

LINDSEY HEWARD,

Osage City, Kansas, October 15, 2012.

PAT ROBERTS,
U.S. Senator for Kansas, Frank Carlson Federal
Building, Topeka, KS.

DEAR SENATOR ROBERTS: There is a lot of talk going on in our community of Osage City, Kansas about all of the changes in our school food service program due to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. When the changes in the nutrition of the available vending machine items in our school took out pop, any type of sugar drinks, candy bars, cookies, most chips, pastries, etc., I could agree with that. A lot of those items aren't going to help a student in their day; it's not going to be what gives them the fuel they need. I didn't have a problem with that because the lunches that we were having always satisfied me for the day, it would actually get me through after school practice until supper time. But now that the school lunch program has been greatly altered, the majority of the students, especially in the high school, are not receiving enough calories to sustain them through school, after school practices, and events.

What really frustrates me is that the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 is not correctly addressing the reduction of our nation's obesity rate. What is not being addressed is education of the parents who are the main consumers of the family's grocery items or parents modeling healthy eating habits. As an employee of Jerry's Thriftway, this is something that I witness daily. I especially see the purchasing of unhealthy food choices by welfare recipients when using their Vision cards. For example, this last Saturday, a customer was at my check-out line with a cart of hot dogs, chips, pizza, pop, and a lot of frozen items loaded with preservatives. These items were purchased with funds provided by our tax payers. It is obvious that this parent does not go home to prepare a healthy meal for her children and she certainly doesn't model healthy eating habits. This is something that occurs regularly throughout my six hour shift. No matter what takes place at school, it is not changing the way these parents are providing (through somebody else's money) for their children's meals. I fear that there isn't even a family meal time in those homes, but rather a time to binge on junk food throughout the evenings or on weekends. This is where nutrition needs to change to reduce the obesity in our nation, not by unrealistically restricting our school breakfast and lunch program.

Instead of focusing on school meal programs, I strongly feel that it's time to focus on the following:

1. Creating a greater work ethic in all citizens
2. Developing budgeting skills for shoppers
3. Nutritious meal planning
4. Food preparation skills
5. Valuing family togetherness at the dinner table
6. Family physical fitness

The family is the basic unit in every community. Let's start with changes in the daily life of families . . . that's the ground level. Once that happens, then we will see true, positive changes in the health of our nation.

I would appreciate hearing your thoughts on my suggestions of how this change needs to start with each family instead of through the restricted school meal service. Do you have any ideas on how my concerns can be put into action to make real, meaningful change happen?

Sincerely yours,

LINDSEY HEWARD,
Osage City High School Senior.

RECOGNIZING VICTORIA HANZO

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I recognize Ms. Victoria Michelle Hanzo, a bright and talented young Louisianian.

Each year since 1743, the carnival celebration known as Mardi Gras, French for "Fat Tuesday," has been celebrated by the people of New Orleans. The season officially begins on January 5, the Twelfth Night of Christmas and the Feast of the Epiphany. Also recognized in many countries around the world with large Roman Catholic populations, Mardi Gras is the final party prior to the ritual fasting of the Lenten Season, which begins on Ash Wednesday.

Over the many decades that New Orleanians have celebrated Mardi Gras, "krewes" or private Mardi Gras social organizations have also contributed to the merriment and glee surrounding the festive season. In Greek mythology, Endymion was known for his everlasting youth and beauty. In 1966, the Krewe of Endymion was established and has annually paraded through the streets of New Orleans. Today, Endymion is known for being the largest parade in New Orleans, both for the number of members—more than 2,600—and also for the incredible size and spectacle of its floats. This krewe has meant a lot to me since I had one of my first jobs as a high school student painting Endymion's floats—white primer only, as I wasn't trusted with colors.

During the Krewe of Endymion's 47th year, Ms. Victoria Michelle Hanzo will reign as queen. Ms. Hanzo is a senior at Archbishop Chapelle High School and has been on the distinguished honor roll each year while a student at Chapelle. She is also a member of the National Society of High of High School scholars, has been a student ambassador for 4 years, is a student representative for her senior class on the student council, and is an active member in Health Nuts, an organization that promotes fitness and nutrition. Lastly, Victoria is a member of the prolific club and has traveled to Washington, DC, recently with over 600 high school students from the New Orleans area for the March for Life Rally, an occasion and cause for which I will continue to be a strong advocate.

She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Hanzo and the granddaughter Mr. and Mrs. Edmond J. Muniz, the founder and captain of the Krewe of Endymion. Next year she plans to continue her education at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. It is exciting for such an accomplished young person to have this honor and will be something she will cherish for a lifetime. She joins a long line of family members who have also had the honor of serving as queen of Endymion: her mother Michelle in 1986, her Aunt Mary in 1984, her aunt Margie in 1991, and her cousin Erica in 2012.

As we celebrate the 2013 Mardi Gras season, it is my pleasure to honor Ms.

Victoria Michelle Hanzo as the 47th queen of the Krewe of Endymion. •

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I would like to recognize and honor the valuable contributions of Catholic schools in educating our youth throughout our great Nation. From January 27 to February 2, we will celebrate Catholic Schools Week to bring attention to the exceptional work and contributions to society that Catholic education programs across the country provide.

These schools provide a comprehensive education that emphasizes moral, intellectual, and physical development in our youth and that fosters responsible individuals who positively contribute to our communities while leading lives grounded in the Catholic tradition. This year's theme, "Catholic Schools Raise the Standards," demonstrates the high standard to which the Catholic schools of our Nation hold themselves and their unwavering commitment to promoting academic excellence and Catholic identity.

Catholic schools in Louisiana have continued to support this tradition of academic excellence and physical and spiritual well-being, while allowing families to be involved and supportive in the educational process. Today, more than 2 million students attend Catholic schools around the country. More than 99 percent of attending students graduate, with more than 85 percent pursuing college degrees at 4-year institutions.

I am in strong agreement with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, which stated:

Education remains critically important in the formation of the human person by teaching how to live well now so as to be able to live with God for all eternity . . . Our schools serve both the faith community and society by educating children, young people and adults to contribute to the common good by becoming active and caring members of the communities, cities, and nation in which they live.

As a Catholic school alumnus, I know that Catholic school educators and administrators deserve recognition for their steadfast commitment not only to educating minds, but also to shaping hearts and cultivating the virtues that make our country and local communities stronger. In that respect, I am hopeful that the Senate will again pass my bipartisan resolution recognizing the valuable contributions of Catholic schools in the United States.

This week, we recognize the students, their families, teachers, administrators, all of our parish leaders, and our communities for their efforts to support our Catholic schools and continued achievement toward the education of our young people. •

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to