

Mr. Speaker, the unfortunate result of this, aside from limiting the number of schools in which veterans may teach and honor their obligation of three-years service in this program, is that it has disproportionately impacted western and rural states. In my home state of Wisconsin, the number of eligible school districts has been reduced from approximately 400 to 11. Not surprisingly, participation in the programs has fallen significantly since the implementation of the new definition last year. This decision, although understandable given the conflicting definitions contained in the law, is a disservice both to veterans wishing to continue their service to our nation as educators as well as children who stand to benefit from their unique expertise.

The bottom line is that we are losing out on great teachers because they cannot accept the certification stipend due to a lack of schools meeting the higher needs threshold in their community. The more we restrict opportunities for participation, the fewer teachers we will be able to bring into public education, and the fewer teachers we will eventually be able to attract to the schools with the greatest need. Further, given the President's recent focus on the need for more math and science teachers, as well as their support for adjunct and alternative routes to teaching programs, we should be removing, not creating, restrictions that prevent qualified teachers in these areas from teaching in our nations classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, with Troops to Teachers, the Department already has an established program that is well-funded and successful. Rather than restricting it, we should be maximizing this program's potential. The bill we introduce today simply clears the confusion surrounding the conflicting definitions of "high-need" and represents a compromise between the two. Specifically, it allows for participants to teach in high-need schools, as defined by having received grants under part A of Title I, if no other school, for which the member is qualified to teach, under the new definition exists within a 50 mile radius of the participant's residence.

This is a pragmatic solution that is perfectly in-line with the spirit of No Child Left Behind while also supporting our veterans and students by maximizing opportunities for participation. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this successful program and restoring the opportunity to "serve again" to our nation's veterans.

TRIBUTE TO MR. TYRUS "T.P."
TURNNEY

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to pay tribute to the late Mr. Tyrus "T.P." Turney and to recognize his many accomplishments. He was truly a man who embodies the American principles of hard work, dedication to one's family and service to one's community. T.P. Turney was born December 17, 1935 in Morgan County, Alabama to Alonzo Fletcher Turney and Alice Pauline Sharp Turney and raised in Northern Alabama. Mr. Turney served 18 months in the United States Army in Germany and worked for 43 years

and three months at a chemical lab in Monsanto, Alabama. In 1976, Mr. Turney was appointed to serve on the Morgan County Board of Education and was re-elected the four following terms. He was a member of the Brewer Lions Club for 17 years and served as an officer for the Morgan County Cattleman's Association. He was a member at the First Christian Church in Hartselle, Alabama where he also served as a Deacon, an Elder and as Chairman of the Board. T.P. Turney was an avid supporter of Gospel music. He had a great love for new book "convention" singing and was, at the time of his death, President of the Morgan County Singing Convention. He was a devoted family man with great respect for his father and mother and the values that they instilled in him at an early age. Mr. Turney loved his country and was proud he had an opportunity to serve in the U.S. Army. T.P. Turney passed away at his home in Valhermoso Springs, Alabama on Sunday, July 23, 2006. He is survived by his wife, Sandra; two sons, Steven Turney of Trinity, Alabama and Irby Gray of Orlando, Florida; three daughters, R. Jeannine McCormick of Gardendale, Alabama, Teresa Burton of Saraland, Alabama, and Tammy Cowan of Okeechobee, Florida; two brothers, Gerald Turney of Valhermoso Springs, Alabama and Carleton Turney of Somerville, Alabama and seven grandchildren. T.P. Turney was an inspiring role model for all of us and I join his family and friends in remembering him today.

FREEDOM FOR LEONICO
RODRÍGUEZ PONCE

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Leoncio Rodriguez Ponce, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Rodriguez Ponce is a member of the Pedro Luis Boitel Association of Political Prisoners and an opponent of the dictatorship of the Castro brothers. He has committed himself to doing everything possible to bringing an end to the dictatorship and to restoring democracy to that enslaved island. Because of his steadfast belief in freedom, democracy and the rule of law, Mr. Rodriguez Ponce has constantly been targeted by the dictatorship.

According to Prima News, Mr. Rodriguez Ponce was severely beaten in the gulag and confined to a punishment cell in 2002. According to Directorio, he has undertaken numerous hunger strikes while in the gulag to call attention to the gross human rights abuses in Cuba and in July of this year he courageously signed the following statement:

The Pedro Luis Boitel Association of Political Prisoners would like to express, once again, its complete and unconditional support for the measures presented by the commission for a Free Cuba, and we urge the President of the United States of America, George W. Bush, to implement them immediately.

Cuban political prisoners, conscious of the intolerance and lack of political will of the Havana regime, support all measures which pressure the dictatorship to concede to openings with the objective of restoring a demo-

cratic system in Cuba with the rule of law where each Cuban can exercise the inalienable prerogatives and freedoms which they possess by the single fact that they are human beings.

We also support any initiative to offer support and help to the democratic forces that are struggling and resisting from inside Cuba in an unequal and titanic battle against the totalitarian hoards of hate and oppression. In the same way, we are sincerely encouraged by the great effort shown so that Cubans on the island may receive with greater reach and clarity truthful and objective information through Radio and Television Marti.

With the clear conviction and certainty of the importance of depriving the regime of its repressive organs and resources which uphold it and consequently are used to harass citizens, we look with enthusiasm on any action to put an end to such a terrible situation.

We Cubans long for and need democracy, and in order to obtain it we are willing to endure the greatest sacrifices. The government in Havana and its lackeys in the media are determined to distort the content and purpose of the aforementioned Commission. They try to make one think that it is a military threat from our neighbor to the north or an interventionist policy. On the contrary, the measures presented to the President of the United States by the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba only seek to accelerate the nonviolent transition to democracy in Cuba, which will have as its protagonists Cubans both in and out of the island.

For all of them, we urge all Cubans who long for the reestablishment of democracy and an open and pluralist society where the execution wall, exit permits, and exile cease to be paths for those who dissent from government policies, to support this initiative which together with others will contribute decisively to bringing down this unjust and undemocratic system which has lasted nearly half a century.

And to the frontmen of Castro's government-run press, it is time to stop manipulating information. Far from attacking and cowardly disqualifying their adversaries, they should have the dignity of providing the people with transparent information in its whole and unadulterated state so that after knowing it, the people may come to their own conclusions, without Machiavellian interference and deliberate gaps. The contrary is deceit and political cowardice.

Mr. Speaker, it takes extraordinary, truly admirable courage to sign a document that demands freedom when the signer knows the Castro brothers' machinery of repression will be unleashed on him and his family. Mr. Rodriguez Ponce is representative of the fighting spirit of the Cuban people: of their rejection of the brutality, discrimination, depravity, and oppression of the totalitarian tyranny. Mr. Rodriguez does not waiver in his conviction that freedom and democracy are the inalienable right of the Cuban people. It is a crime against humanity that Castro's totalitarian gulags are full of men and women, like Mr. Rodriguez, who represent the best of the Cuban nation.

Let me be very clear, Mr. Rodríguez Ponce is imprisoned because he refuses to accept the Castro brothers' dictatorship in Cuba today. Mr. Speaker, we must speak out and act against the abominable violations of human rights, human dignity, and human