

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE SERVICE OF BRIAN COOPER, CHIEF CLERK TO THE PARLIAMENTARIAN

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Brian Cooper, Chief Clerk to the Parliamentarian, who is retiring after more than three decades of service to our country.

Brian Cooper has dedicated his career to ensure the good management and orderly function of the U.S. House of Representatives.

As Chief Clerk to the Parliamentarian, much of his work has gone unnoticed.

But it has not gone unappreciated.

From time-keeping to processing bills to preparing for joint sessions of Congress, Brian Cooper has played an integral role in maintaining the integrity of the House of Representatives.

After more than three decades of service, this public servant has more than earned his wings of retirement.

Brian Cooper made the House work better and he will be missed by his many friends and colleagues, whom I join in wishing him well as he embarks on a new chapter in his life of service to others.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN MISSISSIPPI SOLDIER ARMY STAFF SERGEANT (SSG) KENNETH RAY BRADLEY

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Army Staff Sergeant (SSG) Kenneth Ray Bradley who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our nation on May 28, 2003, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SSG Bradley died of a heart attack while serving in Baqubah, Iraq.

SSG Bradley was assigned to Company B 588th Engineer Battalion, Fort Hood, Texas. The Utica native was a 19-year Army veteran.

According to the Associated Press, SSG Bradley enjoyed music. Cleveland Washington, SSG Bradley's first cousin, said he liked musical instruments.

"He was left-handed," Washington said. "He blew the trumpet and played the guitar. He always liked music and was in a band."

People who grew up with SSG Bradley and served with him in the Army memorialized him on the "Fallen Heroes of Operation Iraqi Freedom" website.

Sergeant First Class (SFC) Lee of Washington said he was a great leader. "I remember that he was a great NCO and a great leader," SFC Lee said. "He is a true hero and will never be forgotten. God bless his family, friends, and brothers-in-arms."

Sergeant First Class (SFC) Frye of Fort Benning, Georgia, said SSG Bradley would not be forgotten. "You are never forgotten, brother, and your passing caused me so much grief. Your words touched my heart," SFC Frye said. "I remember those days you talked of spending time with your family prior to being ordered to go to Iraq. The fact that your life was cut short, and we're all robbed of your love, hurts me to this day. I only pray your family has found peace in your memories and what a great man you were."

Melvin Waters of Woodbridge, Virginia, offered his condolences to the family. "I would like to convey my sincerest sympathy to Claudia, Brian, and Sandra," Waters said. "Kenney is truly missed by many and he will always live in our thoughts and good deeds."

Specialist (SPC) George Sanchez served with SSG Bradley. "I am currently attending St. Mary's University as a disabled veteran," SPC Sanchez said. "The days I feel like quitting, I think of SSG Bradley, and my other fallen brothers-in-arms. Then I pick myself up and keep going for them. I dedicate my education to their memory. Your sacrifice is not in vain, my friend."

SSG Bradley bravely fought to protect the freedoms we all enjoy. His service to our nation will not be forgotten.

STEM OPPORTUNITIES ACT OF 2017

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be introducing the STEM Opportunities Act of 2017. A very similar bill passed the House as part of the America Competes Act of 2010, but unfortunately didn't make it into the enacted law. As a result, every Congress since then, I have worked hard to keep the legislation updated and to convince my colleagues of the urgency of the challenges this bill addresses. Today I am reintroducing this bill with 20 cosponsors. And my colleague Senator HIRONO is introducing a Senate companion bill. The goal of our legislation is to develop and implement evidence-based policies to promote the progress of women and minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) studies and research careers.

The need for full engagement in STEM by women and underrepresented minorities goes beyond enabling individuals to fulfill their dreams of becoming a scientist. Our economic future relies on what we do now to nurture the STEM talent that will be necessary to meet the demands of an increasingly technological and knowledge-based economy. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that STEM employment is the fastest growing sector, with computer science and engineering jobs among the fastest growing STEM occupations.

If things continue as they are now, however, I fear we will be ill equipped to fill these jobs.

We are seventeen years into the 21st century and the demographics of the STEM workforce do not reflect the diversity of the nation. In 2015, women earned only 19 percent of bachelor's degrees in engineering and 18 percent in computer science. Black and Hispanic students are similarly underrepresented in these fields at the undergraduate level, and the problem is even more pronounced in STEM faculty. Women hold only 23 percent of all tenured and tenure-track positions, while Black and Hispanic faculty combined hold a dismal 6.4 percent of these positions. We need to leverage all of our human capital if we are to achieve the necessary capacity to innovate and to discover.

The STEM Opportunities Act is focused on addressing the leaky pipeline for those who have already chosen a STEM path. First, so that we better understand the nature and scope of the challenges, the STEM Opportunities Act requires more comprehensive demographic data collection on the recipients of federal research awards and on STEM faculty at U.S. universities. These data would be available to researchers to study the participation and trajectories of women and underrepresented minorities in STEM so that policy makers can design more effective policies and practices to reduce barriers.

