

woods or at the farm) about Christian—and increasingly on my part, Buddhist—thought, and returning again and again to our shared love of the environment and what all this meant for activists and stewards. Eventually I left the Joint Commissions and started working for the Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust, a group I'd started. I asked Brendan if he'd consider becoming an advisor to ACT—expecting him to say no, for given his high level career (in addition to his government work he'd been on the board of just about every major New England environmental organization) why bother with a little start up like ACT? But he graciously agreed. Now, Brendan chairs the ACT Lands Committee, and regularly works with us on forestry issues and with landowners who are considering conservation.

Brendan is like one of his beloved stiff asters, the unusual plant that grows near the liquor store in Groveton, able to find nourishment in dry gravel, and subject of one of his most memorable sermons. His calling was to work with the underserved, and he found his parish in the great unruly life of the North Country, independent and fiercely neighborly. He also found his parish with the people working in conservation, including the game wardens he directed as ANR secretary and continues to have special regard for. He's done great service for our land and people, and I am tremendously grateful to have him as a friend, colleague, and mentor.

Former Courier Editor Rebecca Brown is director of ACT, and serves as a NH State Representative.

#### TRIBUTE TO MIKE DONOGHUE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to call the Senate's attention to the continued First Amendment advocacy of a Vermont journalist, Mike Donoghue of the Burlington Free Press. The Vermont Press Association has presented Mike with the prestigious Matthew Lyon Award, for his staunch advocacy of First Amendment rights.

Mike is a talented and seasoned reporter, and in more than 40 years as a staff writer at the Free Press he has covered local, State and national news, as well as sporting events—all, with integrity and vigor. He has shown a steadfast commitment to truth-telling, to getting the facts, and getting them right, for the people of Vermont.

While Mike has achieved noteworthy accomplishments and awards during his tenure at the Free Press, it is, especially, his work as an advocate and teacher of First Amendment protections that have drawn the distinction of the Matthew Lyon Award. He served two terms as president of the Vermont Press Association, where he worked to expand the use of cameras in Vermont courtrooms. As a founder of the Vermont Coalition for Open Government, he has provided testimony in front of the Vermont Legislature on a regular basis and on a variety of topics related to First Amendment rights. Mike not only is a veteran reporter and volunteer advocate but a dedicated educator as well. He is an adjunct professor of journalism at Saint Michael's College in Colchester—my alma mater—and he has trained young journalists throughout Vermont and New

England as well as through the auspices of the New England Press Association, the New England Society of Newspaper Editors, and Investigative Reporters and Editors. His commitment to teaching and defending the tenets of the First Amendment led him to participate as a trainer in Ireland after the country passed its Freedom of Information Act in 1997.

The Vermont Press Association each year offers the Matthew Lyon Award to an individual who has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to the First Amendment and to “the public's right to know the truth in Vermont.” It is named for Congressman Matthew Lyon, one of the foremost defenders of the Bill of Rights. He served in the U.S. House of Representatives on behalf of Vermont, as well as Kentucky, beginning in the 5th Congress. Congressman Lyon is known for his time in jail—and subsequent reelection during his sentence—on charges of sedition in 1798 for his sharp criticism of President John Adams.

Throughout his career, Mike Donoghue has worked tirelessly to promote accountability of public officials, and transparency in government agencies. As an earlier recipient of this same award, I will always feel a special kinship in these efforts with champions like Mike Donoghue.

I ask unanimous consent that this announcement from the Vermont Press Association about Mike Donoghue's selection for this award be printed into the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### BFP'S DONOGHUE WINS VT PRESS 1ST AMENDMENT AWARD

(By The Vermont Press Association, July 6, 2015)

MONTPELIER.—Longtime journalist and educator Mike Donoghue of South Burlington has been selected to receive the Matthew Lyon Award for his lifetime commitment to the First Amendment and the public's right to know the truth in Vermont.

The Vermont Press Association, which represents the interests of 11 daily and about four dozen non-daily newspapers circulating in Vermont, will honor Donoghue at its annual meeting and awards banquet at noon Thursday, July 16 at the Capitol Plaza in Montpelier.

Donoghue, an award-winning veteran news and sports writer for the Burlington Free Press, is being recognized for efforts in his spare time working as an adjunct professor of journalism at St. Michael's College, as a longtime officer with the Vermont Press Association and his volunteer efforts with various groups including New England First Amendment Coalition (NEFAC), New England Newspaper and Press Association (NENPA) and the Society for Professional Journalists (SPJ).

