

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT EDMOND LO

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I rise today to pay special tribute to U.S. Army SSG Edmond Lo of Salem, NH.

Tragically, on June 13, 2009, this brave 23-year-old gave his life for this Nation when an improvised explosive device detonated while his explosive ordnance disposal team courageously worked to neutralize the threat near Samarra City, Iraq. At the time of this hostile action, Sergeant Lo, a member of the 797th Ordnance Company based at Fort Hood, TX, was serving his second tour in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Edmond demonstrated a willingness and dedication to serve his country from an early age. A 2004 graduate of Salem High School, Edmond was a member of the Air Force Junior ROTC Program and commander of the drill team, color guard, and operations squadron. He was well known and liked by his teachers and fellow students and earned himself a full scholarship to a top engineering school upon graduation. However, sensing a call to duty, and because of his desire to protect his country, Edmond instead chose to join the Army.

Just as many of America's heroes have taken up arms in the face of dire threats, Edmond dedicated himself to the defense of our ideals, values, freedoms, and way of life. His valor and service cost him his life, but his sacrifice will live on forever among the many dedicated heroes this Nation has sent abroad to defend our Nation's freedom.

A beloved member of the Salem community, Edmond was respected and admired by all those around him. As a loyal member of the U.S. Army, he continually performed above and beyond all expectations. Because of Edmond's efforts, our liberty is more secure.

Kathy's and my thoughts, condolences, and prayers go out to Edmond's parents, David and Rosa Lo, his brothers and sisters, and his other family members and many friends who have suffered this most grievous loss. All will sorely miss Edmond Lo, a true patriot who was proud of his family, proud of where he lived, and proud of what he did. In the words of Daniel Webster—may his remembrance be as long lasting as the land he honored. God bless Edmond Lo.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

CELEBRATING WEST VIRGINIA DAY

• Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I rise to recognize that 146 years ago today, West Virginia became the 35th State to join the Union. The only State to have seceded from a Confederate State, West Virginia's birthday shines as an anniversary which commemo-

rates the spirit, perseverance, optimism, and hard work of its people.

West Virginia is unique in countless ways; and her history is just the beginning. For almost 200 years, West Virginians have played a significant role in the development and advancement of our nation. From the Battle of Philippi in Barbour County, which was the first organized land battle of the Civil War, to John Brown's historic raid on the Arsenal in Harpers Ferry, we recognize the role our State has played in the making of America's history.

The only State to lie entirely within the borders of Appalachia, we remain incredibly diverse; our geography, population, and heritage are what have led to our identity as the "Wild and Wonderful" State. From the renowned Greenbrier Hotel and Resort in White Sulphur Springs, to the New River Gorge in Fayetteville, which houses the longest steel-arch bridge in the United States, it is no wonder that we draw tourists here from all over the globe.

But it is not the many historical sites or beautiful landscapes that capture the fortitude of West Virginia, but rather, her people—people who continue to inspire with pride and honor, and overcome challenges with a resolve like no other.

Early last month, flash flooding devastated families throughout southern West Virginia, damaging at least 1,500 homes with the worst flooding the area has seen for quite some time. The humanitarian response within the State has been profoundly moving; with people traveling hours to donate their time and energy to assist their fellow West Virginians, and some 300 National Guard troops posted in the area—proving that goodwill is alive and well in West Virginia. Seeing this outpouring, I was reminded of serious flooding in our State when I was Governor. I opened National Guard armories to house displaced families but none showed up—because their neighbors had taken them in. That is a shining example of our Mountaineer spirit.

In addition to serving the people of our State, the West Virginia National Guard is committed to global security, with 38 active units serving around the world, including in Afghanistan and Kosovo. Our State motto, "Mountaineers are always free," can be found resonating not only in all corners of the Mountain State but across the globe. And it is a motto that West Virginians have stood up for time and again—as our State's veterans are among the bravest, most selfless, and most devoted in the entire Nation.

West Virginians have the amazing ability to make sure our culture—which we are so proud of—is also part of our future. Ours is a State wrapped in age-old traditions, but also a State with a readiness to adapt to its younger generations; a veritable melting pot of both old and new world. The Ramp Eating Capitol of the World is found in Richwood, where international crowds

gathered in April for the annual Ramp Eating Contest to delight in this West Virginia favorite. And artists across our State are finding more innovative ways to market our cultural heritage, from Blenko Glass and amazing woodwork, to folk-art, quilts and Appalachian music.

Our schools, colleges and universities have inspired some of the best and brightest young leaders. West Virginia University and Marshall University have produced some of the greatest minds in some of the toughest fields worldwide, and have played an integral role in supporting the communities they inhabit. The Promise Scholarship, which pays instate collegiate tuition fees for those high school graduates with qualifying academic records, has helped thousands of students afford college since its inception. Thanks to this measure, admission to institutions of higher education in West Virginia has steadily increased, drawing students from across the Nation to study subjects such as biometrics, forensics, and defense.

Native West Virginians often joke that telephone calls placed to God are local, as our State is "almost" heaven. We love and are so proud of our awe-inspiring scenery and our towering mountains, and we can't wait to show them off to anyone who visits. And what those visitors also find when they come to our beautiful State is a population well-versed in humility and good-nature. It is indeed the people who pay the greatest tribute to our Mountain State, and it is my honor and privilege today to wish you on their behalf, the happiest of birthdays, West Virginia.●

INDIRECT LAND USE

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss a lingering issue that could have serious detrimental effects on our nation's ethanol industry.

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 increased the renewable fuels standard—commonly known as the RFS—to 36 billion gallons annually of ethanol and other biofuels by 2022.

I support the RFS . . . Always have. The RFS simply means more domestic energy production, less imported oil from unfriendly nations, and more jobs in rural America—both on and off the farm.

The 2007 law requires EPA to come up with new rules to determine greenhouse gas emissions throughout the lifecycle of renewable fuels. Simply put, EPA must calculate how much greenhouse gas is emitted from the time the seed is produced to the time drivers use the fuel in their cars, with every step in between. These steps include production, transportation, distribution, and blending, just to name a few.

Under the 2007 law, renewable fuels must emit anywhere from 20–60 percent fewer greenhouse gases than petroleum.