

the room or at the coffee shop will explain how the bill came to be.

If the author of this amendment feels that this would increase transparency, then I will support the amendment. I would hope that all Members would take the opportunity to increase transparency and demand transparency on how the backroom deals that sealed the fate of our health care system in the hands of Washington bureaucrats came to pass.

Mr. Chairman, I urge an “aye” vote on the amendment, and yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I just rise to thank the gentleman from Texas for accepting this amendment. I think it shows that though we may have positions that differ on the underlying legislation, this is an initiative for transparency, and it will help explain to the American people.

Let me also conclude by saying that it should be very clear that this funding is not used for health care, in particular, on personnel. But it is to build the structures that will provide and protect children to be able to have these clinics, more access to health care for communities, and a source and site to be able to protect people who are impacted by natural or manmade disaster.

With that, I would ask my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. PALLONE. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. PALLONE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment preprinted in the RECORD as amendment No. 2 to H.R. 1214, as the designee of Representative CAPPs.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

In section 1, add at the end the following:
(c) GAO STUDY TO DETERMINE SCHOOL DISTRICTS MOST IN NEED OF CONSTRUCTING OR RENOVATING SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study to determine the school districts in the United States most in need of constructing or renovating school-based health centers (as defined in section 2110(c)(9) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397jj(c)(9)). Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Congress a report setting forth the results and conclusions of the study under this subsection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This amendment provides for a GAO study to determine school districts most in need of constructing or renovating school-based health centers. Basically, it asks the Controller—or I should say mandates the Controller—to conduct a study to determine the school districts most in need of construction and renovation, and not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment, the Controller has to submit to the Congress a report setting forth the results and conclusions of the study under this subsection.

Mr. Chairman, I know we've had a lot of debate today about money, but the fact of the matter is that the \$50 million per year doesn't actually cover the costs of all of the schools that have requested and applied for construction or renovation funds. That's why I would like to have this amendment passed and hopefully accepted by the other side so that we can find out exactly how many more of these clinics, or centers, are in need of funding.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. I move to strike the requisite number of words.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment. The amendment requires the Government Accountability Office to conduct a study to determine the school districts in the United States most in need of constructing or renovating school-based health centers.

Actually, the amendment is refreshing. I only wish we would have had an opportunity to have this discussion in our committee a year and a half ago before the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act passed. This amendment underscores one of the major flaws in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

□ 1840

Rather than conduct hearings and markups on this specific program, the school-based health center construction fund was lumped in with hundreds of other programs in a 2,700-page bill. I think the amendment will help the Congress determine whether the need exists and to quantify the target dollars in a careful manner.

My only regret—my only regret—is that in the last Congress the then Democratic majority did not request this study before providing \$200 million in mandatory funding for the school-based health center construction under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Congress should determine the need before authorizing and appropriating

dollars. That's, after all, regular order. That's the way we are supposed to do it; not simply throw the money out after a program because we feel that it may be a good program or we believe that it may be a good program, no. We're dealing with taxpayer dollars. It is our obligation to show those dollars are going to be wisely spent and then proceed with the authorization and then the appropriation.

I believe this amendment will help in that process, and I urge support of the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Jersey will be postponed.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUFFY) having assumed the chair, Mr. SIMPSON, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1214) to repeal mandatory funding for school-based health center construction, had come to no resolution thereon.

HONORING THE RECENTLY FALLEN SOLDIERS IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to be on the floor for such an important issue and joined by my colleagues.

I am holding the time until the distinguished gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND) arrives. But let me just indicate that this is an enormous crisis when nine of our soldiers are killed in the way that they were killed in Afghanistan. And for many of us who are concerned about the continuing conflict and the next steps, it is important to be able to offer our sympathy to their families and, as well, to be able to ask for an investigation as to the basis of their loss.

So it is important tonight that we educate our colleagues about the challenges that those brave soldiers faced, the conditions under which they lost their lives, and to say to their families that we will not rest until we have the opportunity to secure all of the facts

and to be able to establish a reaction or a basis on seeking a response from the Afghan Government and certainly from those who are in supervision of the Armed Forces in the region, in the theater.

With that in mind, as we offer our sympathy and express our desire for a full understanding and story as to what happened, Mr. Chairman, let me just say I look forward to a full airing of this unfortunate circumstance, and I hope that we will continue to seek information for these families and on behalf of these brave soldiers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND) is recognized for the remainder of the minority leader's hour.

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I want to first, before I start, thank the gentlewoman from Texas, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, not only for introducing this segment tonight but for the work that she has done for people all across the country, and especially when you talk about disasters. She was there for the city of New Orleans in the metropolitan region after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita to make sure that everyone was included in the rebuilding and the reconstruction, and it was a lot of her effort that made sure that we could rebuild the city of New Orleans. And as we have just suffered losses around the country with the tornadoes that hit, I'm reminded of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, but more importantly, Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of the people in this Congress who go above and beyond to make sure that we take care of everyone in this country. And for that I want to thank Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Mr. Speaker, tonight I want to focus on our brave soldiers who recently fell in Afghanistan. We want to focus on their sacrifice. We want to focus on their bravery. We want to focus on their legacy.

