

and oversaw a \$30 million budget. As Clinical Coordinator for Meharry Medical College she specialized in case management, where she continued to help Tennesseans recover from the ravages of addiction.

Her commitment to the improvement of Tennessee public health has led her to serve on a number of committees and boards of State and National review. Among them are the Advisory Group for the Congressional Office of Technological Assessment, as chair for the Southeastern School on Alcohol & Drug Abuse and the Advisory Board for Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Tennessee.

In her position as Executive Director of the Office of Minority Health, she served with great stature as chief liaison between the state of Tennessee and the Department of Health and Human Services. She oversaw matters regarding health disparities and HIV/AIDS. In addition, she administered program design, project implementation, grant monitoring and evaluation, and health policy planning to ensure that effective measures are taken to provide Tennesseans with knowledge they need to develop healthier lifestyles.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all Tennesseans, I extend my deepest feelings of appreciation to Ms. Jackson. I commend her long outstanding career, service and commitment to improving the public health of her fellow Tennesseans. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the works of a distinguished woman, and a model citizen.

HEALTHCARE EQUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2005

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss a critically important bill that is being introduced today: the Healthcare Equality and Accountability Act of 2005. Before I go into detail, I must profusely thank three people who were incredibly instrumental in helping us get this bill developed and introduced: Sharon Coleman of the Congressional Research Service, and Peter Goodloe and Warren Burke, of the House Legislative Counsel. Ms. Coleman, Mr. Goodloe and Mr. Burke, on behalf of the TriCaucus, I thank and applaud you for your efforts.

Over the last two decades, hundreds of studies—most which have been conducted by credible sources, like the Institutes of Medicine, academic institutions, including Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Morehouse College and University of California, in addition to non-partisan foundations and think tanks—have confirmed that racial and ethnic health disparities are a challenge to health care in this country. Here in America, the color of your skin, your ethnic background, and your geography can not only influence your health care access and quality; they can determine them.

We have all heard the numbers and statistics. We see grave racial and ethnic differences in health status and outcomes that are unacceptable in a country as wealthy as this one. For example:

African American and American Indian/Alaska Native infant mortality rates are more than two times higher than that for whites.

African American women are nearly four times more likely than white women to die during childbirth or from pregnancy complications.

The death rate from asthma is more than three times higher among African Americans than among whites.

The diabetes death rates among African Americans and Hispanics are about 2 times higher than that among whites.

The AIDS case rate among African Americans is more than ten times higher than that among whites. The AIDS case rate for Hispanics is more than four times higher than that among whites.

Until the conditions that disproportionately affect racial and ethnic minorities are addressed and an emphasis is put on prevention, as well as treatment and care, then racial and ethnic disparities in health will continue to plague minority Americans.

Mr. Speaker, far too many people assume that racial and ethnic minorities have poorer health status and die prematurely because of bad health decisions. And, making healthy decisions is one part of the equation. However, it is difficult to make healthy decisions and to preserve good health when you are uninsured. And, uninsurance disproportionately affects racial and ethnic minorities.

In fact, racial and ethnic minorities comprise about one third of the total U.S. population, yet are represented in more than half of this country's uninsured population. Uninsurance, Mr. Speaker, is a major factor that exacerbates racial and ethnic health disparities, and reducing the numbers of the uninsured must be an integral part of any strategy to reduce—and ultimately eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities.

And then, Mr. Speaker, there is something else that happens too often when racial and ethnic minorities go to the doctor. Even when they have an insurance card from the best companies, the quality of their health care is less than that of whites and often does not meet medical standards. These disparities, Mr. Chairman, are the most egregious and disturbing because they serve as a reminder that more than four decades after the Civil Rights Movement, racial and ethnic minorities still are not treated equally and fairly.

When I first heard about these types of disparities, I was shocked. As a physician who practiced for more than two decades, I cannot fathom discriminating against a patient because of their skin color, their ethnic background or sexual orientation. But, the studies documenting these disparities are extensive and robust, and have found that:

Despite having heart disease and stroke rates that are disproportionately higher than whites, African American women with health insurance are 40% less likely than whites with health insurance to be recommended for cardiac catheterization.

African-American diabetics are more nearly 3.5 times more likely than white diabetics to have a lower limb amputation procedure performed.

African Americans are 3 times more likely than whites to be hospitalized for asthma and about 2½ times more likely to visit an emergency room with an asthma attack. This is significant because hospitalization for asthma is an avoidable admission if the condition is adequately managed.

Mr. Speaker, last Congress, my colleagues and I in the TriCaucus introduced a bill that

would reduce racial and ethnic disparities in health and in health care. This Congress, we decided to re-introduce that bill in a concerted effort to continue our commitment and work to ensure that racial and ethnic health disparities are eliminated from our health care system.

This bill, entitled the Healthcare Equality and Accountability Act of 2005, proposes solutions to the factors that exacerbate racial and ethnic health disparities by working to accomplish the following:

Remove barriers to health care access by expanding existing forms of health insurance coverage.

