

more from Star Medicine Woman and Elk Dreamer about the Cherokee Indians, especially Sequoyah and the relation to present-day culture. The boys were fascinated and appreciated the kindness shown to them.

Along with congratulating these outstanding students, I also recognize their teacher, Judy Buscetta, who is the winner of the National History Day in Tennessee's Teacher of the Year award. Daniel said it best in a letter he wrote to me to let me know he was going to be in Washington. He said: Without good teachers, we do not have a chance.

I am proud of Judy and Daniel and Tyler. Students and teachers like them are who I had in mind when I introduced legislation along with the distinguished minority leader to put the teaching of American history and civics back into our classrooms, so our children grow up learning what it means to be an American. I am proud that the Presidential academies for teachers and congressional academies for students in American history and civics through the Department of Education are beginning this summer as a result of Congress passing and the President signing that bill into law.

I have also introduced legislation with Senator EDWARD KENNEDY of Massachusetts to create a 10-State pilot study to provide State-by-State comparisons of U.S. history and civics test data for 8th and 12th grades administered through the National Assessment of Educational Progress, NAEP, to assess and improve knowledge of American history.

I appreciate National History Day and its commitment to improving the teaching and learning of American history in our schools. I also appreciate Daniel, Tyler and Judy, fellow Tennesseans, who are working to keep history alive.

ELIGIBILITY FOR AUTOMATIC COMPENSATION

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I have come to the floor today to celebrate a landmark achievement for former nuclear weapons workers in Iowa. Today marks the completion of an administrative process whereby workers from the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant, who assembled some of the most significant nuclear weapons in this Nation's history and subsequently developed devastating forms of cancer, will become eligible for automatic compensation.

Reaching this point has been an example of both the best and the worst in our system of government. I first started working on this issue back in 1997 when I received a letter from a constituent, Bob Anderson, who wrote about how he and many of his former coworkers had become ill after working on nuclear weapons in Burlington, IA. I shake my head every time I think of what Bob's reaction must have been when he got a letter back from me,

telling him that the Department of the Army had assured my office that they never made nuclear weapons in Burlington!

In fact, the list of weapons that were made by Bob and 4,000 other Iowans includes many familiar names: Polaris, Titan, Pershing, Minuteman the list just goes on and on. It's a tribute to the workers in Burlington that while the Cold War was going on, no one beyond the workers at the plant—including me—ever had a clue about the work that was occurring. They did their job with excellence, and they did it at great personal peril. The men and women of Burlington truly were on the front lines of the Cold War. They received no medals, no thank-you's, no special pay. Instead, they paid a terrible price. The levels and types of cancer that have afflicted this workforce are shocking. And along with these illnesses have come financial hardships—pain and suffering—which family members have witnessed and nursed loved ones through—and, in too many cases, premature death.

Today, finally, workers from IAAP, including Bob Anderson, at long last, will receive compensation. Equally importantly, at long last, they have some measure of justice.

This has been a long process. It seems like more than seven years since I brought then-Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson to the plant to meet with workers. It seems like more than six years since I got a team from the University of Iowa School of Public Health to track and analyze the illnesses that workers had developed. And it has been almost five years since Congress passed the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Act to actually provide compensation to these workers.

For almost five years we have struggled through one of the worst bureaucratic processes that I have ever seen. We have been required to demonstrate that no documents existed that would allow the radiation doses the workers received to be accurately reconstructed. It has been mind-boggling that a program designed to compensate people who had been deceived by the government, could put those same people through a second bureaucratic nightmare.

But today is a day to celebrate. It is also a time to say thank you for the marvelous team effort that has made this day possible. IAAP was the first facility to file a petition for automatic compensation, and only the 2nd in the Nation to be approved. While I have worked hard to make that happen, it simply could not have happened without the workers themselves, as well as the University of Iowa scientists.

I would like to say a special thank you to Jack Polson, Sy Iverson, Paula Graham, and Vaughn Moore. It was their willingness to repeatedly challenge the assumptions that were made about the work performed at the plant, and about how that work was done,

that forced the Government to acknowledge that the documents from the plant were just inadequate to accurately reconstruct the levels of radiation that workers were exposed to.

I also want to thank Joe Shannon, Laska Yerington, Sharon Shumaker, Marge Foster and Nancy Harman for their service on the Advisory Board here in Burlington and Shirley Wiley and Ed Webb for their help with the petition.

No thank-you is complete without acknowledging how fortunate we were to have the help of the University of Iowa team: Laurence Fuortes, Bill Field, Kristina Venske, Howard Nicholson, Christina Nichols, Marek Mikulski, Phyllis Scheeler, Stephanie Leonard, and Laura McCormick.

I would also like to thank my own staff. Alison Hart, my staffer in Davenport, Iowa, has put her heart into helping hundreds of workers and their families navigate this whole process.

I would also like to thank Peter Tyler, Lowell Unger, Michelle Evermore, Jenny Wing, Ellen Murray, and Beth Stein of my Washington, DC, staff for their years of sustained work on this effort. And a special thank you is owed to Richard Miller of the Government Accountability Project for his assistance and his commitment to making this compensation program work.

Finally, I would like to thank Bob Anderson and his wife Kathy. Bob and Kathy have weathered the ups and downs of this process with patience, good humor, and great fortitude. It will be a proud day for me when they actually receive a compensation check in hand from the Treasury. It speaks volumes that a letter from one Iowan can set in motion a monumental process that, in the end, will bring acknowledgement, compensation, and a measure of justice to so many.

While more than 700 former workers are still seeking compensation, today marks our first significant victory. The people who will now be receiving compensation include at least 364 of those who got the most serious illnesses from their work at IAAP. Unfortunately, this group includes far too many workers who are no longer with us. In their honor and in their memory, I thank all of the former workers of the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant for their patience, their persistence, and their service to America. They are genuine patriots.

COMMEMORATING 142 YEARS OF WEST VIRGINIA STATEHOOD

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today I commemorate 142 years of statehood for my State of West Virginia. In doing so, I believe that it is important to note my State's motto, "Mountaineers Are Always Free." This phrase, as relevant today as it was 142 years ago, truly embodies a people who have done so much to contribute to our great Nation and a State so abundant in natural beauty.