Last week, on a diplomatic military congressional delegation which was headed up by and whose idea was Congressman BILL SHUSTER's, he also went the extra mile to make sure that he included freshmen Members in that so that we would get a chance to see what's going on over there. So last week while on a diplomatic and military delegation in Europe and Afghanistan, I attended a memorial service for the following heroes on this board. They are:

Lieutenant Colonel Frank Bryant, Jr.; Major David Brodeur; Major Philip Ambard; Major Raymond Estelle; Major Jeffrey Ausborn; Captain Charles Ransom; Captain Nathan Nylander; Retired Lieutenant Colonel James A. McLaughlin; Technical Sergeant Tara Brown; Private First Class Jonathan Villanueva; and Staff Sergeant Matthew Hermanson. These are just some of the faces of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice while

protecting America's interests abroad and helping to keep our country safe from threats far and wide.

I am joined by a couple of my colleagues who were with me on a fact-finding trip.

□ 1850

We will focus on the sacrifice made by these brave men and women, as well as the sacrifices being made by all of our brave men and women on a daily basis.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to yield to Congressman BILL SHUSTER, who will have the opportunity to not only talk about one or two or three of the individuals who gave the ultimate sacrifice but just on the experience in Afghanistan, where we are, the progress we're making.

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for yielding and thank the gentleman for traveling with us on our codel, which was a bipartisan codel made of up six Members—2 Democrats, 4 Republicans—and we traveled to, obviously as the gentleman from Louisiana said, to Afghanistan. It was, I think, an eye-opening experience for all of us getting to see and hear firsthand from not only our military leaders but also soldiers who were in the field and traveling out to Herat Province and be able to go to a village and talk to the village elders, the people that 18 months ago in this village it was controlled by the Taliban. Today, with the help of the U.S. Special Forces, the Taliban is gone and the people of this community, the people of this village and region are setting up their own police force.

The village elder committed to us that he would never allow the Taliban to come back and how much he appreciated the support of U.S. Special Forces and their training and the fact that they were living with them in the community, 30 of our Special Forces in two different compounds, again offering training and guidance to these folks that live out in a very, very rural part of Afghanistan and actually 50 to 60 miles from the Iranian border. And they're doing good work. So we saw those kinds of positive developments.

Of course, we all know what happened at the end of this weekend. Our Special Forces were able to go in and kill Osama bin Laden and bring justice to him, and America's grateful for their efforts.

As my colleague said, we were also able to participate in two ceremonies. One was a ramp ceremony of one of our fallen heroes. They actually put the coffin on the plane to bring it back to Dover Air Force Base to meet its final destination, and then also a ceremony to honor the nine fallen Americans that were killed by an Afghan pilot, somebody they had been working with for 9 months, somebody they trusted, who came in during a meeting last week, and brought in a weapon and killed nine people. They were not all military. There were eight people that

serve in our military and one civilian, a civilian contractor, A retired lieutenant colonel. So there were also officers and enlisted people, and all of them gave the ultimate sacrifice serving for us in Afghanistan, and it was also the largest loss of life for the U.S. Air Force since the Khobar Towers were bombed by Osama bin Laden some 12 or 13 years ago.

Tonight, we are joining here—and I think we are going to be joined by others that were on the trip—to talk about these individuals and honor these individuals.

With that, the first person that we want to honor is Major Jeffrey O. Ausborn. He was in the NATO Air Training Command in Afghanistan. Major Ausborn was born in August 1969 in Hokes Bluff, Alabama. His military career began on August 9, 1991, after being commissioned as a second lieutenant from the Troy State University Reserve Officer Training Corps. After completing basic communications officer training at Keesler Air Force Base, he remained as an instructor for nearly 4 years, and in 1996, Major Ausborn was selected for undergraduate pilot training and proceeded to Columbus Air Force Base where, as a pilot trainee, he went on to earn the coveted wings of silver.

Major Ausborn went on to fly the C-130, eventually completing two flying tours in the mighty Herk. In 2001, he joined the air education and training command as an instructor pilot. Major Ausborn spent 9 years of that command transitioning through the T-37, the T-6, and T-1 aircraft at Laughlin and Randolph Air Force Bases.

In November of 2010, Major Ausborn joined the NATO Air Training Command in Afghanistan as a C-27 evaluator pilot and the chief of current operations with the 538th Air Expeditionary Advisory Squadron. His awards include the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Aerial Achievement Medal.

Major Ausborn is survived by his wife, Suzanna; daughters, Emily and Shelby; son, Eric; and stepchildren, Summer and Mitchell.

Our hearts and prayers go out to that family, for their loved one who gave the ultimate sacrifice. It is with that tonight that we remember Major Jeffrey O. Ausborn.

I yield to my colleague from Wisconsin.

Mr. DUFFY. I'm grateful for the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

You know, we were on a trip together, a bipartisan trip to Afghanistan, and as we were able to tour the country and meet with our military leaders, our CIA and our State Department, it was for me an interesting trip in that you see that support of our young men and women who are overseas fighting for their country does not have political boundaries. Our group on this trip came together and unanimously were supportive of the men and women who we have sent to defend this

country, and I think it was quite remarkable to see this team come together.

