

These giants up upon that stage, touch all of our very souls . . .
 And that most magnificent National Symphony,
 And those Military Bands and Choirs continually . . .
 Take our hearts even higher!
 For in this city, surrounded by consequence . . .

There, is no greater place . . . on these holidays to be so hence!
 Then, up there upon Jenkins Hill . . .
 On The West Front of The Capitol, letting all of your hearts be thrilled.
 In Concert . . .

Dedicated to A Great American Family, The Colbert Family . . . Jerry and his son Michael . . . The Talent, The National Symphony, The Military Bands, The Choirs, The Crew, and PBS who have given so much to our nation.—Written by Albert Cary Caswell, 2009.

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF BENJAMIN VAN HORN ON HIS APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 28, 2009

Mr. LATTA. Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding young man from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am happy to announce that Benjamin Van Horn of Whitehouse, Ohio has been offered an appointment to attend the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Ben's offer of appointment poises him to attend the United States Air Force Academy this fall with the incoming cadet Class of 2013. Attending one of our Nation's military academies is an invaluable experience that offers a world-class education while placing demands on those who undertake one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Ben brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming class of Air Force cadets. He was a member of the National Honor Society, received the Anthony Wayne Academy Award in grades 9–11, received the Presidential Physical Fitness Award and the National Physical Fitness Award, among numerous other academic awards.

Outside the classroom, Ben was a member of Brailey Union Church Youth Group, serving as vice president, was a student leader for Campus Life. He was President of the German Club and active in marching, concert, and jazz band. Ben participated on Anthony Wayne High School's cross country and track teams, earning varsity letters in both and serving as captain of the cross country team. He has taught hunter safety courses, fire safety courses, and obtained his student pilot license. He has been extremely involved in community service projects. I have no doubt that Ben will employ the lessons of his student leadership as he excels among the leaders at the United States Air Force Academy.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Benjamin Van Horn on his acceptance of appointment to the United

States Air Force Academy. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available. I am positive that Ben will excel during his career at the Air Force Academy and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to him as he begins his service to the Nation.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR
 "LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT
 HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT
 (LLEHCPA)/MATTHEW SHEPARD
 ACT"

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 28, 2009

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support to the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention/Matthew Shepard Act (H.R. 1913). On the night of October 6, 1998, Matthew Shepard was brutally tortured and murdered by two assailants because he was a gay man. It has been over ten years since America was shocked by that despicable hate crime, and the time for action is long overdue. Today we take a significant step towards protecting Americans from being violently attacked simply for being who they are.

Hate crimes continue to spread fear throughout targeted communities to this day. Last year, 18-year old Angie Zapata, a transgendered woman, was murdered by an assailant who defended himself by saying "it's not like I killed a straight, law-abiding citizen." While Angie's murderer was recently convicted for this hate crime, Colorado is the exception in hate crime laws. Most states do not extend hate crime legislation to protect transgendered Americans, leaving some of the most vulnerable members of society with inadequate protections.

Protecting citizens from violence is one of the fundamental roles of government. This legislation is necessary to ensure that no American has to live in fear of violence simply because of who they are. In 2008, the FBI reported a 6% increase in violent crimes against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Americans, despite a 1% overall decline of hate crimes in the U.S. As we mark the ten year anniversary of Matthew's horrific death, and the one year anniversary of the brutal murder of Angie, we must commit ourselves to decide that now is the moment when we push back against the forces of hate.

Opponents of the Matthew Shepard Act have claimed that its passage will result in the criminalization of protected speech—even the imprisonment of preachers for condemning homosexuality. This could not be further from the truth. The Act expressly states that it does not prohibit "any expressive conduct . . ., or any activities protected by the free speech or free exercise clauses of, the First Amendment to the Constitution." This means that nobody can be prosecuted under the law for expressing their beliefs about homosexuality. The Act specifically targets people who commit violent acts motivated by the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability of another. It also affirmatively protects free speech ensuring that Americans remain free to engage in moral debate, without fear of retribution.

The Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act will help guard against groups and individuals who seek to terrorize entire communities through brutal violence against targeted individuals. With its passage, we will bring about the changes needed to make clear, once and for all, that hatred of LGBTs and other minorities is no longer a conceivably legitimate excuse for violently attacking another person.

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF JANELLE RUNION ON HER OFFERS OF APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY AND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 28, 2009

Mr. LATTA. Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding young woman from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am happy to announce that Janelle Runion of Tiffin, Ohio has been offered appointments to attend the United States Military Academy and the United States Naval Academy. Janelle has accepted the offer to attend the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

Janelle's offer of appointment poises her to attend the United States Military Academy this fall with the incoming cadet Class of 2013. Attending one of our Nation's military academies is an invaluable experience that offers a world-class education while placing demands on those who undertake one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Janelle brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2013. While attending Tiffin Columbian High School in Tiffin, Ohio, Janelle attained an impressive grade point average; was inducted into the National Honor Society and the National Technical Honor Society; participated in Tiffin Columbian's Student Forum, and was active in the Spanish Club.

Throughout high school, Janelle was a member of the track, basketball, and soccer teams. Janelle demonstrated her dedication and service to her community and peers by being active with the TC Crew Club and by serving as a Tech Center Ambassador. In addition, Janelle utilized her leadership skills by being the secretary of her class for three years and coaching in Tiffin City Schools' elementary league basketball program. I am confident that Janelle will carry the lessons of her student leadership to West Point.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Janelle Runion on the acceptance of her appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available. I am positive that Janelle will excel during her career at West Point and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to her as she begins her service to the Nation.