

Megan Shaw, Melissa Toby; Trombone: Sean Allison, Jeremy Crawford, Katie Dina, Derek Eller, Sean Emmons, Chad Hoiem, Brandy Jackson, Steven Karanja, Brent Lehman, Kevin Lipp, Veronica Meade, Betsy Ritchie, Alec Sanderson, Brandon Schenk, Andrew Stout, Kenneth White, Teneen Zimmer; Baritone: Jeffrey Eads, Bryan Eichorst, John Kauffman, Matthew Lanouette, Derek Lipp, Ryan McCarty, Trenton Prieshoff, Robert Stout, Alan Tack, Paul Tucker; Tuba: Aaron Bowser, Jonathan Freel, Suzanne Holcomb, Jared Klingler, Brandon Long, Jeremy Rowe, Andrew Trosper; Guitar: Jordan Swartzendruber, Matt Tompkins; Snare Drum: Lisa Bennett, Jennifer Bollero, Eric Rhude, Nick Stubbs; Quad Drums: John Bibbee, George Wright; Bass Drum: Justin Miracle, Derek Richard, Michael Johnson, Susie Bower, Brandon Dascoli; Cymbals: Bryce Canen, April Mascola, Dustin McLain, Bryant Quist, Sarah Runswick; Percussion Pit: Cory Allison, Amy Clark, Jonathan Faloon, Eric Foley, Matthew Schnaars, Andrew Stevens, Mark Wyrick; Color Guard: Elise Arvidson, Alicia Baer, Tiffany Baker, Mandy Beer, Karen Berndt, Ashley Bunch, Heather Dean, Hillary Durie, Mikala Ellsworth, Ashley Faloon, Ashley Guerra, Olivia Guevara, Chrissy Hoover, Jessica Hoover, Brittney Houston, DeAnna Jackson, Danielle Johnson, Leanne Johnson, Audrey Lanning, Allison Matthews, Jessica Meade, Amber Miller, Kourtney Mumaw, Kelly Perkins, Jessica Scott, Tara Scott, Jill Sheldon, Rachel Sirinek, Sierra Smith, Kristen Weaver.

I would also like to congratulate Director of Music Max Jones, Associate Band Director Scott Spradling, Assistant Band Directors Scott Spradling, April Duffey, Bryan Golden and Steve Peterson, Dance & Color Guard instructor Colleen Piekarz, Sound Technicians Aaron Ulrich and Scott Preheim, and Percussion Specialist Amy Davis for developing an award-winning program. Shirley Dyer, Dianne Jones, Matt Hall, Kelly Novy, and Katie Shouffer also deserve a note of thanks for helping make things run smoothly.

Mr. Speaker, you have to admire the dedication of the students, instructors and parents. It takes a lot of long hours and hard work to be a champion and the young men and women at Concord High School have proven they have what it takes to be champions.

Again, on behalf of the citizens of the Second Congressional District, I would like to congratulate the Concord Marching Minutemen on their Class B state championship. We are all proud of you.

IN SUPPORT OF OUR NATION'S
VETERANS

HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 7, 2003

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of our nation's veterans. These brave men and women risked their lives for their country—for our country. We owe it to them to live up to all of the promises that we made when they entered the military.

I go home every weekend, and I hear from the veterans in my community. These veterans don't have a multi-specialty clinic; they

don't have a hospital, and they don't have a long term care facility. But southern Nevada does have one of the fastest growing veterans populations in the nation.

Because of this growth, the VA predicts that the number of annual visits by veterans in the Las Vegas Valley to their primary health care clinic will rise from 200,000 now to more than half-a-million by the end of the decade. And the number of hospital beds needed to serve the veterans in my community will increase by over 50 percent.

The VA is already struggling to address and meet the current demands on the VA health care structure in the Las Vegas Valley, and these demands will only continue to grow.

Last year, 1500 southern Nevada veterans were sent to neighboring states because we could not provide the needed services locally. This is an unfair burden on these veterans and their families. They should not have to travel hundreds of miles for care.

