EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING NATHAN RICHARD DUDA FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 28, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Nathan Richard Duda, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 98, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Nathan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Nathan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Nathan Richard Duda for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CORPORAL ANDY D. ANDERSON

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 28, 2006

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Corporal Andy D. Anderson one of the true heroes of the conflict in Iraq, and to recognize his service to our Nation.

Corporal Anderson, a longtime resident of Falls Church, VA, graduated from J.E.B. Stuart High School in 2001. While at Stuart, he enjoyed a prolific athletic career. He was a leader of the football team and was among the leading scorers in the county in basketball. After a year of college, he followed in his father's footsteps and enlisted in the Army, in which he was assigned to the Army's B Company, 46th Engineer Battalion at Fort Rucker, AL.

Just a few weeks ago, Cpl. Anderson had been home to visit his family in Vienna, VA. He proposed to his high school sweetheart and impressed friends and relatives with his self-assurance.

Corporal Anderson was ambitious and selfless, hoping to make the Army a career. Tragically, on June 6, 2006, Cpl. Anderson gave his last full measure for our Nation, when he was killed by mortar fire in Ar Ramadi, Iraq.

Corporal Anderson is survived by his father, Harold Anderson, mother Xiomara Mena, and his brothers Rafael and Randall.

Words cannot express the gratitude we feel toward those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. This is a debt that can never be repaid. I hope the family of Cpl. Anderson, who are suffering in the wake of the loss, will take some solace in knowing that we will never forget Cpl. Anderson's sacrifice or the sacrifices made by other patriots like him in the defense of our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I call upon my colleagues to remember in our minds and in our hearts the bravery and sacrifice of Cpl. Andy D. Anderson, as well as that of all the men and women of the armed services who honorably protect the American people.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2006

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 28, 2006

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to introduce the No Child Left Behind Improvements Act of 2006. This legislation will improve accountability for the academic performance of children enrolled in the nation's public schools. My bill builds on the major reforms of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 signed into law on January 8, 2002 and offers improvements that address many of the unintended consequences of the federal legislation while holding states and school districts accountable.

As a former teacher, I am committed to providing our nation's children with the best possible education. I firmly believe in the original goals of NCLB but I understand that a ''one size fits all'' approach to student achievement is not possible. Alaska is more than two times the size the state of Texas, yet only has a population of 660,000 compared to the 22.9 million residents of Texas. As you can see, providing education services in Alaska can be difficult as 190,000 Alaskan students are literally scattered over 572,000 square miles.

Alaska has approximately 500 public schools and they are organized into 53 school districts. These include 34 city and borough school districts and 19 Regional Educational Attendance Areas which serve students living in towns and villages in politically unorganized areas of rural Alaska.

Alaska schools vary greatly in size. High schools in Anchorage, the state's largest city, may serve more than 2,000 students. Schools in other urban areas such as Juneau, Fairbanks, the Kenai Peninsula, or the Matanuska-Susitna Valley may serve hundreds and are similar to schools in small cities in the rest of the United States. However, many schools in rural areas are small, some with 20 or fewer students at a variety of grade levels. They may be many miles from population centers and services, and accessible only by aircraft or boat. In remote villages, schools often serve as centers of community activity.

In addition to the geographic barriers, Alaska, like many other states is faced with cultural obstacles. There are 20 different Alaska Native languages spoken in the state and during the 2004–2005 school year, students in the Anchorage School District spoke 95 different languages. Roughly 42 percent of students are from ethnic minority groups including Native Alaskan, Asian and Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and African American.

Alaska is not alone in having to face unique challenges as it struggles to educate its children. Each state in this country one has geographic, economic or cultural barriers that impede its schools from reaching a level of success as mandated by NCLB. My bill will establish an improved framework for accountability that fairly and accurately assesses student, school, and school district performance. As a result, states and local school districts will be able to more strategically use their resources to bring about meaningful and measurable results.

This legislation contains more than 40 provisions that focus on five areas: Assessments, Measuring Adequate Yearly Progress, Sanctions, State Flexibility by the U.S. Department of Education and Non-Public Schools. Specifically the bill provides the following:

Assessments. The bill offers greater flexibility to states in the use of alternate assessments for students with disabilities based on the individual education program (IEP) and authorizes states and school districts to count the scores in the calculation of AYP. The bill also offers states the flexibility to use alternate assessments for students who are not proficient in English. In both categories of students the assessment instruments must be valid and reliable in measuring the performance based on the specific needs of the student. The bill would also grant states the flexibility to assess students more than once within the full academic year, and to use the higher scores in calculating the performance of subgroups.

Measuring Adequate Yearly Progress. The bill would authorize states to expand their AYP measurement systems to include gain score approaches like value-added and give partial credit for meeting basic proficient targets. Additionally, states would be permitted greater flexibility in using alternate methods of measuring AYP as long as the ultimate goals of NCLB are achieved. Use of these specific flexibilities would require approval by the U.S. Department of Education. Further, the bill would authorize school districts and schools with diverse student populations to calculate AYP in a way that more accurately reflects subgroup and school performance.

Sanctions: Public School Choice and Supplemental Services. The bill would strengthen the use of sanctions by applying such sanctions only when AYP is not met by the ''same group'' for two or more consecutive years in the same subject on the same indicator rather than applying sanctions when different groups or different indicators are involved from year to year in that subject. Additionally, the bill offers greater flexibility to states and school districts in the sequence of offering supplemental services and public school choice. Finally, the bill