Improve cultural and linguistic competence in health care by removing language and cultural barriers to quality health care.

Improve the diversity of the health care workforce to reflect, understand and respect the backgrounds, experiences and perspectives of the people it serves.

Support and expand programs to reduce health disparities in diseases and conditions, especially diabetes, obesity, heart disease, asthma and HIV/AIDS.

Improve racial, ethnic, socioeconomic and language data collection to adequately identify, measure and find reasonable and innovative solutions for health disparities.

Ensure accountability of the Bush administration to ensure adequate funding of the Office of Minority Health, and the National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities and the important work that they do.

Bolster the capacity of institutions that provide care in minority communities.

Mr. Speaker, these health disparities are not just minority issues. Because these health disparities often result in death, they are moral issues. Because these health disparities leave minorities with greater disease and disability burden, they are civil rights issues. Because these disparities burden the health care system, they are economic issues. And, because these disparities jeopardize the health and well being of the people in this country, they are an American issue.

I therefore urge my colleagues—on both sides of the fence—to support the Healthcare Equality and Accountability Act of 2005.

THE FINAL MISSION OF THE LATE OSSIE DAVIS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to an outstanding American actor, civil rights advocate, and highly regarded humanitarian—Ossie Davis. Throughout his distinguished career as an actor, he was simultaneously an activist who utilized the platform his celebrity status gave him to advocate for opportunity and justice for all Americans.

Ossie Davis passed away almost six months ago, leaving behind a legacy of determination, pride, and caring that will long be remembered and will continue to be an inspiration to all who were privileged to know him. Upon hearing of his death, I was deeply saddened but remembered his rich legacy of activism and leadership.

Ossie Davis fully participated in and led the great movements for civil rights and justice in

this nation in the 1960s. As the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, and school desegregation threatened to divide our nation, Ossie stepped forward as a champion of integration, equality, and civil rights. From the Broadway stage to the motion picture screen to the streets where injustice lay, Ossie Davis was there to demand that each and every person be treated as an equal, as a brother. With his deep voice that spoke from wisdom and experience, he would discuss the challenges to the attainment of equal treatment and fairness that is the constitutionally mandated birthright of every citizen born in this great country. He would discuss how to achieve that level of equality and would challenge those around him to aid in his crusade.

Ossie Davis was selected to be the speaker at the first annual Congressional Black Caucus dinner, I recall, because we wanted to have someone who, as a celebrity and a highly respected civil rights leader, would be both entertaining and inspirational. Ossie, in a speech that is still remembered and quoted today, set us on a course to sustain the achievements of the civil rights era and to build upon them. He exceeded our collective expectations.

Ossie was one of the noblest individuals I knew. He lived a life of dignity and pride that was so exemplary that one wanted to emulate him. In his chosen profession of acting, he was a true legend that used his position to advance positive images of the Black male and to challenge those who would accept the subjugation of an entire group based on their race. He has a history of over one hundred films, plays, television series, and other productions that cover the range of experiences of the Black male in America today.

Ossie who was always working, always raising important issues, left us in the film on which he was working at the time of his death, an inspiring story that serves as a metaphor for the struggle by African-Americans for equality of opportunity and inclusion. We are fortunate in the Harlem community to have Ossie's film to screen as a highlight of our celebration of Harlem Week.

The movie *Proud*, which was released two months after his death, is a heroic story about an all-Black crew on the U.S. warship *Mason* during World War II. Ossie and his fellow cast members tell the important story of how the War and a segregated Navy changed them. True to his nature, Ossie Davis made this experience a personal investment in the struggle for justice and equality in Black America for his audience. This movie allows Ossie one last opportunity to tell the story of Black America in this country. It is also our last opportunity to witness this great man in action.

I submit for the RECORD the press release announcing the movie and describing how it came to be made. I look forward to attending the screening of *Proud* in my community next week and encourage everyone to take time out and see this wonderful film.

[From THEentertainment, April 18, 2005]

PRESS RELEASE "PROUD"

(Written/Directed by Mary Pat Kelly)

(Produced by Ally Hilfiger)

NEW YORK.—The late Ossie Davis completes a final mission when the THEentertainment film "Proud," which will screen at the Tribeca Film Festival, April 23rd, is released by Castle Hill Productions in the New York, Washington and Los Ange-

les Magic Johnson Theatres during Memorial Day weekend.

Ossie Davis, a WWII veteran himself, not only stars in the film, but had taken a personal interest since becoming aware of this true adventure of the USS *Mason* in 1995. The men of the USS *Mason* were the only African-American sailors to take a navy warship into combat in WWII. Like Ossie Davis, they served in a segregated military, but found strength in the midst of struggles against racism from their camaraderie and pride in their own excellence.

