

their corporate allies and stacking the deck against working people.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT TRAVIS W. ATKINS

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, in honor of National Military Appreciation Month, I want to recognize a Montana hero, Medal of Honor Recipient SSG Travis W. Atkins of Bozeman, Montana and the Nation are eternally grateful for the sacrifice he made to protect his fellow soldiers and his country. His memory will live on in the hearts of all Montanans for years to come.

I ask unanimous consent that a poem penned in his honor by Albert Carey Caswell be printed in the RECORD.

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

THE GREATER GOOD

The Greater Good . . .
 In all you could . . .
 Oh what would?
 What would you do?
 In honor should . . .
 All in that moment of truth . . .
 As there lies the truth . . .
 So lies the proof . . .
 In life and death . . .
 When courage crest's . . .
 To give all that you have left . . .
 All in your most heroic quests . . .
 As so surely lies our very best . . .
 Our world shall bless . . .
 Goodness . . . Evil . . . Darkness . . . Light
 . . .
 Those Brave Hearts who evil must fight . . .
 Who bring the light . . .
 But, for the greater good . . .
 To fight the darkness as Travis you so would
 . . .
 And what child may be born . . .
 From a future love you saved which may live
 on . . .
 Who might save the world or touch hearts oh
 so warm . . .
 For only the future tells . . .
 For only our Lord knows so well . . .
 As you Travis showed us all how future An-
 gels are born . . .
 All in honor's code . . .
 As you so bore the load . . .
 With all your splendid splendor so . . .
 As we now so weep . . .
 As your family and your Brothers In Arms
 will always keep . . .
 Your most gallant memory in their hearts so
 deep . . .
 My son, your battle is over now . . .
 But, your new one is about . . .
 Is about to begin my friend . . .
 As an Angel in The Army of Our Lord, time
 and again . . .
 As you will watch over us my friend . . .
 And in Montana when there comes a gentle
 . . .
 Our Lord's tears shall wash down upon your
 loved ones to ease their pain . . .
 Until, one fine day once again . . .
 Up in heaven you'll meet then . . .
 And you won't have to cry no more . . .
 At Ease . . .
 As a new Angel rises up to heaven to bless
 . . .
 As now we lay your fine body down to
 rest . . .
 Who but For The Greater Good all of us so
 blessed . . .
 Amen . . .

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT CHRISTOPHER SLUTMAN

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to an American hero and patriot who was taken from us far too soon. Earlier this month, I was standing in the flight line at the Dover Air Force Base alongside Congresswoman LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER and Senator CHRIS COONS. We were there to receive the remains of three marines killed in action on April 8, 2019, when a roadside bomb went off in Afghanistan. Two of the servicemembers killed were Active Duty: Cpl Robert A. Hendriks, of Long Island, NY, and SSgt Benjamin S. Hines of York County, PA.

There was a third: SSgt Christopher Slutman, a Reservist, a 15-year member of the New York City Fire Department, and a Delawarean. The 43-year-old U.S. Marine was also a loving husband to his wife Shannon and father to three daughters: McKenna, Kenley, and Weslynn. In life and in death, Staff Sergeant Slutman epitomized the best of America. He selflessly put his life on the line to protect and serve his country and his community.

It was Winston Churchill who once said, "The reservist is twice the citizen." By that measure, Christopher Slutman was three times the citizen. He wore two uniforms in service to our Nation. He was staff sergeant in the U.S. Marines, serving in the 25th Marine Regiment, Fourth Marine Division in the Marine Forces Reserve, based in Harrisburg, PA. He was also a decorated 15-year veteran of the New York City Fire Department.

Friends say that Christopher always dreamed of being a firefighter. He grew up in Maryland and graduated from Frederick Douglass High School, where he played football, baseball, and wrestled and achieved Eagle Scout status. Eventually, he volunteered with fire departments in Maryland and Washington, DC. Most recently, he split his time between the Bronx and Wilmington, DE. Most days, I ride down to Washington, DC, from my home in Wilmington to do my job. Staff Sergeant Slutman took the train the opposite direction to do his job. He so wanted to serve that he would travel from his home in Delaware to Ladder Company 27 in New York City. In fact, he was on military leave from Ladder Company 27 and nearing the end of his most recent deployment with the Marine Reserves in Afghanistan when he and two comrades lost their lives.

