

programs the opportunity to seek court-ordered attorneys' fees, which they are currently prohibited from seeking.

Finally, this legislation codifies recent recommendations from the Government Accountability Office to improve LSC governance and accountability. These recommendations should lead to better management and oversight of LSC-funded programs.

I urge my colleagues to join me, Mr. SCOTT, Chairman CONYERS, and others, and cosponsor this important and timely legislation. I am optimistic that Congress can send a bill to the President for his signature so that the doors of justice will always remain open to those in need.

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT DANIEL CHOI FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER EQUALITY MOVEMENT

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 8, 2009*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize LT Daniel Choi for his service to the United States of America and outstanding contributions to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender, LGBT, equality movement as an Army officer, Iraq War veteran, and now civil rights activist. In clear defiance of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," the unjust law that prohibits LGBT service members from serving openly and honestly in the military, Lieutenant Choi courageously spoke three words on national television—"I am gay." In doing so, he knew that he was risking his military career, but was firm in the belief that he had chosen the harder right over the easier wrong. Lieutenant Choi was ultimately discharged, but has since devoted his life to activism in the hope that, one day soon, Don't Ask, Don't Tell will be repealed.

Lieutenant Choi's story is one of excellence and leadership. He was born in February 1981 in Orange County, California and attended Tustin High School, where he was student body president, participated in the American Legion Boys State program, and was involved in various extracurricular activities ranging from Christian Club and Model United Nations to varsity swimming and marching band. It comes as no surprise that Lieutenant Choi was admitted to the prestigious U.S. Military Academy at West Point, where he continued to excel and learn the values that gave him purpose as an officer in the Army and activist for LGBT rights. It was at West Point that Lieutenant Choi first recited the Cadet Honor Code: "A cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do."

In 2003, Lieutenant Choi became one of only eight graduates in his class to earn a degree in Arabic Language, in addition to Environmental Engineering. During his 10 years of honorable service to this nation, Lieutenant Choi served as an Infantry Officer. Specifically, he was a Platoon Leader, Company Executive Officer, Battalion and Brigade Staff Officer, Iraqi Arabic language instructor, and

civil-military and reconstruction engineer in the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, New York. For 15 months from 2006 to 2007, Lieutenant Choi saw duty as an Infantry Platoon Leader and Arabic linguist in South Baghdad, Iraq, providing an invaluable service to his fellow soldiers and the United States' mission by communicating quickly and clearly with the Iraqi people. In 2008, Lieutenant Choi became an Infantry Platoon Leader in the Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry in Manhattan, New York.

While an officer with the Army National Guard, Lieutenant Choi co-founded KNIGHTS OUT: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender West Point Graduates, an organization of West Point alumni, staff, and faculty who are united in supporting the rights of LGBT soldiers to openly serve their country. On March 19, 2009, Lieutenant Choi appeared on MSNBC's The Rachel Maddow Show to discuss the military's Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy. In a surprising announcement, Lieutenant Choi revealed that he was gay. Fully aware of the consequences, he refused to lie about who he is and accept a policy that compromises the integrity of the U.S. military and its service members. Despite testimony from his commanding officer, members of his unit, and fellow soldiers who served in Iraq, as well as 260,000 letters and signatures of support, a panel of New York National Guard officers recommended that Lieutenant Choi be discharged on June 30, 2009.

Guided by the same values he learned at West Point and in the Army, Lieutenant Choi now advocates for the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell and the reversal of Proposition 8 in California, an amendment to the state constitution that recognizes marriage as between only one man and one woman. He continues to raise public and political awareness of issues that affect LGBT service members and the LGBT community as a whole.

Madam Speaker, the West Point Cadet Prayer teaches cadets ". . . never to be content with a half-truth when the whole can be won." Don't Ask, Don't Tell is a no-truth policy and must be repealed. I am honored and humbled by Lieutenant Choi's selfless example and, although he is no longer in uniform, he continues to fight for the freedom of all Americans to be the best they can be, gay or straight.

PROVIDING FOR A TRANSITION PERIOD FOR THE GUAM-CNMI VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

**HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO**

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 8, 2009*

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, today I introduced legislation to amend the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 (CNRA), Public Law 110-229, for the purpose of providing for a transition period for the implementation of the new Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program. Section 702 of the CNRA extends the immigration laws of the United States to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). It also provides for a visa waiver program for travel to Guam and the CNMI consistent with the new arrangements for control of immigration in the CNMI and that

would be based on and succeed the highly successful Guam-only visa waiver program, which was authorized by the Omnibus Territories Act of 1986.

The Department of Homeland Security will commence control of six ports of entry in the CNMI on November 28, 2009, in accordance with the CNRA. The bill I have introduced today would make a technical correction to the CNRA, by delaying for one year the start of the authorized joint Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program. Its effect would be to allow for federal control of immigration to commence in the CNMI on November 28, 2009, but also for the existing CNMI visitor entry program under CNMI law to continue but be controlled and administered by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) under the Department of Homeland Security. The current approved countries under the Guam-only visa waiver program and the CNMI visitor entry program would be maintained, respectively for each territory, for an additional year. Such a continuation of the visitor entry rules for both of these territories would afford the Department of Homeland Security additional time to devise rules and allocate the resources necessary in both the CNMI and Guam for the successful operation and administration of the new Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program consistent with Congressional intent. The additional time will also provide for an orderly transition to occur in both territories.

Most importantly, this bill would allow the Department of Homeland Security to focus its resources initially on the standing-up and control of six ports of entry in the CNMI and also protect the economic interests of the CNMI with the continuation of its visitor entry program. The CNMI economy is heavily reliant on tourism and its visitor sector is accustomed to operating under the territory's visitor entry program.

The bill also authorizes a study to be conducted by the Secretary of the Interior, analyzing the economic situation and forecast for the CNMI. This report will be provided to the committees with jurisdiction, the House Committee on Natural Resources and the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, within 30 days of enactment. This report will help the Committees exercise oversight of the implementation of the CNRA and the transition by the Department of Homeland Security to the new joint, Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program.

I look forward to working with my colleagues as this bill moves forward in the legislative process.

IN HONOR OF DR. DANIEL SIMMONS AND THE MOUNT ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

**HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 8, 2009*

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Daniel Simmons and the Mount Zion Baptist Church of Albany, Ga. On Sunday, October 11, the Mount Zion Baptist Church will jointly celebrate Dr. Simmons' 18th year as the Senior Pastor and the church's 144th anniversary. I have known Pastor Simmons for many years