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## Senate

### SOUTH DAKOTA CAPITOL CENTENNIAL

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, it is with great honor that I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of the South Dakota State Capitol. This centennial is especially meaningful to me, as I spent eight years in this building, serving the people of South Dakota in the Senate and House of Representatives from Clay and Union Counties.

South Dakota achieved statehood in 1889, and campaigns were soon waged over which town would become the capital. At least thirteen towns competed in an intense race, with Pierre winning the title in 1904, partially due to its central location. Funding was secured in 1905, construction began in 1907, the cornerstone laid on June 25, 1908, and the official dedication of South Dakota's State Capitol was on June 30, 1910. Government agencies moved into the Capitol from a small wooden building which was located at the southwest corner of the Capitol grounds near the corners of Capitol Avenue and Nicollet. Robert S. Vessey of Wessington Springs was the first governor to serve in the Capitol building.

Modeled after the Montana state capitol building, architects from Minneapolis designed and constructed the building for just under one million dollars. The beautiful structure includes native field stone, Indiana limestone, and Vermont and Italian marble. With hand carved woodwork, marble, special cast brass, and hand laid stone, the Capitol itself is a work of art.

During the "Dirty 30's", the settling of blow-

ing soil caused severe damage to the building. Subsequently, in 1977, a major restoration of the State Capitol commenced with a goal of returning the majestic building to its original state in time for the South Dakota Centennial Celebration in 1989. Fifteen years and roughly \$3 million later, the building has been restored very close to its original grandeur. The ceilings, wall designs, color schemes, window treatments, and carpeted areas were brought back to its original colors and luster.

On Saturday, June 19, 2010 South Dakotans from across the state will gather at the Capitol to celebrate one hundred years of our state's history. With live entertainment, tours of the Capitol, historical lectures, a rededication ceremony, and many other activities, there is something for everyone. I hope this celebration gives our citizens a chance to reflect on our shared history, as well as our promising future.

At the laying of the cornerstone, Governor Coe Crawford said in his address, "The new capitol will do more than comfortably accommodate the officers who are to labor within its walls for the people whom they will serve. It will stand throughout the coming years as an expression of beauty and art and as the people come and go and linger within its walls, they will see in it an expression of the soul of the state." Although currently valued at \$58 million, this piece of history is priceless. I am honored to have served in this historical building and am proud to recognize it today.