For their patriotism, for their commitment to freedom and democracy in Europe, and for their unyielding commitment to each other, it is my privilege to honor the American Association of Invalids and Veterans of World War II from the former USSR, and to warmly welcome them to Washington D.C.

TRIBUTE TO U.S. NAVY SEAL PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS BRIAN OUELLETTE

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 2004

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a fallen hero, Petty Officer 1st Class Brian J. Ouellette of Maynard, Massachusetts. He gave his life in service to our country, and we will forever be grateful.

Brian was a U.S. Navy SEAL deployed as part of Operation Enduring Freedom and serving with the elite Navy Special Warfare Group Two based out of Little Creek, Virginia. He died tragically on May 29th along with three of his comrades when their Humvee hit a landmine in the Zabul province of Afghanistan.

Petty Officer 1st Class Ouellette grew up in Waltham, Massachusetts and graduated from Waltham High School in 1985. His parents, Jack and Peg, now reside in the town of Maynard in my congressional district.

A fourteen-year veteran of the Navy, Brian joined the service in 1990 and became a member of the elite SEAL team in 1991. Friends remember him as a great teammate and tough opponent on the football field and a fierce competitor in Kempo-style karate.

Brian's parents are proud, not just for the supreme sacrifice he made on behalf of his country, but for the honor he brought to them as a Navy SEAL and loving son. Despite his tough exterior, Brian's family describes him as compassionate and nurturing brother of seven siblings and uncle to nine nieces and nephews. Brian's family deeply impacted his life, and he left an indelible imprint on them.

Petty Officer 1st Class Ouellette was a brave sailor who gave his life to restore freedom and democracy in the war-torn country of Afghanistan and support the global war on terrorism. It is lives like his, taken too soon, that remind us of the true price of freedom.

I have requested an American flag be flown over the United States Capitol in memory of Brian to honor his brave service to our country. This flag will be delivered to his family.

Brian died fighting for the country he loved, alongside the fellow sailors he respected and with the family he adored forever in his heart. Our Nation is humbled and grateful for his sacrifice.

Mr. Speaker, we should all take a moment to recognize Petty Officer 1st Class Brian Ouellette of the United States Navy SEALS for his ultimate service to our Nation.

HOMEOWNERSHIP BUILDS STRONG COMMUNITIES

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 2004

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, June is National Homeownership Month. Stronger families, better schools, and homeownership produce healthy neighborhoods and communities.

When people own their homes, other benefits follow, such as economic security and family stability. Over the years, home values have generally increased, making them a good investment and a great way for families to build up assets that can be used for everyday needs, unexpected setbacks, and even helping to send a child to college.

Neighborhoods where people own homes are more stable. People tend to take better care of property they own and care more about the rest of the neighborhood as well. Homeownership also leads to a more vibrant community because home sales attract grocery stores, restaurants and other small businesses that add stability and job opportunities.

With all these benefits, it is discouraging that there are some areas in our country where the homeownership rate is very low. In my home state of Ohio, the City of Cincinnati's homeownership rate is 39 percent, far below the national average of 68 percent. And even in the rural areas of my district where the percentage of home owners is higher, we are still well below the national average.

Ohio has a shortage of affordable homes in inner-city and rural areas. This is also true in many other states. To help address this problem, Representative BEN CARDIN and I introduced H.R. 839, the Renewing the Dream Tax Credit Act, which is based on a proposal advanced by President Bush. The measure would make a tax credit available to developers or investors that build or rehabilitate homes for sale to low- and moderate-income buyers in these areas. H.R. 839 has the support of nearly 300 House members, and would make it more attractive for developers to create affordable housing in urban and rural areas in which the need is greatest.

Mr. Speaker, when people buy a home, they make an investment in that community. Enacting H.R. 839 will help make homeownership achievable for more Americans.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM KOLBE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 2004

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I missed the vote on agreeing to the Rogers (MI) amendment to H.R. 4548, the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 (#293). I intended to vote "aye."

HONORING FUTURE UNLIMITED AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. JEB BRADLEY

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 2004

Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to 17 New Hampshire students who graduated at the top of their high school class and are being recognized for their academic achievements by the Knights of Columbus in Rochester, New Hampshire.

The Rochester Knights of Columbus Council founded the Future Unlimited Banquet in June of 1998 to honor students from the Greater Rochester area who have achieved high levels of scholastic excellence. The "brainchild" of Don Leeman, the banquet honors valedictorians and salutatorians from eight high schools in the region for their academic excellence and contributions to the community. The Council has had much positive feedback from the greater community for their efforts to promote intellectual fellowship, and plan to extend this successful recognition banquet across the state and country.

The students to be honored for their scholastic achievements are:

Bryn Paslawski of Durham, valedictorian at St. Thomas Aquinas High School; Marie Osborn of Portsmouth, salutatorian at St. Thomas Aquinas High School; David Thompson of Kittery, Maine, salutatorian at St. Thomas Aquinas High School; Trevor Sherwood of Barrington, valedictorian at Dover High School; Brittany Soper of Dover, salutatorian at Dover High School; Kristen Couture of Somersworth, valedictorian at Somersworth High School; Danielle Daigle of Rollinsford, salutatorian at Somersworth High School; and Khari Lizotte of Rochester, valedictorian at Spaulding High School.

Kimberly Montini of Rochester, salutatorian at Spaulding High School; Katy Huppe of Farmington, valedictorian at Farmington High School; Casey Raasumaa of Farmington, salutatorian at Farmington High School; Jacqueline Elliott of Milton, valedictorian at Nute High School; Kayla Gagne of Milton, salutatorian at Nute High School; Tonya Prescott of Laconia, valedictorian at Alton High School; Meredith Roy of Alton, salutatorian at Alton High School; Meaghan Maguire of Wolfeboro, valedictorian at Kingswood Regional High School; and, Jamison Costello of Wolfeboro, salutatorian at Kingswood Regional High School.

These 17 students are excellent examples of the hard work, energy and dedication that is necessary to pursuing higher academic goals. They are among the brightest students in the state and offer much hope for the future. They truly exemplify what is good about today's youth. I congratulate all of the students for a job well done, and I also congratulate the members of the Rochester Knights of Columbus for their efforts to recognize outstanding students.