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## Arkansas Teachers Rise to the Challenge

**HON. JOHN BOOZMAN**  
OF ARKANSAS  
*April 26, 2021*

Madam President, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary work of teachers in Arkansas and across the country.

As we celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week, it is clear that educators are in a class by themselves when it comes to resilience.

Over the last 12 months, they have shown us what it means to be selfless and brave at a time when both were critically necessary.

I am especially proud of teachers in Arkansas who rose to the challenge of leading classes 100 percent virtually for the first time and then embraced re-opening our schools in August 2020.

The sudden transition to virtual learning was an extraordinary hurdle as educators had to learn new technology and new teaching techniques overnight.

For all of us who have learned to use Zoom, it is worth taking a moment to imagine an online classroom with 30 wiggling first graders who want to show you their pets. Or that you are teaching Calculus to high school students who are preparing for an AP exam while attending class from their car at a wi-fi hotspot. Somehow, with great creativity and dedication, teachers embraced this mission and continued to do everything they could to reach each child.

And when Arkansas schools reopened in the fall, they were faced with tremendous new challenges from masks and social distancing, to teaching classes where some students were at their desks and others on a screen. Arkansas teachers once again did the impossible for their students.

Over the last year, I've heard from educators who worried for their own health and safety, but said their dedication to their students was stronger than fear.

They learned new skills overnight, overhauled curriculum and reimagined every aspect of their classroom to comply with COVID-19 guidelines. Somehow, they also made kids feel safe enough to learn, set an example with their positive attitudes and let students know how important they were, whether in a classroom or on a computer screen.

As they worked to maintain the academic progress of each child, they also provided a lifeline in an otherwise chaotic time. It is amazing to see the smiles on the faces of kids when they see their teachers. Even though nothing was normal, they gave students an escape back to normalcy by being there and continuing to do what they do best – teach.

When we look back at the heroes of this tumultuous time, it is clear that teachers will be among those we honor as our society's most valuable players.

On behalf of the people of Arkansas, I want to thank our teachers for their great work this year, and every year, to bring out the best in each child and pave the way to a brighter future.