Before I talk further, I would like to yield to the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. RICHMOND. I thank Congressman DUFFY for yielding, and I know that your constituent and the person from Wisconsin was someone that you wanted to talk about and you had the privilege of performing the ramp act. I wanted to give you chance to switch podiums so that you can go down now that we have the pictures presented, but I also wanted to take a minute to say what a ramp act is.

And it's a ceremony performed in the country of the soldier's death. It's not a funeral but it's a memorial, and it's good-bye to a fallen soldier on their return home. So this solemn ceremony, it may have words by a chaplain or commanding officer, but it's just a very, very surreal experience in the fact that all of the troops are out there, and we had a chance to participate in that, to watch one of our fallen soldiers get put back on a plane to be sent home to his parents and the family that he left behind. So that is our farewell for them, and I will tell you that the ceremony is performed for all coalition forces, not just the U.S. military.

So it was that ceremony that we had a chance to participate in, and it was one that was very humbling, something I will never forget.

With that, I will yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin, Congressman DUFFY, to talk about his constituent who we had the privilege of watching and participating in that ramp act.

Mr. DUFFY. I'm grateful to the gentleman from Louisiana for yielding.

I do want to briefly talk about one of our Wisconsin heroes who last week was fighting for his country in the Wardak Province. It's Matthew Hermanson, who is pictured here in the lower left corner of our diagram. He is from Appleton, Wisconsin, and he is survived by his wife and his parents.

He was, again, last week fighting for his country. He was part of the 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, and the division's 4th Brigade is stationed in Fort Polk.

In Wisconsin, we have like many States suffered losses recently, and our hearts go out to the family, the parents of Matt and to his wife, who at a time when many Americans are celebrating what has happened in Pakistan with Osama bin Laden, this family and other families are grieving the loss of their loved one. And here is a great Wisconsin hero, a great American hero who was fighting for his country who gave us the ultimate sacrifice in his pursuit for freedom. And I am grateful for all that he has given his State and his country, and we are proud of him.

□ 1900

Mr. RICHMOND. Thank you, Congressman DUFFY.

And now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield to the gentleman from Connecticut, Congressman CHRIS MURPHY, who was the senior Democrat on the trip who provided an awful lot of guidance as a senior Member of Congress in terms of what we were seeing and the effect of it also.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Thank you very much, Representative RICHMOND. It is kind of scary that I get senior status in my third term, but things move fast here in the United States House of Representatives.

I want to thank the gentleman from Louisiana for bringing us together for this Special Order hour. I have been here now for 5 years. And when votes are done and you go back to your office to get some work together for the next day, we often flip on the TV, and we watch these Special Order hours as, frankly, millions of Americans do across the country. What you see every night essentially starts to look the same. You see Republicans on one side having 1 hour, and Democrats on the other side having another hour. Too often that time is spent by both parties talking down the other side.

This is unique, to have Members of both the Republican and Democratic side joining together in a testimony to something that binds us as Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, whatever we are in this Nation. We know how important it is to support our men and women abroad and then to memorialize them when they don't come home. And you know what, if you got any of us individually and asked what our perceptions were of our trip and of the future of the war in Afghanistan, you would probably get different stories. But you won't get different stories when it comes to the respect that we have every day for the men and women who fight for us and I think the new understanding you get of the threats that are posed to these brave soldiers when you spend a little bit of time in theater.

Not only did we have the tragic honor of being part of a ramp ceremony and then a memorial service for the nine airmen and civilians that perished in the attack at the airport, but we got the chance a day later to walk the beat, essentially, with some of our Special Forces units in one of the western provinces of Afghanistan. And that's where you realize how dangerous this job is in a remote outpost with mud walls. A couple dozen of our bravest are trying to do their best to provide some security for Afghans in Herat province who had barely seen a coalition or American soldier before the last year, trying to cobble together the money that they had at their disposal to build some infrastructure projects to make the lives of the community members and the tribe members better.

Whatever you think about the future course of this war, we have got our best and our brightest fighting for us over there. We have 1 percent of Americans fighting for this country, protecting

the other 99 percent. And, unfortunately, there are more and more that aren't coming home.

In Connecticut, as I got the chance to remark in a short speech before the House of Representatives 2 weeks ago, we have taken an abnormally large number of casualties for a small State in the past 2 months. Unfortunately, one of the nine airmen that were killed in the attack at the Kabul International Airport was Raymond Estelle II. Major Estelle was born in Connecticut. Although he had moved away, he was a native of the Nutmeg State.

His military career spanned two decades back to November 1991 with his enlistment in the U.S. Air Force. After completing basic military and technical training, Raymond served as an enlisted aerospace ground equipment technician, rising to the rank of senior airman before earning his commission through the Reserve Officer Training Corps at the University of New Mexico in 1998.

Major Estelle was most recently assigned as the communications adviser to the Afghan Air Force with the 838th Air Expeditionary Advisory Group. It was in that capacity that he was serving in Afghanistan. It was in that capacity that he had befriended the Afghan airman who eventually turned his weapon on nine Americans.

Major Estelle's awards include the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, the Joint Service Achievement Medal, and the Air Force Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster.

He is survived by his wife, Captain N'Keiba Estelle, his daughters Chanelle and Shayla, his son Raymond III, and his mother Regina.

