

sergeant upon enlisting, and sergeant major just a few days later. As part of the 4th Regiment United States Colored Infantry, he would see action in the Virginia and North Carolina campaigns in the 10th, 18th and 25th Army Corps, and would distinguish himself valorously at Chaffin's Farm, on the outskirts of Richmond, VA, on September 29, 1864.

At the age of 24, SGM Christian Fleetwood stood a mere 5 feet, 4.5 inches tall. Nonetheless, while marching on Confederate fortifications he witnessed Alfred B. Hilton, a fellow soldier, fall wounded while carrying the American flag and the Regimental Standard, which Hilton himself had retrieved from a wounded comrade. Rushing forward under withering fire, Fleetwood and another soldier named Charles Veale caught both banners before they brushed the ground. Now bearing the American flag, Fleetwood carried the attack forward, but retreated once it became clear that the unit did not have sufficient strength to penetrate the defenses. Returning through enemy fire to the reserve line, Fleetwood used his standard to rally a determined group of men and renewed the attack on the battlements.

In a fight where the 4th and 6th Regiments of U.S. Colored Troops sustained casualties reaching 50 percent, Fleetwood refused to give up. For these actions and their contribution to victory at Chaffin's Farm, Fleetwood, along with Veale and Hilton, were awarded the Medal of Honor. Fleetwood's official Medal of Honor citation reads simply: "Seized the colors, after 2 color bearers had been shot down, and bore them nobly through the fight." Every officer in Fleetwood's regiment, all white men, submitted a petition to the War Department to have him commissioned an officer, a sure sign of the respect felt by all who witnessed his gallantry.

The medal is now part of the collection of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, and appears in the exhibit entitled "The Price of Freedom." The medal's inclusion in the Smithsonian exhibit is also unique. Fleetwood's daughter Edith Fleetwood donated his medal to the Smithsonian Institute's National Museum in 1948. The Smithsonian accepted the medal, making Christian Fleetwood the first African-American veteran to be so honored.

The Civil War did not call an end to Christian Fleetwood's service, though he was discharged honorably on May 4, 1866. Fleetwood would go on to organize a battalion of the D.C. National Guardsmen, and, in the 1880s, formed Washington, DC's Colored High School Cadet Corps, which counted among its graduates Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., the Nation's first African-American general, and Wesley A. Brown, the first African-American graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy.

Christian Fleetwood embodied everything Americans revere. His actions in

the 4th Regiment from Baltimore, MD, earned him the military's highest honor. He was selfless, brave, a fierce fighter for the abolition of slavery, and chose to dedicate his free life to service of his country and his community.

#### TRIBUTE TO TAHIS CASTRO

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Tahis Castro, who is retiring after 17 years of serving Nevadans as an organizer for the Culinary Workers Union.

Tahis came to Reno from Costa Rica in 1987. In 1994, she cofounded and organized Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Local 86, which represented over 900 culinary workers throughout Reno. Since that time, she has helped negotiate improvements in health care benefits, wages, job security, and training for thousands of working families in Nevada.

Tahis has always been a dedicated and tireless promoter of justice, respect, and dignity for all workers. She has been instrumental in the growth of Local 86, which merged with Las Vegas' Culinary Workers Union Local 226 to represent a total of 60,000 workers in Nevada today. In addition, she has served on the executive board of the Nevada State AFL-CIO.

Tahis has also been influential in representing Nevadans in the political sphere. In 2008, she was chosen as one of the State's five delegates to the Electoral College, and she has been instrumental in promoting voter participation among Nevada's Latino citizens.

I am pleased to stand today to commend Tahis for all she has accomplished, and all she will continue to achieve. Along with the Culinary Workers Union, I congratulate Tahis for her concerted effort and her career of dedicated service.

#### REMEMBERING EARLE B. COMBS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the remarkable life and career of one of baseball's greatest legends, and a native of the Commonwealth, the late Mr. Earle B. Combs. Known far and wide to fans as the Kentucky Greyhound, the Silver Fox and the Kentucky Colonel, Earle was a prime example of a gentleman who knew the value of hard work and determination.

Earle began his journey to greatness as a child on his father's farm in Pebworth, Owsley County, KY, where he and his siblings would play pickup games with homemade baseballs constructed out of leather and rubber trimmings from old, worn-out shoes and tightly wound string, and bats made with tree limbs found around the yard. Each spring, when warmer weather came, the rolling hills of farmland and hollows provided Earle with the perfect setting to develop a love for America's pastime.

But, as he grew older, he decided his calling in life was to teach. In 1917,

Earle left his hometown of Pebworth to attend Eastern Kentucky State Normal School, now Eastern Kentucky University, and received his teaching certificate in 1919. To help pay for his education, Earle returned to eastern Kentucky to teach in one-room schools in Kentucky towns like Ida May and Levi. That was until destiny had other plans.

