

deadly. Their exceptional efforts are admirable and I applaud them for their courage and dedication under pressure.

# THE MILITARY DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE RESPONSE ACT

**HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2006*

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, today, I am proud to introduce the Military Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Act. This important piece of legislation will ensure greater protections for service members and their families if they become victims of violence. It also will strengthen programs to prevent violence against fellow soldiers and military families.

Unfortunately, sexual assault and domestic violence are pervasive and serious problems throughout all branches of the military. In March 2006, the Department of Defense (DoD) released their second annual sexual assault report, which stated that there were 2,374 allegations of sexual assaults reported in 2005; this is up from 1,700 the previous year. In 2004, the DoD reported 9,000 incidents of spousal abuse. A 2005 Sexual Harassment and Assault Survey of the Service Academies found 6 percent of females and 1 percent of males said they were sexually assaulted in 2004–2005, and less than half the females who experienced sexual assault reported it. In this same survey, 60 percent of female cadets indicated sexual harassment was about the same as when they first enrolled at their academy.

While the DoD has been making efforts to improve its prevention and response to domestic and sexual violence, victim services remain incomplete and inconsistent among the various branches. There have been reports that victims advocates, charged with protecting the victim's rights, have been denied resources to do their job, and in some instances been forced off the base all together. Furthermore, DoD policies are not codified in the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and do not offer the same level of rights and protections afforded to civilian victims. Perhaps most importantly, victims are unable to seek confidential counseling and treatment without fear that their records might become public if they press charges against their assailant.

My bill, the Military Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Act, seeks to bring military law up to par with civilian laws by establishing a comprehensive approach for the military to address domestic violence and sexual assault among our soldiers. Specifically, this bill will:

Establish an Office of Victims Advocate (OVA) within DoD, bring the Family Advocacy Program under OVA, and create a Director of OVA to oversee and coordinate efforts to prevent and respond to cases of family violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking with the military and among military families;

Codify rights, restitution policies, treatment and other services for victims within the UCMJ, including creating comprehensive confidentiality protocols to protect the rights of victims within military law;

Strengthen policies for reporting, prosecuting and treating perpetrators of violence; and

Create counseling and treatment programs through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The military should be at the forefront of prosecuting assailants and setting the highest standards for treatment of servicemen and women, or military family members, victimized by sexual assault and domestic violence. Our Armed Forces must be able to guarantee the most basic protections to ensure these victims can receive necessary counseling, treatment, and justice.

If a victim cannot access essential care for fear of stigma, public embarrassment, threats to their career, or because they just do not know what resources are available, the military will continue to lose valuable female and male soldiers. These service members put themselves in harms way to protect us and our Nation from threats at home and abroad. They should not be given lesser rights and protections than the civilians whose freedoms they protect. My bill ensures they are adequately protected when dealing with the horrible tragedy of sexual assault or domestic violence.

Do not allow our brave service members to be victimized twice, once by their perpetrator and then again by the military's lack of appropriate, compassionate, and confidential treatment and response.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Members to join me in cosponsoring the Military Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Act.

RECOGNIZING REVEREND JOHN H. ROUSE, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 51ST ANNIVERSARY OF SERVICE IN THE MINISTRY AND 31ST ANNIVERSARY AS PASTOR OF THE MOUNT ZION MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH IN EAST ST. LOUIS, ILLINOIS

**HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2006*

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Reverend John H. Rouse, of the Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, in East St. Louis, Illinois, on the occasion of his 51st anniversary of service in the ministry and 31st anniversary as Pastor of Mt. Zion.

John Rouse is the son of Dr. W.B. and Evelyn Rouse. A native of Nashville, Tennessee, Rev. Rouse graduated with honors from Lincoln High School in East St. Louis, Illinois. Even though he was the president of his graduating class, Rev. Rouse was once counseled at Lincoln High School to compromise his ambition and settle for employment that did not require public speaking. How fortunate for all those who have benefited from his years of ministry that Rev. Rouse did not follow that advice.

Rev. Rouse began his formal ministry at the First Ward Baptist Church, in Clarksville, Tennessee, where he was pastor until 1970. During his time in Tennessee, Rev. Rouse continued his extensive education at American Baptist Seminary and College of the Bible, Tennessee State University, Austin Peay State University and George Peabody College.

Also during his years in Tennessee, Rev. Rouse became very involved in the civil rights

struggle. His work to end segregation in Tennessee and later in Henderson, Kentucky has continued throughout his years of ministry as he has been a constant champion of civil rights and social justice.

It was through activities as a member of the NAACP that Rev. Rouse met Mary G. Avent, who would become his wife and mother of their four children.

In 1975, Rev. Rouse returned to East St. Louis to begin his pastorate at Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church where he still serves as pastor today. While at Mt. Zion, Rev. Rouse has expanded his ministry to include Mt. Zion Baptist Mission East, as well as a community-based prison ministry. In addition to their own four children, Rev. and Mrs. Rouse have taken in a number of foster children and opened their hearts and helping hands to many within their congregation.

While Rev. Rouse has built an impressive congregation in East St. Louis, he has extended his ministry through speaking engagements, workshops and revivals across the country and as far away as Seoul, South Korea. Rev. Rouse has officiated at over 2,000 weddings and over 5,000 funerals. He has served on governing boards and commissions serving the church, education, government and community.

Rev. Rouse has traveled far and wide in his service to the Lord. He has also been a teacher, coach and funeral director. He has built congregations and mentored others in their quest to become ministers. The good work that he has done has extended far beyond the boundaries of his present congregation and will be felt for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in an expression of appreciation to Reverend Rouse for his 51 years of dedicated ministry and to wish him and his family the very best in the future.

HONORING NEIL ARMSTRONG AS HE RECEIVES THE NASA AMBASSADOR OF EXPLORATION AWARD

**HON. JEAN SCHMIDT**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 26, 2006*

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Neil Armstrong, a war hero, teacher, businessman, and one of the world's greatest explorers, who received the prestigious National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Ambassador of Exploration Award on April 18, 2006 at the Cincinnati Museum Center in Cincinnati, Ohio.

An Ohio native son, Neil Armstrong rewrote history in July of 1969 when he was the first man to set foot on the moon. Mr. Armstrong served as commander of Apollo 11, the first manned lunar landing mission. He was accompanied on this historical journey to the moon by Command Module Pilot Michael Collins and Lunar Module Pilot Edwin (Buzz) Aldrin.

Born in 1930, Mr. Armstrong always had a fascination for airplanes and space travel. He started taking flying lessons at the age of fifteen and received his pilot's license at the age of sixteen.

After graduating from high school in 1947, Mr. Armstrong entered Purdue University with