VPA President John Flowers said Donoghue has been on the front lines in seeking greater public accountability through a range of efforts, including that government officials and courts ensure records are easily available to the public, and that government meetings and court hearings are open to Vermonters.

“Mike's efforts in accountability journalism at the Burlington Free Press are well

documented over several decades. But the Lyon award is focusing on his efforts in educating students, the public, government officials, and journalists—both for print and electronic media outlets. Mike is called upon frequently to speak in classrooms, in the community and at professional conferences from Vermont to Ireland.”

His work has helped improve both the open meeting law and public records law in Vermont, Flowers said. He noted it was while serving as VPA President in the mid-1980s that Donoghue helped lead the media efforts in successfully obtaining approval for cameras in Vermont Courts.

St. Michael's College recruited Donoghue in 1985 to teach as an adjunct professor in the journalism department, where he still helps. He also served as an officer for the Vermont Press Association for 35 years until he resigned as its executive director earlier this year. Donoghue was instrumental in getting the VPA headquarters anchored at St. Michael's College.

Donoghue serves on the executive board of NEFAC, a six-state effort promoting the First Amendment. He was on the New England Press Association Board of Directors and various committees 1995-2001. The Society of Professional Journalists appointed Donoghue in 1990 to serve as the Vermont chairman for Project Sunshine, a nationwide First Amendment effort—a volunteer hat he still wears.

The VPA solicits nominations from Vermonters each year for the Lyon award, which honors people who have an unwavering devotion to the five freedoms within the First Amendment and to the principle that the public's right to know the truth is essential in a self-governed democracy, Flowers said.

Donoghue has been named to five halls of fame. They include induction as one of 35 charter members selected by the New England Press Association for its Community Journalism Hall of Fame in 2000. Three years later he was named one of three charter members selected nationwide by the Society of Professional Journalists and The National Freedom of Information Coalition for their National Hall of Fame for Local Heroes.

Other honors include the Yankee Quill Award in 2007 for a lifetime commitment to outstanding journalism in New England and beyond; selected the New England Journalist of the Year for print or electronic media in 2013; and voted by Gannett employees nationwide to receive “Greater Good Award” from the company in 2013.

The Lyon Award is named for a former Vermont congressman who was jailed in 1798 under the Alien and Sedition Act for sending a letter to the editor, criticizing President John Adams. While Lyon was serving his federal sentence in a Vergennes jail, Vermonters re-elected him to the U.S. House of Representatives. Lyon is credited with ousting Adams when he cast the deciding vote in favor of Thomas Jefferson when the 1800 presidential race went to Congress for a final determination.

Previous Matthew Lyon winners include Patrick J. Leahy for his work as a state prosecutor and U.S. senator; Edward J. Cashman for his efforts as Chittenden Superior Court clerk, a state prosecutor and state judge; Robert Hemley, for his many successful fights as a lawyer to keep courtrooms open and court files available to the public; Gregory Sanford, state archivist, for his work in maintaining, restoring and saving government records for public access; H. Allen Gilbert, executive director of ACLU in Vermont for fighting for greater public access to government records and for public disclosure about police misconduct; and Ken Squier and WDEV-radio for efforts to inform Vermonters about state and local issues.

## VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for votes on S. 1177, the Every Child Achieves Act from Monday, July 13, 2015, through Thursday, July 16, 2015. Had I been present I would have voted in favor of invoking cloture on the substitute amendment No. 2089, cloture on the amended underlying bill, and final passage of S. 1177. I also would have voted in favor of amendments Nos. 2169, 2194, 2093, 2176, 2171, 2161, 2241, 2177, 2243, 2247, 2100, and 2242. I would have opposed amendments Nos. 2132, 2162, and 2180.●

## EVERY CHILD ACHIEVES ACT

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, it is clear to me that No Child Left Behind was broken and that it was not serving the best interest of children in Michigan or the rest of the country. That is why I voted to support the passage of the Every Child Achieves Act, which moves away from high stakes testing and puts decisions on education back in the hands of our States, school districts, parents, and the teachers, who are in the best position to make those decisions.

However, I continue to have reservations about the Every Child Achieves Act, particularly the changes to formulas that govern how resources are allocated. The bill as drafted will reduce the support that Michigan schools have for recruiting teachers and school leaders at the same time as it reduces support for their professional development. It also cuts the future resources dedicated to the education of the most vulnerable low-income children in Michigan, sending that money to other States, using a formula that effectively rewards States for investing less in education. It is wrong to take resources away from one set of children and give them to another, and then call it equity.

