

I am pleased this bill has passed today because it is critical in allowing United States launch companies to compete effectively in the growing commercial space race.

Having already passed the House by a large margin, the Commercial Space Act needed to be considered by the Senate. I was pleased to work with my colleagues to ensure the future of our nation's high-tech economic frontier: commercial space.

I speak to you today as a Senator concerned about both our national security and our nation's economic position. The United States cannot afford to descend into another "launch gap." Our recent discussions over why U.S. satellites are being launched from China demands that the U.S. Senate act quickly to make the commercial launch environment in this country as progressive and productive as possible.

When the space race began with the launch of Sputnik in October 1957, American citizens listened in indignation and fear as the first man-made satellite—a Soviet satellite—beeped its way around the earth. In the two decades that followed, an aggressive U.S. space program, both civil and military, brought our country back to its rightful lead in technology by putting a man on the moon and securing many other achievements in space.

But there is no denying that today, the United States preeminence in commercial space is threatened. If you were to step back in time 30 years to the nation's premier launch facility, Cape Canaveral, you would have seen a forest of launch vehicles ready on the pads. Visit our launch facilities today and you will see under-utilized launch facilities while at the same time U.S. commercial companies struggle to develop new space vehicles under constraints of outdated laws and policies.

A recent aerospace survey predicts over 2,000 satellites will be launched into earth orbit over the next decade. The good news is that the U.S. government and American companies may launch up to 65 percent of those payloads if the Commercial Space Act is implemented. The bad news is that many commercial satellite companies are already looking to foreign countries for launch services due to the restrictive environment in which they must operate in the United States and the lack of available launch vehicles.

In other words, Mr. President, while our space industry is rapidly preparing for the 21st Century, federal policy in dealing with this important source of economic activity is stuck on the launch pad.

The single most important provision of the Commercial Space Act is an amendment to the Commercial Space Launch Act of 1984 that gives the federal government the authority to license commercial space re-entry activities. In short: what goes up, must come down.

Can you imagine the Wright Brothers flight at Kitty Hawk ever being made if

the government told them, "Sure you can fly it, just don't land." The way the law presently exists, commercial companies can launch but cannot land any vehicle returning from space. Only the U.S. government is allowed this privilege.

This provision must be changed to allow the development of future generations of spacecraft, such as the Reusable Launch Vehicle. This is the business of space: providing services, repeat services, to entrepreneurs. We must regulate in an efficient and expeditious manner to support this growing market.

That brings me to my next point: this bill, to borrow from Neil Armstrong, will take a giant leap in clarifying complex and sometimes divergent commercial space licensing requirements in federal agencies. By streamlining the regulations and licensing, we will allow commercial companies to raise capital, develop business plans, and create job opportunities that might otherwise go overseas.

Mr. President, U.S. commercial space industry faces a number of competitors from abroad. The most serious are the Russian Proton, the Chinese Long March, and the European Space Agency Ariane rockets launched from French Guiana in South America. But this is not a comprehensive list. There are numerous competitors who would be more than happy to see the U.S. commercial launch industry locked in a web of regulations and limitations.

I am proud to report that one thing our bill does not do is spend any new taxpayer dollars. As a policy bill, we are seeking to level the playing field without creating any new government programs. Our bill does require studies, but those studies will be accomplished using the existing resources of agencies involved and data that has already been collected.

For instance, our legislation would require the Department of Defense to conduct an inventory of its range assets and determine what, if any, deficiencies exist. Much of this information is already available through existing Defense Department reports. Armed with this information, we can convert our nation's launch ranges back to the busiest space facilities in the world.

But this legislation does more than just refrain from new spending. It actually saves money by allowing the conversion of excess ballistic missiles into space transportation vehicles. Due to the START treaty, these missiles can no longer be used for their original intended purpose. Furthermore, they are extremely expensive to store or destroy.

By using these missiles as launch vehicles, the government will be able to launch small scientific and educational payloads that cannot afford the larger and more expensive rocket systems. This is a legal and efficient way to dispose of an expensive asset. Our Russian

counterparts have been firing their missiles as opposed to spending money to destroy them. We will implement one more practical step by firing them with a payload.

In closing, let me remind you of remarks that President John F. Kennedy made in the midst of the hotly contested space race. During one of his visits to Cape Canaveral, President Kennedy declared, "We choose to go the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard."