As we sat there listening to the final roll call of that unit with nine of its members missing, we read through the biographies of the nine that were killed. We noted that almost all of them had children, young children, three, four, five kids. And as Representative DUFFY so aptly said, as many Americans are celebrating in the street the heroic achievement of our Special Forces in taking down one of the most evil people ever to walk this Earth, there are other families that are grieving today for those who put their lives on the line to protect the other 99 percent of us. And for my constituent Raymond Estelle, we grieve in Connecticut today.

Mr. RICHMOND. Thank you, Congressman MURPHY. I think that you brought up a very good point, which was the observation of the sacrifice and the fact that as we looked at all of the boots and the helmets of the nine troops during that boot ceremony, the fact that it crossed all lines. It crossed partisan lines. It crossed racial lines. It crossed geographic lines, and it certainly crossed different income levels.

So I just wanted to reiterate that the reason why we are here today with such a bipartisan and diverse group

showing our appreciation is because that was one of the things that was so noticeable when we participated in that ceremony, the fact that it was a very diverse group.

But there was one consistent and one overwhelming issue, one overwhelming purpose, and that was to make sure that the United States of America stays the best country on Earth and to make sure that this next generation, we leave them and we give them the opportunity to succeed and the opportunity to live in peace.

I will just quickly read, and it was one night while we were meeting in Batumi, and we were having a deep conversation about the sacrifice that our children are making, the sacrifice that the troops were making. And there was a parliamentarian from Batumi who used the John Quincy Adams quote, and it was the sentiment of everyone. So I just thought that I would point out that quote and read it to everybody. Mr. Speaker, it is so on point that I thought people needed to hear it: "I must study politics and war, that my sons may have the liberty to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history and naval architecture, navigation, commerce, and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry, and porcelain." That is John Quincy Adams.

Mr. Speaker, I would just again reiterate the fact that it seems like we have been fighting forever to make sure that we give those next generations the freedom and that they don't have to concentrate on war so much and that they don't have to ship their children off to war and we don't have to welcome our troops back home in caskets. That is the sacrifice we are making, and we hope that we make that sacrifice so that the next generations can study the arts and the culture and all of those things.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the leader of that congressional delegation, **BILL SHUSTER**.

Mr. **SHUSTER**. I thank the gentleman, and I appreciate the gentleman talking about the meeting with other parliamentarians in some of the other countries that we visited, from the Czech Republic to Azerbaijan to Georgia. And one of the things all three of those countries have in common is they are really great allies of the United States of America. All of those countries contribute forces not only to Afghanistan but to Iraq.

Currently, they either have troops there or have troops just returning. And you look at a country like Azerbaijan, which lies in a rough neighborhood between Iran to the south and Russia to the north; Georgia sits on the Russian border and has had problems with Russia; but when those countries send their troops to fight shoulder to shoulder with the Americans, they have no caveats, which means that their troops are allowed to do whatever

the Americans, whatever the NATO forces need them to do, whether it's combat, whether it's Special Forces, whether it's supporting the NATO troops and the American troops in some other way. So it's really important that we, as Americans, know these countries and support what they do for us.

When people think and they hear that Georgia was to provide 900 troops to the effort in Afghanistan just recently, a lot of people would say, Well, that's not a very big force. But when you look that it's a country of about 4.5 million people, that would be the equivalent of the United States contributing 80,000 to 90,000 troops to the effort. So it's really a big contribution, and we owe a debt of gratitude to those countries that do that around the world.

□ 1910

As my colleagues have been talking about, we're honoring those nine that were killed last week in Afghanistan. And of the nine, as I said earlier, eight were in the U.S. Air Force, but one was a civilian, a contractor. That person was Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) James McLaughlin, or as he was commonly known as "Jimmy Mac," was one of the nine.

James Aloysius McLaughlin, Jr. was born on June 16, 1955. He graduated from Drexel University with a bachelor of science degree and earned a master's degree in business administration from the University of Phoenix. Jim retired from the U.S. Army as a lieutenant colonel in 2007 after service in Iraq.

His civilian career included program manager, product marketing manager, and applications engineer manager with LEMO USA. Jim's most recent service was as a contractor with L3 Communications, MPRI Division, supporting the NATO Training Command mission in Kabul, Afghanistan. During that time, he was a senior mentor to both the Ministry of Defense and the Afghan Air Force. Jim held military and civilian ratings in both rotary and fixed wing aircraft. One of his passions was his ham radio, and he held a current amateur radio license. He had a network of fellow ham radio operators throughout the United States and the world.

James McLaughlin is survived by his wife, Sandra, and their three children, Adam, Eve and James, all of Santa Rosa, California.

All Americans should keep their families in our thoughts and our prayers and we give, again, a thank you not only to James McLaughlin for giving the ultimate sacrifice, but for his family that had to suffer this great, great loss.

Mr. **RICHMOND**. Thank you, Congressman **SHUSTER**.

With that, I will yield to Congressman **CHRIS MURPHY** so that he can again pay tribute to another one of our fallen American heroes.

