

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Ms. CARSON. Madam Speaker, I regret that I was not able to cast votes on the evening of Tuesday, April 17, 2007 due to the cancellation of my scheduled flight from Indianapolis to Washington's Reagan National Airport and subsequent flight cancellations at Indianapolis. I understand that there was a backlog of eastbound travelers and limited flight options due to previous significant storm systems in the northeast.

Had I been available to vote, I would have voted yes on: roll No. 214; roll No. 215; roll No. 216; roll No. 217 and roll No. 218.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE OPENING OF THE ED AND RAE SCHOLLMAYER SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Texas Wesleyan University on the completion of the new Ed and Rae Schollmaier Science and Technology Center.

This new learning center will facilitate access to genomic databases for use in biology, chemistry and computer science courses at Texas Wesleyan. The technology center will be a valued resource for students and faculty working in the disciplines of biology, chemistry, physics, computer science, and math. Texas Wesleyan science educators will be able to provide state-of-the-art learning opportunities to its diverse student body. Undergraduate students at Texas Wesleyan will be provided with scientific research opportunities that are typically available only to graduate students.

Founded in 1890 in Fort Worth, Texas, Wesleyan University is a United Methodist institution dedicated to the education of students in the region and beyond. The University offers a wide range of degrees for undergraduate and graduate students and educates international students from 28 countries

I congratulate Texas Wesleyan University as it continues to progress as a distinguished and diverse educational institution, and I am proud to represent them in Congress.

OFFERING HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES TO THE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES REGARDING THE HORRIFIC VIOLENCE AT VIRGINIA TECH AND TO STUDENTS, FACULTY, ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF AND THEIR FAMILIES WHO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, the thoughts and prayers of the entire Nation go out to the families and friends of those who lost loved ones.

What happened at Virginia Tech on Monday was a senseless tragedy and it is important for us to come together and find strength at such a sad time.

This is a time of profound mourning as there are few things more heart wrenching than the loss of so many young lives.

The sight of students and faculty coming together to comfort and support each other, however, is a stirring reminder of our Nation's resolve.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution has my support and the support of everyone who lives in the Fourth Congressional District.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MONTGOMERY G.I. BILL IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. TERRY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Montgomery G.I. Bill Improvement Act of 2007 to eliminate the burdensome enrollment fee that prevents more of our young soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines from gaining a college education.

Today's military members are consummate professionals meeting the difficult challenges of their service with courage, skill and expertise. Obtaining a college education is critical to expanding their expertise to better serve the United States and the cause of freedom. However, the current \$100 monthly enrollment fee required for participation in the Montgomery G.I. Bill could prevent young enlisted military families from furthering their education.

More than half of the enlisted men and women in our armed forces have family responsibilities that limit their income choices. Currently, only 3.9 percent of enlisted active-duty members of the armed forces have a bachelor's degree, compared to 86.6 percent of the officers' corps. The \$100 per month enrollment fee required for participation in the G.I. Bill sets up an unnecessary barrier to educational opportunities for enlisted military families trying to make ends meet and care for their children.

I have heard from current and former military members, public housing organizations, and groups advocating on behalf of military families that enlisted military members at pay grades E-5 and below would most benefit from the elimination of the \$1,200 annual enrollment fee.

For these families who struggle to meet their basic needs and the needs of their children, an additional \$1,200 each year will have a significant impact on the family budget. The legislation I am introducing today will allow servicemembers to utilize G.I. Bill education benefits to improve their family's circumstances and their future career opportunities.

This legislation would help improve military families' quality of life by ensuring the G.I. Bill continues to provide realistic and relevant educational opportunities to servicemembers defending our country.

The G.I. Bill Improvement Act of 2007 would accomplish two critical goals: Eliminate the \$1,200 G.I. Bill enrollment fee for active duty servicemembers at pay grades E-5 and below, and allow all servicemen and women serving on active duty to opt into the G.I. Bill with no penalty or enrollment fee.

This is an issue of fundamental fairness. The men and women serving our country in wartime should not have to choose between the long-term benefits of the G.I. Bill and the short-term demands of their paycheck.

This legislation will provide tremendous benefits to our Nation. The G.I. Bill is one of the greatest investments ever made by the American people in our economy and the lives of young men and women who selflessly serve in the military. The "Greatest Generation" servicemembers who returned home from WWII and received a higher education under the G.I. Bill became our Nation's entrepreneurs, teachers, doctors and community leaders.

R.C. Thompson, a former Commanding Officer of Top Gun, and a former Commander of a carrier airwing in Afghanistan, said: "This legislation would send a great signal to our young men and women in uniform that our Nation is unified behind them, and our sense of purpose remains strong. I was fortunate to receive my education through the G.I. Bill, and I know that \$100 a month is a lot of money to a young married person serving overseas. This legislation will enable them to do a lot of good for their families when they return home."

I urge my colleagues to join me in improving opportunities for our servicemembers and their families by cosponsoring the Montgomery G.I. Bill Improvement Act of 2007.

H.R. 1495, WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2007; VOTE 233: ON THE MOTION TO RECOMMEND WITH INSTRUCTIONS

HON. JOHN J. HALL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. HALL of New York. Madam Speaker, although I am a staunch advocate of increasing the use of hydroelectric power to meet America's energy needs, I voted against the motion to recommit H.R. 1495 because it does not constitute a good-faith effort to meet this important goal.

Under the guise of supporting renewable energy, the amending language contained in the motion to recommit would have directed the Secretary to undertake a boundless survey of America's waterways and wherever possible to augment existing hydroelectric dams