

Her organization memberships include: Board of Directors of the Drew Park, Renaissance Foundation Board, James E. Clyburn Golf Center Board, City Lighting Committee, City of Columbia Citizens Advisory Committee for Community Development, several neighborhood crime prevention programs, and the W.A. Perry Middle School support group.

Mrs. Martin has received numerous awards for her service including recognition by the American Cancer Society, the Columbia City Council, the Columbia Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, and Richland County School District One. On May 1, 2010, she added the honor of the dedication of The Elise Jones Martin Place to her long list of accomplishments.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the contributions of a true community leader. Mrs. Elise Jones Martin has spent her entire life giving back to her community and improving the quality of life for her neighbors. I am pleased to call Mrs. Martin a friend, and I add my voice to those of so many others in thanking her for her selfless service. She is a remarkable individual who is deserving of our appreciation.

HONORING THE SEVEN GOLD STAR MEMBERS OF THE WELSH BETH-EL BAPTIST CHURCH WHO SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES DURING WORLD WAR I AND WORLD WAR II

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 26, 2010

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to the seven Gold Star Members of the Welsh Bethel Baptist Church in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

The Welsh Bethel Baptist Church was founded in 1884.

During the 1940s, the Church established an Honor Roll of all of the members of the Church who served during World War II. In total, 111 members of the Church served in World War II, including 110 men and 1 woman.

The Church would honor those who were killed in action during the War by placing a gold star next to their name on the Honor Roll. Six members of the Church were killed in action during World War II and received this honor.

About ten years ago, the Church recognized its only member to be killed in action during World War I by adding his name to the Honor Roll along with a gold star.

Every year on Memorial Day, the Church holds a ceremony to honor its seven Gold Star Members.

On Sunday, May 30, 2010 the Church will pay tribute to the seven Gold Star Members of the Church by dedicating a memorial stone in front of the church in their honor.

The seven Gold Star Members, and Wilkes-Barre natives, being honored are:

Private William Robbins who was killed in Germany in World War I. He was only sixteen years old.

Private First Class Charles Grosspietsch who was killed in Luzon in the Philippines during World War II. He was 20 years old.

Corporal Kenneth Hobbs who was killed in Whelan, Germany during World War II. He was 28 years old.

Private First Class Robert Hummel who was killed in Germany during World War II. He was 21 years old.

Private William Parry, Jr. who died at Normandy during World War II. He was 24 years old.

Private William L. Richards who was killed in Anzio, Italy during World War II. He was 22 years old.

Staff Sergeant Thomas D. Williams who was killed in Russeisheim, Germany during World War II. He was 24 years old.

The memorial stone will be unveiled by Jack Johnson, the last surviving World War II veteran of the Church.

Madam Speaker, please join me in honoring these brave men who gave their lives protecting our country. This stone will serve as a reminder for future generations of the ultimate sacrifice made by these seven men who came before them.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 26, 2010

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of seniors, Social Security and Medicare.

Social Security and Medicare are among the most important programs ever created by our Government. Older Americans have worked hard and sacrificed themselves to ensure a better, stronger country for future generations. They deserve a secure, healthy retirement.

Together, Social Security and Medicare have helped tens of millions of seniors avoid poverty, enjoy better health, and maintain a respectable standard of living. For countless seniors, Medicare has literally saved their lives, giving access to medical treatment they would otherwise have been unable to afford.

These programs are a measure of what we truly value, and who we are as a Nation.

It was not always this way. Prior to the establishment of Medicare in 1965, a serious illness or hospitalization could easily bankrupt not only a senior, but his or her entire family. A single serious illness—a round of pneumonia, or a broken hip—could render an elderly man or woman destitute. Too often, our elders simply went without needed medical care, suffering and even dying because decent health care was out of reach.

I bring this up today to underscore the need for vigilance in protecting Medicare and Social Security from those that seek to privatize these vital programs. Indeed, the retirement and health security of today's retirees, today's workers, and future generations rests on the decisions that Congress makes on these programs.

During the year-long debate over health care reform, we heard a great deal of rhetoric from our Republican colleagues about the need to protect Medicare. Yet when given the chance to strengthen Medicare by providing better benefits, lowering costs, and preserving Medicare's solvency for years to come, my Republican colleagues unanimously voted no.

In opposing Health Care Reform, my colleagues said no to free preventive care for seniors, no to ending the 'donut hole' for prescription drug coverage and lowering prescription drug costs, and no to more time with and better access to primary care physicians.

Further, while erroneously assailing health reform legislation as detrimental to seniors and Medicare, the ranking Republican member on the House Committee on the Budget introduced H.R. 4529, the Roadmap for America's Future, which purports to rescue and strengthen Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security, allowing them to fulfill their missions and making them permanently solvent—all while putting the federal budget on a sustainable path. If this were true, I would be the first in line to cosponsor the legislation.

However, analysis of the "Roadmap for America's Future" by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities revealed the plan "would raise taxes for most middle-income families, privatize a substantial portion of Social Security, eliminate the tax exclusion for employer-sponsored health insurance, end traditional Medicare and most of Medicaid, and terminate the Children's Health Insurance Program. The plan would replace these health programs with a system of vouchers whose value would erode over time and thus would purchase health insurance that would cover fewer health care services as the years went by."

What I find most disturbing about this proposal is the failure to acknowledge a connection between the recent volatility of the stock market and the effect that would have on privatized Social Security accounts. When a trillion dollars of wealth can disappear in 30 minutes, as it did on May 6, 2010, we know that the stock market is not the place for seniors' life savings. Privatization, or partial privatization, of the Social Security system would have been disastrous for millions of senior citizens that depend on their Social Security checks every month. Likewise, replacing Medicare with a voucher system and letting seniors fend for themselves on the private market would leave our seniors with less and less care every year.

America's seniors have worked long and hard to build a prosperous Nation, yet too many seniors in this country saw their retirement savings get decimated by President Bush's economic crisis. I rise today to assure seniors that I and the Democrats in Congress will continue to stand firmly opposed to any and all efforts to privatize Social Security or turn Medicare into a voucher program. Moreover, we will continue to take a leading role to improve—rather than undermine—Social Security and Medicare.