Mr. **MURPHY** of Connecticut. Thank you, Representative **RICHMOND**. I know

we're joined on the floor by a few of our other colleagues here. I would just underscore the remarks of Representative **SHUSTER**. Although Americans clearly are carrying the burden of operations in Afghanistan, we do have partners there. And many of our partners increased their commitment to Afghanistan, as the United States did. Others have walked away and drawn down their commitment. But we are fortunate that we are not fighting this fight alone there, and that we do have partners. And I think it's important for us to remind Americans of that, but also remind many of our allies that this fight is an international fight because, though the most high-profile of terrorist attacks in this world were those on New York and Washington, D.C., and the fields of Pennsylvania, the next terrorist attack could be anywhere in this world. And our ability to push al Qaeda to the brink of extinction is a global effort, not just an American effort.

In addition to those that we've noted already, there was another airman who we memorialized that day, and I would like to just for a brief moment of time talk about Major Charles A. Ransom. Major Ransom was born in 1979. He attended the Virginia Military Institute, and he earned a baccalaureate of science in computer science. And he received his ROTC commission in the United States Air Force as a second lieutenant on the 18th of May, 2001. It was in that year that he deployed for the first time in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Then in 2006 he deployed again in Turkey in support of Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Fundamental Justice. And then in 2009 he deployed to Baghdad, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Finally, in 2011 he deployed for the last time to Afghanistan in Operation Enduring Freedom.

He is survived by his mother and father, SGM (Ret.) Willie and Marysue Ransom, and his brother, Chief Petty Officer Stephen Randolph.

From those that talked about Major Ransom, they talked about what a tremendously important figure he was in our operations in Afghanistan. But his story and his background are not uncommon in two ways.

First, Major Ransom comes from a military family. Both his brother and his father have served and are retired from the armed services. And that's how it goes. This becomes a family occupation, a family passion. There are millions of families around this country who have the kind of commitment that the Ransom family did. And while we pay our respects to those individuals who served, we, frankly, have to remember that this is not just an individual commitment. This is not just an individual sacrifice; this is a family sacrifice, that the whole family serves, whether they are serving through brothers and sister and fathers and mothers who have been members of the military, or whether they simply serve

by picking up and doing a little bit more for their family while their loved one is away.

But he's also not unique in the fact that this was his fourth deployment. When we talk about the heroes from previous wars, they are no less heroes because they only served one or two tours. But there is something unique about the last 10 years in that there are more and more people like Major Ransom who have gone back, not just for a second time, not just for a third time, but in Major Ransom's case, for a fourth time.

He did it, and I can't speak for the reasons why he did it. But I imagine he did it because he knew of the importance of the work that he was doing. He knew that he didn't want to leave his men and women behind to do it on their own.

And unfortunately, Representative RICHMOND, Major Ransom didn't come back from his fourth deployment. But we owe him and his family, frankly, a degree of gratitude beyond words for their service and their sacrifice as an entire family.

Mr. RICHMOND. Thank you, Congressman MURPHY. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. DUFFY. I appreciate the gentleman from Louisiana for yielding. And I would echo the sentiment as stated by the gentleman from Connecticut. I think he's right. You look at the families and how they suffer when they lose one of their sons or daughters or fathers or mothers. It truly is felt. I think it was well said.

Just quickly, as we were on this trip, we had a chance not just to go to Afghanistan, but this bipartisan delegation had a chance to go see many of our great allies in the conflict in Afghanistan. We stopped over in Georgia and Azerbaijan and the Czech Republic. What I thought was so unique as I went to those countries was their unabashed support for American principles, not just American principles, human principles of freedom and liberty and prosperity.

And when we look around the world and people talk about America, oftentimes they pay us great lip service. They tell us they're our friend and they're supportive of what we're doing in the world. But oftentimes their actions don't meet their words. But you look at these three countries that we visited. They just don't express by word their support for what we do here in America, but they show their support. And they've shown that support most definitely by way of sending their troops to Afghanistan to fight for the freedom of those Afghans who want to see some form of democracy in their country.

Again, while we were in Afghanistan, we participated in a memorial ceremony for the nine Americans who were shot at the airport and were killed. I want to remember tonight Major Philip Ambard, one of those who lost his life last week in that attack. He was

born in Caracas, Venezuela, on the 4th of April, 1967. He lived in Venezuela until he was 12 years old, at which time he moved to America, and he was then living in Edmonds, Washington.

Now, he started his military career in 1985. He enlisted in the United States Air Force. With a stellar enlisted career, he rose to the rank of master sergeant. From there he attended night school, all the while raising a young family, and he obtained his bachelor's degree.

□ 1920

He was then selected to go to Officer Training School in 2000. He was given his most recent assignment as a foreign language professor at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. He taught both Spanish and French.

As we've discussed here, the loss of one of our military men or women is felt throughout the family. Major Ambard was survived not only by his wife, Linda, but by his five children—Alexander, Timothy, Joshua, Patrick, and his daughter, Emily; by his mother and father; and by his sister, Diana.

I know, as they go into this week and into the coming months and years, they will mourn the loss of their father, their son, their brother, their husband. I just want Major Ambard's family to know that we are grateful for his service, that we are grateful for the sacrifice he made for his country, and that we are grateful to them for the sacrifice they are making, for they don't have their loved one at home with them tonight, sharing a meal, and they're not going to have Christmases and birthday parties together. That, most definitely, is a sacrifice they will feel for a lifetime. I am grateful for what he has done in paying the ultimate sacrifice for his country.

Mr. RICHMOND. Thank you, Congressman DUFFY.

