

consumers about device risks. It is now the responsibility of Congress to correct the Court's dangerous mistake.

Patients who are injured by medical devices often suffer permanent, debilitating injuries or even death. They need the ability to hold the negligent medical device manufacturer accountable for their injuries. If not, private health insurance companies and Medicare or Medicaid would be left footing the bill to pay for those injuries; and, ultimately, the taxpayer pays for the medical device manufacturer's mistake.

This narrow piece of legislation is necessary to address the Riegel decision and to ensure that it is not then applied to afford total immunity to medical device manufacturers throughout the country. It also will make certain that patients injured by medical devices can have their claims heard by a judge and jury and will prevent courts from summarily dismissing claims without ever hearing the facts. Finally, it restores congressional intent by explicitly stating that actions for damages under State law are preserved.

I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring and enacting the Medical Device Safety Act so that we can restore long-standing consumer protections.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM MAHONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, June 25, 2008, I was unable to be in Washington, D.C. due to my attendance at the funeral of a personal friend in my district.

Had I been able to vote, I would have voted the following ways on the below listed rollcall votes: 449—"yea"; 450—"yea"; 451—"yea"; 452—"yea"; 453—"yea"; 454—"nay"; 455—"nay"; 456—"yea"; 457—"yea"; 458—"nay"; 459—"yea"; 460—"yea"; 461—"yea."

ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 25, 2008

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I will vote for this bill because of the need to protect middle-income families from a massive tax increase that will hit them if we do not act to adjust the Alternative Minimum Tax, or AMT.

In technical terms, the bill would extend for one year AMT relief for nonrefundable personal credits and increases the AMT exemption amount to \$69,950 for joint filers and \$46,200 for individuals. In real-world terms, that means it will prevent a tax increase for more than 28,000 Colorado households that otherwise would be required to pay more in Federal income tax when returns are due next year. And so, Mr. Speaker, the bill overall is properly focused on tax relief for middle class families—a goal I strongly support.

Some of our colleagues say they will oppose the bill because it includes provisions

that would close loopholes and make other changes in the tax laws in order to offset this tax relief. They evidently are not concerned about the fact that the federal budget is deeply into deficit spending.

I do have some reservations about how the bill seeks to provide AMT tax relief without making our Federal deficit worse. But I do not take a relaxed attitude to our fiscal problems, and think it is better to avoid adding to them—and that is the purpose of the offset provisions of the bill

One such provision would revise current law so investment fund managers would no longer pay capital gains rates on the income they receive for investment management services income that does not reflect a reasonable return on their own invested capital. This change was approved by the House last year in H.R. 3996, which I supported. In addition, the bill would exclude from the domestic production deduction the gross receipts derived from the sale, exchange or other disposition of oil, natural gas, or any primary product thereof for large integrated oil companies. And it would freeze at 6 percent—the rate under current law—the domestic production deduction for income of other taxpayers with respect to oil, natural gas or any primary product thereof. This is also not new—it is a scaled-back version of an outright repeal of this deduction for all oil, natural gas or any primary product thereof that passed the House last year.

And the bill would prevent foreign multinational corporations incorporated in tax haven countries from avoiding tax on income earned in the United States by routing their income through structures in which a United States subsidiary corporation makes a deductible payment to a country with which the United States has a tax treaty before ultimately repatriating these earnings in the tax haven country. This is a scaled-back version of a previously approved by the House of Representatives as part of H.R. 2419. Further, the bill includes a proposal that was in the president's latest budget request that will require institutions that make payments to merchants in settlement of payment card transactions to file an information return with the IRS.

These provisions are not the only or perhaps even the best way to offset the revenue costs of providing a temporary fix to the AMT—but the bill's opponents have suggested no alternative except to cut unspecified amounts of spending in unspecified parts of the budget or to further add to the "debt tax" that has already been imposed on our children (and their children) by the irresponsible policies of the last seven years.

The Senate will have to consider the legislation further, and it is possible that these provisions will be revised. But, in the meantime, the bottom line is that today we have the opportunity to provide tax relief to hundreds of thousands of middle-class families in Colorado. I think that is something I think the House should do without delay, and that is why I am voting for this bill.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 19, 2008

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I offer my support for the passage of both amendments which constitute H.R. 2642, the Iraq/Afghanistan Supplemental Appropriations. Our service personnel serving abroad and here at home deserve the full support of this Congress. After months of partisan posturing by the Democrat Leadership, this bill finally puts the needs of our troops above the needs of politicians.

This bipartisan agreement provides \$161.8 billion for the Department of Defense (DoD) to carry out the will of this nation. This funding pays the salaries and benefits of military and DoD civilian personnel, the fuel for their vehicles, and ammunition for their guns. This funding also takes care of their loved ones left behind.

In addition to providing for our service personnel in combat, this important legislation expands the GI education benefits for our veterans and extends unemployment insurance. Although unrelated to the primary purpose of this legislation, I agree that these are vital priorities to the American people.

In December 1943 when Kansan Harry Colmery wrote the guiding principles that would become the GI Bill of Rights, the promise was clear. Veterans returning from war would be provided with free education and a host of other benefits as a token of America's thanks for their service. Today, returning veterans receive many of these same benefits, but the value of the educational benefits has fallen due to the rapid rise in the cost of higher education.

