Clinics will also be offered at the festival to help developing musicians improve their abilities and talents. Jazz students have a unique opportunity to meet with and learn from some of the most talented musicians and educators in that field.

Jazz has come a long way since I first listened to the music as a boy on the radio in Searchlight. This distinct musical style has developed from its humble origins in early 20th century New Orleans to touch music fans of all ages and backgrounds today. The personalities of the early days of Jazz continue to influence today’s artists across the musical spectrum.

I wish the host and participants of the Reno Jazz Festival continued success in bringing Jazz to all members of the community.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT KENNETH LOCKER

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I rise to express my sympathy over the loss of U.S. Army SSG Kenneth Locker of Burwell, NE. Sergeant Locker was killed in action in Diwala province, Iraq. He was 28 years old.

Sergeant Locker graduated from Burwell High School in 1997. He enlisted with the Army while he was still in high school. Bob Lee, his high school math teacher, said that after he enlisted, Sergeant Locker became a much more focused young man whose grades shot up.

After high school, Sergeant Locker spent 3 years in the Army, 2 years with the National Guard, and eventually reenlisted with the Army. He had been in Iraq since August 2006 with the Army’s historic 82nd Airborne Division.

Sergeant Locker was previously injured in Iraq by a land mine. He was awarded a Purple Heart and lived with shrapnel in his neck. Thousands of brave men and women like Sergeant Locker are serving in Iraq.

In addition to his life as a soldier, Sergeant Locker was father to three young sons and believed he was making a safer world for his children. He is survived by his father Ken, two sisters, and a half sister and half brother. We are proud of his service to our country.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Americans in honoring SSG Kenneth Locker.

FIRST LIEUTENANT KEVIN GASPERSON

I rise to express my sympathy over the loss of U.S. Army 1LT Kevin Gaspers of Hastings, NE. Lieutenant Gaspers was killed on April 23 in Diwala province, Iraq. He was 26 years old.

Lieutenant Gaspers was a 2000 graduate of St. Cecilia High School in Hastings, where he wrestled and played football. After graduation, he attended the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and enrolled in the ROTC program. As a senior at UNL, Lieutenant Gaspers was selected to lead the ROTC cadet’s battalion. His colleagues remember him as low-key and professional in his leadership style. He earned his Army officer’s commission in 2005, along with a degree from UNL in accounting.

Lieutenant Gaspers was a paratrooper with the Army’s historic 82nd Airborne Division based at Fort Bragg, N.C. He had been serving in Iraq since August 2006.

Lieutenant Gaspers is survived by his parents, John and Pam, and sisters Katie and Audrey. We are proud of his service to our country.

I ask my colleagues to join me and all Americans in honoring 1LT Kevin Gaspers.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I regret that on April 23, I was unable to vote on certain provisions and passage of S. 761, the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act. I wish to address these votes, so that the people of the great State of Kansas, who elected me to serve them as U.S. Senator, may know my position.

Regarding vote No. 142, on amendment No. 930, I would not have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

Regarding vote No. 143, on amendment No. 918, I would not have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

Regarding vote No. 144, on amendment No. 921, I would have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

Regarding vote No. 145, on amendment No. 922, I would have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

Regarding vote No. 146, on passage of S. 761, the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act, I would have voted in favor of passage of this act. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

HOLD ON INTERIOR DEPARTMENT NOMINATION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I have placed a hold on the nomination of R. Lyle Laverty to be Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks at the U.S. Interior Department. Consistent with my policy of publicly announcing whenever I place a hold on a nomination, I want to notify my colleagues of my objection to allowing Mr. Laverty’s nomination to be considered. Joanne MacInnis, General Counsel for the Interior Department, has warned us.

I regret that on April 25, I was unable to vote on certain provisions and passage of S. 761, the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

Regarding vote No. 142, on amendment No. 930, I would not have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

Regarding vote No. 143, on amendment No. 918, I would not have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

Regarding vote No. 144, on amendment No. 921, I would have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

Regarding vote No. 145, on amendment No. 922, I would have voted in favor of this amendment. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

Regarding vote No. 146, on passage of S. 761, the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act, I would have voted in favor of passage of this act. My vote would not have altered the final result of this vote.

