

eliminated several programs targeted for at-risk students.

Democrats have rejected those cuts and proposed a modest increase in order to keep our students competitive in a global economy.

The President's budget cut funding for health care. We do not agree with reducing opportunities to find life saving cures through research or reducing access to quality care for American families.

The President proposed cuts to job training and vocational education. Democrats understand that our economy is changing, and that investing in our greatest resources—working families (including veterans)—is important today and tomorrow.

Madam Speaker, the amount of money that separates the President's budget and the Democrats' proposal is approximately what we spend in 1 month in Iraq—and all of that is on a credit card.

In addition, this bill includes the largest increase in veterans' health care since the beginning of the Veterans Administration.

If we say we value families and communities—and veterans—in America, then surely we can agree that a modest investment in our future is reasonable.

Let's put politics aside, let's listen to the American people, and let's pass this bill. Let's do our jobs.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, on November 5, 2007, due to personal obligations, I missed the following recorded votes:

Roll No. 1034, on the Motion to Close Portions of the Conference Making Appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes; had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Roll No. 1035, on H.R. 513—The National Heroes Credit Protection Act; had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

Roll No. 1036, on H. Res. 744—Recognizing the contributions of Native American veterans and calling upon the President to issue a proclamation urging the people of the United States to observe a day in honor of Native American veterans; had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

HONORING THE LIFE OF SERGEANT BRYAN TARSITANO

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary life and accomplishments of Pinellas County Sheriff's Sergeant Bryan E. Tarsitano. Bryan Tarsitano was born to proud parents, Bonnie and Bob Tarsitano, on February 21, 1972, in Park Ridge, Illinois, and grew up along with his sister, Janelle, in the Chicago area. The Tarsitano family moved to Clearwater, Florida

in 1983, and Bryan graduated from Country-side High School in 1990.

He went on to graduate with a bachelor of science degree in criminology from Florida State University where he was an avid Seminoles fan. This degree served as a stepping stone for Bryan's illustrious career in law enforcement. In 1996, Bryan Tarsitano was hired by the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office as a deputy sheriff. His star quality was obvious to his superiors and he was soon appointed as a Field Training Officer—a leadership role that had him mentoring new recruits.

As Bryan Tarsitano continued to excel in his career, the most important part of his life was also blossoming. Mr. Tarsitano met and fell in love with Carolyn Milanese. The two were married on October 28, 2000, and were blessed with the arrival of their beautiful daughter, Angelina Marie, on August 9, 2002.

Angelina was the apple of Bryan's eye. Father and daughter were inseparable. When Bryan Tarsitano wasn't serving and protecting the citizens of Pinellas County, he could be found in the park playing with Angelina or watching their favorite movies together.

While a devoted husband and father, Bryan Tarsitano was also the best law enforcement officer in every sense of the word. In 2001, Bryan became a detective. As a detective for 6 years, Tarsitano was able to help hundreds, if not thousands, of victims with his keen intellect and crime-solving ability.

Bryan Tarsitano had the honor of being promoted to Sergeant on January 14, 2007 and served with distinction until his untimely death on May 24, 2007. During his 11 years with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, Sgt. Tarsitano was a shining star who earned numerous medals, awards, and commendations. His loss has been, and will continue to be felt, both at the Sheriff's Office and in the community at large.

Madam Speaker, while we mourn the sudden and unexpected passing of Sgt. Bryan Tarsitano, I rise today to celebrate his life. For what Bryan accomplished during his short time on earth, is what most fail to do in a full lifetime. While Sgt. Tarsitano has left an impressive legacy with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, his enduring legacy is the beautiful wife and daughter he has left behind.

Madam Speaker, I pray for his family and salute Sgt. Tarsitano for a job well done.

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT COLONEL BRIAN E. ALBERT

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions and achievements of Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Brian E. Albert, and his 21 years of service to this country as a decorated officer in the United States Army.

LTC Albert began his noteworthy military career in the Ohio National Guard in June 1983. In 1986, he enrolled in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program at Ohio University. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant on January 15, 1987, then was assigned to the Army Chemical Corps and began training at the Chemical Officer Basic

Course (COBC). Always striving for advancement, he completed the COBC training and applied for, competed and won an active duty appointment with the Commandant's program.

Upon graduation from COBC, LTC Albert was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery, in Hanau, Germany. During this assignment, he served as the Battalion Chemical Officer, HHB Executive Officer, and the Battalion S-1.

Within 2 short years, LTC Albert had already completed three rigorous training programs and won a prestigious appointment setting the tone for numerous awards and accolades including the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Achievement Medal (w/two OLCs), Army Commendation Medal (ARCOM), Army Achievement Medal (w/two OLCs), National Defense Service Medal (NDSM), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal (GWOTSM), Army Reserve Commendation Medal (ARCOM), and the Parachutist Badge. He is a distinguished member of the Order of Saint Barber (Field Artillery) and the Order of the Dragon (Chemical) military societies.