Next, this bill requires the development of consistent federal policies, such as no-cost award extensions, for recipients of federal research awards who have caregiving responsibilities, including care for a newborn or newly adopted child and care for an immediate family member who is sick. The bill also requires consistent federal guidance to grant reviewers and program officers on best practices to minimize the effects of implicit bias in the review of federal research grants. It requires NSF to provide guidance to universities and OSTP to provide guidance to Federal laboratories to aid them in identifying any cultural and institutional barriers limiting the recruitment, retention, and achievement of women and minorities in academic and government STEM research careers and developing and implementing current best practices for reducing such barriers. Finally, the legislation authorizes NSF to award grants to universities to implement or expand research-based practices targeted specifically at increasing the recruitment and retention of minority students and faculty.

Mr. Speaker, in developing this legislation, we solicited extensive input from governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to ensure that the guidance and requirements reflect today's needs and opportunities without unduly burdening our research universities. The result is a bill that attempts to systematically address the full suite of issues facing both female and minority STEM researchers, from work-life balance policies, to campus climate, to better data collection, to recruitment and retention practices. This bill proposes concrete and evidence-based solutions to the indisputable reality that our nation continues to fall well short of engaging our entire talent pool in STEM careers. That disparity in our STEM workforce

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

will continue to have real and increasing consequences to our social, economic, and national security if we do not begin to implement scalable solutions soon.

I want to thank Senator HIRONO for joining me in introducing a Senate companion bill, and all of the Members of the House and Senate who have already cosponsored this legislation. I urge the rest of my colleagues to join us and to help us move this legislation forward into law.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALL-
EN MISSISSIPPI ARMY NA-
TIONAL GUARD SERGEANT (SGT)
DANIEL RYAN VARNADO

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Mississippi Army National Guard Sergeant (SGT) Daniel Ryan Varnado who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our great nation on May 23, 2005, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SGT Varnado was killed when his military vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device in Haswa, Iraq. Also killed were Specialist (SPC) Bryan Edward Barron, Sergeant (SGT) Audrey Daron Lunsford, and Sergeant First Class (SFC) Saburant Parker.

SGT Varnado was assigned to C Company, 1st Battalion, 1–155th Infantry Regiment, Mississippi Army National Guard, Biloxi, Mississippi. SGT Varnado, a Saucier resident, joined the Mississippi Army National Guard in November 2000.

According to a website created in his memory, SGT Varnado played baseball growing up for Harrison Central High School in Lyman until he graduated in 1999. He also played baseball for Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College while pursuing a degree in education. SGT Varnado wanted to be a baseball coach.

The website's author describes SGT Varnado as the perfect husband, father, son, and friend. He is also described as a person with faith and a love for the Lord which kept him strong in times of war. Additionally, the author says he will be deeply missed.

The Army National Guard Readiness Center in Gulfport has been named in honor of SGT Varnado.

Mississippi Army National Guard Brigadier General (BG) John Rhodes was the 1–155th infantry battalion commander in 2005. BG Rhodes recently said SGT Varnado will always be remembered along with those who died with him.

"SGT Daniel Ryan Varnado, SPC Bryan Edward Barron, SGT Audrey Daron Lunsford, and SFC Saburant Parker are remembered in many ways, but we knew them as warriors who represented something larger than themselves," BG Rhodes said. "They operated in a hostile environment and faced the dangers of combat on a regular basis. Yet, if given the choice, they would not have wanted it any other way. They sacrificed their lives trying to provide a better life for people who they did not even know. This is who they were and what they represented. They exemplified the modern day Mississippi Riflemen. Stand Fast, Mississippians! Stand Fast!"

During Operation Iraqi Freedom, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Andrew Robertson served as company commander of Charlie Company, 1–155th Infantry Regiment, MS Army National Guard, Biloxi, Mississippi, serving operational control under 2–11 Armed Cavalry Regiment (ACR), U.S. Army. He says there were no greater people than the Charlie Company soldiers who endured being in the most dangerous and highest casualty area of operation as part of OIF III under Task Force 155 Heavy Brigade Combat Team.

"In 2005, there were no greater Americans than our fallen patriots, Charlie Company Infantrymen and their families. None greater. This, I believe, America needs to know," LTC Robertson said.

SGT Varnado is survived by his wife, Sharon Shavers, and son, Kannon Varnado.

SGT Varnado's sacrifice to protect our freedoms will always be remembered.

IN RECOGNITION OF REV. JOHN
BEATTY KAHL'S 25 YEARS OF
SERVICE

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Reverend John Beatty Kahl for his 25 years of dedicated service to our community as an ordained minister.

