

INTRODUCING THE “HONORING OUR FALLEN HEROES WITH DIGNITY ACT OF 2013”

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 15, 2013

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Honoring Our Fallen Heroes with Dignity Act of 2013.

This act protects the rights of families to leave small keepsakes at the gravesites of servicemembers buried in Section 60 of Arlington National Cemetery, many of whom bravely served their country in Iraq and in Afghanistan.

During the summer of 2013, officials at Arlington National Cemetery came through Section 60 and, without providing advance notice to families, threw away mementos left behind for the heroes buried in Section 60.

Teresa Arciola, a mother whose son was killed in Iraq in 2005, cried when she found out that the mementos she left at her son's gravesite had been removed. “It was like no one cared anymore,” she told *The Washington Post*.

The act would allow mementos to be left on the top of and immediately next to grave markers in Section 60 of Arlington National Cemetery as long as they did not interfere with normal operations and maintenance procedures, such as mowing the grass.

The items can not be a health or safety hazard, be permanently affixed to gravestones, and can't interfere with normal operations of the Section 60 of Arlington National Cemetery. At end of each month, items left on the grave stone will be collected, cataloged, and stored.

HONORING JAMES BRYON ADAMS, JR.

HON. PHIL GINGREY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 15, 2013

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and honor the life my dear friend James “Jim” Bryon Adams, Jr.—an exemplary American citizen, husband, father, and grandfather.

On November 10, Jim passed away peacefully at his home in Greensboro, North Carolina at the age of 70.

Born and raised in Atlanta, Jim was the oldest son of the late James Byron and Marie Black Adams. After graduating from Druid Hills High School, he attended Georgia Institute of Technology and joined Sigma Nu fraternity, where we became friends. Jim was a reliable friend and fraternity brother. And on top of that, he was a dedicated leader in whatever organizations he joined. While I knew him, he was a Rush Chairman of our fraternity, Captain of the Varsity baseball team, President of the Rambling Wreck Club, and a member of the ANAK honorary society.

After finishing his degree and a short stint with the Chicago Cubs minor league team in Washington State, Jim joined Deering Milliken—presently Milliken & Company—in New York City which began a long and successful career in the textile industry. He was

an executive at many companies in the industry and eventually became President of Flynt Amtex, where he retired at age 65, but continued serving on their board of directors.

Jim's friends and family will remember him as a level headed and dispassionate man who could bring a lighthearted sense of humor to every situation. He took pride in his profession, cared deeply about his family, and enjoyed golfing with his friends.

Mr. Speaker, I extend my deepest condolences to Jim's wife Daryl, his son James, his daughter Jill, his great grandson Brayden, his brother David, and his nephew James in this time of difficulty. It saddens me to know that the world is missing an honorable and dedicated man, but I am humbled to know that he is now in a better place.

LAWSUIT ABUSE REDUCTION ACT OF 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2013

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2655, the so-called “Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act.”

This is a misleading title and a misleading bill. A plaintiff courageously seeking to stand up to civil rights violations, equal protections violations, or voting rights infringement IS NOT abusing anything: she's exercising her rights enshrined in the Constitution.

When I practiced law in California, I know that those I represented—from victims of workplace discrimination to women athlete scholars looking for equal opportunities—would have been hurt by this bill, and their cases may never have been heard.

Ordering sanctions should be at the discretion of the judge, not Congress. This bill would reverse the good judgment and counsel of the Judicial Conference of the United States and the Supreme Court, both of which recommended the change twenty years ago.

Our Courts are a great equalizer; the courtroom is often the only place that a plaintiff can find a fair and equal footing with employers, corporations, and even their government.

This bill would have a chilling effect on the ability of Americans to find justice for civil rights violations, employment discrimination claims, privacy suits, equal protection violations, voting rights claims, consumer protection claims, and so much more.

The changes proposed in this bill would negatively impact cases where the bulk of the evidence rests with one party, disproportionately impacting plaintiffs in civil rights and consumer protection litigation.

This bill would also negatively impact civil cases that involve new legal theories, meaning that landmark cases in our nation's history may never have made it to the Supreme Court; cases like *Brown v. Board of Education*, *Griswald v. Connecticut*, *Massachusetts v. EPA*.

If my colleagues are serious about reforming the legal system, I would be very interested in working with them. There are abusive litigation tactics by both plaintiffs and defendants, and we could work in a responsible, bipartisan manner to address those. But this bill

is not a serious attempt to level the playing field or to curb real abuses. Instead, it puts Congress' thumb on one side of the scale of justice.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill.

HONORING RIVERDALE HIGH SCHOOL AND H2O FOR LIFE

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 15, 2013

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to take a moment to honor an individual who, for the last four years, has been inspiring the next generation of global water activists.

Riverdale High School teacher Laurie LePore began teaching the “H2O for Life” course as a way to introduce a service-learning component to her students' education.

At the beginning of each H2O for Life course, students select one or two schools currently lacking a proper, healthy, water source. The class is then divided into five student-led groups, each tasked with their own jobs to do, working together to raise funds for the building of wells, water purification systems, and restrooms for schools in need. Laurie also educates students about water issues in my home state of Oregon, including dam breaching, overfishing, and the impact of bottled water.

This year, her class is assisting two elementary schools in South Africa to raise \$5,000 to bring water, sanitation, and hygiene projects and practices to their schools—benefiting a total of 2,086 students. At the end of the year, eight schools from Africa, the Philippines, and India will have first-time access to water and sanitation facilities thanks to the H2O for Life class and Mrs. LePore's dedication.

Bringing water and sanitation into schools is an essential part of having an effective education system. Without adequate sanitation facilities, young girls are embarrassed to attend school and too often stay away as a result. If there isn't water in their place of learning, many children are forced to choose between providing water for themselves and their family or their education. When it's a matter of life and death or learning, school always loses out.

As the lead sponsor of the 2005 “Water for the Poor Act” and the current “Water for the World Act of 2013,” I applaud local efforts to highlight this ongoing challenge and am deeply appreciative of the impact this program has and will have not only on her students, but for the thousands of children they've helped around the world.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 15, 2013

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, on November 12, 2013, I missed rollcall votes No. 571 and 572 for district business. Had I been present I would have voted “yes” on both.