LTC Albert continued to enhance his portfolio completing the Chemical Advanced Course in March 1992. Over the next several years LTC Albert would continue his education completing a masters degree in human resource management from Central Michigan University in June 1999. LTC Albert's distinctive service also extends beyond the classroom. After completing the Army's Command and General Staff College (CGSC) in June 2000, he was assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, GA. While serving as a Brigade Operations officer, his Division was deployed in December 2002 to Kuwait in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He would go on to serve in subsequent combat operations in the gulf as his Division fought with distinction during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

After returning from Iraq, LTC Albert was assigned to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (OSD), Counter Proliferation Policy office. He continued to excel coordinating key changes to research and development legislation for critical chemical and biological defense programs. He also made invaluable contributions in the establishment of NATO's first multinational nuclear, biological, and chemical defense battalion.

Throughout his illustrious career, LTC Albert served in several integral command and leadership roles such as Company Commander for the 91st Chemical Company, Field Grade Assignments Officer, Assistant Division Chemical Officer, Battalion Training Officer (S-3) for the 703rd Main Support Battalion, Brigade S-3 for the Division Support Command (DISCOM), and Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for counter proliferation policy.

LTC Albert concludes his distinguished military career with his final assignment to the U.S. Army Special Activity Management Unit located in Dunn Loring, VA. He contributes the success of his career to a merciful God and the loving support of his wife of 20 years, Tonya, and two children, 17-year-old Brandon and 11-year-old Kristen.

LTC Brian Albert, I stand in solidarity with your comrades, family, and friends as we salute you for your service and your excellence in the United States Army. May the Lord guide your steps as you transition into civilian life and continue to inspire new achievements.

HONORING THE BRAVERY OF
WORLD WAR II VETERAN BER-
NARD RADER

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Mr. Bernard Rader, a true American hero who valiantly served this country in World War II. Today and everyday, we owe members of our military—soldiers like Bernard Rader and so many of his generation who faced grave danger in order to restore freedom and preserve the dignity of mankind, our sincerest debt of gratitude.

I had the privilege to first meet Mr. Rader in Normandy, France in 2004, on the 60th anniversary of the D-Day invasion. It was then that I first learned of this man's extraordinary story of survival and heroism. A Private First Class with the 301st Regiment of the 94th Infantry Division, his unit was ambushed and forced to surrender to the Nazis in October 1944. As a Jewish soldier, he feared his fate as a prisoner of war. Surviving his imprisonment, Bernard was returned to the Allied forces in one of the few prisoner exchanges to take place between the Germans and Americans during World War II.

For service to his country and in recognition of his combat wounds, Bernard received the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart. On November 6, 2007, Bernard was personally thanked by French President Nicolas Sarkozy and awarded the Legion of Honor, in recognition of his sacrifice for the Liberation of France. I join the many in honoring Bernard Rader—this Nation remains indebted to his service.

Madame Speaker, I would like to offer Bernard Rader's powerful and personal story for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. I am submitting "The Ambush", an article published in the Hartford Courant, which chronicles Bernard's war experience and faithful return to France with his family 60 years later, as described by his son Robert Rader—who I'm proud to note is from Connecticut's First Congressional District. I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking Mr. Bernard Rader for his service to this nation and for sharing his heroic story with all of America.

[From the Hartford Courant, July 25, 2004]

THE AMBUSH

(By Robert J. Rader)

Dad and the two other veterans strained to pick out their comrades from the pictures of basic training at Fort McCain. "Remember this one? What was his name?" Their eyes, now 60 years older, strained at the fuzzy prints. "Have you heard from Higgins or Schulman or Boyd recently?" We were on a ferry from Lorient, on the western coast of France, to Ile de Groix. During World War II, the port of Lorient remained in Nazi hands till the day after Germany had surrendered. All three men had been imprisoned by the Nazis after being captured in an ambush in October 1944: two of them were held on the Ile de Groix, the third—Dad—on the mainland. The boat glided swiftly across the water. The day was overcast, with mist rising from the sea, but the sun would soon burn the mist off and, as we reached the island, break through. The three veterans—my father, Bernard I. Rader; Kermit Harden; and Bob Moore—sat on benches in the cabin and talked about the men who died. They re-

membered the food the French people sneaked to them at a time when few had much to feed their own families. And they talked about the young American Red Cross officer, Andrew Gerow Hodges, who had braved getting shot by mistake, either by the Germans or the Americans, to arrange one of the few prisoner exchanges on the Western Front in World War II. They dubbed their trip "The Andrew Gerow Hodges Tour."

The ferry nosed past a massive cement building that still contained submarine pens. The low-slung building, several football fields in size, had been built with walls 20 feet thick to withstand heavy Allied bombing. The weather-beaten structure was a monument to the slave labor that had struggled to build it with wartime speed.

