EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PROVIDE VETERANS WITH BEST HEALTH CARE AND HIGHEST COMPENSATION

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker I rise today in the spirit of Independence Day to recognize the will and strength of our men and women in uniform as they fought in wars past and continue to maintain our commitment to democracy throughout the world. Our veterans are living examples of the ideals of our founding fathers and it is those same ideals that are inspiring a new generation of veterans.

More than 300 years ago, the first generation of American veterans fought a war to establish our sovereignty. Along with our independence came the understanding that America would need protection, and we would need a constant military force to ensure the preservation of these freedoms. Americans answered the call to duty, and the willingness of our troops to boldly go into harms way in the defense of democracy has not wavered.

As our nation's veterans volunteered to risk their lives for our protection, our country and its leaders have an obligation to provide them with the care and resources they need and are entitled to once they retire. Veterans have made significant, personal sacrifices and have earned the very best we can offer them.

Yesterday marked the 60th anniversary of the GI Bill, an important step our leaders took to recognize the commitment we owe our veterans. Because of the GI Bill, our veterans were given assistance with the costs of a college education and helped with the purchase of a home or business.

A lot was done, but there is still much to do. Health benefits need improving, the Widow's Tax and Disabled Veterans Tax need ending and education benefits should still be expanded. We cannot increase their costs for health care, and we must not cut funding to their system.

George Washington said "the willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation." Our nation's veterans served and protected us, and they inspired the soldiers who responded to the call after them. They fought for our country, for the continued prosperity of our government, and once their service has ended, they should not have to fight the government for the benefits they deserve.

I call on my colleagues in Congress to continue to work together to provide veterans with the best healthcare and the highest compensation, as it is the least they have earned for their years of service.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO TAMERA BICKETT

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the life and legacy of Tamera "Tami" Bickett of Powell Butte, Oregon. Tami bravely battled the Storm King Mountain Fire outside the town of Glenwood Springs, Colorado in 1994, but succumbed to the blaze along with thirteen fellow firefighters while working to protect the City. I personally served as a firefighter and understand the risks they face each and every day. Witnessing the awful inferno that fateful July day, I know Tami and her comrades battled the fire with the utmost courage and valor. With the tenth anniversary of the Storm King Fire approaching, I believe it appropriate to recognize the sacrifice Tami and the Storm King Firefighters made on behalf of a grateful community, state and nation.

Born and raised in Lebanon, Oregon, Tami was a competitive athlete in high school, participating on the cross-country and volleyball teams. In her senior year of high school, she represented her community as a Strawberry Festival princess. Tami joined the U.S. Forest Service in 1988, and was a Squad Boss for the Prineville Hotshots, an elite group of firefighters who specialize in wildland fire suppression. She enjoyed the challenging rigors of fighting fires, even when injuries sustained on the job made her work difficult. She was a dedicated member of her crew, and received a great deal of satisfaction from helping others. Above all, she was devoted to her family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise before this body of Congress and this nation to pay tribute to the life and memory of Firefighter Tamera Bickett. Tami personified the Hotshots credo of Safety, Teamwork and Professionalism; putting herself in harm's way for unfamiliar people and places. She made the ultimate sacrifice doing what she loved, and I, along with the Glenwood Springs community and the State of Colorado are eternally grateful to this brave young woman.

TRIBUTE TO BISHOP VERNON RANDOLPH BYRD

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Bishop Vernon Randolph Byrd, one of eight legendary leaders of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) who will be retiring at this year Quadrennial Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana. A native of South Carolina, Bishop Byrd received a public school education. After graduating from Bell Street High School, he enrolled at Allen University, where he received the Bachelor of Arts degree. He later received a Master of Sacred Theology degree from Boston University.

Called to preach at the age of 12, Bishop Byrd was licensed to preach at the age of 17. His ministry included pastorates at Macedonia AME Church in Seaford, Delaware (1954–1959); St. Paul AME Church in Hamilton, Bermuda (1959–1966); and Macedonia AME Church in Camden, New Jersey (1979–1984). He also served as Presiding Elder of the Newark District from 1966–1967.

