

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT FIRST
CLASS PAUL SMITH

HON. JIM DAVIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2005

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Sergeant First Class Paul Smith, of Tampa, Florida.

Yesterday, President Bush posthumously awarded Sergeant Smith with our nation's highest military honor—the first Medal of Honor awarded to a soldier since 1993. Sergeant Smith always gave his fellow soldiers, his country and his family his very best. But on April 4, 2003, Sergeant Smith showed extraordinary valor when making the ultimate sacrifice for the soldiers whose lives he saved and the values and ideals that have made this country great.

Sergeant Smith had always wanted to serve our country as a professional soldier, and when he graduated from Tampa Bay Technical High School at 18, he immediately enlisted in the Army. He went on to serve in the Persian Gulf War, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo before serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Sergeant Smith was known for holding his soldiers to high standards, but on April 4, 2003, he held himself to the highest standard of all. Sergeant Smith's unit, B Company of the 11th Engineer Battalion was constructing a prisoner holding area at Baghdad Airport when their compound came under attack by nearly 100 Iraqi soldiers. Sergeant Smith immediately organized the unit's defense and risked his own life to hold back the enemy and help move injured soldiers to safety.

Despite Sergeant Smith and the unit's efforts, the enemy continued to fire on the compound. When faced with the call of having to pull his troops back, Sergeant Smith chose instead to take an exposed position behind a mounted .50-caliber machine gun and fire through three boxes of ammunition before being mortally wounded by enemy fire.

The official medal citation said Sergeant 1st Class Smith's "courageous actions helped defeat the enemy attack, and resulted in as many as 50 enemy soldiers killed, while allow-

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ing the safe withdrawal of numerous wounded soldiers. Sergeant First Class Smith's extraordinary heroism and uncommon valor are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the Third Infantry Division 'Rock of the Marne,' and the United States Army."

Paul Smith was a loving and devoted father, husband, brother and son. While the Medal of Honor will never fill the enormous hole in hearts of Sergeant Smith's family, this honor signifies our nation's deepest appreciation for Sergeant Smith's heroism and sacrifice. His courage and patriotism will never be forgotten.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF THE MAYOR OF SCHERTZ,
HAL BALDWIN

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Hal Baldwin, mayor of Schertz, Texas, for his commitment to public service.

Hal Baldwin's life has been fully dedicated towards helping of his fellow citizens ever since he served with the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing at Naba Air Force Base during the Korean war. He continued to serve with the U.S. Air Force until 1974, when he retired from the military profession as a senior master sergeant.

After the conclusion of his military tenure, Baldwin moved back to Schertz where he served 6 years as the assistant city manager of Schertz. After his tour of duty as the assistant city manager, Baldwin was appointed to the Schertz City Council in 1983. He served his community with distinction in this post until May 1994 when the City Councilman Hal Baldwin became the Mayor Hal Baldwin.

Now, going on 11 years of service to Schertz as Mayor, Hal Baldwin also has spent 48 lovely years with his wife Barbara. They have five children, eight grandchildren, and two great-grand children, all of whom Mayor and Mrs. Baldwin love dearly.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply proud to have been given this opportunity to recognize the Schertz mayor, Hal Baldwin, for his dedicated public service.

April 5, 2005

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF REVEREND LESTER J. GIL-
LESPIE, SR.

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the important contributions of the Reverend Lester J. Gillespie, Sr.

Rev. Gillespie is a native of San Antonio, Texas. He comes from a family tradition of spiritual service; he is the son of the late Rev. W.G. Gillespie and the late Sister Vernell Gillespie-Jones. He received his Bachelor and Doctor of Divinity from the Guadalupe Baptist Theological Seminary, as well as a Doctor of Divinity from the American International Theological Seminary.

Lester Gillespie has had a long and distinguished career of community service and religious leadership. He is a former Pastor of the Mount Olive Baptist Church in Crystal City, Texas, the 2nd Vice President of the Ministers Conference of the National Baptist Convention of America, and Moderator of the United Fellowship Baptist District Association. He has worked to reach out to some of our State's most troubled citizens as Chaplain of the Frio County Jail Ministry and Chairman of the Gang Intervention Committee of the Southern Baptist Association of San Antonio.

Currently, Rev. Gillespie serves as the Organizer and Pastor of the Greater Love Missionary Church in San Antonio, and National President of the Ministers United for Ministerial Development. He provides invaluable spiritual leadership to both his San Antonio church and the national Baptist community. Finally, he helps to build a future for the next generation as founder of the Rev. W.G. Gillespie and Vernell Gillespie-Jones Memorial Institute Scholarship Fund.

Mr. Speaker, Reverend Gillespie is one of our most accomplished and beloved community leaders, and I am proud and happy to have the chance to honor him here today.