In 1918 after a faculty-student baseball game, Earle's abilities caught the eye of Dr. Charles Keith, an Eastern Kentucky State Normal School dean and former pro player, who recommended he try out for Eastern's team. After successfully landing a spot on the team, Earle's talent on the field started to gain him some much-deserved attention. In the summer of 1921, after his last season on Eastern's team, Earle played semiprofessional baseball in several Kentucky towns until he was offered a contract with the Louisville Colonels.

During his 2 years with the Colonels, Earle's miraculous talent earned him his career-long reputation as a line-drive hitter with reckless base-stealing ability. In 1924, this reputation traveled north all the way to New York, where the New York Yankees bought the young and talented Earle for \$50,000.

In the years that followed, Earle became a leadoff hitter for the famed Yankees "Murderers Row," a lineup of the late 1920s and early 1930s, and a member of the 1927 World Championship Yankees team where he played alongside other greats by the names of Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig. He was errorless in the 16 World Series games in which he played throughout his career, and ended with a career batting average of .325.

Earle retired in 1935 after sustaining a brutal outfield injury the year before, but remained a coach for the Yankees until 1944, during which he trained other baseball greats such as Joe DiMaggio. He was named to the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY, in 1970.

Earle coached for several other teams before returning to Madison County where he served as a banking commissioner during Governor A.B. Chandler's second administration and on Eastern Kentucky University's board of regents for 19 years, serving as chairman for 2 of those years. Earle was a leader both on and off the diamond. He was known as a loving family man, a successful businessman, and above all, a true gentleman. He was a devoted father and grandfather and a loyal husband to his childhood sweetheart, the late Ruth Combs.

He valued hard-work and knew the importance of higher education. There is no question that Earle was someone who forever changed the game of baseball, who left an impression on those he taught, and who left a lasting legacy in both his community and throughout the Commonwealth.

The Booneville Sentinel recently published an article introducing a new

portrait of the late Earle B. Combs that was hung on the outside of the courthouse in Owsley County, KY, on December 30, 2010. What an honor for this athlete and legend from his hometown and home county. I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Booneville Sentinel, Jan. 12, 2011]

EARLE B. COMBS PORTRAIT HUNG AT  
COURTHOUSE

(By Rosalind Turner)

Boonesville and Owsley County officials honored one of the community's most famous sons Thursday, December 30 when a portrait of the late Earle B. Combs was hung on the outside of the Owsley County Courthouse.

Earle B. Combs, a native of Pebworth and the son of James Jesse and Nannie (Brandenburg) Combs, was a major league baseball player, a member of the 1929 New York Yankees and was named to the National Baseball Hall of Fame. In 1917, Combs left Owsley at age 17 to pursue a degree in education at Eastern Kentucky Normal School (Eastern Kentucky University). Though he earned his degree in 1919 and taught at one-room schools in Ida May and Levi, he eventually changed his career path to play baseball.

In 1924, he earned a position as the centerfielder and leadoff hitter for the famed New York Yankees "Murderers Row" lineup of the late 1920s and early 1930s, according to the Earle Bryan Combs official website. He was a member of the 1927 World Champion Yankees team, which also featured baseball greats Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, and is considered by many to be the greatest team in baseball history.

As the portrait was installed on the side of the courthouse, the outgoing Owsley County Judge-Executive Cale Turner and Booneville Mayor Charles Long were joined by one of Combs' grandsons and two great-grandsons.

"We are so honored," said Craig Combs of Richmond, a grandson with very fond memories of his grandfather. "Thank you so much."

Craig Combs praised Turner, Long and others who were instrumental in seeing the project to fruition. In March, Craig Combs came to Owsley to speak to Holly Shouse's class at Owsley County Elementary School about his grandfather. He said that he was later contacted about the courthouse project and gave his permission for the officials to proceed.

"I was very honored," he said. "I was thrilled that you (the project planners) were going to include grandfather."

Turner said that it has been a long time goal of Mayor Long's to have a portrait in the city honoring the famed baseball player.

"We're tickled to be here and we're tickled that (the community) thought enough of him to put his picture on the side of the courthouse. (It shows) obviously, how proud they are of grandfather," said Craig Combs, who was accompanied by his sons, John, 17, who plans to study vocal music at the University of Louisville, and Christopher, 22, who played baseball at Madison Central, graduated from the University of Evansville and is currently working on his Ph.D. at the University of Texas in aerospace engineering.

Earle B. Combs has had many honors bestowed upon him, but for his grandson, this one is especially meaningful. "Coming from his hometown and his home county, this is something very special," said Craig Combs. "I appreciate Judge Turner and Mayor Long for being so kind to us when we came down."

Long said he is very pleased to see the community finally honor its famous son with the portrait at the courthouse.

"This has been a dream of Mayor Long's," said Turner. "He has brought it up at numerous meetings."

The portrait by Robert Johnson of Madison Avenue Designs in Georgetown joins other murals at the courthouse depicting important Owsley County scenes.

