

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT FIRST
CLASS DEBORAH L. THORN

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 27, 2001

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity to congratulate Sergeant First Class Deborah Thorn, of Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, who was recently named as the 2001 Army Drill Sergeant of the Year. SFC Thorn was chosen out of 2400 drill sergeants across the active Army. The Army's drill sergeants are responsible for all initial entry training for the Army's 120,000 new recruits annually.

SFC Thorn enlisted in the Army on her birthday, 3 September 1993 and has served in Fort Huachuca, Arizona and Germany before moving to Fort Leonard Wood to become a drill sergeant. She has served as a drill sergeant for the last 25 months in Alpha Company, 795th MP Battalion, 14th MP Brigade. She will attend the Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course in July. Following her completion of the course, she will then serve a year at Training and Doctrine Command headquarters as an advisor to the commander on drill sergeant and basic training matters.

Mr. Speaker, I know the Members of this body will join me in congratulating SFC Thorn for her outstanding dedication and service to the U.S. Army. She is a tremendous role model for soldiers, not only at Fort Leonard Wood, but across the entire U.S. Army. I join her husband Lee and daughter Samantha in wishing SFC Thorn all the best in the days ahead.

VASSAR POLICE CHIEF JOHN
HORWATH: A BADGE OF HONOR

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 27, 2001

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Vassar Police Chief John Horwath as he prepares to close the book on a long and venerable career serving and protecting the citizens of Vassar, Michigan. John's faithfulness and dedication in his work has made him an invaluable part of law enforcement in his community and throughout the state during his 36 years on the job, the past 32 years of which he served as Police Chief.

As Chief, John has made great strides in making and keeping Vassar a safe and enviable place to call home. Just last February, John put himself at great personal risk when he chased and apprehended a bank robbery suspect who had fled by car and later took off on foot. John's valor, talent and dedication to duty have been a hallmark of his tenure. He has helped establish the Vassar Police Department as a top-shelf agency that others should seek to emulate. Moreover, the impact of his hard work and adherence to excellence have undoubtedly made a profound difference in the lives of countless people throughout his career.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

John, however, has never been content to limit his contributions to the workplace. He has been an avid and frequent community activist who has touched the lives of friends, neighbors and strangers for many years. During the Persian Gulf War, John made it his mission to garner homefront support and display patriotism for our overseas troops. He also has often gone the extra mile in helping coordinate safety measures for scores of events in the Vassar area. In addition, John was one of the first to respond to the needs of his neighbors during the 1986 flood that devastated the community and he earned a special commendation for providing relief and support to the victims.

Those employed in law enforcement fully understand the important role family plays in supporting such work. John's wife, Katherine, and four children, RaeAnn, Michael, Matt, and John Thomas, have willingly and generously shared John with the community and everyone is the better for it.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I wish to praise John Horwath's work ethic and steadfast dedication. He has been an outstanding asset to the Vassar Police Department and the entire community. His presence will be sorely missed. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating John for his 36 years of service and in wishing him the best in his retirement.

INTRODUCTION OF THE
"THOMASINA E. JORDAN INDIAN
TRIBES OF VIRGINIA FEDERAL
RECOGNITION ACT"

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 27, 2001

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, today I am joined by Representatives. JO ANN DAVIS, RICK BOUCHER, TOM DAVIS, BOBBY SCOTT, and EDWARD SCHROCK in introducing the "Thomasina E. Jordan Indian Tribes of Virginia Federal Recognition Act."

This legislation will grant federal recognition to six Indian tribes in Virginia: the Chickahominy Tribe, Chickahominy Indian Tribe Eastern Division, the Upper Mattaponi, the Rappahannock Tribe, the Monacan Tribe, and the Nansemond Tribe.

As we approach the 400th anniversary of the first permanent European settlement in North America, it seems appropriate that the direct descendants of the native Americans, who met these settlers, should be recognized by the federal government and that we acknowledge these historic tribes and the significance of their heritage. Together, the men and women of these tribes represent a long neglected part of our nation's history.

The Virginia tribes have fought hard to retain their heritage and cultural identity. The legislation we are introducing today describes the history of the tribes and their early treaty rights with the Kings of England and the colonial government. Like much of our early history as a nation, the Virginia tribes were subdued, pushed off their land, and up to the mid 20th century, denied full rights as U.S. citizens. Despite their devastating losses of land and population, the Virginia Indians success-

fully overcame the years of racial discrimination that denied them equal opportunities to pursue their education and preserve their cultural identity.

Federal recognition would provide what the government has long denied, legal protections and financial obligations, including certain social services and benefits the federal government provides the 558 recognized tribes. At a time when our nation is trying to remedy past injustices to the Indians, Virginia's Indians are denied these benefits because none are recognized by the federal government. Not one of the 558 tribes recognized by the federal government reside in Virginia.

I know that the gambling issue may be at the forefront of some members' concerns. In response to this concern, we have worked to close any potential legal loopholes in the legislation to ensure that the state could prevent casino-type gaming by the tribes. Having maintained a close relationship with many of the members of these tribes, I believe they are sincere in their claims that gambling is inconsistent with their values. This position is already borne out by the fact that none of the tribes today engage in bingo gambling despite the fact that they have all established nonprofit organizations that are permitted under Virginia law to operate bingo games despite compelling financial needs that revenues from bingo could address.

The real issue for the tribes is one of recognition and the long overdue need for the federal government to affirm their identity as Native Americans. Coupled with this affirmation is an opportunity for the tribes to establish a more equitable relationship with the state and secure federal financial assistance for the tribes' social services, health care and housing needs. Many of their older members face the prospect of retiring without pensions and health benefits that most Americans take for granted.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:
"MEDICARE RURAL AMBULANCE
SERVICE EQUITY ACT OF 2001"

HON. JOHN P. MURTHA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 27, 2001

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, from an urban setting to the furthest reaches of rural America, Americans have come to expect and rely on health care that includes emergency ambulance service. Unfortunately, for many of us, our first exposure to medical care is, all too often, the EMS unit that responds to our call for help. Yet, for millions of Americans living in rural America this cornerstone of medical care is in danger of collapse.

Typically, rural EMS is a small one or two unit service, staffed by volunteers, not affiliated with a major medical facility, that responds to 350 to 500 calls per year within a large radius (37 miles average) who's greatest danger to its existence comes from Medicare.

From the Pacific Northwest to the Florida panhandle to the rural setting of Pennsylvania,