With that, I would like to yield to the gentleman from New Jersey, another Member who took the time over the Easter break to go to Afghanistan to visit with our troops. He was certainly a rock star when he appeared on the base and stopped to sign a bunch of autographs. Of course, he was the only one who was asked for an autograph.

Mr. RUNYAN. I would like to thank the gentleman and also all of my colleagues for a great trip, for a really great factfinding trip. It was an opportunity to go over there in a bipartisan nature and to really learn about what our troops go through on a daily basis and about what they're doing for the Afghani people.

In the same light, it was also an opportunity to learn about some other allied nations we have because, when you boil all of this down, whether it's the Czechs, the Jordanians, the Afghans or the Azerbaijani people, we're all fighting for the same thing. We're all fighting for democracy, and we're all fighting for freedom. So it was truly an honor to go over there and to learn firsthand about everything that's going

on there. It was an opportunity to really go out and see what our guys go through on a daily basis.

Being put in a camp there in western Afghanistan and seeing the relationships and the support they're building with the Afghan people was tremendous. Building those friendships really allows our troops and all of our allied troops to go in there, to make friends with them and to help them defend their own country. No matter where we went on this trip, there was a sense of pride that everybody had in themselves, in their country and in their warfighters: that we were all out there, fighting for democracy and freedom.

When you talked to the troops, you could really see it in their eyes even when they asked the question: What is the end? When is the end? You looked at them and said, Well, the end is to give these people the opportunities that we have. The scary thing about it is a lot of the Afghani people don't understand what it is to live in a democracy, what it is to have freedom.

You could always see the twinkle in our troops' eyes when you said that to them because you could sense that some of them were thinking, Well, when is this going to be over? Then you just refresh their memory on what they're fighting for. They're fighting for our freedom. They're fighting for the freedom of other human beings. It was truly an honor to go over there and witness that and experience that and really just say "thanks" to all of them.

As my colleague said, I had somewhat of a rock star mentality over there. Everyone asked me, Can I get a picture? I can't give you enough time in the world for what you're doing for us and for what you're doing for other people around the world with the sacrifices you're making, and I say that on a day-in and day-out basis with every troop I ever meet with.

You go off into the villages, and you see a group of guys who are living together in a camp out there. That's all they have. They're brothers. You could see them all, and they were having beard growing contests throughout the camp. Some of them participated and some of them didn't, but they were taking a lot of pride in that type of stuff, and were just keeping that morale going. It was great to see because you knew what type of desperate situation they were in.

I think when we all got to that boot ceremony there at the end—and many of you have seen it before where there's the boots with the M16s stuck in the middle, with the dog tags wrapped around the weapon, and the helmet on top—it was a somber reminder of the cost of freedom and of the cost of democracy. I really want to, along with my colleagues, say "thank you" to everybody.

The one gentleman I do want to recognize is Major David L. Brodeur, whose call sign was actually "Klepto." Throughout the ceremony, they would call the guys by their call signs; and

when they went through the roll call and they kept calling these guys' names, the silence was deafening because they kept calling his name, and there was no one answering as they went through the whole company. I know quite a few of us were really brought to tears in that moment.

Major Brodeur was born on December 10, 1976. He was commissioned through the United States Air Force Academy in 1999 where he majored in political science.

After graduating pilot training in 2001, he was qualified as an F-16 pilot. He was then assigned to Shaw Air Force Base where he served as the Assistant Weapons Officer in his squadron. He next served at Luke Air Force Base as scheduler, flight commander and weapons instructor pilot. At his next assignment to Eielson Air Force Base, he was the Chief of Scheduling, an F-16 Aggressor Pilot, and the Chief of Aggressor Academics. Upon his deployment, he was assigned as Executive Officer to the 11th Air Force Commander at Elmendorf Air Force Base.

Major Brodeur deployed and served in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and was deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as an Air Adviser to the Afghan Air Corps Command Center.

He is survived by his wife, Susan, by his son, David, Jr.—aged 3—and by his daughter, Elizabeth.

It is truly guys like him who make the difference, who are a big reason why people like myself, I really think, get involved in supporting these heroes and in making sure they're known. Yes, we've suffered a loss here, but the true people who have suffered the ultimate loss are his family. His children aren't going to have a father. Myself being a father of three, I realize that. I respect that. May God bless his soul, and may God bless his family. We thank him for his service.

Mr. RICHMOND. Thank you, Congressman RUNYAN.

I will now yield to the CODEL leader, Congressman BILL SHUSTER.

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for securing this hour for us to be able to talk about our experience in Afghanistan and, most importantly, for us to be able to talk about and honor the nine people who were killed in Afghanistan last week. As I mentioned earlier, it was the largest loss of life in the U.S. Air Force since the Khobar Towers.

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As my colleague, Mr. RUNYAN, talked about the somber and powerful experience that we had there at this memorial service, at the ceremony, it was really something to be there. We got there at the last minute, and I think we all were very, very grateful to be able to participate in the ceremony.

Again, nine people were slain. We have already talked about the one that was not a military person but a contractor. He served in the military, but then came back to serve in Afghani-

stan as a contractor and tried to help develop and train the Afghan Air Force.