Bishop Byrd was elected the 105th Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church at 1984 General Conference and was assigned the 14th Episcopal District. He initiated numerous projects under his administration—one in particular was the Frank Curtis Cummings Health Clinic, which was built in Monrovia, Liberia.

During his tenure he presided over the 16th, 13th, and 5th Episcopal Districts, where his mission continued to be saving souls for the building of God's kingdom. His motto is "Unless souls are saved, nothing is saved!" Bishop Byrd holds memberships in the NAACP, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., and the Royal Lodge of Scotland.

Bishop Byrd is married to Theora Lindsey Byrd. They are the parents of four.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Bishop Vernon Randolph Byrd upon his retirement from the Bishopric. He has provided tremendous leadership for the AME Church, and his long history of educational leadership and service will influence future generations for ages to come. AME founder Richard Allen would be deeply proud of his Episcopal descendent.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF 2004 LEGRAND SMITH OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD WINNER LOLA COLLINS OF PARMA, MICHIGAN

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, education is the key to our Nation's future prosperity and security. The formidable responsibility of molding and inspiring young minds to the avenues of hope, opportunity and achievement partially rests in the hands of our teachers. Today, I would like to recognize a teacher from Parma, Michigan that significantly influenced and motivated exceptional students in academics and leadership who were winners of the LeGrand Smith Scholarship.

Lola Collins teaches fourth and fifth grade at Parma Elementary in Parma. She is credited with instilling in students an enthusiasm for not only these subjects, but also for life. As one of her students, Kelli McCarrell, said, "She showed me how to be who I am, and not be

afraid of experiences. Because she was my teacher for two years, she watched me grow up. Both of these years, she encouraged my curiosity for life and my energetic passion for knowledge—it is her influence that has helped me become who I am today.'' The respect and gratitude of her students speaks well of Lola's ability to challenge young minds and encourage them to always put forth their best effort.

Lola Collins' extraordinary work as a teacher has challenged and inspired countless students to move beyond the teenage tendency of superficial study and encourage them to foster deeper thought and connections to the real world. Arguably, no profession is more important because of its daily influence upon the future leaders of our community and our country, and Lola's impact on her students is certainly worthy of recognition.

On behalf of the Congress of the United States of America, I am proud to extend our highest praise to Lola Collins. We thank her for her continuing dedication to teaching and her willingness and ability to challenge and inspire students to strive for success.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RICHARD TYLER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the life and legacy of Richard Tyler of Grand Junction, Colorado. Rich bravely battled the Storm King Mountain Fire outside the town of Glenwood Springs, Colorado in 1994, but succumbed to the blaze along with thirteen fellow firefighters while working to protect the City. I personally served as a firefighter and understand the risks they face each and every day. Witnessing the awful inferno that fateful July day, I know Rich and his comrades battled the fire with the utmost courage and valor. With the tenth anniversary of the Storm King Fire approaching, I believe it appropriate to recognize the sacrifice Rich and the Storm King Firefighters made on behalf of a grateful community, state and nation.

Born and raised in Minnesota, Rich graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in forestry. He moved to Grand Junction in 1985 where he joined the Western Slope Helitack crew, a specialized group of firefighters who are often the first to respond to a wildland fire. Rich became the crew's foreman, always putting the safety of his crew first. He established the first heli-rappel program in the Rocky Mountain area, and was instrumental in developing the Forest Service's Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide. In 1994, he was recognized for his efforts by the Department of the Interior and received their National Aviation Safety Award. He was a good crew leader and received a great deal of satisfaction from helping others. Above all, he was devoted to his wife and son.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise before this body of Congress and this nation to pay tribute to the life and memory of Firefighter Richard Tyler. Rich was willing to put himself in harm's way for unfamiliar people and places. He made the ultimate sacrifice doing what he loved, and I, along with the Glenwood Springs community and the State of Colorado are eternally grateful to this brave man.

CELEBRATING GALESVILLE SESQUICENTENNIAL

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise before you today to honor the historic village of Galesville, Wisconsin. On June 26, 2004, Galesville will be celebrating its 150th anniversary, and activities will include the opening of a capsule that was buried fifty years ago on the town's 100th anniversary.