To make matters worse, the VA evacuated the Guy Clinic—the Las Vegas Valley's only ambulatory care clinic after only 5 years of service—forcing veterans to rely on a string of temporary clinics scattered across the community.

Imagine what it is like for an 80-year-old veteran waiting in the desert heat to be shuttled from clinic to clinic to receive the health care he needs. For example, a veteran may have to shuttle from a temporary site for a CT scan, then to another site to obtain a prescription for a controlled narcotic, and then to a third site for mental health services.

And female veterans who need mammograms will have to shuttle to a different clinic just for that service.

As one 81-year old World War II veteran described the situation, "You're going from one place to another and it gets confusing." Don't our veterans deserve a permanent facility to meet their health care needs?

In short, southern Nevada is facing a veterans health care crisis and my community is not alone. But here in Washington, Republicans have refused to provide an additional \$1.8 billion for veterans health care this year.

As a nation, we promised our veterans that we would meet their health care needs, but we have not. We promised to provide them with affordable housing and access to a college education, but we have fallen far short. We have broken one promise after another to those who have put their lives on the line to serve their country. Consider the Disabled Veterans Tax. Under this unfair tax, disabled veterans who retire from the military lose one dollar from their military retirement pay for every dollar they receive for a service connected disability.

When a retired Marine Corps major from Nevada was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease, he lost more than \$2,000 in monthly retirement pay because of the Disabled Veterans Tax. To make up for that loss of income, his wife had to work overtime just to make ends meet at home.

I support the Democratic plan that gives our veterans full payment of both retirement pay and disability pay. It is unconscionable that Republicans, who say they support our country's veterans, still have not allowed Members of this body to vote on ending the Disabled Veterans Tax.

Instead they have offered a plan that will take 10 years to enact and penalizes those

veterans with a 40 percent or less disability rating. But it isn't just honoring the commitments to our men and women who fought for this country, it is also about their families. Whether it is income lost because of the Disabled Veterans Tax or the financial burden a family faces when they lose their loved one.

That is why I introduced legislation that would increase the benefits to cover veterans' burial costs. Since 1973, when burial benefits were enacted, these benefits have seriously eroded due to inflation. For example, in 1973, the burial allowance for veterans with service connected injury covered 72 percent of funeral costs. Now, the benefit covers only 39 percent of the funeral costs.

Our veterans' families are forced to make up the costs. And for a widow or widower struggling with the loss of a loved one, this financial strain can take a tremendous emotional toll.

Our veterans not only deserve better, they deserve the best we have to offer. It is time for all Members of Congress to honor the commitments we made to those who fought and are currently fighting around the world for our nation. Support for our veterans is more than rousing rhetoric on Veterans' Day, it is doing what is fair and moral to fulfill our duties and promises to them.

HONORING AFRICAN AMERICAN
VETERANS

SPEECH OF

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 6, 2003

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Few people realize that even before there was a Declaration of Independence or a Constitution, African-Americans could be counted among our most dedicated revolutionaries. In the fall of 1775, the Continental Army tried to appease large landholders in the South by barring all slaves and most freemen from enlisting or re-enlisting. But by the end of the year the war took a turn for the worse, and the order was rescinded. So on Christmas night, in 1776, African-American soldiers made that famous crossing of the Delaware River with Washington to help him capture the Hessians at Trenton. All told, some 5,000 African-Americans served for the cause of Independence, and their sacrifices have been little remembered but should never be forgotten.

There has never been any war fought involving America, whether in time of slavery or freedom, segregation or integration, that African Americans did not serve and become major contributors in serving their country. African American veterans have a long honor roll in serving America. During World War II more than one million African Americans in uniform distinguished themselves as P-40 fighter pilots and Navy Seabees, Sherman tank drivers, orderlies and engineers. Let us remember Dorie Miller, a steward aboard the USS *Arizona* at Pearl Harbor, who saw his captain fall wounded and pulled him to safety and then despite the fire, he manned a machine gun and downed several enemy planes.

At the Battle of the Bulge the men of the 3496th Truck Company hauled weapons, soldiers and prisoners down roads that the rain