

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNITION OF THOMAS L. GROOMS, JR. AS A WORLD WAR II VETERAN

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 30, 2000

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize a great American hero from my district Savannah, Ga., Thomas L. Grooms, Jr. as a World War II Veteran. We should all stand up and applaud Mr. Grooms for his service in the Battle of the Bulge. He used his talent as a Medic to treat those injured and hurt in the line of duty. Without his dedication to helping others many lives would have been lost.

The Battle of the Bulge took place in Germany in 1944. While Mr. Grooms was there he sent all of his pay home to provide for his mother and sister. When the war ended he did not get to go home, instead he stayed in Germany to manage multiple hospitals. Several months later he returned to the United States with no great fan fare. All of the jobs were already taken by the soldiers that had returned earlier.

Mr. Grooms decided to go back to school since he was struggling to make ends meet. He became a Chemist and stayed with American Cyanamid/Kemira Pigments for 33 years. He has since retired and is desperately trying to battle colon cancer.

Mr. Grooms and his wife Bette will celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary on November 5th. In today's society marriages like theirs represent a shining example of family devotion. Both are native Georgians—with their families having migrated from England and Ireland in the 1700's. He and his wife raised four children with strong Christian ethics and family values.

Mr. Grooms wife, Bette, is retired from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with over 25 and 1/2 years service. The citizens of my district have been the true beneficiaries for the many personal sacrifices this family has done in order to serve their community, church, and country.

Mr. Grooms' presence and dedication to our country helped insure the freedom we enjoy today. His unselfish acts made a difference to the families of each person he helped. America's all volunteer military has always served with pride meeting the challenges necessary to maintain our national security, to protect American interests at home and abroad, and to guarantee our freedoms and way of life. Our Veterans made many sacrifices to protect our freedoms and way of life, and Americans owe them a great deal.

Please join me again in applauding Mr. Grooms. His warmth, generosity, and friendship has touched thousands of people in his community, church, and family. Without him our country's history would be different. The

dedication of this brave man helped shape our history. Our society today needs more people like him who unselfishly dedicate to their lives and fight for the freedom of our country. This man is a very brave person and deserves to be recognized as an American hero. I am pleased to submit this acknowledgment of his continuing life in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

My name is (Tommy) Thomas L. Grooms, III. I have met you before and I have been in your office here in Savannah (on Abercorn). I am a staunch Republican Christian Married Male who is retired from the U.S. Air Force (having served over half of my career assigned to an active-duty slot with the 165th Airlift Wing, Georgia Air National Guard in Savannah). I was a single parent of two precious daughters for over ten years and struggling in service to our country as an enlisted member on a "fixed" income in a slot with no upward mobility. I was forced to retire three years ago when my slot was abolished and I was devastated to say the least. I am now employed with the Coastal Heritage Society, here in Savannah, in an administrative position as Assistant to the Executive Director. This is more of a title than anything, as my income is very low—due to this being a non-profit organization, as you well know. I was blessed with a new wife a little over a year ago. My father has cancer (in the final stages—he is currently in ICU at Candler Hospital, here in Savannah). My wife was one of his medical care-providers when he was initially diagnosed with cancer.

The reason that I am writing to you with this long message is two-fold:

1.) My Father, Thomas L. Grooms, Jr., is a World-War II Veteran—he served as a "Hero" in The Battle of the Bulge—as a matter of fact, Time-Life has a series of books out on World War II, with one book dedicated solely to The Battle of the Bulge—and in this book is a full-one-page picture of my Father on the Battle-Field. He served as a Medic and, when the War ended, he did not get to come home, but was left to manage multiple hospitals in Germany for a number of months. When he arrived back in the states, there was no ticker-tape parade for him and all of the jobs were taken. While he was away at War, he sent all of his pay home to provide for his Mother, who was dying of colon cancer (the same that he now has) and for his sister (his Father, who was a Medical Doctor, had passed away when my Father was an infant) . . . My Father struggled and to make ends meet, went back to school, married my Mother at Calvary Baptist Temple—here in Savannah (with the ceremony being performed by Dr. John Wilder), and I was born a year later in 1951. He retired from American Cyanamid/Kemira Pigments—with over 33 years employment—here in Savannah over 10 years ago, as a Chemist, where he was exposed to many chemicals for many years (contributing, I believe to his cancer condition today). My Father just had his 77th Birthday on October 5, 2000. On November 5, 2000—my parents—Tom & Bette Grooms—will celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

a. What I am getting to is this:

(1) Is there any way that you could possibly have my Father recognized in some

special way for his War efforts (so many sacrifices) in behalf of our country—before it is too late? You obviously are aware that our country, to date, has not ever properly recognized our World War II Veterans—I am aware of the planned Washington Monument/Memorial—but, it may be too late for my Dad, Jack. . . . Please do something if you can. . . . You don't know how much I would appreciate this . . .

