

STAFF SERGEANT MATTHEW V. THOMPSON

SSG Matthew V. Thompson, 28, of Irvine, CA, died August 23, 2016, in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, of injuries caused by an improvised explosive device that detonated near his patrol while conducting dismounted operations. Staff Sergeant Thompson was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA.

PETTY OFFICER FIRST CLASS CHARLES H. KEATING IV

PO1 Charles H. Keating IV, 31, of San Diego, CA, died May 3, 2016, in Tall Usqf, Iraq, of combat related causes. Petty Officer First Class Keating was assigned to a West Coast-based Navy SEAL Team.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD GIL KERLIKOWSKE

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I rise today to honor my friend from the Department of Homeland Security—U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Richard Gil Kerlikowske, who is retiring in January 2017. I have known Gil since his days as Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, during which time he worked tirelessly to promote policy reforms, particularly in the area of substance abuse treatment. In 2013, he visited North Dakota at my request and saw firsthand the substance abuse dilemma that we were experiencing in the western part of the State. He worked with me to direct Federal resources to assist our State partners in reducing drug abuse, and for that, I will always be grateful.

Gil was appointed Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, CBP, in 2014, and, as a Senator on the committee that oversees CBP, I saw firsthand the dedication he brought to the position. On his retirement, it is fitting that we recognize the successes achieved under his leadership.

Gil worked to counter terrorism and transnational crime by creating a counter-network capability to identify and disrupt illicit networks and adapt to emerging threats along the border and abroad, placing under one roof the National Targeting-Center Passenger and Cargo facilities to enhance the agency's efficiency and effectiveness in identifying potential high-risk individuals and freight.

He made efforts to enhance transparency and accountability by implementing the CBP Integrity Strategy, enhancing the agency's ability to address corruption and misconduct in the workforce; initiating a review and redesign of CBP's complaint and discipline system to promote a timely, transparent, and accountable dispute resolution process; fostering the agency's commitment to respond to use of force incidents by creating an incident team to conduct investigations and by initiating a National Use of Force Review Board to assess policy compliance and best law enforcement practices;

implementing firearms and less-lethal use of force simulator training; implementing National Standards on Transport, Escort, Detention, and Search, the first nationwide standards that govern interaction with detained individuals.

He engaged stakeholders and partners globally to enhance U.S. border security. Such actions include signing new preclearance agreements with Sweden and the Dominican Republic; creating increased security, economic growth opportunities, and an improved passenger experience with CBP performing the same immigration, Customs, and agriculture inspections of air passengers on foreign soil prior to boarding a direct flight to the United States; assisting the Government of Tanzania in establishing a sophisticated canine program to combat the smuggling of contraband; and sponsoring ten Customs Mutual Assistance Agreements with various countries.

He worked to advance border security and management by addressing the surge of unaccompanied alien children and family units by enhancing the agency's capabilities and coordination with Federal partners while sustaining all border security responsibilities; deploying advanced technological solutions to provide additional layers of surveillance; initiating a Naloxone pilot program, becoming the first Federal law enforcement agency to train and equip officers with the potentially lifesaving drug for the treatment of overdoses; installing facial comparison technology in two airports and continuing work towards a comprehensive biometric exit system; establishing the Missing Migrant Initiative in the south Texas corridor—a proactive program to establish preventative procedures in order to preserve human life.

He worked to enhance economic competitiveness through lawful trade and travel with a continued commitment to the strong partnership between the U.S. and Canada by leading CBP to deliver on key Beyond the Border Action Plan commitments related to joint commerce and travel facilitation and security initiatives; transitioning to the Automated Commercial Environment, which serves as the "single window" for the electronic transmission of import and export information for 47 agencies; streamlining the import-export process and eliminating more than 200 forms; developing ten centers for excellence and expertise to facilitate trade for compliant importers; achieving positive results in CBP's Traveler Satisfaction Survey administered at the top 25 airports between September 2015 and February 2016.

He promoted organizational integration, innovation, and agility by raising levels of engagement and commitment higher than at any other time since 2011, according to the 2016 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. He led creation of advanced hiring hubs and other recruitment initiatives that re-

duced overall costs and hiring delays for CBP officers and Border Patrol agents. The agency was recognized by Monster.com and Military.com's "Best Companies for Veterans 2016" as the second best organization for veterans among government and private sector employers.

