importantly, changing the nature of their relationship with the governments in the countries in which they operate.

This is critical to our energy security, our national security and for the welfare of the citizens of these countries.

When we look at countries situated on oil and natural gas reserves, we think these countries have won the global version of the economic lottery. But what economists have found by studying these resource-rich countries is that they often fare worse than their resource-poor neighbors, both economically and politically.

In these countries rich in natural resources, governments do not provide the most basic of information concerning natural resource revenues. This lack of transparency facilitates and even encourages corruption. This often leads to grinding poverty in countries that are paradoxically rich in natural resources.

This legislation will provide much-needed regulatory and legal support to existing initiatives such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, EITI, and Publish What You Pay.

It is critical that the United States lead by example on transparency. That is why this legislation also encourages the United States to become an implementing country under EITI.

U.S. implementation of EITI would have practical and symbolic value on a number of fronts.

While this legislation puts human rights front and center in the global energy discussion, it also empowers people to fight corruption and hold their governments accountable. Greater transparency will lead to greater stability in countries that benefit from their natural resources and will lessen volatility in the global energy market, making them more conducive for long-term investments.

Just as importantly, U.S. implementation would bolster the momentum for the EITI, helping to make it a truly global standard for transparency in extractive industries. Leading by example is one of the most powerful ways the U.S. can encourage other countries to sign on to the initiative.

I look forward to working with our colleagues to ensure passage of this important and timely legislation.

THE SITUATION IN HONDURAS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on Monday, September 21, President Manuel Zelaya returned to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, for the first time since he was deposed and exiled in a June 28th coup d'etat, taking refuge in the Brazilian Embassy. His return has led to the installation of a curfew, violence between Zelaya's supporters and Honduran security forces, and troubling reports of the detention and physical abuse of his supporters.

I am encouraged by reports that representatives of Roberto Micheletti, who currently occupies the Presidency, have met with President Zelaya. As divided as these two factions are, these talks need to continue in order to resolve this situation peacefully before the country descends into further bloody confrontations between civilians and police, or it leads to violent fractures within the military.

I continue to believe that the proposal for the restoration of President Zelaya and early elections, put forward by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, has the best chance of resolving this conflict. Brute force, like that reported from Honduras this week, will achieve nothing but further polarization.

If President Zelaya is guilty of violating the law, as some have maintained, there are constitutional procedures for dealing with that. But by abusing the law themselves and simply throwing him out of the country, those who claim to have acted in the interests of the Honduran people only compounded the country's problems. Honduras, an impoverished country that needs the support of the United States and its neighbors, can ill afford this crisis to continue.

REMEMBERING FRANK FERTITTA

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President. I wish to honor the memory of a remarkable human being who inspired those around him with kindness, generosity, and devotion. He was a man who loved his family and understood the value of education.

Lately, it seems that heads of corporations and big businesses have become about as popular as lawyers and politicians. Well, you don't have to look further than the legacy of Frank Fertitta, Jr., to understand that compassion and respect can very much be part of a successful mission statement.

The name Fertitta may be best known in Las Vegas, NV, but the lessons of how this gaming patriarch lived his life should be emulated around the world.

Frank Fertitta, Jr., moved to Las Vegas in 1960 with his lovely wife Victoria. He started as a bellman and slowly worked his way through the ranks—dealer, pit boss, general manager. But what he will be remembered for professionally is his vision and understanding of business and human nature.

In 1976, Frank opened a 5,000-square-foot building called The Casino. Those around him had their doubts about whether this venture would succeed. Instead, Frank became a pioneer of a gaming niche that catered to locals. His little experiment eventually became the Palace Station. Thirty-three years after that first venture, Station Casinos today has 18 casinos and resorts and employs more than 13,000 people. And today, another generation of Fertittas is working to keep the vision of Frank Fertitta, Jr., alive and well.

His success, however, is not what made Frank Fertitta, Jr., so extraordinary. It was his character and integrity that truly made him an example to all. With the utmost respect, he was called Mr. Fertitta by longtime employees and patrons of Station Casinos. That is because he showed respect to all he came into contact with, and they knew it.

I was fortunate to know Mr. Fertitta and call him a friend. He was genuine and unwavering in his support. The kind of person you were blessed to have in your life.

Described as quiet and polite, family and faith were the foundations of his life. Mr. Fertitta showed how a successful, hard-working businessman can also be a dedicated family man. Each week his whole family gathered at his and Victoria's home for Sunday dinner. This was a tradition that all of the Fertittas have cherished over the years. Anyone who knew him knew his family came first.

He was also a consistent and valued friend to many philanthropic organizations in Las Vegas. He and Victoria were involved with the University of Nevada Las Vegas, Bishop Gorman High School, Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada, the Nevada Cancer Institute, Opportunity Village, St. Judes Ranch, and the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health.

It is one thing to be generous with your resources. It is another thing to raise your children to also be generous with theirs. That was part of Mr. Fertitta's success. He was proud that his children had become such generous contributors to the community. They did so because he set such a strong example.

Las Vegas lost a visionary with the recent passing of Mr. Fertitta. He taught us all how to respect others—regardless of one's status, how to dream big, and how to give back to our communities. There aren't many people like Mr. Fertitta in the world. We should all take a page from his mission statement to ensure that his brand of success lives on.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

2009 SERVICE TO AMERICA MEDAL RECIPIENTS

• Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I honor and congratulate three outstanding Federal employees from Maryland—Thomas Alexander Waldmann, Patricia Guerry and Deborah Jin—who have recently been awarded Service to America medals in recognition for their great work.

Our Federal employees are on the front lines every day, working hard for America. Their commitment to public service makes life better for us all. I am proud to honor these three terrific Federal employees from Maryland today.

For the past five decades, Dr. Thomas Alexander Waldmann has devoted himself to performing cutting-edge