It was Slutman's work in the Bronx where, in 2014, he won the Fire Chiefs Association Memorial Medal for rescuing an unconscious woman from the seventh floor of a high-rise apartment building.

Scripture tells us in John 15:13, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." Staff Sergeant Slutman lived that kind of profound love: dedicating his life to serving others, even at his own peril, and it seems that this kind of selfless-

ness and devotion to service was a hallmark of the Slutman household. Staff Sergeant Slutman is survived by three brothers. One of his brothers is in the Marines, another in the Army. The third is a firefighter in Washington, DC. Their father is an Army veteran and was a volunteer firefighter, as was Slutman's mother. Here is a family who has, and continues to, truly give of themselves in service of others.

Last Friday, I was honored to have been able to join Staff Sergeant Slutman's family, friends, and fellow servicemembers in New York City to pay our respects to a man who gave his life for this country. The first speaker at his funeral was Marine SgtMaj Christopher Armstrong, who served alongside his friend Chris for 8 years. Armstrong remembered his friend with these words. He said, "Upon joining the unit, I began observing the Marines; who they watched, how they looked at their leaders, and what they said. There were a small number of men that when they spoke, silence fell; when they issued an order, the response was immediate; and when they were looked upon, it was with reverence. Christopher Slutman immediately stood out as a leader who was respected and admired. He didn't pound his chest, he didn't try to impress or go on about what he was going to do. He just did it."

Armstrong continued. "He placed his Marines' welfare before his own, always. Chris never sought credit, but he always gave it."

FDNY Commissioner Dan Nigro also spoke. He described Slutman as "the type of American we can all be proud of." And he added, "Chris was a protector of those in danger, a defender to those who needed him, a rescuer to those who needed saving, and a leader who demonstrated his valor on every tour of duty both here and abroad."

It was a poet named Edgar Guest, who spent his life in Detroit, MI, and was often referred to as the People's Poet, who once said, "I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day." Christopher Slutman's life was a better lesson than any sermon. He demonstrated the absolute best of this country every day with his heroism and service to others. The way he lived his life and gave his life is a language that is clear to one and all.

It is with a heavy heart that I, along with the entire First State and the country, offer our sincerest condolences to his wife Shannon and his three girls. Their dad is an American hero. I, along with our Governor, John Carney, and Delaware's congressional delegation, promise you that he won't soon be forgotten, and I know that his legacy lives on in you.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GOLDEN SPIKE

Mr. ROMNEY. Mr. President, the Transcontinental Railroad is a testament to the enduring American spirit of industry and national unity.

On the precipice of the American Civil War, Utah's delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives, William Henry Hooper, recognized that "A great band of Union throughout the family of man is a common interest." Hooper petitioned Congress in his belief that "a Central Road would unite that interest as with a chain of iron, and would effectually hold together our Federal union with an imperishable identity of mutual interest."

William Henry Hooper's letter to Congress would take several months to reach Washington, DC, as any westward travel beyond the Mississippi River required wagon, stagecoach, or horseback.

The U.S. Congress would, however, approve such an undertaking, and soon, a National Central Railroad began to manifest from the worn hands of laborers to execute a vision of national unity, a feat that would propel American power and change the course of our history.

These hands belonged to men of differing national origins and creeds, who labored together under one banner, often fleeing significant hardship in pursuit of economic opportunity in the American West. Roughly 15,000 Chinese immigrants, 10,000 Irish immigrants, and 4,000 Latter-day Saints joined the national effort to complete the most remarkable and ambitious engineering project of the 19th century.

On May 10, 1869, the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads formally met at Promontory Summit, UT, and the 17.6-carat golden spike officially linked the East and West Coasts, marking a watershed moment for American trade, commerce, and population.

A 6-month journey across the continent was reduced to 1 week. Within a decade of the railroad's completion, Salt Lake City's population more than doubled, further boosting Utah's significance in the national economy.

Brigham Young recognized the enormous opportunities that global trade would bring to Utah and the country and the abundant and yet untapped resources of iron, coal, stone, and timber.

In pursuit of a national railroad project, Brigham Young recognized that "mineral resources of California, and these mountains, will never be fully developed to the benefit of the people of the United States, without the construction of such a road, and upon its completion, the entire trade of China and the East Indies will pass through the heart of the Union; thereby giving our Citizens the almost entire controls of the Asiatic and Pacific trade."

Indeed, the Transcontinental Railroad would transform the American economy in profound ways. This achievement revolutionized communications, global trade routes, and allowed for the movement of people across the country at an unprecedented scale.