Rev. Kahl attended Lenoir Rhyne College where he graduated magna cum laude with a triple major in math, physics, and chemistry. As a driven scholar, he received the American Institutes of Chemistry Award his senior year of college and became a member of multiple academic honor societies. While in college, he enlisted in the Navy and went on to Officer Candidate School where he was commissioned as an officer.

After graduation, Rev. Kahl served his country for four and a half years as an officer in the United States Navy. During his service as a Submariner on the USS *Key West*, he felt God pulling on his heart to pursue another career. This calling led Rev. Kahl to attend Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, where he graduated cum laude. He was ordained as a minister on May 29, 1992 at Lenoir Rhyne College. Now, he is not only the head pastor at New Life Lutheran Church, but also the principal at Christ the King Christian Academy. He and his wife, Cindy, have two children, Joshua and Lisa.

Rev. Kahl has shown immense commitment to God and his country over the years. He is a man of principled values and strong faith who continues to embody the true meaning of public service. It is my hope that he will remain an active leader in the community for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in honoring Rev. John Beatty Kahl for his 25 years of service to his community.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALL-
EN MISSISSIPPI ARMY NA-
TIONAL GUARD SERGEANT
FIRST CLASS (SFC) SABURANT
PARKER

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Mississippi Army National Guard Sergeant First Class (SFC) Saburant Parker, known to his friends as "Sabot" (sab-oh), who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our great nation on May 23, 2005, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SFC Parker was killed when his military vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device in Haswa, Iraq. Also killed were Specialist (SPC) Bryan Edward Barron, Sergeant (SGT) Audrey Daron Lunsford, and Sergeant (SGT) Daniel Ryan Varnado.

SFC Parker, a Foxworth native, was assigned to C Company, 1st Battalion, 1–155th Infantry Regiment, Mississippi Army National Guard, Biloxi, Mississippi. SFC Parker served in the Mississippi Army National Guard for 16 years and served with the 155th Separate Armored Brigade in Bosnia. SFC Parker was also employed as a loader operator at Angie Lumber Company in Angie, Louisiana, and wrestled on the weekends for Southern Championship Wrestling. He was the 2004 champion of the cruiser weight division.

Major General (MG) Harold A. Cross, Mississippi Army National Guard Adjutant General, posthumously awarded SFC Parker the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star and the Mississippi Medal of Valor during a memorial service held at Hurricane Creek Baptist Church in Hattiesburg. He spoke to the audience during the service and was quoted in an Associated Press article.

"Once again we come together in a small community to honor a soldier," MG Cross said. "It comes to mind that over 1.2 million people have paid the ultimate sacrifice in our 228-year history that we might be free."

Mississippi Army National Guard Brigadier General (BG) John Rhodes served as the 1–155th infantry battalion commander in 2005. BG Rhodes recently said SFC Parker will be remembered along with those who died with him.

"SFC Parker, SPC Bryan Edward Barron, SGT Audrey Daron Lunsford, and SGT Daniel Ryan Varnado are remembered in many ways, but we knew them as warriors who represented something larger than themselves," BG Rhodes said. "They operated in a hostile environment and faced the dangers of combat on a regular basis. Yet, if given the choice, they would not have wanted it any other way. They sacrificed their lives trying to provide a better life for people who they didn't even know. This is who they were and what they represented. They exemplified the modern day Mississippi Riflemen. Stand Fast, Mississippians! Stand Fast!"

During Operation Iraqi Freedom, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Andrew Robertson served as company commander of Charlie Company, 1–155th Infantry Regiment, MS Army National Guard, Biloxi, Mississippi, serving operational control under 2–11 Armed Cavalry Regiment (ACR), U.S. Army. He says there were no

greater people than the Charlie Company soldiers who endured being in the most dangerous and highest casualty area of operation as part of OIF III under Task Force 155 Heavy Brigade Combat Team.

"In 2005, there were no greater Americans than our fallen patriots, Charlie Company infantrymen and their families. None greater. This, I believe, America needs to know," LTC Robertson said.

SFC Parker's daughter, Sheliah Parker, shared that her father's service made the family proud. "I'm very proud," Sheliah said. "He is the reason why I pushed myself so hard to become the first college graduate in the family. He is the reason I wanted to succeed. I think about him every day."

SFC Parker is survived by his wife, Kitza, daughters, Merissa and Sheliah, stepson, Ramsey Cumpton, mother, Ora Lee Hayes, brother, Mark Parker, and sister, Sable Parker.

SFC Parker's sacrifice to protect our nation will always be remembered.

LUBIN WALTER HUNTER

HON. LEE M. ZELDIN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Lubin Walter Hunter on his 100th birthday, and to thank him for his years of dedicated service to our community, state and nation.

Lubin Walter Hunter, the oldest living member of the Shinnecock Indian Nation and oldest living veteran in the Town of Southampton, was born and raised on the Shinnecock Indian Reservation in Southampton, NY.

