

I stand here today proud of the services these brave men and women provide our area. Their strong tradition of service and bravery has kept our citizens safe over the past century. I personally thank the Webster Volunteer Fire Department and thank them for their past service as well as the next 100 years that lie ahead.

HONORING THE LIFE AND CAREER
OF JACK B. McCONNELL, MD

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the American Medical Association has established a new honor, the Jack B. McConnell, MD, Award for Excellence in Volunteerism, which recognizes the work of a senior physician who provides treatment to U. S. patients who lack access to health care. After a full career of practice, this physician remains dedicated to the future of medicine through the spirit of volunteerism.

Jack B. McConnell, MD, is a distinguished physician and scientist who served as Corporate Director of Advanced Technology at Johnson & Johnson. Widely acknowledged for his medical contributions, he directed the development of the TB Tine Test used in the detection of tuberculosis, participated in the early stages of the development of the Polio Vaccine, supervised the discovery of Tylenol, was instrumental in developing the technology for MRI's and helped write the enabling legislation to map the genome.

Dr. McConnell saved his greatest achievement for retirement: the creation of Volunteers in Medicine. His visionary concept—using retired medical personnel to volunteer their time and talents in a network of free community clinics for the working uninsured—coupled with his enthusiasm and determination has enabled the VIM program to grow to over 40 clinics in less than a decade. The initial VIM clinic was opened on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, and continues to serve with over 20,000 patient visits in 2005.

Today, I am honored to recognize the tremendous life and career of Dr. McConnell. His service has benefited so many citizens throughout the Second District of South Carolina.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FEDERAL
JUDICIAL FAIRNESS ACT OF 2006

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the "Federal Judicial Fairness Act of 2006"—bipartisan legislation to correct the current inequity in our compensation system for federal judges. I am pleased that Representative JUDY BIGGERT has joined me in this effort, as we both serve as Co-Chairs of the Congressional Caucus on the Judicial Branch.

Mr. Speaker, the federal judiciary is an integral part of our democracy, providing an im-

portant check to the other branches and protecting the rights of the American people. However, if certain steps are not taken, we risk compromising the quality of our judiciary. The salary of federal judges has decreased by almost 40 percent since 1969 compared with the private sector. Consequently, judges have been leaving the federal bench in increasing numbers, many before reaching retirement age, and a large proportion leaving to work for private law firms.

Members of Congress, for a variety of reasons, have determined that it would not be appropriate to give themselves pay raises on an annual basis. Since judicial salary increases for justices and judges are linked with the salaries of Members of Congress, federal judges have also been denied a cost-of-living adjustment in the 5 of the last 13 years that Congress voted to deny themselves one.

Several reports over the last few years have specifically recommended that salary adjustments for Members and judicial officials be determined separately. In 2003, a report by the National Commission on the Public Service (the Volcker Commission), cited "the compelling need to recruit and retain the best people possible" to serve on the federal judiciary and urged Congress to move on "an immediate and substantial increase in judicial salaries," since "the lag in judicial salaries has gone on too long, and the potential for the diminished quality in American jurisprudence is now too large."

The late Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, William Rehnquist, also frequently stated that inadequate compensation seriously compromises the judicial independence fostered by life tenure and risks affecting judicial performance. His views were recently echoed by new Chief Justice Roberts in his Year-End Report where he stated the following:

"There will always be a substantial difference in pay between successful government and private sector lawyers. But if that difference remains too large—as it is today—the judiciary will over time cease to be made up of a diverse group of the Nation's very best lawyers. Instead, it will come to be staffed by a combination of the independently wealthy and those following a career path before becoming a judge different from the practicing bar at large. Such a development would dramatically alter the nature of the federal judiciary."

The "Federal Judicial Fairness Act of 2006" will address this issue and restore equity. Specifically, the bill provides for the following:

1. Termination of Linkage to Congressional Pay—the bill terminates the linkage of congressional pay increase to judicial pay increases, so that Congress's decision to deny itself pay raises will not also place that burden on Federal judges.

2. Partial Catch-Up Increase in Judicial Compensation—the bill increases the salaries of all Federal judges by 16.5 percent, to partially make up for the decline in real pay for judges over the last three decades. In 2003, both President Bush and the late Chief Justice Rehnquist agreed that a pay adjustment of at least 16.5 percent was needed.

3. Annual Cost-of-Living Adjustments—the bill would provide Federal judges with annual cost-of-living adjustments based on the Employee Cost Index, the index already used by the Federal Government to keep Federal salaries in line with inflation.

This important legislation has been introduced in the Senate by Senators FEINSTEIN, LEAHY, and KERRY. Mr. Speaker, if Congress does not provide reasonable compensation adjustments nor address the growing pay disparity between judges and other members of the legal profession, the quality of our judiciary will be compromised.

RECOGNIZING THE OUTSTANDING
SERVICE OF GENERAL WAYNE
DOWNING (RET.) BEING THE RE-
CIPIENT OF THE GENERAL AL-
EXANDER M. HAIG "GUARDIAN
OF LIBERTY AWARD" BY THE
WEST POINT SOCIETY

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on March 18th, the West Point Society recognized the outstanding service of General Wayne Downing (Ret.) by awarding him the General Alexander M. Haig "Guardian of Liberty Award," an honor that is presented to select individuals who exemplify West Point's motto of "Duty, Honor, and Country." I want to take a moment and recognize General Downing's contribution to the United States Army as well as the security of our nation.

General Wayne A. Downing, U.S. Army (Retired) is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point where he earned a Bachelors of Science degree in 1962. General Downing also holds an M.B.A. from Tulane University. A highly decorated combat veteran, General Downing served in a variety of command assignments in the infantry, armor, special operations, and joint units, culminating in his appointment as the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Special Operations Command. He saw combat during two tours in Vietnam and later as a general officer, Downing commanded the special operations of all services during the 1989 invasion of Panama and commanded a joint special operations task force operating deep behind the Iraqi lines during Operation Desert Storm.

After 34 years of service to the United States, General Downing continued to serve his nation after his retirement from the Army. He was appointed by the President to assess the 1996 terrorist attack on the U.S. base at Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia. From 1999–2000, General Downing served as member of the Congressionally mandated National Commission on Terrorism, known as the Bremer Commission. And most recently, he served the White House as National Director and Deputy National Security Advisor for Combating Terrorism.

There is no question that General Downing's service to the United States is a tribute to patriotism and dedication to service. I now want to read into the RECORD a letter written by the superintendent of General Downing's alma mater, West Point in recognition of his being awarded the "Guardian of Liberty Award." The letter, from Lt. General William Lennox reads:

DEAR GENERAL DOWNING: Congratulations on receiving the General Alexander M. Haig, Jr., Guardian of Liberty Award. All of us at the United States Military Academy are