Another one of those members that gave the ultimate sacrifice is Lieutenant Colonel Frank D. Bryant, Jr. Lieutenant Bryant was born on August 13, 1973, from Knoxville, Tennessee.

His military career began when he entered the U.S. Air Force Academy in the summer of 1991. After graduating from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1995 with a bachelor's degree in general engineering, Lieutenant Bryant was assigned at the Columbus Air Force Base initially as a student pilot and then as a T-37 instructor pilot. Lieutenant Colonel Bryant's next aircraft was an F-16.

In the F-16, he completed tours in Korea, Shaw Air Force Base, an exchange pilot with the UAE, and Luke Air Force Base. His last assignment was a CJCS Afghanistan-Pakistan Hand assigned to the 438th Air Expeditionary Wing in Kabul, Afghanistan.

During his career, Lieutenant Bryant earned the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, Air Force Combat Action Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with one oakleaf cluster, Air Force Commendation Medal with one oakleaf cluster, Air Force Achievement Medal, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Air Force Outstanding Unit with Valor Device and two oakleaf clusters, Combat Readiness Medal, National Defense Medal, Global War of Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Afghan Campaign Medal, NATO Medal, Air Force Overseas Ribbon, Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with gold border with one oakleaf cluster, and the Air Force Longevity Service with three oakleaf clusters, and, finally, the Air Force Training Ribbon. Somebody who served long and, obviously by all those medals, did a fabulous job serving the United States of America.

Lieutenant Bryant is survived by his wife, Janice; his son, Sean; his father, Frank D. Bryant, Sr.; and his mother, Patricia Bryant. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to his family and also to Colonel Bryant, for their service to this country, and of course for the ultimate sacrifice that Colonel Bryant gave for his Nation. I would encourage all Americans to remember Colonel Bryant and his family in their thoughts and their prayers.

Mr. RICHMOND. Thank you, Congressman SHUSTER.

I have the privilege to call upon another one of our colleagues who participated in the congressional delegation who has not had an opportunity to talk about one of our fallen soldiers, but I will tell you something about this Member of Congress. He, himself, has put his life on the line and served in our U.S. Air Force, and that is none other than Captain ADAM KINZINGER.

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. I thank the gentleman from Louisiana, and I thank him for setting this up.

One of the great things about when you talk about, just, in general, America and what we stand for, there is a lot of disagreement. But when it comes to supporting our troops, when it comes to what America stands for, there is no disagreement.

The gentleman from Louisiana and I have become great friends, and on this mission we got to really see what America stands for. And even though there are differences sometimes in where we should see foreign policy, and that is understandable and that is fine, there is no difference right now in supporting troops and supporting those who put their lives on the line.

As a military pilot, I never would expect to be in a situation where myself and scores of my brothers and sisters would be killed by a mad gunman walking into a room. That is something that I am sure these brave heroes that we are talking about never expected. But it happened. It was tragic. But they stood up and fought for their country, and in the process they lost their lives.

One of those brave heroes who lost his life is a fellow Illinoisan, Captain Nathan Nylander. Captain Nathan Nylander was born outside of Chicago, Illinois, and grew up in Illinois and Texas.

His military career began in August of 1994, with his enlistment in the United States Air Force. After completing basic military training and follow-on technical training in Texas, Florida, and Mississippi, he served as an enlisted weather forecaster, rising to the rank of technical sergeant.

His enlisted assignments include weather forecaster at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, and Seoul, Republic of South Korea, and culminated as the Presidential Weather Forecaster at Camp David, Maryland.

In 2006, Captain Nylander did what few do: He earned his commission through Officer Training School, and ended as a distinguished graduate.

As a weather officer, Captain Nylander held positions as a weather flight commander at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in Hawaii, and Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona. Captain Nylander was most recently assigned as the lead weather adviser for the Afghan Air Force with the 438th Air Expeditionary Advisory Group.

His awards include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal with three oakleaf clusters, Joint Service Achievement Medal, and Air Force Achievement Medal.

He is survived by his wife, two sons, daughter, and his father and mother.

These brave heroes are an example of what is best about our country. And while we mourn their loss, we celebrate the freedom that they passed defending.

So I would say over the next couple of years as we go forward and we debate really big issues here in Washington and we have disagreement,

never forget that we are all Americans. That is the most important thing.

So to the nine heroes, and to those who gave their lives already, to those who continue to serve every day, let me just humbly say, on behalf of everybody in the United States Congress, on behalf of Americans, on behalf of a Republican and a Democrat standing here in the Chamber united on this: Thank you. Thank you for defending your country. Thank you for being an example for generations to come. We mourn for your loss, but now we celebrate the freedom that you defended.

Mr. RICHMOND. We have one or two more fallen heroes that we want to honor, and I want to make sure that people understand that this is just a short ceremony, but from the heart, for the 10 people that we had a chance to participate in their ceremony, and for Private First Class Jonathan Villanueva who was killed at the same time as Staff Sergeant Matthew Hermanson.

But I wanted to take a minute to talk about Master Sergeant Tara Brown.

She was born July 21, 1977. She began her military career in 1997, at the Kadena Air Force Base in Japan as an administrative clerk, quickly mastering her skills in communications and embracing a love of travel and adventure.