Mr. Hunter proudly served our country during World War II as a B17 Navigator Gunner with the Army's Air Forces in the Pacific Arena. Just prior to enlisting in a cadet program, Mr. Hunter was employed as a "shipper and corker" on both the USS *Iowa* and *Missouri* battleships in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. After the war, he earned a Bachelor of Arts from Brooklyn College while working as a social worker.

In his retirement, Mr. Hunter returned to serve his tribal community by becoming an Elder at the Shinnecock Presbyterian Church, serving as Director of the Senior Nutrition Program. Mr. Hunter was also elected as a member of the Shinnecock Tribal Council, and served as a Health Committee Advisory Board member of the Shinnecock Family Preservation Center. Additionally, Mr. Hunter was a founder of the Shinnecock Golfers Association.

Today, I would like to wish Mr. Hunter happy birthday, and thank him for his service to our nation and the Shinnecock people.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN MISSISSIPPI ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SPECIALIST (SPC) BRYAN EDWARD BARRON

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Mississippi Army Na-

tional Guard Specialist (SPC) Bryan Edward Barron who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our great nation on May 23, 2005, when his military vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device in Haswa, Iraq. Also killed were Sergeant (SGT) Audrey Daron Lunsford, Sergeant First Class (SFC) Saburant Parker, and Sergeant (SGT) Daniel Ryan Varnado.

SPC Barron was assigned to C Company, 1st Battalion, 1-155th Infantry Regiment, Mississippi Army National Guard, Biloxi, Mississippi.

SPC Barron, a Biloxi native, was hoping to be home from Iraq in time for his daughter's first birthday when he was killed. A relative told the Associated Press that SPC Barron left behind two daughters.

"I can say this. He died a hero," his brother-in-law, Ken Daniels, said in 2005. "He was a true American. He found it worthwhile. He found it worth the risk to put his life in danger."

SPC Barron was memorialized with the naming of the Natchez Army National Guard Readiness Center in his honor. Many family members, soldiers, and friends were on hand for the dedication of the building.

Mississippi Army National Guard Brigadier General (BG) John Rhodes served as the 1-155th infantry battalion commander in 2005. BG Rhodes recently said SPC Barron will be remembered along with the others who died with him.

"SPC Bryan Edward Barron, SGT Audrey Daron Lunsford, SFC Saburant Parker, and SGT Daniel Ryan Varnado are remembered in many ways, but we knew them as warriors who represented something larger than themselves," BG Rhodes said. "They operated in a hostile environment and faced the dangers of combat on a regular basis. Yet, if given the choice, they would not have wanted it any other way. They sacrificed their lives trying to provide a better life for people who they did not even know. This is who they were and what they represented. They exemplified the modern day Mississippi Riflemen. Stand Fast, Mississippians! Stand Fast!"

During Operation Iraqi Freedom, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Andrew Robertson served as company commander of Charlie Company, 1-155th, Infantry Regiment, MS Army National Guard, Biloxi, Mississippi, serving operational control under 2-11 Armed Cavalry Regiment (ACR), U.S. Army. He says there were no greater people than the Charlie Company soldiers who endured being in the most dangerous and highest casualty area of operation as part of OIF III under Task Force 155 Heavy Brigade Combat Team.

"In 2005, there were no greater Americans than our fallen patriots, Charlie Company infantrymen and their families. None greater. This, I believe America needs to know," LTC Robertson said.

SPC Barron's daughter, Hayley Barron, shared how proud she is of her father's service. "I am tremendously proud," Hayley said. "What he has done, laid the foundation for my sister and me for years to come. He went to Iraq for a very good purpose."

SPC Barron is survived by his wife, Amanda, daughters, Hayley Barron, Jaden Barron, mother, Cynthia Barron, sisters, Sandy Barron, Jodie Barron, Susie Barron, and brother, Cory Barron.

SPC Barron's sacrifice to protect the freedoms we all enjoy will not be forgotten.

CELEBRATING THE LONG CAREER AND RETIREMENT OF BEVERLY ROWE

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Beverly Rowe of Rolla, Missouri, as she retires after more than forty-nine years of public service. Her longstanding career at Fort Leonard Wood was dedicated to assisting military service members and their families in many capacities.

Ms. Rowe began her career on October 30, 1967, as a military personnel clerk, preparing reassignment orders for prior-service and medically evacuated soldiers returning to active duty, and soldiers assigned to the Special Processing Detachment. She managed the Hometown Recruiting Assistance Program, Junior Enlisted Travel, and United States Military Academy Preparatory School candidates. She also served as the basic training assignment lead clerk and with the AG Trainee/Student Personnel Section.

Beverly was promoted to the position of supervisory travel assistant with the Central Port Call Office in February 1984.

In September 1993, Ms. Rowe began working in the Retirement Services Office as a contact representative, a survivor benefit counselor, and processed enlisted and officer retirement applications. She was later selected as the Retirement Services Officer.

Most recently, Ms. Rowe became the Transition Services Manager in June 2012, working with the Soldier for Life Transition Assistance Program.

