

ABRAHAM LINCOLN BIRTHPLACE  
NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, Kentucky is proud to be the birthplace and boyhood home of one of our Nation's greatest Presidents, Abraham Lincoln. We commemorate this great man's humble origins with the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Park, in Hodgenville, KY.

On July 17, 1916, this park site was donated to the American people and became part of the National Park Service, and so this year, we celebrate the centennial anniversary of this most historic and revered park being in the care of the American people.

At the center of the park stands the Memorial Building, constructed to commemorate the life and accomplishments of the 16th President of the United States. The Memorial Building—built before the iconic Lincoln Memorial on the National Mall here in the Nation's Capital—was the first Lincoln memorial built in America.

It was built by the American people, with over 100,000 citizens, young and old, both in the north and the south, donating sums as small as 25 cents. Fifty-six steps lead up to the building, representing the 56 years of Lincoln's life. The 16 windows symbolize Lincoln's status as the 16th President.

Inside the Memorial Building is the Symbolic Birth Cabin, a replica of the single-room log cabin Lincoln was born in on February 12, 1809. The original cabin that Lincoln was born in and lived in until age 2 was apparently dismantled sometime before 1865. The Symbolic Birth Cabin reminds us of the rural, hardscrabble life the future President faced on the Kentucky frontier, a life that would eventually take him to the Oval Office.

The Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Park also includes the Knob Creek site, the area where Lincoln lived from age 2 to the age of 7. Lincoln himself recalled that his earliest memories were of Knob Creek. Here, he helped his family with planting the garden, carrying water, and collecting wood for fires.

More than 200,000 people every year visit the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Park in central Kentucky to see the origins of our leader and President. The park has received visitors from as far away as Mongolia, China, Russia, and Australia, among other places, who come to this tiny town to see proof that the ideals of America really are true, that even one born into the most modest means can rise to become a great nation's President.

I know my colleagues join me in commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Park. It is an important milestone to mark, both for Kentucky and our country, and the National Park Service will celebrate it later this month. The Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Park is a lasting tribute to Abraham Lincoln and to

how the Bluegrass State shaped and formed him.

For 100 years, the National Park Service has kept careful watch over this sacred ground. I want to congratulate and extend my gratitude to all those National Park Service employees and volunteers who have contributed to this important effort. Kentucky is proud of them, and we are proud to be the birthplace of America's 16th President. This park reminds us that one of our Nation's greatest leaders emerged from the hills of the Kentucky countryside.

TRIBUTE TO ALLEN GILBERT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to recognize the achievements and contributions of a remarkable advocate and distinguished leader in my home State of Vermont.

This summer, Allen Gilbert will be stepping down from his position as executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Vermont. For more than 12 years, Allen has inspired Vermonters and many others as an advocate for personal freedoms.

When Allen began at the ACLU-VT, the office had three staff members, only one of whom was full time. Under Allen's leadership, the office has grown to a staff of five, with two lawyers committed to the State's legislative activities. Allen has become widely known for expanding the work and visibility of the ACLU-VT. Those who have had the privilege of working with Allen cite his boundless wisdom and passion for civil liberties among his many notable qualities.

During his time with the ACLU-VT, Allen has been a champion of free speech, government transparency, and privacy rights, not just in Vermont but nationwide. I have long counted him as an ally in my own work. I was proud to invite him to testify before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee in 2007 about the REAL ID Act. More recently, Allen's contributions were extremely helpful as I developed reforms to curtail government surveillance powers, culminating in the enactment of the USA FREEDOM Act of 2015. Allen and I have also worked together to end Federal vehicle checkpoints near White River Junction.

Among many successes, Allen is well-known in Vermont for his work on cases to protect students' rights to freedom of speech and political expression and the rights of the LGBT community. More recently, Allen and the ACLU-VT have worked to create more consistency among Vermont law enforcement agencies regarding the use of force. And Allen's work highlighting automated license plate readers, cell phone tracking devices, facial recognition technology, and the use of domestic drones has helped to educate Vermonters and its policymakers about the need to address these evolving technologies. In doing so, Allen has once again demonstrated his leadership in protecting Vermonters.

I am not alone in recognizing Allen's talents and tenacity. In 2012, the Vermont Press Association awarded him with the Matthew Lyon Award for his lifetime commitment to the First Amendment and protecting the public's right to know. The award is named after the Vermont Congressman who won reelection from jail in 1798, while serving time for violating the Sedition Act because he challenged the power of the Presidency. Matthew Lyon is considered one of our Nation's earliest free speech heroes.

Allen's commitment to freedom of speech and equality extends far past his 12 years at the ACLU-VT. In earlier years, Allen was a reporter and editor at the Rutland Herald and the Barre-Montpelier Times Argus. He also taught writing at a number of Vermont colleges and served as chair of the Worcester, VT, School Board while it supported a case for equal education opportunity. That 1997 Vermont Supreme Court case ultimately changed the way we fund public education in Vermont.

Although Allen is leaving ACLU-VT, I know he will remain a lifelong advocate for the freedoms and liberties we hold dear. As Allen has said, "There's a saying that civil liberties are never permanently won; you have to continue to fight for them constantly." He is an exemplary Vermonter, and I know he will continue that fight.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I wish to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service and 100 years of national parks.

Often called the land of "Great Faces, Great Places," South Dakota's differing landscapes and abundance of outdoor activities mean there is something for everyone to enjoy. As a result, spending time outside with our family and friends is one of our favorite pastimes.

This August marks the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. South Dakota is fortunate to be home to six national parks located throughout the State. Among them are the desolate but beautiful Badlands and one of our country's oldest national parks: Wind Cave. Jewel Cave in Custer, the Lewis & Clark Trail, the Minuteman Missile Site, and Mount Rushmore are all maintained by the National Park Service as well. The sixth national park, the Missouri River, cuts the State in half and provides energy and entertainment to people across the State. Few realize that a 100-mile stretch of the Missouri River is part of both the National Park System and the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The world's first national park, Yellowstone, was established by Congress in 1872, before Montana or Wyoming were official States. Following that, the Organic Act of 1916 created the National Park Service as an agency under