

workforce assessment, established a formal mentoring program, developed the leadership for innovation decision-making program and expanded the Leadership Development Academy, and instilled in leadership ranks throughout the FHWA the value of expanding opportunity. Initiatives of this type are valuable to employees and their families, but are also critical to ensuring the FHWA can meet the challenges of the future by helping the agency to recruit and retain the best public servants our Nation has to offer. Through these and other initiatives, Jeff helped make FHWA successful not only in accomplishing its vitally important mission, but in making the agency a better place to work. Among agencies of its size, FHWA has ranked in the top 10 best places to work in the Federal Government among agency subcomponents for the past 3 years. Under Jeff's leadership, FHWA moved from No. 33 in 2009 to No. 5 in 2013, an impressive achievement in a short period of time.

Jeff will be retiring this month after 32 years of Federal service to become president and chief executive officer of the Institute of Transportation Engineers. After his long career and especially his 7½ years as executive director, Jeff leaves FHWA a better place, which is good for America. I am proud to represent Jeff and so many other Federal workers. I believe our Federal workforce is the best in the world. We are fortunate to have dedicated, talented, creative, hard-working, and patriotic public servants like Jeff. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Jeff for serving the American public with such distinction and devotion and wishing him much success as he leaves Federal service. We also need to thank his wife, Kim, and his children Chris and Lauren for supporting him in his public career.

TRIBUTE TO SYLVIA OLIVER

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, there are many people who work behind the scenes to help the Senate function. We tend to take them for granted, but we shouldn't. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge one such Senate staffer, Sylvia Oliver, who is leaving at the end of this week. I won't say that Sylvia is retiring because there is a chance we can coax her into returning at some point. But she is leaving her job as coordinator of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD in the Office of the Official Reporters of Debates because she wants to spend more time at home with her daughter, Lily, who is a senior in high school. That is a completely understandable and laudable desire.

Few people appreciate that even though the Office of the Official Reporters of Debates has embraced the latest information technology, producing the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD remains a painstaking, labor-intensive process. Even fewer people appreciate that the officials and employees like

Sylvia who are responsible for its production typically have to work for several hours each night after the Senate has adjourned making sure the RECORD is accurate and complete before sending it to the Government Publishing Office. We take for granted that a printed copy of the RECORD, one of the most important documents in our Nation, will be delivered to our offices the next morning. There are many people who work late into the night without fanfare or accolades to make this possible. They are an invaluable part of what I call the Senate family.

Sylvia is a Vermont native and graduated from the University of Vermont. She still visits her mother, Betty Reid, in Barre as often as possible and is close to her siblings, John Reid, Betsy Reid, David Reid, and Sarah Schroeder. She started her congressional service on the House side in 1988 working for then-Representative Jim Jeffords of Vermont. She came with him to the Senate in 1989. She returned to the House for a few years, working as an executive assistant to the House Sergeant at Arms. Then, she came back to the Senate in 1993, where she worked as a scheduler and executive assistant for Senator Byron Dorgan of North Dakota and the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs before assuming her current job with the Office of the Official Reporters of Debates. She is unfailingly professional and polite. We will all miss her, but I know her colleagues in the Office of the Official Reporters of Debates will miss her the most because she is such a kind and gentle and pleasant person.

I am proud to have Sylvia as a constituent. She lives near Annapolis; and, true to the rural roots of her Vermont upbringing, she has made her home atop a converted barn. Even though she works long hours in the Senate, she has usually done more each morning before she arrives here than most people accomplish in a week. She maintains a small farm and looks after three horses whose names are Conge, Chance, and Love It. She starts most mornings by mowing acres of pasture, hauling dozens of bales of hay, and feeding the chickens. She also has a small pumpkin patch. But that is not enough for Sylvia—she has a number of bee hives to look after, too.

Lily Oliver, who has graciously shared her mother with us, has said, "My mom is the most beautiful person I know. She makes the world a better place by always treating those around her with compassion and patience. I am so fortunate to have such a strong, genuine, resourceful, mother to emulate throughout life." Well, we have been so fortunate to have Sylvia in the Senate family for the past 20-plus years. The American people are so fortunate to have talented and dedicated public servants like Sylvia. I truly believe our Federal workforce is the best in the world.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Sylvia Oliver for her exem-

plary service and wishing her well as she begins the next chapter in her life with the most important family of all, her own.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

ROBIN TRIPOD PATTEN

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I wish to honor Robin Tripod Patten as a 2015 Angel in Adoption award recipient for her outstanding advocacy of adoption issues. Robin serves as Director of Social Services at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center, AMMC, in Paragould, AR. One of her many responsibilities in this position includes coordinating adoptions.

Being a bereaved parent herself, Robin offers a unique perspective to the adoption process because she understands the pain of giving birth and leaving the hospital without a baby. She provides emotional support to both the birth mother and the adoptive parents and assists new and prospective parents in navigating complicated legal matters when contemplating adoption.

Robin is a Licensed Master Social Worker, LMSW, and dedicates her life to children. She is a mandated child abuse reporter who directs care of infants whose birth mothers had illegal substances in her system during pregnancy. For 11 years, she has served on the Greene County multidisciplinary child abuse task force working to ensure no child is overlooked or forgotten.

I am proud of Robin for her dedication to adoption services and for investing in the lives of families in northeast Arkansas and am glad to recognize Robin as an Angel in Adoption for her efforts to connect children to permanent families. I commend her for her service and ask my colleagues to join me in honoring her and the many other advocates who continue to selflessly work to ensure that all children grow up in safe, healthy, and loving homes.●

OBSERVING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPUDIATION OF THE BRITISH STAMP ACT

• Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to honor the actions of "12 immortal justices" of the Frederick County Court in Maryland who refused to discharge the British Stamp Act on November 23, 1765. This first official act of defiance against the British Government's "taxation without representation" in the Thirteen Original Colonies—8 years before the Boston Tea Party—helped set the stage for the American Revolution that would lead to a free and independent United States of America.

The Stamp Act the British Parliament passed in early 1765 exacted revenue from the Colonies by imposing a stamp duty on newspapers and legal and commercial documents. Colonists