Ms. Rowe completed college courses at Central Texas College, Drury University, and the University of Colorado-Denver while working at Fort Leonard Wood. Upon retirement, she plans to continue living in Rolla and volunteering at Leach Theater.

She has a lifetime of service at Fort Leonard Wood, providing expertise, stability, continuity of operations, and critical support on a daily basis. I celebrate with Beverly Rowe as she enters retirement after more than forty-nine years.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN MISSISSIPPI U.S. MARINE CORPS SERGEANT (SGT) JONATHAN WYATT LAMBERT

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant (Sgt) Jonathan Wyatt Lambert who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our great nation on May 26, 2003, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Sgt Lambert died on June 1, 2003, at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, from injuries he sustained when the Humvee he was riding in rolled over.

Sgt Lambert was assigned to the Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division, Camp Pendleton, California. The 1993 Booneville High School graduate enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1995. Sgt Lambert served in the

Marine Corps for four years. After working in wireless data communications, Sgt Lambert reenlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in November 2000.

A proud Eagle Scout, Sgt Lambert was inspired to join the Marines by his uncle, Carroll Brown, who served in the U.S. Marine Corps in Vietnam. He liked to listen to his stories.

Shortly before his death, Sgt Lambert wrote an article that appeared on Memorial Day in his hometown newspaper, *The Banner-Independent*. "I am a Marine," he wrote. "It has always been a dream for me to be in the Marines. I love the challenge. I continuously work and sweat for it. I feel that I need to give back to my nation what so many have gave before me."

Sgt Lambert left behind a wife, Betty Oswald Lambert, and daughter, Kinsey Jade Lambert, of Rienzi. Though he died the day before her second birthday, Kinsey Jade recently said how much she enjoys hearing the stories about her father. She is proud of his service. "I'm proud of him for being in the military," Kinsey Jade said. "I respect that. He did it for our country."

"I have always been proud. He was my hero," Mrs. Lambert said. "He was the one who was going to keep the evil from coming to America. He was loved."

In 2013, Sgt Lambert was memorialized with the renaming of a portion of Highway 4 in Prentiss County in his honor.

Sgt Lambert's funeral was held at Little Brown Freewill Baptist Church. Mrs. Lambert says more than one hundred cars were in the funeral procession which followed the route where her son grew up in New Site.

Sgt. Lambert was the recipient of the following awards: Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal (2), Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, Meritorious Mast (2), Army Achievement Medal, Rifle Expert Badge, Pistol Expert Badge, Certificate of Commendation (Individual Award), Letter of Appreciation (2nd AWD).

In addition to his wife and daughter, Sgt Lambert is survived by his parents, Johnny and Becky Lambert, sister, Misty Terry, and niece Allie Eaton.

Sgt Lambert's sacrifice to protect the freedoms we all enjoy will not be forgotten.

WHY RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND HUMAN RIGHTS ARE CRITICAL TO U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, over the past forty-two years, much has changed in Vietnam. The Vietnamese people are a little richer, but still have few rights.

The Vietnamese Communist Party has opened up a bit to the outside world, but remains closed to democratic reforms and the rule of law.

U.S.-Vietnamese relations have warmed because Vietnam fears China's increasing economic power and its incursions in the South China Sea, but we see few human rights improvements emerge from better relations.

Over the past two years, Human Rights Watch has used the words "dismal" and

"abysmal" to describe Vietnam's human rights record. Vietnam scored a 7, the lowest score, on Freedom House's "Freedom in the World" index.

From sex and labor trafficking to the censorship of the press and Internet; from restrictions on independent labor unions to severe repression of faith communities, the Vietnamese Government and Communist Party is one of the world's worst abusers of human rights.

For too long Vietnam has gotten a free pass on human rights. Diplomats are so focused on the fact that Vietnam is "not China" that this oppressive police state is granted trade and security benefits without condition. There is a silent human rights crisis going on in Vietnam that must be addressed.

Human rights should be a top talking point when President Trump meets next week with Vietnam's Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc. Doing so will advance U.S. economic and security interests and it will be warmly welcomed by the Vietnamese people.

The President has a real opportunity to bring about tangible reforms in Vietnam if he links better U.S.-Vietnam relations to tangible human rights improvements.

I have been to Vietnam. I have met with its rights advocates and young activists for decades now, like imprisoned rights activist Nguyen Van Dai. I know there is a younger generation in Vietnam—66% of Vietnam is under the age of 40—that looks to the U.S. as a land of opportunity and freedom. They want the same liberties enjoyed by their relatives in California, Texas, Virginia, Louisiana and so many other places where former Vietnamese refugees have flourished.

The Vietnamese people want the U.S. to be a voice for freedom—because their voice is silenced.

No government that represses its own people or restricts fundamental freedoms can be a trusted ally of the United States. No government that censors the Internet, tortures and jails dissidents, and crushes civil society should be given generous trade or security benefits without conditions.