Ossie Davis' character, Lorenzo DuFau, passes the story of his time on the *Mason* on to his grandson (Albert Jones) and two friends, who then become the 1940's sailors in a dramatic movie that depicts the events of the men's service on the USS *Mason*. As a destroyer escort, the men shepherded convoys across a perilous Atlantic infested with Nazi U-boats. They faced the storm of the century and were instrumental in saving a convoy. In spite of enduring racist incidents in a segregated Navy, they found an unexpected welcome in Northern Ireland. In "Proud" Stephen Rea plays the Derry man who welcomes them and Darnell Williams is the war correspondent, Thomas Young, who traveled with the *Mason*.

Tommy Hilfiger's attention was first attracted by the book and documentary done by Mary Pat Kelly, but he felt the story should be a dramatic feature if it were to reach a wide audience.

The events of 9/11 convinced him to finance the film himself. "We need our heroes," he said.

Hilfiger's daughter, Ally, became the producer and Mary Pat Kelly the writer/director. Ossie Davis was the first to sign on. "He blessed the movie with his presence," said Kelly and Hilfiger.

Ossie Davis attended a test screening of "Proud" in Washington, DC, with his grandson, Jamal Day, who plays trumpet on the movie score. Davis wore his USS *Mason* ball cap and told the audience he wore it all the time so interviewers would ask about it and he could tell them about the film.

Davis died of natural causes in Miami Beach, Florida on February 4, 2005. He had intended to help promote the film.

"We're pleased that those who admired Ossie Davis will see him in a role that so embodies his own life as an artist and activist," said Kelly.

OSSIE DAVIS (LORENZO DUFAU)

As USS *Mason* veteran, Lorenzo DuFau, Ossie Davis, himself a WWII veteran, forms the head of the movie "Proud." He is the grandfather who passes the story of the "men of the *Mason*" on to his grandson and thus insures that his shipmates will live on. "I am a part of American history," he says. "Proudly we served and I want that acknowledged."

As an actor, writer, producer and director, Ossie Davis has himself shaped American history and insured that the richness of African-American experience is presented with artistry and joy.

Born in Cogdell, Georgia, Mr. Davis attended Howard University and began a career as an actor and writer with the Rose McClelland Players in Harlem in 1939. He joined the Army after Pearl Harbor and served with great distinction as a member of a medical team in West Africa.

In 1946, Mr. Davis made his Broadway debut in "Jeb," the first of many roles that included following Sydney Poitier into the lead of "Raisin in the Sun." Mr. Davis used his backstage waiting time to write "Purle Victorious" in which he starred in 1961. The artistically acclaimed play became the musi-

cal "Purle" and introduced Melba Moore and Cleavon Little.

The film career of Ossie Davis is legendary. Beginning with "No Way Out" in 1950 with Sydney Poitier, Davis has appeared in dozens of feature films from "The Cardinal," "The Hill," and "The Scalphunter" through recent movies such as "Dr. Doolittle," "Do the Right Thing," and "On the Bus." He directed "Cotton Comes to Harlem" in 1970 and continued to direct and produce movies and plays. Mr. Davis did not neglect television. Beginning in 1965 in the title role of "The Emperor Jones," he's given award-winning performances in "Teacher, Teacher, King," and "Miss Evers' Boys" to name a few. He's been a regular on "Evening Shade" with his friend Burt Reynolds.

Davis' partnership with his wife actress/writer Ruby Dee has produced such notable achievements as the television special "Today Is Ours," "Martin Luther King: The Dream and The Drum," "A Walk Through the 20th Century with Bill Moyers" and the series "With Ossie and Ruby."

Mr. Davis received many honors and citations including the New York Urban League Frederick Douglass Award and the NAACP Image Award. With Ruby Dee, he received The Screen Actors Guild Life Achievement Award and in 2002 The President's National Medal of Arts at the Kennedy Center.

Mr. Davis died of natural causes in Miami Beach, Florida on February 4, 2005.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Proud is a memory piece told by WWII vet, Lorenzo DuFau (Ossie Davis). As a sailor on the USS *Mason*, he was a member of the only African American crew to take a US Warship into combat. As DuFau tells his wartime experiences to his grandson and two college friends, the young men are transformed into USS *Mason* sailors. They fight for their country, but also have to battle the racism inherent in a segregated Navy. They perform heroically and receive an unexpectedly warm welcome in Ireland. The crew was recommended for commendations in 1944, but they were never awarded. The grandchildren take up the fight, and the long overdue commendation is awarded to the surviving crew members in 1995.

THE USA PATRIOT AND TERRORISM PREVENTION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2005 (H.R. 3199)

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my opposition to the reauthorization of the USA PATRIOT Act.

We live in a world in which vital issues of national security, homeland security and intelligence gathering need to be balanced with the most fundamental freedoms and civil liberties granted to the American people by our Constitution. Terrorism is a real threat to our security, but laws that empower over zealous government officials to enter the private lives of individuals and "sneak and peak" based on suspicion is also dangerous. There was an opportunity to find a common sense, bipartisan agreement on protecting our security and our liberties that has been ignored by this legislation.

There are sixteen provisions of The USA Patriot Act that the Bush Administration proposes to make permanent without sunsets.