaired.

Since its founding, Bosma Enterprises has provided employment opportunities and rehabilitation to visually impaired Hoosiers throughout our State. Originally a public institution created by the Indiana State Legislature in 1915, the Board of Industrial Aid for the Blind was renamed after Charles E. Bosma, an advocate for the blind and visually impaired citizens of Indiana. Indiana State Representative and Speaker of the Indiana House Brian C. Bosma has served as a founding director since 1988 when the organization was granted not-for-profit status. Since then, Bosma has grown tremendously. A little more than 15 years ago, Bosma secured a major contract allowing it to package and distribute gloves to hospitals under the jurisdiction of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Bosma then expanded their contract with the Department of Veteran Affairs and began to package and distribute surgical gloves, creating even more jobs.

Bosma Enterprises has grown into a business with more than 200 employees,