The President will face pressure from his advisors and the business community to look at Vietnam through the lens of trade deals and the containment of China. Hopefully, he will be able to see the situation more clearly than past Administrations.

Failing to press for real and concrete human rights improvements underestimates U.S. leverage and will disappoint the young generation in Vietnam who are that country's dynamic future.

It should be clear by now that Vietnam needs the U.S. markets and security commitments much more than the U.S. needs Vietnam's markets and security cooperation.

If history is any guide, the President's, championing of individual rights will meet with some success. If his interest in human rights is sustained, those successes could be tangible and far-reaching.

The Vietnamese government has responded to concerns expressed by the last two Administrations when they linked human rights improvements to better U.S.-Vietnam relations. Whether to gain entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) or to address U.S. concerns over religious freedom abuses, the Vietnamese government took steps toward reform when pressed by past American Presidents.

It is when the U.S. loses interest in human rights that conditions regress.

The Communist leaders in Hanoi take our trade benefits and security commitments and continue repressing those seeking political reform and universal freedoms.

The business of the Communist Party is staying in power and repressing those they believe will challenge their power. They will not embrace human rights improvements or the rule of law unless it is a firm condition of better relations with the U.S.

I am circulating a letter for the signatures of other Members of Congress detailing the strategic opportunities available for the United States and the Vietnamese people if the President pursues a robust human rights agenda.

The letter urges the President to pursue Internet freedom, religious freedom, independent labor unions, and the release of prisoners of conscience—as a condition of U.S. assistance.

These fundamental freedoms are directly related to U.S. interests in a better business climate, less corruption, investor confidence, expansion of economic freedom, and civil society development.

I also wrote to Secretary Rex Tillerson to urge more robust human rights diplomacy in Vietnam, particularly on the issue of religious freedom.

I urged the Secretary to use the authorities given him by the Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act and the Global Magnitsky Act, legislation I introduced, that was passed into law last year to hold individual government officials accountable for human rights abuses and restrictions on religious freedom.

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) recommended that Vietnam be designated as a "Country of Particular Concern" for severe and egregious religious freedom restrictions. That report provides compelling evidence of egregious and ongoing religious freedom violations in Vietnam.

The President should follow USCIRF's recommendation and immediately designate Vietnam as a CPC for its religious freedom violations. This designation carries with it potential sanctions and visa denials for Vietnamese government officials complicit in religious freedom abuses.

No Vietnamese government official who tortures political dissidents or restricts the activities of religious communities should profit from access to the U.S. or our financial system.

Let me say that the violence and intimidation faced by Hmong and Montgard Christians, by Khmer Krom Buddhists, by the independent Hoa Hao and Cao Dai groups is outrageous. The torture faced by Ms. Tran Thi Hong is shocking. She was on her way to meet religious freedom Ambassador David Saperstein to advocate for the release of her husband Pastor Nguyen Cong Chinh.

If there are religious prisoners, if forced renunciations of faith are happening, if pagodas and churches and places of worship are forcibly closed—how does Vietnam not meet the criteria for CPC? We know it does. Politics should not play a part in designations.

I will be working closely with the State Department to make sure international religious freedom is a diplomatic priority. This fundamental freedom is not merely a humanitarian issue with little strategic value—it is critical to our security and prosperity.

Research shows that countries that embrace and protect religious freedom are more economically successful, protect women's rights, and experience less terrorism and political instability. There is not a single country that respects religious freedom that poses a security threat to the U.S. In fact, just the opposite is true—countries who are the worst violators of religious freedom are often those who seek to do Americans the most harm and seek to tear down democratic values and institutions. These facts alone should give us pause in expanding relations with Vietnam.

President Trump should not prop up Vietnam's Communist old guard because they are not Vietnam's future. That future lies with Nguyen Van Dai and the many bloggers and advocates of political reform and human rights who seek our freedoms more than our trade.

U.S. policy must send the unmistakable message to the Government of Vietnam that human rights improvements are fundamental to better relations, critically linked to our mutual economic and security interests, and will not be ignored or bargained away.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN MISSISSIPPI ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SERGEANT (SGT) AUDREY DARON LUNSFORD

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Mississippi Army National Guard Sergeant (SGT) Audrey Daron Lunsford who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our great nation on May 23, 2005, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SGT Lunsford was killed when his military vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device in Haswa, Iraq. Also killed were Specialist (SPC) Bryan Edward Barron, Sergeant First Class (SFC) Saburant Parker, and Sergeant (SGT) Daniel Ryan Varnado.

SGT Lunsford, a Sardis native, was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 1–155th Infantry Regiment, Mississippi Army National Guard, McComb Mississippi.

SGT Lunsford enlisted in the Army after he graduated from high school in 1993. He served as a U.S. Army Ranger. After completing four years of service in the Army, SGT Lunsford became an officer with the Sardis Police Department and a firefighter for the Tunica Fire Department.

