

I ask my colleagues and our Nation to join me in this special Congressional Recognition on the 65th Anniversary of the Northside Center for Child Development, Inc.

IN HONOR OF DR. CHARLES
MACCORMACK

HON. JAMES A. HIMES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 3, 2011

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the many achievements of Dr. Charles MacCormack, whose tireless work to improve the lives of children around the world serves as an example to all of us.

As President and CEO of Save the Children, Dr. MacCormack has overseen humanitarian aid programs in more than 50 countries. In the wake of natural disasters and in regions of the world torn apart by war, Save the Children helps children avoid unbearable pain and suffering. Dr. MacCormack's retirement creates a void at Save the Children that will be difficult to fill and he will be missed by friends, colleagues and the countless children across the world whose lives are better, because of him.

As many as a billion children around the world go to sleep hungry each night. For nearly two decades, Dr. MacCormack has led a global organization that protects the most vulnerable children and creates real change in the lives of those most in need. Throughout his life, Dr. MacCormack has conducted research, taught, and led organizations that promote greater mutual understanding among cultures, provide basic necessities to those in need, and defend the defenseless.

Before joining Save the Children, Dr. MacCormack was President of World Learning, a non-profit organization that promotes understanding among people from diverse cultures through educational exchanges and research. He serves on the Board of InterAction, an association of more than 160 humanitarian and development organizations, and on the Boards of the Basic Education Coalition and the Campaign for Effective Global Leadership. Dr. MacCormack has taken leadership roles with the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid, the Food Security Advisory Committee, and the Non-Governmental Committee on UNICEF and is a founding board member of Malaria No More.

Dr. MacCormack has enriched the lives of people around the world. But today, let us all turn our attention to him and express our gratitude for his lifetime of service. As a Representative, I am proud to honor him here today; and as a fellow citizen and friend. I am indebted to Charlie for all he has done and continues to do—for the children of the world.

ON THE REINTRODUCTION OF THE
FILIPINO VETERANS FAMILY RE-
UNIFICATION ACT

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 3, 2011

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce two versions of the Filipino Vet-

erans Family Reunification Act, both of which will provide for the expedited reunification of the families of our Filipino World War II veterans.

The first version I am introducing is a companion to S. 1141, a bill recently introduced by Senator DANIEL K. AKAKA. I am introducing this bill in acknowledgement of his leadership on this issue.

The second version I am introducing is identical to earlier versions of the bill that I have introduced in the 110th and 111th Congresses. S. 1141 differs from these earlier versions of the bill in that it provides that the petitions filed by the sponsoring Filipino veteran shall remain valid regardless of whether the petitioning parent is living or dead.

As you know, Filipino veterans are those that honorably answered the call of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and served alongside our armed forces during World War II. They fought shoulder to shoulder with American servicemen; they sacrificed for the same just cause. We made a promise to provide full veterans' benefits to those who served with our troops. And while we have recently made appreciable progress toward fulfilling that long-ignored promise, we have not yet achieved the full equity that the Filipino veterans deserve.

In 1990, the Congress recognized the courage and commitment of the Filipino World War II veterans by providing them with a waiver from certain naturalization requirements. Many veterans thereafter became proud United States citizens and residents of our country. However, allowances were not made for their children and many have been waiting decades for petition approval.

The Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act would allow for the further recognition of the service of the veterans by granting their children a special immigration status that would allow them to immigrate to the United States and be reunified with their aging parents. It is important to note that the Filipino soldiers who fought under the command of General Douglas MacArthur at this critical time in our nation's history represent a unique category. These soldiers were members of the United States Armed Forces of the Far East. They were led to believe that at the end of the conflict they would be treated the same as American soldiers. It took more than sixty years to begin to make good on our commitment. The Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act recognizes the special circumstances of this group of soldiers.

I look forward to working with my colleagues by providing for the reunification of our Filipino World War II veterans with their families.

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT AARON J.
BLASJO

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 3, 2011

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a hero from my congressional district, United States Army Special Forces Sergeant Aaron J. Blasjo. Today I ask that the House of Representatives to join me to honor and remember this incredible young man who died in service to his country.

Aaron was born in Riverside, California and graduated from Ramona High School in 2004.

He was determined to be in the Special Forces and after graduation he promptly enlisted in the United States Army. Aaron was assigned to A Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. His most recent deployment was his third tour in Afghanistan, where he served in the Special Forces canine unit. About Aaron, his grandfather, Wesley Blasjo, stated, "I think he wanted to do something for his country. He liked the camaraderie and all the things that go along with Special Forces."

Aaron was a member of the Palm Baptist Church and traveled to Africa on a short missionary trip to help others. A youth pastor at the church remembers Aaron as serious but caring member of their church community.

In 2009, he married Crystal Thompkins in Riverside. Two months ago, Aaron became a proud father to his son, Talon Blasjo, which was one of the highlights of Aaron's life. On May 29, 2011, the day before Memorial Day, Aaron was killed in action in Wardak Province, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He was 25 years old. In addition to his wife Crystal and son Talon, he also leaves behind his mother and father Daniel and Roberta Blasjo; and his extended family.

As we look at the incredibly rich military history of our country we realize that this history is comprised of men, just like Aaron, who bravely fought for the ideals of freedom and democracy. Each story is unique and humbling for those of us who, far from the dangers they have faced, live our lives in relative comfort and ease. The day they learned of Aaron's death was probably the hardest day the Blasjo family has ever faced and my thoughts, prayers and deepest gratitude for their sacrifice go out to them. There are no words that can relieve their pain, and what words I offer only begin to convey my deep respect and highest appreciation.

Sergeant Blasjo's wife, son and parents have all given a part of themselves with the loss of Aaron, and I hope they know that their husband, father, and son, the goodness he brought to this world and the sacrifice he has made, will always be remembered.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MRS.
HORTENSIA G. SILVA

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 3, 2011

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the 91st birthday of teacher and volunteer, Mrs. Hortensia G. Silva. She has dedicated her life assisting the south Texas community, educating and serving children.

Mrs. Silva was born on June 5, 1920 on a ranch located on the outskirts of Rio Grande City, Texas, to proud parents, Serapio and Martha Guerra. After the passing of her father in 1929, she began working in a local grocery store to help her mother provide for her three younger siblings. During World War II, telegrams were sent to the Juan B. Galindo Grocery Store and Mrs. Silva was often charged with delivering families the heart-wrenching message that their soldiers had fallen. One of the only people with the ability to read or write, Mrs. Silva often wrote catalog orders so