

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.