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March 12, 2014

Dear Fellow Nevadan,

Throughout this year, Nevada will celebrate the 150th anniversary of its path to statehood. Next week, while I am back home visiting with constituents and family, the Silver State will celebrate the day that Congress passed, and President Abraham Lincoln signed legislation paving the way for Nevada to become the 36th state.

Congress was in a rush to welcome Nevada to the Union since the Civil War was raging.

The only other state admitted to the Union during the war was West Virginia, which seceded from Virginia to remain part of the Union in 1863. Congress did not want to wait until its next session to admit another new state. One that could swing the presidential election in Lincoln's favor, and provide crucial votes for the 13th Amendment, which abolished slavery. And Nevadans had already rejected one proposed state Constitution, so there was no time to waste.

On March 21, 1864, in the waning hours of the 38th Congress, a law was passed allowing Nevada to enter the union whenever voters finally passed and President Lincoln approved a state constitution. It was not the normal course of business. Typically Congress would get the final word on admission of a new state to the Union, but these were not normal times.

Even today, we acknowledge Nevada's unique path to statehood on our state flag with the words "Battle Born."

Throughout this year, we will celebrate with events in every corner of the state. From my hometown of Searchlight to Virginia City to Elko, there is a 150th anniversary event to match every interest. We will mark Nevada's second constitutional convention. It is the day Nevada voters finally approved its constitution and the day, October 31, 1864, that Lincoln proclaimed Nevada's statehood.

The 150th anniversary of our admission to the Union provides a wonderful opportunity to study Nevada's history. It is also a chance to reflect on our great state's unique pioneer spirit, a spirit that continues to make it special today.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email. To learn more about my work in the Senate on behalf of Nevadans or to contact me, please visit reid.senate.gov, or connect with me on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Sincerely,

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