

expertise from businesses, higher education, and community groups, among others, into school planning, operations, and oversight. And, importantly, innovation schools will remain part of their local education authority, serving as laboratories for experimentation, the benefits of which can serve as a model for other schools in the district.

Mrs. MURRAY. I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE. As ranking member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, I support this amendment, which establishes a process for educators in traditional public schools to pursue innovative, community-inspired strategies to improve education. My home State of Washington has benefited from educator-initiated innovation through the Washington Innovative Schools Program. I am proud to say that we now have almost thirty designated innovative schools that are pursuing creative and innovative educational ideas with a high level of parent and community involvement. And while providing room for innovation is important, it is also essential that we maintain important Federal safeguards. This is why under this amendment, innovation schools must still comply with part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This program will ensure that we balance the need for flexibility while maintaining strong accountability.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his work on this amendment. The thinking behind the Innovation Schools Demonstration Authority is consistent with the approach we have taken throughout the Every Child Achieves Act: returning more decisionmaking authority back to our 100,000 public schools and promoting greater flexibility in achieving high standards. This pilot program would allow for the creation of autonomous schools that would operate under the same accountability standards as other schools in the school district; however, these innovation schools would be granted flexibility to increase student achievement in innovative ways to best serve the needs of their students. Through increased autonomy and flexibility, innovation schools may see some of the same demonstrated successes as charter schools.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I thank Ranking Member MURRAY and Chairman ALEXANDER for their support. I hope this measure will meet all of our expectations and create great examples of innovative, student-centered public schools.

RECOGNIZING ST. MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH UPON ITS 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church in the German Village neighborhood of Colum-

bus, OH, as it celebrates its 150th anniversary. In 1865, St. Mary initially operated under the leadership of Rev. Francis S. Specht in a building that featured a one-room church, one-room school and second-story rectory. In 1866, the parishioners began construction on a German-gothic inspired church. In 1893, the parishioners built the iconic steeple, which rises to 197 feet and still stands tall today.

The parish is home to more than 500 families, with parishioners from 5 different counties in Ohio. St. Mary also hosts more than 50 weddings each year and has approximately 230 students enrolled in prekindergarten through the eighth grade.

The parish mission is “to be of one mind and heart with the Church by loving God with all our heart, all our mind, all our strength, all our soul; and by loving our neighbor as ourselves.” St. Mary fulfills its mission by supporting the needs of its congregation, hosting community activities, and educating its students. Nearly 95 percent of the students at St. Mary have been fortunate enough to receive tuition assistance.

I am here today to honor St. Mary of the Assumption and its congregation. I congratulate all who were involved in making its first 150 years a success.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE BOBBY FAMILY OF ROSCOE, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the Bobby family from Roscoe, SD, for their work in railroad service. Roger, Duane, Albert, Bill, and Dale—led by their late father La Vern Bobby—have served a combined total of 232 years with the railroad industry. The six men have worked with Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, and Pacific Railroads, all serving in the Maintenance of Way department throughout their careers.

Following La Vern, who joined railroad service in 1955 after serving on a U.S. Navy destroyer in World War II, the Bobby boys have dedicated their lives to the railroad. Their railroad service has spanned across a variety of Midwestern States, including South Dakota, Minnesota, and Illinois. They have made many sacrifices, frequently traveling, moving, and leaving their families at home to fulfill their duties with the railroad.

The entire Bobby family deserves recognition for their hard work ethic, patriotism, and service to the railroad system. I extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Bobby family for their dedication to an industry that is vital to our economy by connecting our country and transporting goods. I hope that the Bobby legacy will continue to thrive with the generations to come.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO SIGNIFICANT TRANSNATIONAL CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT WAS ESTABLISHED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13581 ON JULY 24, 2011—PM21

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to transnational criminal organizations declared in Executive Order 13581 of July 24, 2011, is to continue in effect beyond July 24, 2015.

The activities of significant transnational criminal organizations have reached such scope and gravity that they threaten the stability of international political and economic systems. Such organizations are becoming increasingly sophisticated and dangerous to the United States; they are increasingly entrenched in the operations of foreign governments and the international financial system, thereby weakening democratic institutions, degrading the rule of law, and undermining economic markets. These organizations facilitate and aggravate violent civil conflicts and increasingly facilitate the activities of other dangerous persons.

The activities of significant transnational criminal organizations continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of