This would probably be the last time the three veterans, all over 80, would make this trip to visit the countryside where their young lives had taken such a crucial turn. Many of their buddies who had wanted to come could not. Hodges was not in good enough health to make the trip. They would see the site of the ambush, where their patrol had come under fire and their comrades had been slain, and the places where they had been held prisoner. They would thank the French people for the help they gave them. They would converse again with the people of Ile de Groix, and leave a plaque expressing their thanks on the wall to the entrance of Fort Surville on the island, where Harden and Moore had been imprisoned for 47 days in 1944. They wanted to pay tribute to their five friends killed in the ambush by visiting the cemetery at St. James, where they rest forever. And they wanted to honor Hodges—without whom, they believe, they would not be alive today. They wanted to tell the story of what happened so many years ago and how he came to get them out. With those goals in mind, the three veterans and their wives and children had come back to Brittany. We family members listened as the men recounted their war experiences, as soldiers have done since long before World War II. Many veterans of that war, who are now dying off at the rate of over 1,000 a day, never talked to their families about what they had gone through. But Dad did not shy from discussing his war experiences. He watched World War II movies with interest (we knew if there was a swastika on the cover of a videotape we'd rented, he'd be interested), and, despite the stroke he suffered in 1999, has spoken at libraries, schools and other sites, telling his story and encouraging other veterans to tell theirs. Mom has been his main support, helping him in every way with these "gigs" and explaining what had happened when Dad could not find the words.

Dad was trained as an infantryman and made private first class by the time he shipped out to England on Aug. 6, 1944. After further training, his unit sailed on a Liberty ship for France, came ashore at Utah Beach on Sept. 3 and marched to Brittany. He served as a sentry there, helping to keep the Germans contained while the Allies pushed through France to Germany following the D-Day invasion. On the October day he and his unit set out on patrol, only to be ambushed and captured, he tasted combat for the first time. Dad began reacquainting himself with old buddies over the past few years, as he became more proficient than we ever thought he would be at email. He got in touch with a number of those who had been in his company and was contacted by others after I wrote up his story and posted it on the 94th Infantry Division's web site. I thought it was important for me to share this one last, great adventure with my parents. Curious about the war, and an amateur historian, I knew I had to tag along.

I expected that this would be an emotional trip. It did not disappoint. The ferry landed

in the harbor at Ile de Groix, about five miles from Lorient. On this beautiful, green island the Germans had set up artillery to protect their position in the port. They had also set up a prison for captured soldiers. It is hard to believe that such a picturesque place would be ideal for a prison. But its remoteness from Allied troops, together with its closeness to the fortified mainland city, made it a perfect location for a prison, with virtually no opportunity for escape. The island had a far different mood on May 26 of this year, when our little tourist group boarded a bus to travel to a lane out in the country. The unpaved road, bordered by fields where flowers grew wild, had been renamed in honor of the 94th Infantry Division when Dad and some other veterans came here four years ago.

Our group of veterans and their families were joined by about 30 town officials, journalists, former members of the French Resistance and others. We walked about 100 yards down the lane and came to an area with ancient, weather-beaten walls on both sides. Ahead was the entrance to Fort Surville: a narrow archway the prisoners had been marched through 60 years ago. On one wall we noticed an American flag covering something on the wall. Strangely, it had 36 stars. The mayor explained that the flag had been sewn in 1944 by a Frenchwoman, whose daughter now joined us. It was to show support for what she hoped would be the eventual liberation of the island by the Americans. It was kept in the chimney of the house where the woman lived. She had no access to a real American flag, so had guessed at the number of stars. When a German was in her house and asked her what the colorful cloth was doing in the chimney, she said that it was used, like paper, to wrap meats that were being cured. Had the Germans known the truth about what she had done, she would certainly have been punished. The mayor made a speech, the first of many we would hear, extolling the amity between the French and American people. He gave thanks for what these soldiers had done in helping to liberate France. He then reached up and gently pulled the flag down, exposing the plaque the veterans had donated, and warmly presented the flag to the three veterans. They accepted it with some reservation. Their first thought was that it was such a wonderful work by an Ile de Groix citizen that it should stay on the island. But rather than taking a chance of insulting their hosts, they decided to bring it home and exhibit it in the Museum of the 94th Infantry at Fort Devens, Mass.

It was then the turn of the three veterans. They, too, talked about the friendship and love of Americans and the French. And they dedicated the plaque, which they had paid for and which my family designed and had made in France. It was black with gold letters, written in English, French and Breton, the language of the region. It was for those who had helped them by giving them apples, eggs and potatoes surreptitiously while they were held on this island. It read: "To the people of Ile de Groix, who gave us so much, when they themselves had so little. Company K, 301st Regiment, 94th Infantry Division."

The outpouring of love on both sides struck me as being in sharp contrast to what I had been hearing about the French and Americans since the U.S. decided to invade Iraq. We were feted no fewer than six times by representatives of local French governments. While I heard criticism of President Bush, there was no doubt in my mind that there still existed a love for the people who had returned freedom to them in 1944 and 1945. It seemed to me that we in the United States seemed to be quick to answer French policy on Iraq with mockery (remember