This sort of conduct is simply unacceptable. If you agree to work in the Interior Department, your loyalty should be with the Interior Department and protecting this country’s natural treasures. Ms. MacDonald’s loyalty lay elsewhere.

The inspector general sent his report on Ms. MacDonald to the Interior Department for administrative action more than a month ago. The Interior Department had no public comment. Only after I announced that I would place a hold on Mr. Laverty’s nomination did Ms. MacDonald resign. That removes her from the equation, but not the atmosphere that allowed her to operate as she did for so long.
In case I wasn’t perfectly clear last year at his confirmation hearing, I want to be sure that Secretary Kempthorne knows that I am serious. The Interior Department has been a source of shame to this government for too long. It is failing in its mission to protect and balance the needs of the American people with wisdom and integrity. It has stumbled from one misstep to another, from one scandal to another, and I have to question who is in charge over there.

I want Secretary Kempthorne what action he plans to take to be certain that we won’t see this sort of problem again. I want to hear from Mr. Laverty what he would do, if he is confirmed to the post of Assistant Secretary, to end the politicization of the Fish and Wildlife Service. We cannot continue to have government scientists whose work is manipulated and conclusions are rewritten by political appointees. We cannot continue to have federal officials working secretly with groups challenging their own agencies.

Until I receive these assurances, I will object to any unanimous consent agreements to allow Mr. Laverty to the post of Assistant Secretary.

IDAHO GUNFIGHTERS HONORED

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, on March 30, Secretary Robert Gates announced that Mountain Home Air Force Base in my home State of Idaho had earned the coveted 2007 Commander in Chief’s Annual Award for Installation Excellence. This Presidential honor is given only to a single installation in each of the military branches for outstanding and innovative efforts by installation personnel. I am honored to be able to publicly herald this tremendous achievement by Colonel Rock and all the men and women of Mountain Home Air Force Base.

This high honor reflects a sustained level of excellence by all the Gunfighters of Mountain Home. Installation of the Year can only be achieved if everyone, from the wing commander to airmen working in all aspects of operations and support, has their priorities straight and expectations for personal duty performance at the highest level. Improving the structures that protect our soldiers and families, the facilities that provide training, and the structures that protect the safety of Dams Act of 1978 to authorize improvements to development countries as an objective of United States foreign assistance policy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mrs. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. SMITH):

S. 285. A bill to amend the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978 to authorize improvements for the safety of dams and other facilities; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself and Mr. SMITH):

S. 259. A bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide assistance for developing countries to promote quality basic education and to establish the achievement of universal basic education in all developing countries as an objective of United States foreign assistance policy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CARPER (for himself and Mr. BENNETT):

S. 260. A bill to protect information relating to consumers, to require notice of security breaches, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. HARKIN, and Mr. SMITH):

S. 261. A bill to amend title 10 and 38, United States Code, to repeal the 10-year

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 3:20 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by one of its clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 1951. An act making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 1332. An act to improve the access to capital programs of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself, Mr. VOINOVICH, and Mr. HARKIN):

S. 1254. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to provide that the reductions in social security benefits which are required in the case of spouses and surviving spouses who are also receiving certain government pensions shall be equal to the amount by which two-thirds of the total amount of the combined monthly benefit (before reduction) and monthly pension exceed $1,200, adjusted for inflation; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. KYL, Mr. THOMAS, and Mr. DOMENICI):

S. 1255. A bill to protect Indian arts and crafts through the improvement of applicable criminal proceedings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. KERRY (for himself, Ms. SNOWE, and Mr. LEVIN):

S. 1256. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to reauthorize loan programs under that Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. BENNETT):

S. 1257. A bill to provide the District of Columbia a voting seat in the House of Representatives; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. ALLARD, and Mr. SMITH):

S. 1258. A bill to amend the Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978 to authorize improvements for the safety of dams and other facilities; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself and Mr. SMITH):

S. 1259. A bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to provide assistance for developing countries to promote quality basic education and to establish the achievement of universal basic education in all developing countries as an objective of United States foreign assistance policy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CARPER (for himself and Mr. BENNETT):

S. 1260. A bill to protect information relating to consumers, to require notice of security breaches, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.