In January 2005, SGT Lunsford enlisted in the Mississippi Army National Guard. His wife, Vangi, says he reenlisted because he wanted to provide for his family, including his daughter, Paris Audrey, should something happen to him. Vangi says her husband was committed to fighting for freedom.

"Daron wanted to fight for our family's freedom," Vangi said. "He also wanted to fight for others who couldn't go to the battlefield."

Brigadier General (BG) John Rhodes served as the 1–155th infantry battalion commander in 2005. He recently praised SGT Lunsford and the soldiers who died with him on that day.

"SGT Audrey Daron Lunsford, SPC Bryan Edward Barron, SFC Saburant Parker, and

SGT Daniel Ryan Varnado are remembered in many ways, but we knew them as warriors who represented something larger than themselves," BG Rhodes said. "They operated in a hostile environment and faced the dangers of combat on a regular basis. Yet, if given the choice, they would not have wanted it any other way. They sacrificed their lives trying to provide a better life for people who they did not know. This is who they were and what they represented. They exemplified the modern day Mississippi Riflemen. Stand Fast, Mississippians! Stand Fast!"

During Operation Iraqi Freedom, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Andrew Robertson served as company commander of Charlie Company, 1–155th Infantry Regiment, MS Army National Guard, Biloxi, Mississippi, serving operational control under 2–11 Armed Cavalry Regiment (ACR), U.S. Army. He says there were no greater people than the Charlie Company soldiers who endured being in the most dangerous and highest casualty area of operation as part of OIF III under Task Force 155 Heavy Brigade Combat Team.

"In 2005, there were no greater Americans than our fallen patriots, Charlie Company infantrymen and their families. None greater. This, I believe, America needs to know," LTC Robertson said.

SGT Daron is survived by his wife Vangi, daughter, Paris Audrey, mother Martha Sue Lunsford, and siblings; Donna Miller, Danny Lunsford, David Lunsford, Kim Lunsford Diffree, Michael Lunsford, and Alton Lunsford.

SGT Lunsford's devotion to America and the sacrifice he made will not be forgotten.

RECOGNIZING PROFESSOR JEFFREY FAHRENWALD

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Professor Jeffrey Fahrenwald who is retiring from Rockford University. Professor Fahrenwald has become a pillar in the Rockford community, and he will be greatly missed.

Professor Fahrenwald is the Director of the MBA program at Rockford University, where he has taught in areas of human relations, management, leadership and international studies. He has enriched our community through his leadership in small business development, in addition to serving on numerous not-for-profit boards. Professor Fahrenwald's contributions to our community have not gone unnoticed, and he was named one of our region's "People You Should Know" in 2011, and "Citizen of the Year" in 2014 by the Rockford Chamber of Commerce for all his tireless work to empower those living in the Rockford community.

It is because of dedicated and selfless leaders such as Professor Fahrenwald that I am especially proud to serve Illinois 17th Congressional District. Mr. Speaker, I would like to again formally congratulate Professor Jeffrey Fahrenwald on his well-earned retirement and thank him for all of his contributions and service to our community.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN SOLDIER ARMY STAFF SERGEANT (SSG) DAVID DWAYNE SELF

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of fallen soldier Army Staff Sergeant (SSG) David Dwayne Self who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our nation on May 16, 2011, during Operation Enduring Freedom. SSG Self died from wounds sustained after his unit was attacked with an improvised explosive device in Spin Ghbarga, Zabul province, Afghanistan, during his fourth tour of duty. SSG Self was one of four American soldiers killed in the insurgent attack.

SSG Self was assigned to the Fires Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, Vilseck, Germany. SSG Self graduated from Pearl High School in 2000 before enlisting in the U.S. Army. According to an article written by Nate Rawlings, SSG Self was a, "quiet, steady non-commissioned officer who knew his job well." Rawlings also shared, "we never heard him complain about anything" and praised SSG Self's ability to work calmly under pressure. As an example of SSG Self's calmness under pressure, Rawlings said SSG Self once evacuated his wounded gunner after an artillery shell exploded underneath their vehicle.

He is survived by his father and step mother, Eddie F. Self and Kathleen Self; his mother, Linda Rhodes; his sister, Kimela Shull; and his step sisters, Lorene Thomas and Sherry Wilmouth.