On the sesquicentennial of the completion of the Transcontinental Rail-

road at Promontory Summit, let us remember the sacrifice of those laborers who would not live to see its conclusion, but whose contributions helped transform the Nation and the world.

The 150th anniversary of the Golden Spike is also a celebration of the limitless American imagination, spirit of ingenuity, and industry that made this incredible project a success.

Let us not forget the example these pioneers set for us as we go forward in a new era of challenges and opportunities.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ZZ TOP

• Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today I recognize and congratulate the Texas blues rock band ZZ Top on their 50th anniversary. It is only fitting that this group kicks off their anniversary tour in their home State of Texas.

With plenty of gas in the tank, Dusty, Billy, Frank, and the rest of their crew will be traveling to more than 60 cities across 14 countries in their commemorative tour. An appropriate reminder of ZZ Top's history, this tour clearly shows they have been able to reach millions of fans across the globe for decades.

In 1969, two rival blues rock bands in Houston, TX—Billy's Moving Sidewalks and Frank and Dusty's American Blues—coalesced into one band, ZZ Top. Two years later, they dropped their first album, aptly titled, "ZZ Top's First Album."

Bandmates Billy Gibbons, Frank Beard, and Dusty Hill have been writing songs and creating a musical fusion between blues and southern rock since their formation and have never looked back. Though they draw inspiration from music greats like Jimi Hendrix, BB King, Cream, George Jones, and Texas blues guitarist Freddie King, all of their influences transform into one singularly unique sound.

In 1973, the band released its third album "Tres Hombres," which catapulted them to the national spotlight with the hit song "La Grange," still one of ZZ Top's signature songs.

ZZ Top's momentum and success built during its first decade culminated in the legendary 1976 tour entitled the World Wide Texas Tour, a production that included a longhorn, a buffalo, buzzards, rattlesnakes, and a Texas-shaped stage. If their tour wasn't proof enough that things are bigger in Texas, then maybe their record sales will convince you otherwise.

The band has sold over 50 million records worldwide, and their 1983 album "Eliminator," sold more than 10 million copies and included rock hit "Sharp Dressed Man."

"The Little Ol' Band From Texas" has played for millions of fans across the globe, Sweden to Australia, Japan to Germany. The band is among a select few to say they have toured the globe for half a century.

ZZ Top also lays undisputed claim to being the longest running major rock band with the original members intact. Their iconic beards, powerful rock anthems, dedication to music, and impressive artistic talent has sustained them as a perennial rock power, whose music will stand the test of time.

Over five decades of creating music, ZZ Top earned eight Top 40 hits on the Billboard Hot 100; six No. 1 mainstream rock hits; and ranked 44th on VH1's 2000 "100 Greatest Hard Rock Artists."

ZZ Top's accomplishments throughout the years culminated in their induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2004, where they are recognized as some of the greatest rock artists in the world.

I congratulate Billy, Frank, and Dusty on their 50th anniversary and wish them luck as they embark on their year of touring around the world. •

RECOGNIZING BRUNOW CONTRACTING, LLC

• Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, as a member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, it is my privilege to recognize a woman-owned small business that is dedicated to its customers, employees, and community. In honor of the U.S. Small Business Administration's National Small Business Week, it is my pleasure to name Brunow Contracting of Council Bluffs, IA, the Senate Small Business of the Day.

Brunow Contracting represents the story of a construction company with an unlikely founder. Tamara Brunow was a pre-law student at the College of Saint Mary who found herself working in construction. She began her career with an internship at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, in military contracting. It was in this role that she saw a future in construction and government contracts.

After her time at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, she proceeded to work for two other construction organizations, Oakview Construction and Lueder Construction. During her tenure with these firms, she realized that while she loved her jobs, she knew she wanted to be her own boss. This prompted her to launch Brunow Contracting in 2008. Shortly after her launch, Brunow Contracting acquired its first contract of \$1.3 million dollars to build a Presbyterian church.

Brunow Contracting specializes in government contracting and is certified by the Small Business Administration as an 8(a) and HUBZone business. Brunow Contracting has completed numerous contracts, ranging in value from \$800 to nearly \$5 million, and a client list which includes the City of Omaha, the U.S. Forest Service, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Southwest Iowa Planning Council, and the U.S. Coast Guard. These projects have included everything from churches, to water treatment plants, to data facilities for Facebook.