(2) Congrats ltr? you could have both of my parents recognized for their 50th Wedding Anniversary (NOV 5)—should my Dad live long enough to be here for it??? . . . Their Names, Again: Mr. & Mrs. Thomas L. Grooms, Jr. (Tom & Bette)—My Mother's Maiden Name is: Barbaree. Both of my parents are native Georgians—with their family having migrated here from England and Ireland in the 1700's. They are both dear Christian people who have been so involved in their church all of their lives and have reared four children in a Godly, Christian home. They are well-respected in the community by their peers and family alike. They truly deserve to be recognized. As an added note, my Mother, Bette Grooms, retired from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with over 25½ years service, including employment at Historic Fort Pulaski under Mr. Ralston B. Lattimore, the original Superintendent who was responsible for the original restoration efforts there. She, too, was a hard worker who contributed much to this community for many years. . . . So, if you can have them recognized for all of this on this very special occasion, it would mean the world to them, me and the rest of our family and friends . . .

2.) The second issue deals with me and my fellow Veterans who have served our country as a career in the U.S. Air Force. I retired after having served over 25 years. I am, once again, a conservative Christian Family Man Who is a Card-Carrying Republican. I am appalled at what our country has done to its Veterans. We were promised free medical, dental, insurance, etc. for the rest of our lives—in return for 20 or more years of service. We however, have to pay for "Tri-Care" and have no Dental Insurance, Eye Care, or Life Insurance . . . I, also, happen to have qualified for V.A. benefits due to disability suffered from a broken back, etc. while in service (I am a Viet Nam Era Veteran, as well). However, every dollar that I receive in V.A. is taken out of my retirement pay. Why is it that a young person can serve 6 months of service and be placed on V.A. due to an injury/disability and receive the same pay that I receive after having had served for over 25 years.

(a) If there is any way you could help initiate a bill and push it through Congress to eliminate this unfair practice/discrepancy—and allocate payment of retirement pay to those who have earned it, as well as V.A.—and another bill to return the proper medical care to all Veteran Retirees for Life, as originally promised by our U.S. Government Representatives/Recruiters/Retention Officers—this would be so very much appreciated, along with a reasonable increase in Retirement Pay for Military Retirees, so we won't have to struggle so much on the outside . . . If I was making more in retirement

● 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.

at this very moment, I would not have to be working to make ends meet and would be at the hospital, helping to morally support my parents during this very trying time. . . .

In closing, thank-you, Jack, for all that you have done for our community, our state and our nation—and for how you present yourself—as an Honest, God-fearing, Christian, Family, Moral Man with Values. If there is ever anything that I can do to help support your mission, your campaign, your office, please do not hesitate to call upon me, sir!

Anything that you can do positively relative to the above shared situations would be greatly appreciated and would not go unnoticed. Thank-You, again, Jack, and May God Continue To Richly Bless You In All That You Undertake For His Glory and For The Betterment of Mankind, Our Country, Our Community, and Your Family!!!

Looking forward to hearing from you in the near future in a most positive manner concerning these matters, I am most humbly and sincerely,

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 30, 2000

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote number 575 on October 29, 2000 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

IN HONOR OF PETER AKINYELE

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 30, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a truly remarkable man, one who genuinely exemplifies what it means to be a loving, peaceful person, even under the most adverse circumstances.

On Thursday, September 14, around 11:00 pm, Peter Akinyele's 16-year-old neighbor asked to use his phone. He did, only to return with a friend—and a gun. The young boys demanded money while holding the weapon to Peter's head, and yet the 67-year-old maintained a calm, collected composure, asking them simply to "put the gun down."

Peter Akinyele also maintained his composure as the boys proceeded to slash his throat open, beat him and bound his hands and feet with an electrical cord. Near unconscious, the boys threw him in the basement, ignoring his last request: "Please don't set the house on fire," as he collapsed from pain and fatigue. Peter awoke to the smell of gasoline and smoke, and the sound of firefighters extinguishing the blaze. Peter broke through a basement window with his bare hand, and, shouting for help, was eventually heard amidst the chaos. Finally, his ordeal was over and he was brought to safety.