The sacrifice of this brave soldier will always be remembered.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PRAMILA JAYAPAL

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I strongly believe that crimes against children are particularly egregious. It is our duty as members of Congress to do everything we can to prevent these crimes and hold offenders accountable. However, I felt compelled to vote against H.R. 1842, H.R. 1862, and H.R. 1761, as each of these flawed bills would increase the application of mandatory minimum sentences in the U.S. criminal justice system. Judges already have the ability to impose harsh sentences in these cases as they see fit. Mandatory minimum sentences make it impossible for judges to take context or circumstance into consideration, which eliminates judicial discretion and compromises the futures of those at the hands of our justice system. Mandatory minimums create a glaring disproportionality between crime and according punishment and subsequently expand prison populations, strain resources and structures of support, and disproportionately impact communities of color. Because of my stance on this issue and my steadfast resolve to fight any expansion of mandatory minimum sentences, I have voted against each of these bills. I remain committed

to protecting our children and doing everything in my power to prevent crimes against children from happening, but expanding mandatory minimums is not the answer. I look forward to working with my colleagues across the aisle as we continue to pursue critical reforms to the criminal justice system.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN MISSISSIPPI MARINE PRIVATE FIRST CLASS (PFC) STEPHEN PHILLIP BALDWIN

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of Marine Private First Class (PFC) Stephen Phillip Baldwin who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our great nation on May 5, 2005. PFC Baldwin was killed in an explosion, while he was conducting combat operations in Nasser Wa Salaam, Iraq. He was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

During his military service, he received the Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Navy Sea Service Deployment, and Navy and Marine Corps Overseas Service Ribbon. He was also awarded the Rifle Marksman badge.

PFC Baldwin was born on May 7, 1986, in Saltillo, MS. He earned his Eagle Scout badge before graduating from high school in 2004 and leaving for boot camp. He was 19 years old at the time of his death.

PFC Baldwin is survived by his parents, Danny and Stephanie Baldwin.

The sacrifice of this brave Marine will always be remembered.

RECOGNIZING GREG GARRISON

HON. TODD ROKITA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and salute the distinguished “Voice

of the Heartland”, Greg Garrison, who has announced that he will retire from his radio program on June 9, 2017. I wish to express my admiration and appreciation for Mr. Garrison and his constant dedication to his conservative Hoosier values.

Greg’s commitment to the rule of law and justice began before he took to the airwaves, serving the community through his law firm Garrison Law, which focuses on personal injury, business, and commercial law. It was through his diligent work in his practice that he gained fame during the high profile prosecution of boxer Mike Tyson in 1992. That case led to opportunities to offer legal analysis nationwide for major trials such as O.J. Simpson and Timothy McVeigh, and on various media platforms such as 60 Minutes, the Today Show, 48 Hours, the FOX News Channel, Rivera Live and ESPN.

Greg became a Hoosier treasure through his radio program that began twenty years ago. His program, Garrison, became an institution of measured thought and Hoosier values. He connected with his listeners through his warm demeanor that sounded more like a friend than a commentator. He was a positive influence on the lives of the countless Hoosiers that spent their mornings listening to him.

I have known Greg for almost as long as he has been on the air. As Secretary of State, I was a guest on his show on several occasions, speaking about the need to improve election integrity with the adoption of the state’s photo ID law. We also discussed investigations into voter fraud and redistricting reform. As a member of Congress, my appearances were more frequent as a regular on his program until he cut back his hours and moved to a later timeslot. I will always remember he asked tough, but fair questions teeming with Hoosier common sense.

While it will be sad to not hear his voice over Indianapolis’ airwaves every day, he will not be disappearing from the scene completely. He plans to be on the radio every now and again and he plans to stay active in his law practice. But his daily presence will be missed.

Congratulations to Greg on twenty years of service to the Hoosier state and a happy and well-deserved retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF FALLEN SOLDIER ARMY SERGEANT (SGT) MARK ALLEN MAIDA

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 26, 2017

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of fallen soldier Army Sergeant (SGT) Mark Allen Maida who paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our nation on May 27, 2005, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. SGT Maida died of wounds he suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle in Diyarrah, Iraq.

SGT Maida was assigned to the 2nd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, attached to Mississippi’s 155th Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force, Fort Irwin, California. SGT Maida chose to join the Army shortly after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. He joined the Army on October 31, 2001, and was assigned to Fort Irwin, California, where he assisted in training soldiers in preparation for deployment to Iraq. Fallen Heroes Project writes that SGT Maida was originally scheduled for discharge in October of 2004, and he was planning to attend Madison Area Technical College. Instead, his service was extended, and he was deployed to Iraq in January of 2005.

SGT Maida was born in Madison, Wisconsin on November 15, 1982 to parents Ray and Diane Maida. He graduated from Memorial High School in 2001. According to Fallen Heroes Project, Chris Maida, a veteran, attempted to talk his brother out of enlisting. Chris said, “He just laughed. He loved life and he wasn’t afraid of anything.” The Chicago Tribune writes that SGT Maida was “known for a great sense of humor and loved hunting, fishing and the outdoors; but most of all he loved his family and friends.”

SGT Maida’s survivors include his parents, Ray and Diane Maida; a sister, Juliann Mutch; two brothers, Aaron Maida and Christopher Maida; one grandmother, Olga Herman; two nieces and two nephews.

The sacrifice of this brave soldier will always be remembered.