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Senate

TRIBUTE TO JOHN MCKENZIE

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the career and achievements of John McKenzie, owner of the McKenzie Apartment Company. Throughout his career, John has fused together his work in home construction with his passion for community service to establish the next generation of leaders in the housing industry.

Born and raised in Madison, WI, John got his start in business working with his father in real estate. After graduating from UW-Madison as a business major in 1971, he began his career in real estate development around the country, working from Cincinnati to San Francisco. In 1989, he returned to Madison where he had a significant impact on the region's real estate development and revitalization. During this period, he cofounded his family business, the McKenzie Apartment Company.

John is somebody who takes deep pride in his work, creating both homes and opportunities to improve the lives of others. With this mission, John began working with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dane County. He recognized that, by working with the Boys and Girls Club, he could have a remarkable and lasting impact on the community by introducing skilled trades to the young people in the program. Having been a Madison Area Builders Association—MABA—member for 30 years, John connected the Boys and Girls Club with the MABA, and a lasting partnership has resulted.

In collaboration with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dane County and the Madison Area Builders Association, John raised the significant funds needed to build and sustain a facility that provides space for youth ranging from elementary school to high school to participate in introductory trade activities. This year, the McKenzie Regional Workforce Center opened to train and connect a new generation of young people of diverse backgrounds to the skilled trades. A first-of-its-kind project for the Boys and Girls Clubs of America and a National Association of Home Builders—NAHB—affiliated local home builders association, the center will serve as a national template, preparing young people in Dane County for quality, family-sustaining jobs at a time when the skilled trades are facing a labor shortage. Due to John's innovative idea, a national movement was sparked to partner local Boys and Girls Clubs with the construction industry around the Nation. John's impact will be felt nationwide through 10 local partnerships that began in 2023 and another 20 beginning in 2024.

With John's persistence, leadership and dedication to his community, he has impacted so many lives in our State. I am so pleased to join others in recognizing his success and accomplishments. I wish him and his family all the best and applaud his continued efforts in the skilled trades.