The important educational expansion to the GI Bill found in H.R. 2642 renews the promise first proposed by Harry Colmery. Service members in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the world fighting the Global War on Terror deserve our support while in uniform and when their duty is complete. As a Kansan, I am proud of the work Mr. Colmery started in 1943 and the work Congress continues today with the passage of this legislation.

This bill provides increased educational benefits for all members of the military who have served on active duty since September 11, 2001. The new benefit includes tuition reimbursement equal to the established cost regularly charged for in-state tuition at a public institution of higher education, a housing allowance, and a stipend for supplies and equipment for four academic years. The amount of the benefit is determined by the length of time, after September 11, 2001, the service member was on active duty. This provision also allows educational benefits to be transferred to the spouse or child of a service member.

As a co-sponsor of H.R. 5740, which provided the base concepts of this GI Bill expansion provision, I am very pleased that these benefits were included in H.R. 2642. Thankfully these much deserved benefits are not linked to a tax increase on small businesses, which was the case on an earlier version of the Iraq/Afghanistan Supplemental Appropriations.

In addition to providing funding for our troops fighting the Global War on Terror and

valuable educational benefits to our military veterans, this legislation includes an extension of unemployment insurance for 13 weeks in every state through March 31, 2009. Contrary to previous versions that had been considered by this House, this provision incorporates a 20-week work requirement in order to qualify for benefits. This work requirement is essential to ensure that people do not gain unemployment benefits for a longer period of time than they worked.

Mr. Speaker, this is a proud day. I am privileged to support this important legislation to honor our commitments to those in uniform and our veterans. They deserve nothing less. I hope all my colleagues will support both amendments to the H.R. 2642.

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE ROTUNDA OF THE CAPITOL TO COMMEMORATE THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTEGRATION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES

SPEECH OF

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 25, 2008

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Rotunda for a ceremony commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the beginning of the integration of the United States Armed Forces.

And I thank the distinguish Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, Mr. SKELTON, for bringing this resolution to the floor.

Throughout the course of our Nation's history, the men and women of our Armed Services have defended our liberties with bravery, honor, and sacrifice. But because our Nation racially segregated its military prior to 1948, generations of African Americans served our Nation with the knowledge that they were fighting abroad for the very freedoms that were frequently denied to them at home. Despite this injustice, not only did African Americans serve honorably to fight for all our freedoms, they did so with the dignity and bravery that earned many of them our Nation's top military honors.

Of the many units to serve with distinction, I particularly want to recognize the Tuskegee Airmen that organized at Moton Field in Tuskegee, Alabama, many of whom I would hope could be a part of this ceremony in the Rotunda. Over the course of World War II, the Tuskegee Airmen became one of the most highly decorated units in the Armed Forces. These brave pilots destroyed more than 1,000 German aircraft while accumulating an unprecedented record of flying more than 200 bomber escort missions over central and southern Europe without the loss of a single bomber to enemy aircraft. The Tuskegee Airmen returned home with some of our Nation's highest military honors including 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 744 Air Medals, 8 Purple Hearts, and 14 Bronze Stars. But they also returned home to a racially segregated America.

One of the many important milestones toward achieving an integrated America occurred on July 26, 1948 when President Harry Truman signed Executive Order 9981. This important order, which will be recognized under this resolution, ordered there be equality of treatment with all persons in the Armed Services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin. Even though it took many years to accomplish the complete integration of the Armed Services, it was Executive Order 9981 that began the process and it is that event, among others, that I hope we will honor in the Capitol Rotunda next month.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to bring the attention of this House to House Concurrent Resolution 297, a resolution I introduced with my friend and colleague Mr. MEEK of Florida on February 14 of this year. This resolution also recognizes the 60th anniversary of the beginning of the integration of the United States Armed Forces. I look forward to the consideration of this or any other similar resolution honoring this important event in our history.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I regret that I was unable to vote on the

evening of Wednesday, the 25th of June. Had I been present, I would have voted:

"Yea" on rollcall vote No. 460, the H.R. 3195, the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008, which restores the intent and protections of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. I deeply regret that I was unable to vote in support of an issue which I feel very strongly about. And I remain proud of this body, under the leadership of the Speaker and Majority leader, in guaranteeing that tens of millions of Americans with disabilities now enjoy equal rights under the law while being empowered to better our nation with their incredible, inherent talents without fear of discrimination or bias.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTION OF SUFFOLK LIFE NEWSPAPERS TO LONG ISLAND

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Mr. ISRAEL. Madam Speaker, I rise to commemorate a sad occasion in my district: Suffolk Life Newspaper will publish its last edition this week. David Willmott published the first edition of what would become Suffolk Life on August 17, 1961.

His paper, which started out serving a small community in Suffolk County, eventually became the largest weekly paper east of the Mississippi. For more than 40 years, Dave Willmott covered the local issues that didn't receive attention elsewhere. He had a style all his own—with political views that I often disagreed with. But he took on the issues others wouldn't touch and he and his staff took great pride in the service they provided to our community with the newspaper. They held those of us who serve in public office to a high standard with rigorous questionnaires and biting weekly columns.

Suffolk Life will shut its doors, but the impact of Dave Willmott's enterprise will live on long after the paper is gone.

Madam Speaker, Suffolk Life will be missed but not forgotten. I'm proud to honor this Long Island institution on the House floor.