



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 158

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2012

No. 151

Senate

REMEMBERING WAYNE BURKE

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a true Nevadan and friend, Wayne Burke, who has been honored by the Nevada Indian Commission as American Indian Community Leader of the Year. As tribal chairman for the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Wayne led the tribal council through many successes for the betterment of Nevada. Wayne's untimely passing is a great loss, but his legacy of community and economic development in the Silver State will never be forgotten.

In addition to serving the State of Nevada, Wayne bravely served our Nation in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1993 until his honorable discharge in 1997. As a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, Wayne understood the importance of supporting those who defend our Nation. He was a member of Numu Tookwasu—Pyramid Lake Veterans and Warriors Association—and a staunch advocate for Native American veteran affairs. His vision helped launch Nevada's first annual American Indian Veteran Summit this year, which invited members of the 27

tribes of Nevada to learn about access to veteran benefits and healthcare. His legacy will help raise awareness and resources for Native American veterans for years to come.

As tribal chairman, Wayne promoted an award winning Pyramid Lake economic development and tourism plan. His advocacy for the recovery and restoration of the Pyramid Lake fishery helped to secure over 1,000 acres of water, the most in any one-month period. Under his leadership, the Pyramid Lake Tribe has enjoyed a record number of visitors to Pyramid Lake and, subsequently, numerous tourism awards. In August 2012, Wayne became the first Native American leader to serve on the Nevada Commission on Tourism.

The citizens of the Silver State were privileged that such a passionate and dedicated leader called Nevada home. My thoughts and prayers go out to his wife, Leticia; and children, Alex, Christian, and Soleil. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of a devoted Nevadan and honoring his esteemed accomplishments.