

Country by dramatically increasing the incentives for individuals with advanced degrees to work within and for Indian Country.

I am deeply concerned by the fact that Native Americans continue to rank at the bottom of every indicator of social and economic well-being in America. Unemployment continues to average near 50 percent in Indian Country and hovers well over 90 percent on many Reservations. Indian Country continues to have some of the highest rates of poverty, poorest health, highest mortality rates, and lowest levels of educational achievement in the United States.

A unique legal and political relationship exists between the United States and Indian tribes that is reflected in the Constitution, various treaties, Federal statutes, Supreme Court decisions, and executive agreements. This creates a responsibility for the federal government to facilitate and complement tribal governments' efforts to improve the quality of life for Native Americans and encourage economic development in Indian Country. This bill does just that.

Numerous external efforts at economic development in Indian Country have proven unsuccessful. The most successful efforts have been initiated from within native communities themselves. Economic development efforts that empower native communities and give them the tools to make their own decisions should be encouraged and pursued.

I believe that education and economic development go hand-in-hand in Indian Country. Indeed, higher education is a fundamental form of economic development. Yet, an uneducated workforce continues to be a cyclical obstacle to economic growth in Indian Country.

The cycle is vicious. Businesses are often unwilling to locate into Indian Country because of the lack of an educated workforce and Native American youth see little value in an advanced degree because there are no jobs on the Reservation that would reward one. Those native youth that do obtain a higher education often do not return to their communities because there are no jobs.

Higher education is costly to attain. As college and graduate school costs continue to swell, students are increasingly shouldering high levels of debt to pay for a college education. In fact, thirty-nine percent of student borrowers now graduate with levels of debt that require monthly payments in excess of eight percent of their total monthly incomes.

Loan repayment assistance for higher education graduates choosing to work in Indian Country will help break this cycle of poverty and promote economic development. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

RECOGNIZING REN DICKSON FOR  
ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE  
SCOUT

### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 8, 2006*

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ren Dickson, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by tak-

ing an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 337, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Ren has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Ren has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Ren Dickson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONGRESS SALUTES LANCE  
CORPORAL JASON KEITH BURNETT

### HON. DAVE WELDON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 8, 2006*

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the life and service of Jason Keith Burnett, a lance corporal with the United States Marine Corps—who lost his life in Iraq while conducting combat operations on May 11, 2006 in the Al Anbar Province.

Burnett drowned with three other Marines when their tank plunged off a bridge during a combat patrol. The others killed in the accident were Lance Corporal David J. Grames Sanchez of Fort Wayne, Indiana, 2nd Lt. Michael L. Licaizi of Garden City, New York and Corporal Steve Vahaviolos of Airmont, New York.

At the time of his death, Lance Corporal Burnett was a member of Company A, 2nd Tank Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

His parents, Ronald and Michele Burnett and his brother, Ryan, a Marine stationed in Hawaii, survive him. Several hundred people attended the funeral at First Baptist Church of Poinciana on May 25, 2006 to honor our fallen hero.

He served his country honorably—with courage, inspiring initiative and distinction.

A devoted Marine and true patriot, it has been said of Lance Corporal Burnett that he knew how to make people laugh and he knew when it was time to be serious—either by helping the poor through his church or playing soccer.

He will be long remembered for his love of outdoors, his successful mission trips with his church and his ultimate sacrifice for his country. We've lost another great American. We will all miss him. Jason Burnett is a true hero. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
APPROPRIATIONS ACT,  
2007

SPEECH OF

### HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 6, 2006*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5441) making ap-

propriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes:

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise to support passage of this bill.

While I am upset that the Democratic Motion offered by my colleague NITA LOWEY, which would have increased the first responder grants for urban areas by \$750 million, was defeated on a party line basis, she raises important issues that must be addressed.

Where have foreign terrorists struck when they attack our country?

They attack major urban areas, as they look to create spectacular havoc while maximizing the killing of civilians—that is the calling card of Osama bin Laden. Remember him? Sometimes we forget him in the discussion of tax cuts and gay marriage and all the other issues—but he is still out there and still threatening our country, and especially New York and Washington, almost everyday.

Al-Qaeda is not human—but we need to be ready for other attacks. That means proactive preparedness, as well as improving our reactive response as well.

Proactively, we need to better protect our urban areas—the terrorist targeted areas—like New York.

New York was the target in 1993 when terrorists bombed the World Trade Center, and again on September 11, 2001, when they completed the job they started 8 years earlier. New York City is the most targeted city in the country and likely on Earth by terrorists.

This is a reality Congress and the White House need to face. And if we are serious about protecting America—all Americans—regardless of their voting patterns, then we must go about protecting these most targeted and most vulnerable areas.

And I don't just say New York City is targeted to get my hometown more money. We know we are targeted due to information our U.S. intelligence services provide to us.

Being on al-Qaeda's hit list is one of the few distinctions New York City has that I am not proud of, and not happy to talk about.

But we must talk about it—because it is, again, reality.

I salute the Appropriations Committee for working with me and agreeing to the amendment I offered with my colleague from New York, VITO FOSSELLA, to increase the current urban area security initiative by \$20 million—a \$12.7 million increase over last year. But more funding is needed.

But this issue of homeland security and ensuring the resources are there for our first responders—both for proactive and reactive preparedness—is more than an issue of funding in total dollar amounts. It comes down to the flawed funding formulas developed by Congress and the Bush White House to distribute homeland security dollars.

These flawed formulas were crystallized last week when President Bush announced a 40 percent cut in urban security aid to New York City, saying the funds weren't needed for us.

Instead, these urban security dollars went to places like Louisville, Kentucky, while certainly at risk, cannot claim to have the critical infrastructure of New York City under the terrorist microscope.

This is a reality too—a sad and pathetic reality that our homeland security dollars have become the latest pot of federal funding to be