As we consider this bill, we should all ponder that quote. It is not easy for the federal government to change the way it has done business for many years. It is hard; it is a challenge, for forward-thinking people both in and out of the government. But it is what we must do to protect our investment in the nation's economic future and our national pride. It is vital that we ensure our nation's position in the commercial space race of the 21st century.

I thank the distinguished Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Commerce Committee Senator MCCAIN and Senator HOLLINGS, and the Chairman of the Science, Technology, and Space Subcommittee Senator FRIST for supporting this legislation and guiding it through the Senate process.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations on the Executive Calendar: 605, 616, 617, 618, 652, 709, 711, 716, 719, 720, 721, 722, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744 through 778, 779, 780, and 781, and all the nominations on the Secretary's desk in the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, and Marine Corps and Navy.

I further ask unanimous consent that the nominations be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, any statements relating to the nominations appear at the appropriate place in the RECORD, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and that the Senate then return to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Raymond L. Bramucci, of New Jersey, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor.

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

Thelma J. Askey, of Tennessee, to be a Member of the United States International Trade Commission for the remainder of the term expiring December 16, 2000.

Jennifer Anne Hillman, of Indiana, to be a Member of the United States International Trade Commission for the term expiring December 16, 2006.

Stephen Koplan, of Virginia, to be a Member of the United States International Trade

Commission for the term expiring June 16, 2005.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Deidre A. Lee, of Oklahoma, to be Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy.

Rosina M. Bierbaum, of Virginia, to be an Associate Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

COAST GUARD

The following named officer for appointment as Chief of Staff, United States Coast Guard, and to the grade indicated under title 14, U.S.C., section 50a:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Timothy W. Josiah

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

L. Britt Snider, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Central Intelligence Agency.

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

Scott E. Thomas, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission for a term expiring April 30, 2003. (Reappointment)

Darryl R. Wold, of California, to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission for a term expiring April 30, 2001.

David M. Mason, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission for a term expiring April 30, 2003.

Karl J. Sandstrom, of Washington, to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission for a term expiring April 30, 2001.

UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

Jonathan H. Spalter, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Director of the United States Information Agency.

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Hugh Q. Parmer, of Texas, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Agency for International Development.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Carolyn H. Becraft, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

Ruby Butler DeMesme, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force.

Patrick T. Henry, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Army.

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10 U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. George W. Keefe

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10 U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Richard C. Cosgrave

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10 U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Roger G. DeKok

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10 U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. John W. Handy

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10 U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Nicholas B. Kehoe, III

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10 U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Maxwell C. Bailey

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Phillip J. Ford

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Ronald C. Marcotte

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Air Force as Chief, National Guard Bureau, and for appointment to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 10502:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Russell C. Davis

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Richard S. Colt

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Keith B. Alexander
Dorian T. Anderson
Eldon A. Bargewell
David W. Barno
William H. Brandenburg
John M. Brown, III
Peter W. Chiarelli
Claude V. Christianson
Edward L. Dyer
William F. Engel
Barbara G. Fast
Stephen J. Ferrell
Thomas R. Goedkoop
Dennis E. Hardy
Steven R. Hawkins
John W. Holly
David H. Huntoon, Jr.
Peter T. Madsen
Jesus A. Mangual
Thomas G. Miller
Robert W. Mixon, Jr.
Virgil L. Packett, II
Donald D. Parker
Elbert N. Perkins
Joseph F. Peterson
David H. Petraeus
Marilyn A. Quagliotti
Maynard S. Rhoades
Velma L. Richardson
Michael D. Rochelle
Joe G. Taylor, Jr.
Nathaniel R. Thompson, III
Alan W. Thrasher
James D. Thurman
Thomas R. Turner, II
John M. Urias
Michael A. Vane
Lloyd T. Waterman

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of im-

portance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Robert F. Foley

The following Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Dale R. Barber

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be brigadier general

Col. Robert T. Dail

The following named officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Robert A. Cocroft

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Leon J. LaPorte

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. James M. Link

The following Army National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Edmund C. Zysk

To be brigadier general

Col. William J. Davies

Col. James P. Combs

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be general

Lt. Gen. John N. Abrams

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. David H. Ohle

The following Army National Guard of the United States officers for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Paul J. Glazar
Brig. Gen. John R. Groves, Jr.
Brig. Gen. David T. Hartley
Brig. Gen. Lloyd E. Krase
Brig. Gen. Bennett C. Landreaneau
Brig. Gen. Benny M. Paulino
Brig. Gen. Jean A. Romney
Brig. Gen. Allen E. Tackett

