

consumers, increased greenhouse gas emissions, and the loss of U.S. jobs. They also represent poor tax policy.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT JOSEPH J. HAMSKI

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, with sadness, I rise to pay tribute to the life of Air Force SSG Joseph J. Hamski who died in the Shorabak district of Kandahar Province, Afghanistan on May 26, 2011, of wounds suffered when enemy forces attacked his unit. My thoughts and prayers go out to his wife, SSG Maria Christina Hamski, his mother Mary Ellen, and all his other family and friends who are grieving his loss.

Staff Sergeant Hamski had served two tours in Iraq and was serving his second tour in Afghanistan. He was an explosives disposal specialist and was reportedly very good at his job. According to his mother, "He loved life, but when he was working, he was intense." She also observed that, "He was modest: He'd say, 'I just do my job so everyone can do their job.'" He also told a friend that if he didn't come back, he didn't want people to make it a big deal.

While I don't mean to go contrary to his wishes, I cannot fail to pay tribute to his selfless service and tremendous sacrifice. Where would our country be without humble, hardworking, self-sacrificing patriots like Joseph Hamski? We owe him and his comrades in arms nothing short of our freedom and our way of life, a debt we can never repay but must never forget.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL LAURA RICHARDSON

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the dedication and selfless service of Colonel Laura J. Richardson, who has served as the chief of the Army's Senate Liaison Division since October, 2009. As a member of the Secretary of the Army's Office of Legislative Liaison, Colonel Richardson was responsible for advising Army senior leadership on legislative and congressional issues and for educating Senators and staff on Army matters. Colonel Richardson's outstanding leadership and hard work was made clear by the tremendous support that she and her office provided to the U.S. Senate for both sessions of the 111th Congress and the first session of the 112th Congress.

It is a personal honor and a privilege to recognize Colonel Richardson today on the floor of the U.S. Senate. She is a native of the great State of Colorado and was a tremendous athlete at Northglenn High School. She attended Metropolitan State College in Denver, and upon graduation; she was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army. She then attended flight school and earned her wings as an Army aviator.

Colonel Richardson's career highlights include a variety of command and staff positions including three years of service in the 17th Aviation Brigade in Korea. She went on to serve on the III Corps Staff, with the 6th Cavalry Brigade, and with the 101st Airborne Division, Air Assault. She was also selected to serve as the military aide to Vice President Gore from 1999 to 2001, and following her tour at the White House, she returned to the 101st to take command of the 5th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment. Colonel Richardson's skill and leadership were clearly displayed when she led 5th Battalion into Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in March 2003. Following her highly successful battalion command, she served in a variety of positions on the Army staff in the Pentagon and as the installation commander at Fort Myer, VA.

Throughout her service to our Nation Laura has been a shining example for the people of Colorado and the United States. Her selfless service, professionalism, and outstanding performance in each of her assignments led to her recent selection for the rank of brigadier general. This well-deserved promotion will take her to Fort Hood, TX, where she will serve the next commanding general of the Operational Test Command. That move will also reunite Laura with her husband, BG Jim Richardson, who is currently serving at Fort Hood. I want to say a special thank you to their daughter Lauren. She is a wonderful young woman, and she is a great role model for other military children.

I am proud to call Colonel Richardson a friend and a fellow Coloradan. Her tireless work helped to further strengthen the relationship between the Senate and the Department of the Army, and through her leadership, new doors were opened between our proud institutions. We will miss her here in the Senate, but I know that she will continue to excel in her next assignment and any endeavor that follows. On behalf of my colleagues and all Coloradans, thank you for your service, Laura, and all the best to you and your family.

NORTH CAROLINA VETERANS PARK

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, it is with great pride that I recognize the dedication of the North Carolina Veterans Park. This park will give visitors the opportunity to reflect on the sacrifices made by the courageous women and men of our armed services. The park and its beautiful visitor center, walking paths, and public art honor the lives and service of North Carolina veterans. As a Senator from North Carolina and a member of the Armed Services Committee, I am committed to ensuring our veterans receive the respect they deserve.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a

resolution that was passed unanimously by the North Carolina House and North Carolina Senate. The resolution honors the dedication of the North Carolina Veterans Park in Fayetteville, NC.

There being no objection, material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Whereas, the citizens of North Carolina have a long and proud history, dating to this country's birth, of paying special honor and respect to its sons and daughters who protect our country's freedoms; and

Whereas, the lands of North Carolina and our country are enjoyed by all its citizens due to the unending efforts and sacrifices made by all of our veterans; and

Whereas, North Carolina is proud to be the home to Cherry Point Air Station, 8 Charlotte Air National Guard, Camp Lejeune, U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City, Fort Bragg, Pope Air Force Base, New River Air Station, and Seymour Johnson Air Force Base; and

Whereas, North Carolina is proud to call itself the most military friendly state in America and, as a state, North Carolina has one of the highest percentages of veterans in America; and

Whereas, July 4, 2011, will mark the dedication of the North Carolina Veterans Park; and

Whereas, the purpose of the North Carolina Veterans Park is to honor all North Carolina veterans and be a composition of objects, spaces, and images that symbolize gratitude, reflection, celebration, and education, and commemorate achievement, service, dedication, and sacrifice; and

Whereas, the North Carolina Veterans Park is located in Fayetteville, North Carolina, home of Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base, and is adjacent to the Airborne and Special Operations Museum, which is a part of the United States Army Museum System, providing an exciting educational experience and preserving the legend of airborne and special operation forces; and

Whereas, the North Carolina Veterans Park will consist of seven water features and public art representing participation of individuals from across the State; and

Whereas, the hands of 100 veterans were cast to honor and represent every county in North Carolina and are displayed in this park's Wall of Oath; and

Whereas, soil from each of the State's 100 counties will be included in the construction of the columns in the park; and

Whereas, public art sculptures in the public plaza at the North Carolina Veterans Park signify our veterans' commitment, courage, dedication, heroism, sacrifice, service, and strength, as well as the incredible talents of our State's artist; and

Whereas, the city of Fayetteville has directed the design and construction of the North Carolina Veterans Park to meet or exceed all guidelines and guidance provided by a large segment of the veteran population, including Content Committee members from all five branches of the military service;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Senate:

SECTION 1. The Senate joins the citizens of this State in expressing its pride and gratitude to the veterans of this State for their service, dedication, and sacrifice in protecting the freedoms of this country and designates July 4, 2011, as North Carolina Veterans Park Day."

SECTION 2. This resolution is effective upon adoption.