

Today, Reynolds has much to celebrate. Its 125th+2 celebration will be an event worth taking in. Festivities will include a steak fry, parade, street fair, alumni baseball game, fireworks, and much more.

I ask the Senate to join me in congratulating Reynolds, ND, and its residents on their first 127 years and in wishing them well in the future. By honoring Reynolds and all the other historic small towns of North Dakota, we keep the great pioneering frontier spirit alive for future generations. It is places such as Reynolds that have helped to shape this country into what it is today, which is why this fine community is deserving of our recognition.

Reynolds has a proud past and a bright future.●

TRIBUTE TO BERNARD WOODARD

● Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today I celebrate the life and mourn the recent passing, of a great Texan, Thurmond Bernard Woodard. Mr. Woodard recently lost a courageous battle with cancer, a foe he had been battling since 2005.

Born on January 9, 1949, in Ocala, FL, Thurmond Woodard learned the importance of family at an early age. His childhood and adolescence were marked by the qualities that would later endear him to all—strong will, strong character, and uncompromising integrity. He went on to earn a bachelor's degree in accounting from Hampton University and then embarked on a storied career in finance, marketing, sales, and human-resources management.

In October 2000, Woodard was serving as president and chief operating officer for Roosevelt Thomas Consulting and Training in Atlanta. In that role, he spent his days advising the company on the importance and necessity of integrating diversity within business strategies. Recognizing his talent and vision, Austin-based Dell Inc. decided to try and lure him away by offering him the job of vice president for global diversity and chief ethics, privacy, and compliance officer. Thankfully for Dell, he accepted the offer and never looked back. He held those positions until his death in April.

Known for his dedication to creating cultures of dignity, respect, and inclusion, Thurmond promoted the importance of leadership through creating opportunity for all. "We cannot resist change that is inevitable," he said. "We have to get on board and help drive that change."

That eloquence earned him the admiration of his colleagues, including Dell's chief executive Michael Dell who said, "His sensible counsel, generosity of spirit, tireless dedication, and optimism were appreciated and admired by all he touched. His passing leaves a void impossible to fill."

That void is seen not only at Dell but also in the many Texas communities in which he had a profound impact. Even

in the difficult stages of his illness, he served as deacon and Sunday school teacher at the David Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in downtown Austin. His work as a mentor and community activist was recognized last year when the Austin Area Urban League honored him with the Whitney M. Young Jr. Award for his efforts to promote diversity through the strengthening of business and community partnerships.

Thurmond's impact could also be seen in our Nation's Capitol, where he served as a board member of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation and was the key architect of the foundation's AVOICE virtual library on the history of African Americans in Congress. Other organizations that continue to benefit from his efforts and generosity in Washington include the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute's Center for Latino Leadership and Operation Hope's financial literacy center in Anacostia.

Dell will honor his legacy of outreach by endowing a scholarship in his name for students of color and students from disadvantaged economic backgrounds around the world.

Even though he was known for being an incredibly successful businessman and community leader, Thurmond was known first as an incredibly successful family man. A beloved father and husband, he leaves behind his wonderful wife of 37 years Suzanne, his children Michelynn and Derek, and countless friends. They recall with fondness Thurmond's love of humor, friendship, and the occasional round of golf.

He lived life with vigor, passion, and unwavering optimism. And even though he has been called home to God, Thurmond's selflessness and decency will always serve to guide and inspire us all.

Mr. President, please join me in celebrating the life of Thurmond Bernard Woodard.●

RETIREMENT OF DALE W. SOPPER

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, today we recognize a distinguished executive at the Social Security Administration, Dale W. Sopper. Dale is the Deputy Commissioner for Budget, Finance and Management. He is a dedicated public servant who has served his country in public service for 42 years.

A native of Allentown, PA, he began his Federal career as a claims insurance specialist in the local Social Security Office in Kansas City, MO. After 2 years, he was selected for the Management Intern Program at the then-Department of Health, Education and Welfare. He served in a number of increasingly responsible positions there and in the Department of Health and Human Services over the next 16 years, ultimately serving as HHS' Assistant Secretary for Management and Budget.

Dale returned to the Social Security Administration in 1983 as the Deputy Associate Commissioner for Management, Budget and Personnel. In his

current position as Deputy Commissioner for Budget, Finance and Management, Dale is responsible for providing executive leadership and direction in administering: a comprehensive financial program of budget policy, formulation and execution; accounting policy and operations; the agency's acquisition and grants program; audit resolution and liaison; the internal controls program; agencywide facilities and publications management programs; and the agency's efforts to improve annual wage reporting and wage reconciliation activities. In addition, Dale serves as SSA's chief financial officer, senior procurement executive and principal deputy ethics counselor.

During Dale's long and distinguished career with both agencies, he has received many awards—of special note, the Presidential Rank Awards for Distinguished Executive and Meritorious Executive, the Donald Scantlebury Memorial Award, the Elmer Staats Award and the Frank Greathouse Distinguished Leadership Award.

Dale will retire from the Social Security Administration on August 3, 2007. He is an exceptional career executive who has consistently demonstrated strength, integrity, diligence and a relentless commitment to public service and the well-being of our citizens across the Nation. Through his extraordinary leadership and achievements, he has inspired countless men and women with whom he has worked over these past 42 years.

It is important that we in Congress recognize the many men and women who devote their working lives to improve the lives of others. Career civil servants often do their work in quiet anonymity behind the scenes providing vital service to the American people. They are rarely recognized for their important contribution. Dale Sopper is one of those people. His record of leadership at the Social Security Administration and his commitment to providing the American people with effective and compassionate service is a record of which he can be justly proud.

