

Schroeder. That was her leader. That was her commander saying that to her. Instead of helping her, her commander called her a liar and restricted her from seeking medical help or any type of counseling.

And what's worse is that her commander did nothing illegal. The military judicial system allows commanders complete discretion for handling cases of rape and sexual assault. To the current standard of justice, the commander did absolutely nothing wrong.

This story is one of thousands that happens in the military every year. By the Department of Defense's own statistics, 19,000 men and women are sexually assaulted or raped in the military every year. This is not a secret. Congress and the DOD have worked on this issue for a quarter of a century, but very little has changed.

The issue has been treated like a game of tag. Congress calls a hearing and then, tag, DOD submits a report, then, tag, Congress has a hearing, then DOD has a press conference about a new report. The game goes on and on, but no real changes actually occur.

Well, I have my own game. It's called "Truth Or Dare."

First, truth: the women in our military are more likely to be raped or assaulted by colleagues than they are to be killed by the enemy.

Truth: only 13.5 percent of victims report the crime.

Truth: only 8 percent of the cases are actually prosecuted.

Truth: the sole arbiters of reports of assaults in commands who decide which rapists are punished and will go free are, in fact, the commanders.

And now, there's a dare. I dare the Department of Defense to create a better, fairer process for handling rapes and sexual assaults. Instead of continuing a system that punishes victims and sweeps sexual offenses under the rug, I dare the Department of Defense to create an impartial office to review and handle these cases with experts in prosecution and investigation.

So what actually happened to Private Schroeder? Well, she got transferred away from her rapist to a new duty location. Prior to her arrival, her command called and told her new supervisor that she was a "troublemaker."

Two weeks after the transfer, her new superior made a pass at her. She refused to have sex with him, and he retaliated by publicly harassing her at work. When she contracted pink eye, he asked her in front of formation if she let a guy ejaculate in her eye.

She reported the harassment to command. Nothing happened. A month later, she awoke to the same supervisor sexually assaulting her. Again, she reported it to her command.

This time the command took action—against Private Schroeder. She was disciplined for having a man in her room. Private Schroeder, the victim of sexual assault, was punished after a sex

offender broke into her room and harmed her.

Private Schroeder learned not to report crimes committed against her. So 6 months later, when she was sexually assaulted again by a marine in a truck, she told no one how he attempted to have sex with her, or how, when she refused, he began to masturbate in front of her and locked the doors so she could not leave. He said, Show me your tits; and, Help me masturbate; and, You masturbate for me.

This is outrageous conduct that should not be allowed in our military. For now, victims of rape and sexual assault must follow the chain of command, even if their commanding officer chooses to ignore the problem. We need to overhaul this system.

I've introduced H.R. 3435, the STOP Act, that would take these cases out of the chain of command and create an office in the military that will handle them.

I will continue to tell stories like Private Schroeder's until something changes. Survivors can email me at stopmilitaryrape@mail.house.gov if they would like to speak out.

For more information about this issue and opportunities to advocate for change, please visit [ProtectOurDefenders.com](http://ProtectOurDefenders.com).

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 3 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

#### PRAYER

Reverend Rudy Stevens, United States Army, Pinehurst, North Carolina, offered the following prayer:

Lord, too often, we Americans back home forget to pray for our leaders here in D.C. Forgive us, Lord. For those assembled here in the people's House, I pray that You give them courage, strength, and wisdom.

Give them courage from our convictions, strength from Your spirit, and wisdom for the future. For here decisions are made: choices that shape circumstances of years, if not generations, of all Americans.

All the way from California to North Carolina that airborne chorus sounds off loud and strong with, "This land is my land, and this land is your land."

And it is here in this room that chorus hits the ground and finds harmony reminding us that from many, we are one, one Nation under God that seeks liberty and justice for all, for all the fatherless and the oppressed.

So, Lord, hear our prayer and keep these leaders wise, strong, and courageous.

In Jesus' name, amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Ms. HAHN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. HAHN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### WELCOMING REVEREND RUDY STEVENS

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) is recognized for 1 minute. There was no objection.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me today to introduce Army Chaplain Rudy Stevens.

Captain Stevens lives in North Carolina's Sixth Congressional District and serves the 2-504 Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

During his tenure, Mr. Speaker, Captain Stevens has received many awards, most notably the Bronze Star, the Air Assault Wings, and Jump Wings. He has been deployed, Mr. Speaker, on separate occasions and will continue his duty with a deployment to Afghanistan in the coming months.

On behalf of the constituents of the Sixth District of North Carolina and my colleagues here in the people's House, Chaplain Stevens, we welcome you to the House of Representatives and extend our appreciation to you for having offered today's prayer.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches from both sides of the aisle.

#### HONORING RETIRED COLONEL JOHN R. HED OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

(Mr. CRAVAACK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CRAVAACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my respects for retired Colonel John R. Hed of the United States Air Force.