To be brigadier general

Col. Richard W. Averitt
Col. Daniel P. Coffey
Col. Howard A. Dillon, Jr.
Col. Barry A. Griffin
Col. Larry D. Haub
Col. Robert J. Hayes
Col. Lawrence F. Lafrenz

Col. Victor C. Langford, III
 Col. Thomas P. Mancino
 Col. Dennis C. Merrill
 Col. Walter A. Paulson
 Col. Robley S. Rigdon
 Col. Kenneth B. Robinson
 Col. Roy M. Umbarger
 Col. Jimmy R. Watson
 Col. Paul H. Wieck

The following Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Emilio Diaz-Colon

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Edward G. Anderson, III

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be general

Lt. Gen. Thomas A. Schwartz

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624(c):

To be brigadier general, Judge Advocate General's Corps

Col. Thomas J. Romig

The following Army National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Army to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be brigadier general

Col. Bruce W. Pieratt

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (1h) Peter A. C. Long

The following named officer for appointment as Chief of Chaplains and for appointment to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 5142:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (1h) Anderson B. Holderby, Jr.

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Michael E. Finley
 Capt. Gwilym H. Jenkins, Jr.
 Capt. James A. Johnson

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. James F. Amerault

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 624:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. (1h) Michael L. Cowan

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Joseph S. Mobley

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade

indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Edward Moore, Jr.

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. John W. Craine, Jr.,

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Herbert A. Browne, Jr., II.,

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Diane D. Blair, of Arkansas, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2004.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Kelley S. Coyner, of Virginia, to be Administrator of the Research and Special Programs Administration, Department of Transportation.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Ritajeane Hartung Butterworth, of Washington, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2004.

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE, ARMY, COAST GUARD, MARINE CORPS, NAVY

Air Force nominations beginning Albert K. Aimar, and ending Jerry L. Wilper, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 15, 1998.

Air Force nominations beginning Hedy C. Pinkerton, and ending Philip M. Shue, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 7, 1998.

Air Force nominations beginning John J. Abbatiello, and ending Michael P. Zumwalt, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 7, 1998.

Army nominations beginning Johan K. Ahan, and ending Clorinda K. Zawacki, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 1998.

Army nomination of Angela D. Meggs, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 15, 1998.

Army nominations beginning Kevin C. Abbott, and ending Mark G. Ziemba, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 7, 1998.

Army nominations beginning *Celethia M. Abner, and ending *Shanda M. Zugner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 7, 1998.

Army nominations beginning Robert D. Branson, and ending William B. Walton, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 17, 1998.

Army nominations beginning Mark A. Acker, and ending X4578, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 17, 1998.

Coast Guard nomination of Christopher A. Buckridge, which was received by the Senate

and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 17, 1998.

Marine Corps nomination of Michael J. Colburn, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 15, 1998.

Marine Corps nominations beginning Reginald H. Baker, and ending James J. Witkowski, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 15, 1998.

Navy nominations beginning Mark T. Ackerman, and ending Mary J. Zurey, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of May 22, 1998.

Navy nominations beginning David Abernathy, and ending Michael B. Witham, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 15, 1998.

Navy nominations beginning Sanders W. Anderson, and ending Paul R. Zambito, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 15, 1998.

Navy nominations beginning John S. Andrews, and ending William M. Steele, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of June 15, 1998.

Navy nominations beginning Paul S. Webb, and ending Wesley P. Ritchie, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 7, 1998.

Navy nominations beginning Kevin J. Bedford, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 7, 1998.

Navy nominations beginning Douglas J. McAneny, and ending Richard A. Mohler, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of July 17, 1998.

NOMINATION OF RAYMOND BRAMUCCI AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I rise in support of the nomination of Ray Bramucci for the position of Assistant Secretary of Employment and Training in the Department of Labor.

Mr. President, I have known Ray for many years. He is a man of enormous integrity, deep commitment to public service, and is ready and anxious to take up his responsibilities at the Department of Labor. Ray has a passion for making things better, and believes strongly in lifelong education and job training for our youth, especially our disadvantaged youth. He will give this job his full measure. I urge the Senate to move rapidly to confirm him.