I wish Dale all the best in his retirement from Federal service and thank him for his many years of dedicated service.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a treaty which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

INITIAL ASSESSMENT REPORT
RELATIVE TO THE IRAQI BENCHMARKS—PM 20

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 1314 of the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (Public Law 110-28) (the "Act"), attached is the report that assesses the status of each of the 18 Iraqi benchmarks contained in the Act and declares whether satisfactory progress toward meeting these benchmarks is, or is not, being achieved.

This report has been prepared in consultation with the Secretaries of State and Defense; Commander, Multi-National Forces-Iraq; the United States Ambassador to Iraq; and the Commander of United States Central Command.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, July 12, 2007.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER
COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2558. A communication from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting the report of a draft bill entitled, "Preserve America and Save America's Treasures Act"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-2559. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a flood damage reduction project for the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, Des Moines, Iowa; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2560. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Partial Termination and Turnover Rate" (Rev. Rul. 2007-43) received on July 11, 2007; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2561. A communication from the Director, Office of Labor-Management Standards, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Labor Organization Officer and Employee Report, Form LM-30" (RIN1215-AB49) received on July 11, 2007; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2562. A communication from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 17-70, "Safe and Stable Homes for Children and Youth Amendment Act of 2007" received on July 11, 2007; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-148. A resolution adopted by the City Council for the City of Okeechobee of the State of Florida urging Congress to appropriate the funds necessary to bring the Herbert Hoover Dike into compliance with current levee safety standards; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

POM-149. A resolution adopted by the Council of the City of North Miami of the State of Florida urging Congress to appropriate the funds necessary to bring the Herbert Hoover dike into compliance with current levee protection safety standards; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

POM-150. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Utah expressing opposition to the Divine Strake explosive test that is to be conducted in Nevada in 2007; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Whereas, "Divine Strake" is the code name for a large high-explosive test to be conducted by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency;

Whereas, the Pentagon has stated the purpose of the test is to "determine the potential for future non-nuclear concepts," such as high-energy weapons or the simultaneous use of multiple conventional bombs to destroy deeply buried and fortified military targets, as an alternative to detonating a nuclear device;

Whereas, the test was originally planned to take place June 2, 2006 at the site of an existing underground tunnel in the United States Department of Energy Nevada Test Site, but was postponed several times due to legal action, then later delayed until 2007;

Whereas, the test is scheduled to utilize 700 tons of an ammonium nitrate combined with fuel oil explosive, which is equivalent to 593 tons of TNT;

Whereas, there is concern that the explosion could stir up nuclear particles, left from previous tests conducted decades earlier at the Nevada test site, into the atmosphere;

Whereas, in December 2006, the revision to the Environmental Assessment was released, and although the study concluded that there are no health risks to persons outside the blast area, it stated, "Since suspended natural radionuclides and resuspended fallout radionuclides from the detonation have potential to be transported off of the NTS by wind, they may contribute a radiological dose to the public";

Whereas, on January 22, 2006, the Washington County Commission issued a statement opposing the federal government's plan to conduct the test which reads in part, "The City of St. George has a unique history due to its proximity to the Nevada Nuclear Test Site during the atomic age. . . thousands of early deaths of those living in southern Utah and the surrounding areas have been attributed to nuclear testing during the 1950s and 1960s at the site. Many St. George residents and others have suffered incalculable loss as a result of radioactive fallout exposure from the detonations at the site";

Whereas, the Commission added, "To assure the safety and well-being of our citizenry, these concerns must be carefully studied and evaluated before a decision is made to proceed with the proposed detonation"; and

Whereas, much more needs to be done to assure that there is never a repeat of the immense suffering endured by citizens of Utah and nearby states due to the nuclear fallout from past tests at the Nevada Test Site. Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein, express opposition to the Divine Strake high-explosive test to be conducted by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency at the

United States Department of Energy Nevada Test Site in 2007. Be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be sent to the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, the United States Department of Defense, the United States Department of Energy Nevada Test Site, the Washington County Commission, and to the members of Utah's congressional delegation.

POM-151. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan urging Congress to enact H.R. 1619 or S. 587 to direct the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins to commemorate the Ford Model T; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 78

Whereas, Michigan's integral role as the heart of the automobile industry in our country and around the world is well established. Nearly 100 years ago, an especially meaningful chapter in this long history began with the opening of the Highland Park Ford Plant that is acknowledged to be the birthplace of the assembly line. In addition, the more than 15 million Model T Fords that were built between 1908 and 1927 reshaped the American landscape and our way of life; and

Whereas, The new age in manufacturing that was born in Michigan and the Model T Ford set in motion changes in how Americans live and how people travel around the world. The rise in the American middle class, the ability to prevail in defense of our nation in world wars, and subsequent technological advances all can be traced in significant measure to the automobile industry that began with the vision and hard work of the pioneer mechanics in Michigan; and

Whereas, Congress has before it legislation that would require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint not more than 500,000 coins to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Model T Ford automobile. Under this legislation, these dollar coins, which would be public tender, would be comprised of 90 percent silver and 10 percent copper. The legislation also provides that the money raised by a surcharge above the face value would be distributed to the Motor Cities National Heritage Area through the Automobile National Heritage Partnership and to the Edison Institute. This money would create endowments to support the celebration of the Model T and the preservation of its story through educational programs and displays; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the Congress of the United States to enact H.R. 1619 or S. 587, to direct the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Model T Ford; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-152. A joint resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Tennessee urging Congress to address the economic impact of interchange fees and merchant discount charges and develop clear and concise disclosure to consumers and retailers; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION No. 361

Whereas, consumers are increasingly using credit and debit cards and other electronic transactions to make purchases, and the number of credit and debit card transactions each year now exceeds the number of check transactions; and

Whereas, payment system networks and technology provide significant economic benefits to merchants and consumers; and