

Program, PSSF. When opportunities have arisen he has worked to highlight ways to strengthen programs such as Head Start and childcare to make sure the country took every opportunity to address child neglect and to prevent it.

Others have recognized Mr. Birch's contributions, including the American Psychological Association, which honored him in 2003 with their Award for Distinguished Contribution to Child Advocacy. Later in 2006 Casey Family Programs honored Tom again by giving him their Leadership Award.

I want to join the many others in recognizing Tom Birch. These days we talk a great deal about lobbyists and special interests in Washington, DC, but there are certain groups of people here in Washington you don't hear about. They won't be featured on the evening news or the front page of the newspaper. These are the men and women who patiently and quietly walk these halls to tell the stories of vulnerable children. These people do it not to get rich or to promote the fortunes of the powerful; they work on behalf of our most vulnerable. Tom is one of these people, an unsung hero who has made a true difference for vulnerable children. It has been a job well done for Tom. I hope his retirement is successful and rewarding in every way he wishes it to be, and I thank him very much for all the contributions he has made to the lives of all the most vulnerable children all across this country.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Mr. President, I was mistakenly recorded as a "no" on vote No. 227 on December 12, 2011. I would like to state for the record I intended to vote for cloture in relation to the nomination of Mari Carmen Aponte to be Ambassador to the Republic of El Salvador.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT GRIFFIN III

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, in Texas, football and team loyalty is a key part of our identity. Today, I know that Baylor University students, alumni, and fans—known as the Baylor Nation—are bursting with pride over the first Bear to win the Heisman Trophy. Robert Griffin III was named the 2011 Heisman Trophy winner for his incredible accomplishments on the football field. Baylor finished this season ranked No. 15 nationally with a 9 to 3 record which included impressive victories over nationally ranked TCU, Oklahoma, and Texas. While Baylor and Big 12 fans have witnessed Griffin's football prowess, many more American sports fans will have the opportunity to watch him lead the Bears in the Valero Alamo Bowl on December 29, 2011.

But it is not only his football talent that makes Robert such a remarkable young man. RG3, as he is known to his friends and fans, is the consummate

student-athlete. An honor roll student at Baylor, he graduated with a degree in political science in only 3 years with a 3.67 GPA. While he was leading the Bears this year on the gridiron, he was studying for his master's degree in communications, and he has indicated that he would like to attend law school as well.

Robert's career at Baylor balances academics and athletics and should serve as a role model for other aspiring young athletes. The discipline to succeed was instilled in him at a very early age by his parents, Robert, Jr., and Jacqueline Griffin, both Army non-commissioned officers, who laid the groundwork for his strong work ethic. A graduate of Copperas Cove High School just outside Ft. Hood, Robert was a three-sport star athlete—he still owns Texas' High School State records for the 110-meter and 300-meter hurdles—and a top student.

Throughout his career at Baylor, Robert set 52 school records in passing, rushing, and total offense. He has thrown for an incredible 10,070 yards, and 77 touchdowns, while rushing for 2,220 yards and 32 touchdowns. During his impressive 2011 Heisman winning season, Robert passed for almost 4,000 yards and 36 touchdowns, while rushing for 655 yards and 7 touchdowns. He also earned the Davey O'Brien Award, presented annually to the best NCAA quarterback.

On Saturday, December 10, 2011, Robert Griffin III was recognized as the greatest college football player of the year. The Heisman Trophy is the most prestigious and coveted award in college sports, and no one is more deserving of this honor than Robert Griffin III.

Congratulations to Robert Griffin III on an incredible season; to his family, who provided the foundation for his abilities; to his teammates and the entire Baylor Nation. This is truly a storybook ending to a tremendous season.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, on December 10, the most prestigious sports fraternity in the country welcomed its newest member, Baylor University's Robert Griffin III, as the 77th winner of the Heisman Memorial Trophy. Griffin is Baylor's first recipient of the Heisman Trophy and the first player from the school to be named a finalist for the award since quarterback Don Trull finished fourth in 1963. The son of two retired U.S. Army sergeants, Griffin led the 15th ranked Baylor Bears to a 9 to 3 record and their second straight bowl appearance. The Big 12 Offensive Player of the Year has energized the football program and helped to end Baylor's 16-year absence from bowl games.

Hailing from Copperas Cove, TX, Griffin put up spectacular numbers, completing 72 percent of his passes for 3,998 yards with 36 touchdown passes. He also led the Nation in passing efficiency with a rating of 192.3, which broke the single-season Football Bowl Series record. On top of his impressive

passing statistics, Griffin averaged 4.0 yards per carry for 644 yards and nine touchdowns on the ground. Although Griffin is only a junior, he holds 46 of Baylor's career offensive records including passing yards, passing touchdowns, and rushing touchdowns by a quarterback. While leading Baylor to one of its greatest seasons in history, he helped accomplish other important firsts for the program. After winning a combined 4 games in November during their first 15 seasons in the Big 12, Griffin guided the Bears to a perfect 4 to 0 record in the same month, with 3 of the wins against rivals Oklahoma, Texas, and Texas Tech. The late-season victory over Oklahoma marked the first time in school history that Baylor was able to defeat the mighty Sooners.

Robert Griffin's skills are not limited to the football field. In addition to being an All-American in the 400-meter hurdles, Griffin is also a model student. He completed his undergraduate work in 3 years with a 3.67 GPA, earning a bachelor's degree in political science, and is currently working on a master's degree in communications. Griffin also plans to earn a law degree. I applaud his commitment to excellence in both academics and athletics.

Today, I join with my colleagues, and Robert's friends and family, including his parents, Robert Jr. and Jacqueline Griffin, in celebrating this fine achievement. Robert Griffin joins a special class of Texas athletes who are also Heisman Trophy winners: TCU's Davey O'Brien, SMU's Doak Walker, Texas A&M's John David Crow, the University of Houston's Andre Ware, and the University of Texas's Earl Campbell and Ricky Williams.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO THE LONG FAMILY

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate the Long family for earning the distinction of 2011's Arkansas Farm Family of the Year.

This honor reflects Heath and Betsy Long's dedication to farming and the importance of agriculture as Arkansas's No. 1 industry. As owners of Long Planting Company, a rice, soybean, and wheat operation of more than 2,200 acres of land, the couple has taken advantage of technology and improved farming efficiency while expanding their farm.

Heath has devoted his life to farming, spending his childhood on the farm and earning a degree in agriculture from Arkansas State University. As a fourth-generation farmer, his commitment to the agriculture industry has helped his farm as well as other farms within the State, as he serves as the vice president of the Arkansas County Farm Bureau board of directors and a member of the Arkansas and USA rice councils.

The Arkansas Farm Bureau's program honors farm families across the