I would like Congress to recognize the significance of these accomplishments and to express my appreciation and the appreciation of the American people for Gil Kerlikowske's selfless dedication to service. I wish him the best of luck as he pursues the next chapter of his life.

HONORING OFFICER JOSE GILBERT VEGA

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Police Officer Jose Gilbert Vega, a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and uncle who was tragically killed in the line of duty on October 8, 2016.

Jose "Gil" Vega was born in Texas to a family of migrant farm workers. When Gil was 6 years old his family relocated to Coachella, CA, where he graduated from Indio High School. In 1979, Gil began his career in law enforcement by serving as a reserve police officer for the Indio Police Department. He was hired as a community service officer by the Palm Springs Police Department in 1982, and the following year, he accepted additional responsibilities as a jail and reserve field training officer. Gil's hard work and dedication was recognized in 1985 when the city of Palm Springs hired him as a police officer trainee. Upon completion of his program at the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Academy, Gil was promoted to police officer.

Officer Vega worked on various assignments throughout his career, including serving as a detective for the Riverside Auto Theft Interdiction Detail, RAID, and the Palm Springs Crimes Against Property Unit. Over the course of three decades, Officer Vega mentored over 30 police officers and was consistently recognized for his commitment to his job and the community. He was awarded a lifesaving medal for performing CPR on an infant in 2010 and received the Medal of Merit in 2013. He is also the only officer in the history of the Palm Springs Police Department to have been selected twice by his peers as "Officer of the Year," in 1992 and 2011.

Officer Vega truly embodied the very best of law enforcement and his courageous service will be forever remembered. On behalf of the people of California whom Officer Vega served so bravely, I extend my heartfelt condolences to his wife, Susana; his eight children; and his entire extended family.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN LEWIS LARKIN O'HERN III

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize U.S. Army CPT Lewis Larkin O'Hern III for his extraordinary dedication to duty and

honorable service to our Nation. During his exemplary career with the Army from May 2008 to January 2017, Captain O'Hern made an immense impact on those he worked with both in the Army and here in Congress.

Captain O'Hern was born at Madigan Army Medical Center at Fort Lewis, WA, and grew up in a military family before graduating from Belton High School in Belton, Texas, in 2004. He received his commission from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 2008. After completing the infantry office basic course, airborne school, and Ranger school at Fort Benning, GA, he was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division, Air Assault, at Fort Campbell, KY, where he served as a rifle platoon leader. He deployed to Kandahar in June 2010 and, after 7 months in Afghanistan was severely wounded, suffering the loss of both legs and a hand. In the course of his 2 and a half year recovery, Captain O'Hern completed the Defense Strategy Course and worked as a future operations planner at U.S. Army North. In 2013, Captain O'Hern was accepted into the Army's prestigious Congressional Fellowship Program. He earned a master's degree in legislative affairs from George Washington University and in 2014 served as my defense legislative fellow. Following his fellowship, Captain O'Hern continued to serve as an Army legislative liaison in the Office of the Chief Legislative Liaison.

Captain O'Hern has performed at the top of his profession throughout his career, providing motivation and serving as a role model for his fellow servicemembers and colleagues. Captain O'Hern demonstrated his impressive intellect in all duties, questioning assumptions and pushing team members to achieve their highest potential. He easily grasped the complexities of policymaking and the appropriations processes, greatly contributing to both while in my office.

Part of what makes Captain O'Hern such a remarkable leader is that his great intellect is coupled with incredible humanity and compassion. I witnessed his inexhaustible drive to provide assistance to fellow servicemembers and veterans, which is in the image of some of the Army's greatest leaders. I was privileged to have Captain O'Hern as an enormously important member of my legislative team. His contributions continue to resonate today.

Captain O'Hern models resilience and determination. His story is a testament to the power of a positive can-do attitude and a shining example of the refusal to let obstacles stand in his way. Captain O'Hern's inspirational journey would not have been possible without the unfailing support from his exceptional wife. Mrs. Rachel Brooks O'Hern was an integral partner in Captain O'Hern's recovery. In addition to undertaking her substantial caregiver role, Rachel also built an impressive career of her own, serving the wider veteran community.