A leading figure in New Jersey politics and public affairs, Ray's expertise in labor-management relations, job training initiatives, employment services, and policy development provides a solid foundation for overseeing the administration of agency programs as Assistant Secretary. From 1990 to 1994, Mr. Bramucci served as Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Labor. In this position, he was a key cabinet member and principal advisor to the Governor on matters of both statewide and national impact, particularly in regard to economic development, education and training, and labor relations.

Mr. Bramucci also served as Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Department of Labor, an agency charged with workforce training and preparation, protecting workers from exploitation, and providing income security through benefit programs for injured, ill, and unemployed workers. While in office, he successfully created and implemented a number of ground breaking initiatives, including the Workforce Development Partnership, a program which has helped to train and upgrade worker skills since July 1992 and is training over 15,000 workers today. He helped to establish the nation's first state-funded program to provide extended unemployment benefits to workers who had exhausted their regular claims, as well as the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission and the Employment Security Council, two national leaders in reforming and revitalizing the worker security system.

To the position of Assistant Secretary, he would also bring the skills he acquired in his 22 years of service as part of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. During this time, he rose from shop floor worker to eventually become the senior executive and key negotiator for the Union, in which he played a central role in negotiating hundreds of individual and industry-wide contracts.

From 1979 to 1990, he was Director of New Jersey Operations for our former colleague, Bill Bradley. Ray was the eyes and ears for Senator Bradley in New Jersey, and a key adviser to him on political and policy matters. It was during this period that I got to know Ray well, and then when he served as Labor Commissioner. In recognition of his many accomplishments, he has been named to the Executive Board of CDS International, Inc., the Commission Board of the New Jersey Black Achievers Program of Business and Education, and President of the New Jersey Caucus Education Corporation.

Mr. President, the Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training is charged with directing Department programs and ensuring that programs

funded through the agency are free from unlawful discrimination, fraud, and abuse. Ray Bramucci has the experience and commitment to assume these responsibilities with sensitivity and skill. He will make an exceptional Assistant Secretary. I thank my colleagues for confirming Ray Bramucci so he can get on with the job.

NOMINATION OF PATRICK T. HENRY TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am delighted to support the nomination of Patrick T. Henry to be the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

P.T. Henry has served on the staff of the Armed Services Committee for the last five years. Before that, he had a distinguished career on active duty in the Marine Corps and in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, as well as serving as the Chief of Staff of the American Red Cross here in Washington.

Mr. President, I can't think of a better person to serve in this important position. P.T. Henry has played a key role in virtually every Defense manpower and personnel issue in the last two decades. Whether the issue is quality of life issues, military pay and benefits questions, recruiting and retention, or military health care, the United States Senate and the men and women of our armed forces have benefited tremendously from the advice and counsel of P.T. Henry.

I know that every member of the Armed Services Committee agrees with me that P.T.'s expertise in the area of Defense manpower and personnel issues is exceeded only by his commitment to the welfare of the men and women of the armed forces and their families. I am disappointed that P.T. will be leaving the Armed Services Committee staff, but I am delighted and proud that he will be moving to such an important position in the Defense Department. The Senate's and the Armed Services Committee's loss is certainly the Army's gain.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank P.T. Henry for his service to the Senate and

the nation. I know that he will do an outstanding job as the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, and that he will continue to be an effective advocate for the men and women of the Army.

NOMINATION OF BRIGADIER GENERAL ALLEN E. TACKETT

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I am pleased that the President has nominated Brigadier General Allen E. Tackett for the rank of Major General. Brigadier General Tackett, a resident of Miami, West Virginia, graduated from East Bank High School and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Charleston, Charleston, West Virginia. He began his military career over 35 years ago as a Private in the Special Forces. Advancing from a Private to a Major General is an accomplishment which exemplifies his dedication to the National Guard, our country, and our State of West Virginia.

Brigadier General Tackett is a military graduate of the Special Warfare Center, Jumpmaster Course; Infantry Officer Basic and Advanced Courses; Command and General Staff College; and the Special Warfare Center, Techniques of Special Operations.

Brigadier General Tackett's major decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Medal, Humanitarian Medal, and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal. He was awarded, through rigorous training and proven efficiency, the coveted Special Forces Tab and Master Parachutist Badge.

Three years ago, Brigadier General Tackett assumed his current prestigious command as Adjutant General, West Virginia National Guard, with leadership responsibility for six thousand men and women serving in the West Virginia National Guard.

Mr. President, I am pleased to cast my vote for the confirmation of Brigadier General Allen E. Tackett as Major General, and I urge my colleagues to support this nomination.