

society they were defending. They showed the best of America, and we are all so proud of their accomplishments. I am privileged to count one of them among my neighbors on the Central Coast of California.

TRIBUTE TO DR. DAVID BENSON,
SUPERINTENDENT OF THE BLUE
VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT IN
JOHNSON COUNTY, KS

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 2, 2004

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor today to recognize Dr. David Benson, who is retiring this month as superintendent of the Blue Valley School District in the Third Congressional District of Kansas. Since 1993, Dr. Benson has led this outstanding school district, which has experienced exponential growth in facilities and in students. All the while, the district has continued to score exceptionally on all standardized tests and by any other measure of school excellence is one of our nation's outstanding school districts. I am lucky to represent in Congress some of the best schools in the United States, and many, many of them are in the Blue Valley District.

During his time at Blue Valley, the district has grown by 8,000 students. This phenomenal growth required two successful bond campaigns, led by Dr. Benson, and the construction of two new high schools, four middle schools, and six elementary schools. A seventh elementary school will open next fall. During Dr. Benson's tenure, the average growth in Blue Valley enrollment was larger than the total enrollment of most Kansas school districts!

During his years at Blue Valley, the district developed new programs, including foreign language programs for all elementary schools, a broadcast technology program, a new Wilderness Science Center (with wetlands and prairie environments), an alternative high school program, and a program to teach independent living skills to students 18 to 21 with moderate to severe disabilities.

In 2001, Dr. Benson was named Kansas Superintendent of the Year by the Kansas Association of School Administrators. In 2000, he was selected as Communicator of the Year by the Kansas School Public Relations Associations. His leadership extends beyond the education community. Recognizing the importance of the business community's support for public education, Dr. Benson has served as a board member for the Greater Kansas City and Overland Park Chambers of Commerce, and also served as president of United Community Services in 1999 and 2000.

Dr. Benson began his career teaching high school in Joplin, Missouri. He has served in various capacities in Salina, Moundridge, Junction City, and Kingman, Kansas, school districts; and also served as superintendent in both Fort Madison, Iowa, and Moundridge, Kansas. I know each of these districts has benefited from this outstanding public educator.

I wish Dr. Benson and his wife Donni the very best in their new community. While Dr. Benson will be missed by all students, teach-

ers, staff, and patrons of Blue Valley, the district will continue under the excellent leadership of Dr. Tom Trigg, currently the Deputy Superintendent of Administrative Services for Blue Valley.

FALLEN HEROES

SPEECH OF

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an amazing generation of Americans, a generation that possessed both the courage and the strength to defend the United States against its fiercest enemies.

I refer, of course, to those who served our great nation during World War II, the brave Americans who stormed the beaches of Europe and who fought to defend our territories in the South Pacific.

Just this weekend, Mr. Speaker, we gave our World War II veterans the commemoration they earned and deserve with the dedication of a new memorial on the National Mall.

Visiting this new monument in person made me think about all of the great sacrifices this generation made on our behalf.

Mr. Speaker, I can only imagine the enormous pressure they faced. The Japanese had already sunk some of our greatest battleships and were gaining ground in the Pacific and across Asia.

German and Italian forces were marching across Western Europe and were gaining ground against our allies.

With the goal of world dominance, the freedoms and liberties of the United States were in jeopardy like never before.

We would have to defeat some of the most powerful military forces in history if we were to keep our independence intact and to prevent a new era of tyranny around the world.

Despite this intense pressure and the great dangers before them, our young men signed up by the thousands and were willing to take on any task no matter what the risk.

They would fight in heroic battles and many of them would never return home or would spend a lifetime with severe injuries.

Working closely with my veterans in San Diego, I have heard firsthand accounts of the heroics on the battlefield and what our young men had to endure to win the war, including one who survived the attack on Pearl Harbor, another who fought in the famous Battle for Midway, and one who was held as a prisoner of war by the Japanese for several years.

We achieved victory only because these service members were willing to fight and willing to do whatever it took to win. We must also not forget the others who were crucial to our great victory.

Women were not eligible for full military status at the time, but this did not prevent them from making vast contributions. Women worked as laborers, engineers, and managers to produce the equipment our soldiers relied upon in the battlefield.

Women also put themselves directly in harm's way by working as medical personnel in battle zones.

Women performed so well and were so crucial to our victory, the War Department would

soon establish women's corps in the different branches leading to full military status for them.

We also broke stiff racial barriers during World War II. The Tuskegee Airmen, a squad of African-American pilots, were among the most elite who flew during the war and are credited with contributing to the desegregation of the Air Force.

We must also remember those from other nations who took up arms for the United States—specifically the Filipino veterans who fought alongside American soldiers in the Pacific.

As we dedicate the World War II Monument on our National Mall and celebrate the 60th Anniversary of D-Day, I hope we will remember the commitment by all of those who were crucial to our victory. Please join me in paying tribute to those who would become known as the "Greatest Generation."

FALLEN HEROES

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES W. STENHOLM

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of our military troops fighting for liberty in Iraq and Afghanistan. As we celebrated Memorial Day this past weekend, it is fitting to remember not only those heroes who have passed on, but also those who promote freedom around the world today.

I also want to take this opportunity to remember the fine young men of the 17th District of Texas who made the ultimate sacrifice for us all in Iraq and Afghanistan. They made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom and liberty, and I extend my condolences to their families and loved ones. Today I honor:

Lt. Nathan White of Abilene, Texas;
Chief Warrant Officer Scott Jamar of Granbury, Texas;
Sgt. Roy Wood of Graham, Texas;
Lt. Doyle Hufstедler of Abilene, Texas;
Lance Corporal Elias Torres of Grape Creek, Texas;
Staff Sergeant Rene Ledesma of Abilene, Texas.

These men are patriots, and I salute them and thank them and their families for their priceless sacrifice.

This Memorial Day, we were especially aware of the sacrifices made by the Greatest Generation, those men and women who fought and won the most important war in our history. Last weekend, we opened a memorial to these brave men and women in a prominent location on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., in a grand setting that befits the strong and indomitable nature of these true heroes.

The veterans of World War II earned their greatness through their blood and sacrifice for a global conflict that destroyed the ambitions of tyrannical regimes. Our soldiers' dedication to country, to freedom, and to duty persevered over frightening threats to our society and way of life.

The Greatest Generation fought against these threats with the best qualities that America had to offer—courage, strength, determination, resourcefulness, fearlessness, and independence. They fought against those who