While I appreciate the efforts of the Senator from North Carolina to change his original amendment, the modified version would still have a negative impact on the children of Michigan. This is the reason I voted no on this amendment.

As this bill continues to conference committee, I intend to continue to fight to ensure that every child in Michigan has the best possible access to quality public education and that Michigan is treated fairly in the funding formulas.

## OLDER AMERICANS ACT

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I am very pleased to see that the Older Americans Act reauthorization passed the Senate last week. This law, which turns 50 years old this month, provides critical services like home-delivered meals, transportation, and elder abuse protections.

I would like to thank Chairman ALEXANDER and Ranking Member MUR-

RAY for their efforts to pass this bill. I would also like to acknowledge the many organizations representing tens of millions of Americans who worked with me and my staff to get this bill passed, including the National Council on Aging, Meals on Wheels America, AARP, the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, and many others.

While this bill is a good step forward, I would have preferred that it go much further.

Older adults are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population. Shockingly, 1 in 5 seniors is living on an average income of \$8,300 per year. We learned from the Government Accountability Office last month that nearly 4 million seniors experience food insecurity and do not know where their next meal will come from. Fewer than 10 percent of low-income seniors who need a meal delivered to their homes receive one. There are seniors across the country who may not have enough money to eat dinner tonight.

For the generation that fought to defend democracy and built our great Nation, we must do everything we can to make sure that seniors do not go hungry. Older Americans should not have to choose between buying medicine or keeping a roof over their heads or having food on the table.

Providing home-delivered meals—Meals on Wheels—for seniors is not only the right thing to do, it makes good economic sense. Why is that? If frail seniors do not get the nutrition they need, they are more likely to fall and break a hip and wind up in the hospital emergency room or in a nursing home. At the end of the day, investing in nutrition which keeps seniors healthy actually saves us money by keeping them out of the hospital.

Since 2006 when the Older Americans Act was last reauthorized, the U.S. population over 60 has grown by about 30 percent. Has funding gone up by 30 percent? No. In fact, funding has been basically flat, and when you account for inflation, funding has actually decreased by about 12 percent. I strongly believe we should significantly expand funding for Older Americans Act programs.

The truth is that the priorities we hold—treating seniors with respect, making sure seniors have the food they need—have the overwhelming support of the American people. These principles are among the foundations of a just and fair society where people look forward to growing old. I thank my Senate colleagues for their support of this important reauthorization bill. I hope that my colleagues in the House of Representatives take up and pass this bill swiftly so that it can become law without any further delay.

INNOVATION SCHOOLS  
DEMONSTRATION AUTHORITY

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am joined by the chair and ranking

member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee to discuss one of my amendments, Whitehouse No. 2185, to the Every Child Achieves Act, which would establish an Innovation Schools Demonstration Authority. I thank them for their leadership on this important legislation and join them today to discuss the purpose of the amendment.

Teachers and school leaders possess a unique understanding of the students and communities they serve. My amendment is intended to help schools address these unique needs through increased autonomy from local, State, and Federal regulations. In Rhode Island I have heard from school leaders who would like to extend the school day for struggling students, take ownership over school budgeting and financing or manage their school's human resources but are unable to do so because existing rules and regulations get in the way. The prospects of moving bureaucratic approaches at all three levels of government can be daunting, but this measure is designed to clear a path.

Several States are already experimenting with increased school autonomy. In Massachusetts, where State law allows for innovation status, schools are already benefiting from regulatory flexibility. In Revere, MA, the Paul Revere Elementary School uses regulatory flexibility around staffing, budgeting, scheduling, and curriculum to operate a school model that emphasizes staff collaboration and differentiated instruction. In Falmouth, MA, the Lawrence School is using regulatory flexibility to improve its governance and decisionmaking structure in a way that emphasizes faculty input and satisfaction. In addition to Massachusetts, States as diverse as Colorado, Kentucky, Minnesota, and West Virginia have established State laws that promote innovation through autonomy.

The Innovation Schools Demonstration Authority builds on these efforts by establishing a fast-track process to give public schools relief from the local, State, and Federal regulations that can be barriers to school-based innovation. The program is designed to serve existing public schools, specifically those where teachers, parents, administrators, and members of the community are working together to implement new, evidence-based models of teaching, learning, and school administration. When these existing schools are selected for innovation school designation, they will be able to obtain expedited relief from regulations that would otherwise prevent them from implementing their school vision.

A key element of this program is that the whole school community wants to participate. Innovation schools must demonstrate support from administrators, parents, and at least two-thirds of the current teaching staff. They are encouraged to form advisory boards to bring community