

shortages in the health care industry. Occupational programs in our high schools offer training for young students and often help them find a rewarding career path. Programs like HOSA direct students to worthwhile vocations while also leading the effort to stimulate industry and job growth.

The American healthcare system faces myriad, complex challenges: rising prescription drug costs, a lack of stable insurance coverage, and a medical bureaucracy that is increasingly difficult to navigate. Qualified healthcare professionals should not be one of them. HOSA has found a way to combine two very important needs in our economy: an educated workforce and competent health care professionals.

I am proud that Texas is home to HOSA National Headquarters and to 491 chapters, the most of any State in the Nation. HOSA is helping build a pipeline of skilled health care workers to ensure that health care in the United States remains a model of professionalism, compassion, and innovation to the world. I commend these talented and ambitious young men and women for their dedication both to the health care profession and to our Nation.

REMEMBERING DON HASKINS

• Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Don Haskins, a great Texan, legendary basketball coach, and remarkable man who passed away earlier this week at his home in El Paso.

Haskins, who started his career coaching small-town high school basketball teams, served as the head coach at Texas Western College, now the University of Texas at El Paso, UTEP, from 1961 to 1999. His decision to “put my five best guys on the court” in the 1966 NCAA national championship game against the Kentucky Wildcats is now widely regarded as a catalyst for racial integration in college sports. The Texas Western Miners, with an all-Black starting lineup, beat the Wildcats 72–65. Their inspiring story is told in the film, “Glory Road,” and the book of the same name.

Over his long career, Coach Haskins compiled a 719–353 record and earned a place in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 1997 and the Texas Sports Hall of Fame in 1987. Over the years, he turned down lucrative job offers in order to stay at UTEP. He retired in 1999 with the fourth best record in history that included winning seven Western Athletic Conference, WAC, championships and four WAC tournament titles.

While Coach Haskins was known for his tough and competitive spirit, he is also remembered for his selfless acts of kindness.

According to an Associated Press report, “USC coach Tim Floyd, a former Haskins assistant, said he once got a call from the mayor of Van Horn, a

small town about 120 miles east of El Paso, to thank Haskins for giving a ride to a family of five stranded along the highway.

“He’d been coyote hunting and saw a station wagon broken down,” Floyd recalled this week. ‘He put them (the family) in his truck, drove them to El Paso, put them up in a hotel for two nights, and gave them \$1,000.’

“The family drove to Los Angeles after Haskins also helped get their car repaired. The coach never told anyone about it, not even his wife, according to Floyd.

“Floyd said he never told the story before, mostly because Haskins wouldn’t have wanted anyone to know.

“I’m only telling it now because he’s gone,” Floyd said. ‘I want people to know.’”

In deciding to devote the best years of his life and career to the people of Texas, Coach Haskins built a legacy that will continue to inspire generations. I join with all Texans as we mourn his passing and extend our deepest condolences to his family.

COMMENDING THE IDAHO ARMY NATIONAL GUARD UNIT

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in early August, I was informed that an Idaho Army National Guard Unit from eastern Idaho was awarded one of the U.S. Army’s highest commendations, the Meritorious Unit Commendation. The First Battalion, 148th Field Artillery Unit based in Pocatello served as part of the Idaho Army National Guard’s 116th Cavalry Brigade combat team in 2004 and 2005 in Iraq. Although part of a combat brigade, these citizen soldiers are doctors, dentists, electricians, lawyers, and other occupations as Idaho civilians. BG Alay Gayhart, Assistant Adjutant Army General for the Idaho Army National Guard, has rightly noted that these men and women utilized their civilian occupational skills in Iraq to help restore civic and governmental services to the country. I am honored to call myself a fellow Idahoan of these brave men and women, some of whom I had the pleasure of meeting prior to their deployment when they were at Fort Bliss, TX, at the end of the summer in 2004. I congratulate them on their professionalism, commitment to our mission, and am happy for their safe return to family and friends. I also keep the families and friends of those who made the ultimate sacrifice in prayer as they continue on without their loved ones.