To this day, Peter Akinyele has no trace of anger toward his young and ruthless attackers. Throughout the entire fiasco, he says, his main concern was not only that he

would live to see the next day, but that the boys would have a future themselves. Realizing the potential danger if he struggled for control of the gun, he simply talked to the young boys, saying "Please don't shoot me. Don't do this. This is not the right thing to do." Even when someone was attempting to brutally end his life, Peter Akinyele remained strong-willed, and yet empathetic. He would not give up this own life, but he would not even attempt to harm theirs for the sake of his own survival. Certainly, this is a man who does not believe in fighting violence with more violence.

My fellow colleagues, Peter Akinyele is a man who deserves the highest respects for his noble suffering. Many people can look to him as an example of the peaceful nature and genuinely loving heart that all should aim to cultivate in their lives. I commend him for his courage, bravery, and loving heart.

RECOGNITION OF U.S. WEIGHTLIFTING TEAM—MICHAEL COHEN, HEAD COACH; CHERYL HAWORTH; CARA HEADS-LANE; SUZANNE LEATHERS; MICHAEL MARTIN; AND OSCAR CHAPLIN III

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 30, 2000

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Michael Cohen, head coach; Cheryl Haworth; Cara Heads-Lane; Suzanne Leathers; Michael Martin; and Oscar Chaplin III as members of the United States 2000 Summer Olympic Weightlifting Team. All of these amazing individuals live in my Savannah, GA., part of my congressional district. They have worked hard and represented our country well. We should be proud of the way they represented our country.

Michael Cohen the head coach of the U.S. Women's Olympic Team was an alternate for the 1980 U.S. Olympic Team that was boycotted so he did not get to participate. In 1984 Cohen did not get the chance to compete again because he was an alternate. In 1988, he injured his back and was unable to compete. It was then that he realized that the only way he would make it into the Olympics was to be a coach and it was then he founded the Paul Anderson/Howard Cohen Weightlifting Center. He is a great coach and an inspiration to all of the people that come into his gym.

Cohen had to wait some 20 years to experience his dream of participating in the Olympic Games. He was allowed to walk in the open ceremonies with all of the athletes. This was a treat because some countries do not allow the coaches to walk in the open ceremonies. Cohen's father started him lifting weights at the age of 5.

Cheryl Haworth of Savannah, Georgia became the youngest U.S. athlete ever to win an Olympic medal in weightlifting when she earned a bronze medal in the women's plus 75kg with a total of 270.0kg. On her way to winning the bronze medal, Haworth set four American records—two in the snatch and two in the total.

Haworth began lifting only three and a half years ago. She is the exception to the rule of training for many years equals success. She walked in the gym some three years ago in order to increase her strength for playing softball. As soon as she walked into the Paul Anderson/Howard Cohen Weightlifting Center the coaches at the gym immediately realized her amazing natural talent and began her training.

Haworth is a three time national champion and holds every American record in her weight class. Haworth won America's only medal at the 1900 Worlds, a bronze in the snatch.

Cara Heads-Lane moved to Savannah, Georgia four years ago from Costa Mesa, California in order to train. She has been training since the age of 8 and has worked a long time in order to make it to the Olympics. Cara placed 7th in the Women's Heavyweight in the 2000 Olympic Games.

Oscar Chaplin III was the first American in history to win Junior World Championship. Chaplin finished 12th in the men's Middle Weight in the 2000 Olympic Games. Chaplin has been lifting weights since the age of 9 and is ranked in the top 15. He holds the National Junior and Senior records for the last three years.

Suzanne Leathers was an alternate for the 2000 Olympic Weightlifting Team. She moved to Savannah, GA. with her coach Donald McCauley to be in the weightlifting capitol. She and Donald decided that they would get married if she made the Olympic Team. So, on September 14, 2000 they tied the knot in Australia. I wish them a happy and joyful life together.

Michael Martin was the youngest person to ever make it on to an Olympic weightlifting team. He was picked as an alternate for the 2000 Olympic Team. His sights are set for the 2004 Olympics.

Please join me in applauding all of these fine young men and women. They have worked extremely hard to reach this momentous goal. Let us all look up to them and strive to work as hard as they have to reach a goal. Our society needs more people like them that work extremely hard to represent our country. These young people proved that our American youth are indeed the best.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

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IN HONOR OF OHIO PTA'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 30, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Ohio PTA on its 100th Anniversary, on May 21, 2001.