Turner acknowledged the assistance of Jo'e Short, Kacey Smith and Cassie Hudson, members of the Action Team. These ladies wrote the application to the Flex-E ARC grant program after attending the Brushy Fork Institute at Berea College that got the ball rolling. "This would not have happened without the grant," he said. Additional matching funds for the project came from the Owsley County Fiscal Court, the Owsley County Action Team and Farmer's State Bank.

As a legendary baseball player, businessman and member of the Eastern Kentucky University board of regents, Craig Combs said his grandfather was much respected. However, his grandson remembers more than baseball and business.

"He was just Pop to me," he explained, recalling nights spent with his grandfather and grandmother (Mimi), Ruth McCollum, also a native of Owsley County, on their farm in rural Madison County.

"It was a magical time to grow up and be around them because they cared so much for us. He was just a regular, loving grandfather."

Craig Combs recalls the stories about his grandfather's baseball career and said he became the family's baseball historian.

"It was a wonderful upbringing to be around them. To be their grandson was so special."

Craig Combs said he remembers his grandfather very well. He was 18 when Earle B. Combs passed away. Earle and Ruth Combs had three children. Earle Jr., Charles and Donald Combs. Mrs. Combs died in 1989.

Still a student, Earle Combs started playing baseball at Eastern. That led to playing semi-professional ball in such Kentucky towns as Winchester, High Splint and Lexington. While playing for the Lexington Reos of the Bluegrass League, he drew the attention of the Louisville Cardinals (American Association), where he honed his skill in 1922 and 1923. In 1924, he was a rookie for the New York Yankees, patrolling center field between Babe Ruth and Rob Meusel. The following season, he was installed as the leadoff hitter in the famed "Murderers Row" Yankee lineup. He kept that position for the remaining 11 years of his career. During his career, he batted over .300 nine times, had 200 or more hits three times, paced the American League in triples three times and twice led all AL outfielders in putouts. He had a career batting average of .325. In the outfield, he was known as "swift and sure-handed," according to the Earle B. Combs official website.

A favorite of Yankee fans, nicknames bestowed upon him included "Kentucky Greyhound," "Silver Fox" and "Kentucky Colonel." After an injury, he retired in 1935 and coached for the team until 1944. The first year he coached, he trained his replacement, Joe DiMaggio. He coached for several other teams before retiring in the mid-1950s and returning to his Madison County farm. He served as Kentucky banking commissioner during Gov. A.B. Chandler's second administration (1955-59). He served on Eastern Kentucky University's board of regents from 1956-1975 and was chairman from 1972-74. A dormitory at ECU (Earle Combs Hall) bears his name and the school gives an athletic scholarship in his honor. He also is a charter member of ECU's Athletics Hall of Fame.

Earle B. Combs was named to the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, NY in 1970. His baseball career included being part of nine World Championships as a player and coach in New York.

Many from Owsley County, including Mayor Long and Judge Turner who watched the portrait go on the courthouse wall, are proud of the numerous honors and accolades bestowed upon this Hall of Fame baseball player. They are also gratified that he found fame for himself while practicing the values he learned growing up in Pebworth in Owsley County, Ky.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE INCOME  
TAXES

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, on February 17, 2011, I introduced a bill that will provide assurance to taxpayers that Federal employees are on equal footing with the American people and are held accountable to the same rules they enforce.

In 2009, the Internal Revenue Service, IRS, found nearly 100,000 civilian Federal employees were delinquent on their Federal income taxes, owing over \$1 billion in unpaid Federal income taxes. When considering retirees and military, more than 282,000 Federal employees owed \$3.3 billion in taxes.

This legislation will save taxpayers at least \$1 billion by requiring the Internal Revenue Service to collect unpaid Federal income taxes from civilian Federal employees.

Federal employees have a clear obligation to pay their Federal income taxes. The very nature of Federal employment and the concept inherent to "public service" demands those being paid by taxpayers to also pay their fair share of taxes. Federal workers should not be exempt from the laws they enforce. In fact, they should lead by example. Failure to do so is an affront to taxpayers and to the rule of law.

Unfortunately, Congress has allowed this abuse of taxpayer dollars to occur throughout the Federal Government and failed to implement the proper safeguards to hold culprits accountable. Considering our national debt recently surpassed \$14 trillion, it is critical Congress quickly pass this legislation. Surely this milestone is a wake-up call for Congress to find ways to get control of the Federal budget and help get our country back on the right track towards fiscal responsibility.

The bill I recently introduced requires all Federal employees to be current on their Federal income taxes or be fired from their jobs. This is a commonsense bill that most Americans would believe is reasonable, necessary, and likely surprised that it is not already the standard throughout the Federal Government.

It is not the intention of this legislation to single out the majority of Federal employees who work hard and pay their taxes. Instead, the bill would carefully reach only those who have willfully neglected to pay their income taxes and would direct the IRS to only collect money already owed under the Federal Tax Code.