It is my honor to recognize this remarkable couple and congratulate Captain O'Hern on his military retirement as he proceeds to the next chapter of his life. I ask the entire country to thank him for his service and dedication.

TRIBUTE TO AYO GRIFFIN

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, for many years, the Judiciary Committee and the Senate have been well served by the distinguished service of Ayo Griffin. Ayo is a talented lawyer and a principled public servant, respected and admired by his peers, who has ably guided some of my most significant legislative initiatives.

Ayo's career has always demonstrated what Victor Hugo called "conscience in the service of justice." By the time Ayo joined my Judiciary Committee staff in 2011, he had already taken on difficult work conducting foreign corruption investigations in private practice. He had volunteered with human rights litigation and anticorruption training in Cambodia. In the important tradition of making legal aid available to all people, even unpopular defendants, he had represented pro bono detainees at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base detention center in Cuba.

Here in the Senate, Ayo took on legislation to improve our prisons and strengthen law enforcement, to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault, to reform our immigration regime, to curb gun violence, and to undo the damage done to our campaign finance system by the Citizens United Supreme Court decision. In the wake of the flood of secret money unleashed by Citizens United, Ayo helped me craft the DISCLOSE Act to require groups spending large amounts to influence our elections to identify their donors and to prevent corporations and other wealthy interests from using shell corporations to funnel secret money to super PACs.

Ayo worked closely with good governance advocates, campaign finance experts, and our colleagues here in Congress to build a strong coalition behind the legislation. When Republicans blocked the legislation from proceeding in 2012, Ayo helped me coordinate a midnight vigil, with the bill's Democratic sponsors holding the Senate floor into the morning hours until we secured a vote on the measure. In the end, the DISCLOSE Act twice won support from a majority of Senators in votes before this body. Ayo's contribution to that effort not only channeled a groundswell of popular support, but shone a bright light on an issue at the very heart of our democracy.

Today Ayo is facing a much different challenge. Some time ago, he was diagnosed with a rare form of brain cancer, requiring intensive therapy. He has tackled his treatment with signature determination, working intently with his specialists and therapists to stay

ahead of the disease. His wife, Mary Dewhurst, has shown great love and courage through this trying time and is Ayo's steadfast partner in every winding step of their journey.

"You must work very hard," Maurice Ravel once wrote to a fellow composer, "because someone who is gifted must work harder than someone who is not." I am grateful for both the ample gifts and hard work of Ayo Griffin.

I thank Ayo for his faithful service. My entire staff and I offer our unending support. And I wish him and Mary health and much happiness in their days to come.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO LISA M. CLINE

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I wish to recognize educator Lisa M. Cline for over 30 years of service as a K-6 STEM educator throughout the State of Montana. Mrs. Cline's love of STEM, particularly biology, was inspired by her mother, Nancy Yonkee, who grew up on a ranch during the Great Depression era and was among the first women to study premedicine at her university in the 1950's.

Mrs. Cline grew up on a ranch near Broadus and studied animal science at Montana State University, with the goal of becoming a veterinarian. Later, Mrs. Cline decided that she could have the greatest impact on her communities by sharing her love of STEM with children and earned an additional degree, also from MSU, in education. In her time as an educator throughout the State, including in the communities of Bozeman, Plevna, Great Falls, and Cut Bank, Mrs. Cline has passionately brought to her students a love for the STEM disciplines that is grounded in her agricultural upbringing, her background in biology, and her genuine excitement about asking tough questions, solving tricky problems, and learning along the way.

Throughout her career, Mrs. Cline strived to bring a rigor to her classroom that prepares her students to become the best scientists, engineers, and mathematicians. She does this both inside and outside of the classroom, working tirelessly over the years to organize innovative, inquiry-based assignments, student debates, local science fairs, field trips to archaeological sites, and voyages into the mountains. Most recently, she brought her sixth graders to Glacier National Park, where they learned about its intricate ecosystems and rich geological history.

I want to express my deep gratitude to Mrs. Cline for her dedication and service to educating our country's youth, particularly for cultivating within them a love for STEM and inquiry-based learning. And a big thank you to Dr. Angela Person for her nomination of Mrs. Cline as Montanan of the Week.●