This quaint community in western Wisconsin overlooks Lake Marinuka and sits among rolling hills, towering cliffs, forests and spring-fed streams. The first settlers of the Galesville area were the Native Americans, who planted their history on the same soil the town of Galesville rests today. The influence of the Native Americans remains strong; this is apparent in the naming of Lake Marinuka, which was named after the legend of Princess Marie Nounko, who was the granddaughter of the Great Chief Decorah, the chief of the Winnebago tribe. Princess Marie's grave lies at the north end of the lake, where she was buried in 1884. In addition, the town of Galesville is blessed with a unique 100 year old bowstring bridge, located alongside the historic McGilvray Road.

Judge George Gale founded Gales College 150 years ago; soon after the town was born. In 1869, Rev. D.O. Van Slyke, circuit-riding preacher and Civil War veteran, believed Galesville was the biblical Garden of Eden because of its breathtaking surroundings. The term ''Garden of Eden,'' is still fitting to those walking the streets of this quiet village.

Galesville's Apple Affair has become a major Trempealeau County event. Since 1983, this annual event takes place on the first Saturday in October as part of Wisconsin's effort to promote the state's apple orchards. The Apple Affair draws many families from throughout the region. From apple pie to caramel apples, this annual celebration is a wonderful time to enjoy the outdoors, as well as get to know the friendly people of Galesville.

The 150th anniversary of Galesville highlights what is good and important about rural America to our country. There are thousands of small rural communities across this Nation that form the backbone of rural life; these communities are the incubators of local commerce, politics, education, recreation, entertainment and faith of rural neighborhoods. The hardworking citizens of small town America are the builders of our great Nation.

I am pleased to congratulate the citizens of Galesville on their sesquicentennial, and believe it is important to recognize their unique contribution to the growth of western Wisconsin. I wish them happiness and prosperity during the next 150 years.

TRIBUTE TO BISHOP FREDERICK HILLBORN TALBOT

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Bishop Frederick Hillborn Talbot, one of eight legendary leaders of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) who will be retiring at this year's Quadrennial Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Bishop Talbot is a graduate of Allen University located in the Sixth Congressional District of South Carolina which I proudly represent in this august body. He also matriculated at Yale Divinity School, Pacific School of Religion, and Columbia Theological Seminary. He completed further postgraduate work at Teachers College, Columbia University, and as a Resident Fellow at Harvard University in the fall of 1989.

Bishop Talbot has served in the 6th, 16th, and 12th Episcopal Districts since being elected the 90th Bishop of the AME Church in 1972. He has also served as the denomination's Ecumenical Officer. Bishop Talbot currently serves in the 13th Episcopal District, which includes the States of Kentucky and Tennessee. He is second in the Church's seniority of Bishops.

In 1996, Bishop Talbot edited the Book of Original Prayers, which served as an official document for the 45th Session of the AME Church's General Conference. He also authored New Eyes for Seeing (1998), Walking Through A Service of Worship in the AME Church (2000), and God's Fearless Prophet (2002). Bishop Talbot has composed several tunes and texts—one of which was included in RISK, the worship book used by the World Council of Churches for its 5th Assembly held in Nairobi, Kenya. Three of his texts are found in the AME Church Hymnal.

Prior to being called to the ministry, Bishop Talbot served in the diplomatic service of his native land, the Government of Guyana. There, he was recipient of the coveted Cacique Crown of Honor (CCH) for meritorious service.

Bishop Talbot is married to Dr. Sylvia Ross Talbot of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in paying tribute to Bishop Frederick Hillborn Talbot upon his retirement from the Bishopric. He has provided tremendous leadership for the AME Church and his long history of community leadership and church service will influence many generations for years to come.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF 2004 LEGRAND SMITH OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD WINNER

HON. NICK SMITH

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, education is the key to our Nation's future prosperity and security. The formidable responsibility of molding and inspiring young minds to the avenues of hope, opportunity and achievement partially rests in the hands of our teachers. Today, I would like to recognize a teacher