Idaho has a proud history of military service. Her sons and daughters have been serving our Nation in uniform far from home since the days of the Spanish American War in the early 20th century. The deployment of the 116th Cavalry Brigade combat team from 2004 to 2005 was the largest deployment of the Idaho Army National Guard in history.

The Meritorious Unit Commendation is awarded to military commands that

display exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service, heroic deed, or valorous actions. The unit was recommended for the award by the U.S. Army’s higher headquarters and was selected by the Pentagon for the commendations.

DENISON COMMUNITY EDUCATION

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students’ test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Denison Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Denison Community School District received a 2002 Harkin grant totaling \$904,200 which it used to help with renovations at the elementary school including the installation of air conditioning. The district also received a 2005 construction grant to help build a new middle school and make renovations at the former middle school. This school is a modern, state-of-the-art facility that befits the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. Indeed, it is the kind of school facility that every child in America deserves.

Excellent new schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Denison Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the Board of Education, president Rod Bradley, vice president Brenda Martens, Mark Johnson, Kris Rowedder and Les Lewis and former board member Craig Dozark. I would also like to recognize superintendent Michael Pardun, former superintendent Bill Wright, business manager Larry Struck and the co-chairs of the Vote Yes Committee, Dr. Scott Bowker and Chad Langenfeld.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin school grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

Too often, our children visit ultra-modern shopping malls and gleaming sports arenas on weekends, but during the week go to school in rundown or antiquated facilities. This sends exactly the wrong message to our young people about our priorities. We have to do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Denison Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in that community. I salute them, and wish them a very successful new school year.●

ESTHERVILLE-LINCOLN CENTRAL COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Estherville-Lincoln Central Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Estherville-Lincoln Central Community School District received three fire safety grants totaling \$350,000 to make safety improvements throughout the district, including the installation of new fire alarm systems at the elementary and middle schools and replacement of doors and hardware at the high school. The Federal grants have made it possible for the district to provide quality and safe schools for their students.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Estherville-Lincoln Central Community School District. In particular, I would like to recognize the leadership of the Board of Education—president Molly Anderson, vice president Karen Butler, Nancy Anderson, Mike Karels, Don Schlitz, Jodie Grieg, and Duane Schnell and former board members, Gordon Juhl, Tom Ross, and Gary Feddern. I would also like to recognize superintendent Richard Magnuson, elementary principal Kris Schlievert, former middle school principal Steve Schroeder, former high school principal Susan Bish, business manager Kate Woods, maintenance supervisors Al Hall and Larry Enderson, Estherville Police Chief Eric Milburn and Estherville Fire Chief Randy Cody.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin School grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

Too often, our children visit ultra-modern shopping malls and gleaming sports arenas on weekends, but during the week go to school in rundown or antiquated facilities. This sends exactly the wrong message to our young people about our priorities. We have to do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Estherville-Lincoln Central Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in that community. I salute them, and wish them a very successful new school year.●

MFL MARMAC COMMUNITY EDUCATION

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, in Iowa and across the United States, a new school year has begun. As you know, Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the MFL MarMac Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal

name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The MFL MarMac Community School District received a 2001 Harkin grant totaling \$162,500 which it used to help build an addition at the high school for the music programs and to remodel the former music classrooms to expand the library. The district also received a 2003 fire safety grant for \$25,000 to upgrade the fire alarm system in the Monona building. The Federal grants have made it possible for the district to provide quality and safe schools for their students.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the MFL MarMac Community School District. In particular, I'd like to recognize the leadership of the Board of Education, president Jill Winkowski, vice president Patti Ruff, Patty Burkle, Toni Niel, Brian Meyer, Terry Mohs and Greg Formanek and former members Craig Strutt, Norm Lincoln and Jerry Schroeder and superintendent Dale Crozier. I would also like to recognize the many individuals who served on the MFL MarMac facility committee which provided valuable input on meeting the needs of the school district.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin school grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

Too often, our children visit ultra-modern shopping malls and gleaming sports arenas on weekends, but during the week go to school in rundown or antiquated facilities. This sends exactly the wrong message to our young people about our priorities. We have to do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the MFL MarMac Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a