

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 2008

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2642) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes:

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman Obey and Speaker Pelosi for crafting a bill which protects our troops, supports our veterans, addresses critical economic and infrastructure needs, and redirects our policy in Iraq to reflect the will of the American people.

The President misled the Congress and the American people into the war in Iraq and has mismanaged it at every turn. As a result, this war has provided fertile ground for terrorists to grow their networks in Iraq and distracted the Administration from the original war on terror in Afghanistan.

The President has continued to ignore the will of the American people and Congress, disregarding expert guidance of former generals and foreign policy leaders by continuing a failed strategy in Iraq.

So, today I am compelled to vote against continued funding for this war to send a strong message to the Administration that we cannot continue this course and there will be no more blank checks.

That is why I will also vote for requirements that establish clear guidelines to end this war quickly and responsibly. This bill requires that U.S. troops begin redeployment from Iraq within 30 days and complete withdrawal of combat troops by December 2009. This measure also ensures that any new agreement between the U.S. and the Government of Iraq that commits U.S. forces be specifically authorized by Congress; prohibits the establishment of permanent bases in Iraq; prohibits torture; and protects our troops by ensuring that they are "combat ready," deployed no longer than Pentagon guidelines allow, and provided adequate time between deployments.

I will also support the portion of this bill which includes GI education benefits for veterans, extended unemployment compensation for those out of work in this struggling economy, and critical funding for international priorities.

In the State and Foreign Operations portion of this bill we reduced Iraq assistance and operations by \$1.2 billion from the President's request and, furthermore, require that the Iraqis match our assistance dollar for dollar. With oil at \$125 a barrel and the Iraqi government expected to run surpluses over \$50 billion, there is no reason that the Iraqis shouldn't provide more of their own resources to support their country.

This bill provides sufficient funding to maintain assistance programs and fund our diplomatic operations in Iraq and Afghanistan through the first three quarters of fiscal year 2009, including over \$50 million to continue important oversight functions of the inspectors general in Iraq. This bill also provides \$462 million for counter-drug and law enforcement efforts in Mexico and Central America.

The President's request failed to address the needs of one of our closest allies in the

Middle East. Jordan is struggling with an influx of nearly 500,000 Iraqi refugees, and this bill provides \$350 million in economic and security assistance to help Jordan meet these needs.

Additionally, we have included \$675 million in response to the global refugee crisis resulting from the conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and parts of Africa.

Rising fuel costs, the global economic down-turn and food scarcity have created a global food crisis that is breeding instability across Africa, Asia and Latin America. This bill provides \$620 million in disaster and development assistance to address short-term and longer-term food security. These funds exceed the \$1.2 billion in PL. 480 food aid in the agriculture section of this bill.

We have also provided the remaining \$333.6 million for the UN Mission in Darfur for FY08 as well as an additional \$90 million to train police to join this UN mission and to support the upcoming elections in Southern Sudan.

Finally, in light of critical staffing deficiencies at the State Department and USAID, the bill contains over \$100 million to rebuild the capacity of our diplomatic and development corps, including \$50 million for the Civilian Stabilization Initiative.

This bill provides funding for critical international and domestic needs to help suffering people overseas and struggling families here at home. We also must end the war in Iraq which has cost us far too many lives and too much money. Our troops and their families have sacrificed greatly, and it is time to bring our troops home.

IN MEMORY OF DUNCAN REED, JR.

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 19, 2008

Mr. GALLEGLY. Madam Speaker, I rise in memory of Duncan Reed, Jr., a good friend whose love of life, people, and community was reflected in the multitudes who considered him family. He was a man of action that only ended when he passed away last week at age 69.

Duncan was a U.S. Army veteran who tested weapons at the U.S. Arctic Test Center in Fort Greely, Alaska, to make sure they would work in extremely cold conditions. After the Army, he returned to southern California, where he tested nuclear fuel reactors for Rocketdyne.

For the next 30 years, he worked for Thrifty Drug Stores, which was later acquired by Big 5 Sporting Goods. After he "retired," he spent the next 13 years as the local "Seed Man," replenishing vegetable and flower seeds at retail outlets for the Northrop King Company.

But it was his activities outside of work that defined him to the community. A Boy Scout who was inducted into the "Order of the Arrow" during his youth, Duncan took that commitment to God and country to heart and served as Cubmaster for Ventura County Troop 3660 as an adult. He was also active in the March of Dimes and Muscular Dystrophy charity drives, and volunteered for the Flying Samaritans, a group of doctors, pilots, and civilians who flew to Mexico to give aid to those less fortunate.

Politics were also a huge passion, and the avenue by which we became friends. His television was almost always tuned to the Fox News Channel.

Even Duncan's avenues of relaxation involved action. His hobbies included growing cactus and other succulents and entering them into competition at the Ventura County Fair. He also enjoyed hiking in the mountains, fishing, and camping. His love of cooking was reflected in his involvement with Dark Chocolate, a gourmet food club, entertaining while cooking on his barbecue, and being a restaurant critic for the local newspaper. In addition, Duncan loved helping his children, grandchildren, and any other child who entered his orbit.

The few times he slowed down was to relax by a campfire or to set on a river bank where, as Duncan would tell people, he liked to watch it go from left to right.

Madam Speaker, I know my colleagues will join me offering our condolences to Duncan's wife of 44 years, Nighla; his children, Kelly, Robert, and Douglas; grandchildren, Lindsey, Matthew, Coral, and Devon; godchildren, Travis, Jacob, Brent, Tom, and Christina; and all who knew him and called him a friend.

Godspeed, Duncan.

RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE WASHINGTON D.
SMYSER ACCELERATED SCHOOL**HON. RAHM EMANUEL**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 19, 2008

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to join with the people of Portage Park and all of Chicago in congratulating Washington D. Smyser Accelerated School on their 75th Anniversary. This milestone will be marked by a 75th Anniversary Gala at Biagio's Banquets in Chicago, Illinois.

During the past 75 years, Smyser Accelerated School has educated thousands of children and has been an anchor for generations of families in the Portage Park community. The Smyser School mission to provide high quality educational services to all children within the Portage Park community has been evident through their role in the community as well as through recognition by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Smyser School has also been selected as one of 508 "Spotlight Schools" in Illinois. Spotlight Schools have a high poverty rate, yet maintain a high academic performance. The Spotlight Schools recognize low-income students and schools that overcome limited resources to show impressive academic performance.

The Smyser School philosophy is that all children are entitled to an outstanding education rich in opportunities and rewarding experiences. They are committed to providing all children with a love of learning and pride in Smyser School as well as their community. They provide their students with opportunities for academic, athletic, and artistic growth while instilling values that will serve its students throughout their lives. These activities and experiences teach students the importance of academic achievement.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the Smyser School's faculty and staff for the contributions they have made to their community.