Master Sergeant Brown completed assignments to Germany, Turkey, Alaska, and Korea before taking charge in numerous high-level communications positions at Andrews Air Force Base right down the street.

Master Sergeant Brown's awards include the Bronze Star posthumously, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal with three oakleaf clusters, and the Air Force Achievement Medal with three oakleaf clusters.

She is survived by her husband, Ernest Brown; father, Jim Jacobs; mother, Gladys Verren; brother, Jim Jacobs, Jr.; and sister, Laguanda Jacobs.

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Mr. Speaker, I will tell you that during this service, and when they talked about Master Sergeant Brown, they talked about her smile, they talked about her status as a newlywed, but, more than anything, they just talked about her love of service and the fact that she was willing to give it all.

So I wanted to make sure that as we continued we included Master Sergeant Tara Brown in our ceremony today, just to make sure that we don't forget any of our troops, that we had the privilege and the opportunity to participate in their service and on their day.

Mr. Speaker, I think that all of my colleagues, and I don't see them now, but I think all of my colleagues have exhausted their time in making sure that they honor all of our fallen soldiers. This was just one thing that we thought we wanted to do to show the

country that although we disagree on 20 or 30 percent of things in this body, and those 20 or 30 percent may be very gut-wrenching and they may be very divisive and we may differ on how we cut programs, but every difference in principle is not necessarily a difference in purpose and a difference in our ultimate goal, and that is to make sure that this country continues to be the best country on Earth.

So we as just a small part of this august body, and one that we are honored to be a part of, we are honored to serve with so many senior Members who have taken us under their wing to make sure they nurture us. Mr. Speaker, we can't thank you enough for that and we can't thank Congress and the American people enough for giving us the opportunity to go over to the conflict, to watch Afghans as they start to patrol their own area.

I will tell you, I am not sure if Congressman SHUSTER touched on it, but we had an opportunity to patrol with a group of Afghans and their elders. One of the elders that was over there was a very elderly man who was the commander of this police unit, and they were protecting the entrance into this city and they had their checkpoint.

While walking to the checkpoint, we saw a young man holding arms and protecting us as we walked, and we stopped to talk to him. Then they pointed out to us he lost his father and brother in a firefight just a week and a half ago while they were out patrolling. Then as we talked to him just for a few minutes longer, he talked to us about the vision of freedom, and he was all excited and his eyes were open very wide as he talked about why he was still patrolling after his father and his brother's funeral, which was the fact that he had a love for his country, for Afghanistan, but also because he felt an obligation because we had so many troops out there fighting and dying that we were joined at the hip, because this was a very important goal. And it is not just to bring freedom to us; it is to bring freedom to people all across this world.

Then as he was telling us that, he told us that just a couple of days before we got there that his daughter drowned in a creek in their little village. So we are talking about a very young man who had tragedy three times in his life who was still out there with his machine gun in the desert, in the heat, patrolling to make sure that this congressional delegation was safe, but also taking the time, and we watched him talk to school kids and other things.

But that is what makes this country great. And the thing that united us all was the fact that what makes this country great, we are inspiring other people so that they want to make their country and their town and their village great, just like America.

So you have people all across this world, and we can talk particularly about Afghanistan, because that is where we saw it, that were going above

and beyond, because they appreciated our effort to help them, and they were committed to helping themselves, and they said we are in it with you, and we are going to sacrifice our life and our limbs, just as those brave men and women in the United States are doing.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for allowing us to have this time to talk about the people we lost, and I will just end with reading their names, because I think that we can't give them enough, because they made and paid the ultimate sacrifice so that we can have the freedom that we enjoy and others could have it. And they are: Lieutenant Colonel Frank D. Bryant, Jr.; Major David L. Brodeur; Major Philip D. Ambard; Major Raymond Estelle; Major Jeffrey O. Ausborn, "Oz," as they called him; Captain Charles A. Ransom; Captain Nathan J. Nylander; retired Lieutenant Colonel James A. McLaughlin; Technical Sergeant Tara R. Brown; Private First Class Jonathan Villanueva; and Staff Sergeant Matthew D. Hermanson.

Mr. Speaker, thank you, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRAVES of Georgia). The Chair wants to thank the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND) for this much-needed tribute. Thank you for recognizing those individuals, the defenders of liberty of this great Nation.

REASONS FOR HIGH ENERGY PRICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, we just got off two weeks of working in our districts around this country. At least I held about 10 town hall meetings, and I am sure many of my colleagues held more. We talked about the debt, we talked about the deficit, but one of the things that almost every one of these town halls insisted upon talking about was the high price of gasoline.

Let's start with this first exhibit we have here. This just gives the comparison of what the gas prices were somewhere in the United States, I can't tell where. January of 2009: Unleaded, \$1.32; mid-range, \$1.42; super, \$1.52. Here is a picture taken in April of 2011: Regular, \$3.99; mid-range, \$4.09; the high powered stuff, \$4.19 a gallon.

Mr. Speaker, the only party that can be blamed for this, unfortunately, is the Democratic Party, through the leadership of Barack Obama, President of the United States, because a vicious combination of the Obama administration's moratorium on offshore drilling and the devaluation of the American dollar through the administration's quantitative easing have resulted in the highest seasonal gasoline prices in U.S. history.

We have reached a point where if we don't pay attention, we are going to