

of them and their hard work and sacrifice, our grandchildren may know a world with less pain, less strife, less conflict. And yet they have come under attack, simply for serving their country.

This week, three State Department witnesses are testifying during the House of Representatives' impeachment hearings on the Trump-Ukraine scandal. These individuals have, in many cases, spent their entire careers serving our Nation with distinction, on behalf of both Republican and Democratic administrations. Some have even worn the uniform of the U.S. Armed Forces.

These men and women are not partisans. They are patriots, patriots who put our country first. And for putting country first, for being willing to tell the truth, they have come under attack—not by a foreign regime bristling at their efforts to promote democracy, not by oligarchs and criminals who fear their effectiveness—though that has happened as well.

No. They have come under attack in our own country, by our own President, by the head of our government that they so bravely and selflessly serve. It pains me, and so I am standing before you today to speak up on their behalf, on behalf of each voice that has come forward in this time of need and tumult for our country. This is a time when we need truth—truth above party, truth above political loyalties and expediency, truth above self-interest. These diplomats, these professionals, these proud public servants are putting the country before themselves—if only this President could do the same, if only he—just once—could put the interests of others ahead of his own.

But frankly, I am not the one who should be standing up on behalf of our diplomatic corps, nor should it be only the Democrats on the Foreign Relations Committee. There is a job post that actually entails standing up for the men and women of our State Department each and every day. The job is called Secretary of State. It is a job held by Secretary Mike Pompeo. Yet under Secretary Pompeo's watch, the dedicated Americans who serve in the State Department have been thrown to the wolves.

Our Secretary of State should be the No. 1 defender of our diplomatic corps. He should come forward and tell the American people what he saw, what he heard, and what he did about it. He should defend the officials who serve in his own Department. And he could start by uttering just one word of support for Ambassador Taylor, Deputy Assistant Secretary Kent, and Ambassador Yovanovitch. But he has had plenty of time for that. We have seen very clearly where he stands.

So instead, I, along with my Democratic colleagues on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, are calling on other senior officials at the State Department to step up and do the right

thing. This week, we sent a letter to the Deputy Secretary of State, John Sullivan, and the Undersecretary for Management, Brian Bulatao, calling on them to do what Pompeo has not: to publicly support the brave officials who are putting their careers, their reputations, and terribly, even their personal finances on the line—all to serve their country. I hope that they do, even in the face of vicious and unfounded attacks unleashed by the President, his allies, and those who refuse to stand up for the truth.

Some have been called “disloyal,” “unpatriotic,” and “Never Trumpers.” In fact, yesterday morning, as State officials were about to begin testifying, the President tweeted, in all caps, “NEVER TRUMPERS!” These false attacks misunderstand the entire premise of public service. To be a career public servant means to work every day on behalf of the public, our government, our country, our Constitution, to check politics at the door. To argue otherwise demonstrates this President's warped view of how our government works. Our career Federal employees do not serve him. They serve our country. They serve the American people.

The only “loyalty” they pledge is loyalty to the oath they take to uphold our Constitution. In coming forward, in speaking the truth, in raising concerns about events that trouble them as guardians of our national security, they are carrying out an act of selfless patriotism and love of country that that this President is incapable of understanding, let alone doing himself.

I hope that some of our other senior officials will step forward and show just a sliver of the backbone that these individuals have shown. I hope they will do the right thing. I hope they will issue statements of public support for officials courageously coming before Congress and commit to protecting them from retribution or reprisal.

Our State Department employees deserve commendation, not retaliation. They deserve our thanks, not our scorn. Above all else, they deserve leaders who will defend them, not desert them when it matters most.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAST GREEN VALLEY

• Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor as it celebrates 25 years of protection and preservation of this environmentally sensitive, pristine area.

Originally designated as the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor, the valley was officially designated as a critical natural resource by President Clinton on November 2, 1994. Twenty years later, it was officially renamed The Last Green Valley.

For a quarter of a century, The Last Green Valley advocates have worked to care for the corridor through nonprofit stewardship. Overall, the valley comprises a 1,100-square-mile area, which ranges from eastern Connecticut to south-central Massachusetts. One of the most notable aspects of the valley is its rural characteristics despite its proximity to three of New England's largest urban areas. Among its 707,000 acres, 77 percent of this range is farmland and forest.

The Last Green Valley's designation as a national heritage corridor by Congress acknowledges its status as a unique national resource. Included in this designation are 26 towns in Connecticut and 9 in Massachusetts. The underdeveloped, green area so close to many large urban spaces makes it a point of special ecological interest and a great environmental asset to Connecticut and the nation.

Dedicated to preserving the natural beauty and resources of New England from development and despoilment, The Last Green Valley sets a positive example of environmental conservation and protection. I applaud its accomplishments and hope my colleagues will join me in congratulating The Last Green Valley on 25 years of excellence.●

RECOGNIZING K. NEAL TRUCK AND BUS CENTER

• Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, it is with great pride that I name K. Neal Truck and Bus Center the United States Senate Small Business of the Week.

K. Neal Truck and Bus Center is a family-owned business based in Hyattsville, MD. Following a decades-long career in the grocery business, Stephen Neal purchased a trucking business and renamed it after his son, Korey Neal.

Together, the father-son team has turned K. Neal into the second largest minority-owned truck and bus supplier in the country, with more than \$100 million in annual revenue and just under 100 employees.

On the Senate Small Business Committee, we often speak of small businesses as drivers of economic growth and innovation, but they are often also pillars in their communities, and K. Neal is no exception.

I had the privilege of meeting with Stephen, Korey, and several K. Neal executives last month, and I was impressed by the company's commitment to empowering all its employees and investing in its community.

Half of the executives at K. Neal are women, and for the past 5 years, the company has partnered with the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation to train workers from underserved communities to become diesel technicians. I am proud to share that 14 individuals have completed the program, and 8 of them are currently employed by the company. The company also voluntarily banned