

2002 General Accounting Office Report to Congress, it was found 25 percent of respondents would use the dollar coin more for purchases if there was a rotating design similar to the 50 State Quarter Program. Additionally, nearly 50 percent of respondents stated they would collect the new coin if it featured a rotating design. And 69 percent of respondents favored U.S. Presidents as the choice for the new rotating design on the dollar coin.

Under the program, the images on the front and back of the coin temporarily would be replaced beginning in 2006 with images of the United States presidents. Four presidents a year would be honored, in the order of their service, with a likeness of the President, his name and dates of service and a number signifying the order in which he served, on the front of the coin. The image on the reverse would be that of the Statue of Liberty, large enough to be dramatic but not so large as to create a so-called "two-headed" coin. The date, mint mark and other important mottoes on the coin would go on the edge of the coin, leaving room on the faces for more dramatic artwork, harking back to the so-called Golden Age of American coins at the beginning of the last century.

Mr. Speaker, the educational aspects of this program are obvious. We all know George Washington was the first president, but how many can tell the exact dates of his service to the country? How about the dates of service of the famous Civil War general Ulysses S. Grant, who later became president? And how many in this Chamber can name the only President who would end up with two coins in the series because he served twice, in terms separated by another president's term?

The bill specifies that the program would end at the point when the next coin issued would have to be for a sitting President, as our founding fathers wisely thought that no sitting president's image should be carried on a coin. At that point the coin would return to the images now carried on it, with the stigma of inadvertently being associated with a failed coin program washed from the rich legacy of Sacagewea.

Mr. Speaker, this coin program by itself would be hard to argue with. Teachers will, as they have with the state quarter program, devise lesson plans around it. We will all look at the change in our pocket more closely, and learn more about our country in the process.

But that is only half of this legislation. The second title of the bill creates a nearly pure gold investment-grade bullion coin, the same diameter as the dollar coin and of an appropriate weight and thickness, honoring the First Spouses, who have done so much for our country. On the front, as with the Presidential coins, would be the likeness of the spouse, his or her terms of service and the order in which they served. On the reverse would be images emblematic of the spouse's works. In the five instances to date in which Presidents had no spouses while in office—there's the educational part again—the bill calls for the image on the front of the coin to be that of an image of "Liberty" as used on a U.S. coin circulating during that President's term, and the reverse of the coin to carry images related to the President's term.

These investment-grade coins would be struck in gold that is .9999 percent pure, a purity of gold the Mint never before has used to strike coins. Mr. Speaker, I think using pure

gold for the spouse coin is appropriate, and I think it is appropriate that the President and spouse coins can be sold or collected in all sorts of combinations. Additionally, the spouse coins could be sold merely for their intrinsic investment value.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation gives the Mint a great opportunity to show off its design and engraving talents and to develop new ones. It gives the Mint the opportunity to package the coins in a variety of ways, and the Mint gets more than a year to prepare to issue the first coin, so they can plan and get it right. As well, it allows for a transitional minting of the current dollar coins, though the demand will mostly be for collectors, so that 2006-dated Sacagewea dollar coins may be sold in large Lewis and Clark-Louisiana Purchase commemorative sets with 2006-dated Thomas Jefferson dollar coins. And with both the increase in dollar coins and the striking of bullion investment-grade coins, it creates jobs in a number of industries.

In short, Mr. Speaker, I don't see any downsides to this bill and believe there are so many upsides that it should pass in short order, giving all of us something good, and fun, to talk about when we go back to our constituents.

Mr. Speaker, so that the new \$1 coin may be introduced into circulation in 2006 and that the Mint will be given adequate time to plan this program to ensure it is a logistic as well as an artistic success, I will be seeking to move the legislation quickly. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation and look forward to working with the Financial Services Committee to bring this bill to the House Floor as soon as possible.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO LT. COL.
MIKE CZAJA

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay tribute to a devoted and compassionate soldier from Paonia, Colorado, Army Lt. Col. Mike Czaja. Mike has worked to keep our nation safe for over 20 years and I would like to join my colleagues here today in recognizing his tremendous service to our country.

Mike recently returned from service in Iraq where he oversaw the Psychological Operations units. These army units were instrumental in both reducing casualties during the war and continuing to build support for the rebuilding efforts after hostilities had ceased. During the war, units under Mike's command successfully deterred many Iraqi civilians from waging a fight against coalition forces by dropping leaflets that encouraged the opposition forces to defect, desert or surrender, out of consideration for the safety of both themselves and their families. The literature also encouraged Iraqis to not destroy natural resources like oil that would be vital to future economic recovery and prosperity.

After President Bush declared an end to the fighting, Mike and his troops focused their efforts on communicating messages that would help rebuild Iraq such as information about schools, doctors, and social services. With

Mike's leadership, American soldiers have begun to earn the trust of ordinary Iraqi citizens through face-to-face contact as the situation in Iraq gradually edges toward democratization. Mike continues to serve in the Army until his retirement in August when he will return to the Western Slope of Colorado to pursue a teaching position.

Mr. Speaker, Mike Czaja is a dedicated, selfless American soldier who has been crucial to the fight against terrorism in Iraq and has aided in securing the safety of America's homeland. His outstanding public service to his fellow countryman is setting an important example for America's future generations. Mike's enthusiasm and commitment certainly deserve the recognition of this body of Congress. Thank you for your service Mike, and keep up the good work.

IN RECOGNITION OF
RHINELANDER, WISCONSIN

HON. MARK GREEN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 2004

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, today before this House I'd like to recognize Rhinelander, Wisconsin, which recently hosted a collapsed structure training exercise for first responders from across northern Wisconsin.

On September 11, 2001, America learned that the best way to defend ourselves against a terrorist attack is through preparation. We were all caught off guard by the terrible events of that day, but rather than wait around for another terrorist strike, America's first responders rallied to make our Nation safer than ever.

Last December, fire fighters, medical professionals and security officials from my district gathered together in Rhinelander to address a serious issue in our area's emergency response network—structural collapses. These first responders received significant training and instruction on how to secure the scene around a collapsed structure and rescue those trapped inside.

Keeping America safe means preparing to stop terrorists wherever they may strike. To terrorists who target all Americans, small towns and villages are just as vulnerable as big cities, and we cannot ignore their needs for greater security. First responders in northern Wisconsin continue to prepare for the unthinkable, and they are a superb example to small communities around the country.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and pleasure to recognize Rhinelander for its leadership in the war on terror, and on behalf of the residents of Wisconsin's 8th Congressional District, we say keep up the great work.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 2004

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, between Sunday February 29 and Wednesday March 3, 2004, I traveled to Libya as part of a Congressional Delegation led by Representative WELDON and as Member of the House International Relations Committee and the Middle East Subcommittee.