

During a month when we recognize Veterans Day, we must also take a moment to recognize those who play an instrumental role in the life of a veteran: their caregivers. By passing this bill, we could make a big difference for the veteran and their caregiver.

I am grateful to my constituents for bringing this need to my attention, and I call upon my colleagues to join me in this effort in supporting H.R. 2894.

DEFEATING ISIS AND PRESIDENT'S SYRIA STRATEGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG) for 5 minutes.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of countless Hoosiers who are concerned for our troops. Like many Americans, we are increasingly dismayed by the Obama administration's incoherent strategy to defeat ISIS and protect American interests around the world.

As someone who served this country in the United States Marine Corps, and now as an elected Representative, I take seriously our responsibility here in Congress to demand war strategies that put American military personnel in a position to successfully complete their missions. This responsibility to our troops—to set them up for victory—has contributed to a new level of frustration felt by many of us over President Obama's disjointed foreign policy decisions in the Middle East.

Just last Friday, without any input from Congress, and absent any form of public debate, a White House spokesperson announced to the world that President Obama was authorizing the deployment of U.S. special operators directly into the fray in Syria.

Rather than hear it straight from our Commander in Chief, it took President Obama 3 full days to appear publicly and discuss his decision to escalate U.S. involvement and put more American boots on the ground.

On the one hand, I applaud the administration for any attempts to degrade the capabilities of ISIS and stabilize a war-torn Syria. However, it remains unclear what these brave special operators have been asked to accomplish. And, what strategy will enable a few dozen U.S. special operators to decisively drive ISIS from their stronghold in Raqqa?

To be clear, I know many of these valorous special operators personally. I am familiar with their remarkable ability to accomplish seemingly impossible missions, even with the odds stacked against them. But these warriors are not magicians. They are not a magic elixir capable of turning the tide of a 4-year, multifaceted civil war. They must be empowered to win.

President Obama tells us the U.S. mission is to degrade and defeat ISIS. But for that to succeed, he must articulate a broader strategy for the remaining 15 months of his tenure as Commander in Chief.

As it currently stands, limited airstrikes and a handful of special forces operators will not sufficiently empower the United States and our partners to initiate change in the region.

Unfortunately, I fear that this marks yet another instance of the President dictating U.S. defense policy by popular opinion. This is unfair to our men and women in uniform, their families, and it is unfair to all Americans.

My fervent hope is that during the close of this administration, a coherent, longer-term strategy is developed that empowers the greatest military in the world to protect American interests and to bring stability to a region desperately in need of peace.

□ 1045

HONORING OUR VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. YOUNG) for 5 minutes.

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as we approach Veterans Day, to honor the brave men and women who have served our country in uniform.

Now, earlier this year, I met with a group of young Iowans in Greenfield, Iowa, belonging to the Junior Optimists Club. They found a truly unique way to pay tribute to our Iowa veterans.

The Sidey family owned and published the Free Press in Greenfield, Iowa, for over 125 years. The Free Press would publish in their newspaper letters Iowa servicemembers sent home to their families over the years.

The Junior Optimists I met with went through the Sideys' collection of letters from World War II from soldiers. They picked out the ones they found most interesting or compelling and read them aloud at a Flag Day celebration that I was fortunate to attend.

I want to share one here, and I will put some others in the RECORD here with my colleagues in the House of Representatives, and enshrine them in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so that we, and future generations, may always remember the very real and human struggles our men and women face as they leave their loved ones and family behind to bravely secure and serve our country with dignity, honor and distinction.

I would like to read one of these letters, written by Lieutenant Kenneth Eatinger of Adair County, Iowa.

July 23, 1943.

Dear Little Brother:

I hope and trust you will be able to read this all by yourself, but if you can't, mother will read it to you and you will be able to save it and read it yourself at a later date after you have learned to read better.

Sonny, I know you miss me. I miss you too. It is too bad this war could not have been delayed a few more years so that I could have been with you a while longer and do all the things I had planned to do with you. But I suppose we must be brave and put those things off for now.

If I could just get home once more to see you and all the folks again and have them meet my little wife and baby, I wouldn't ask for anything more.

When you are a little older, you will know why your brother had to leave home for so long. You know we have a big country and we have big ideals as to how people should live and enjoy the riches of it and how each is born with equal rights to life, freedom, and the pursuit of happiness.

Unfortunately, there are some countries in the world where they do not have these ideals, where a boy cannot grow up to be what he wants to be, with no limits on his opportunity to be a great man such as a great statesman or a businessman, a farmer, a soldier.

Because there are many people in other countries who want to change our Nation, its ideals, its form of government and way of life, we must leave our homes and families to fight.

When it is all over, your brother is going to bring his little family home to see you and Mom and Dad and Inez and all the rest. In the meantime, take good care of Mom and Dad and grow up to be a good boy and a good young man.

Study hard when you are in school. Be a good leader in everything good in life. Be a good American, strive to win, but if you must lose, lose like a gentleman, and be a good sport. Don't be a quitter, either in sports or in your business or profession when you grow up.

Get all the education you can. Stay close to Mom and follow her advice. Obey her in everything, no matter how you may at times disagree. She knows what is best and will never let you down or lead you away from the right and honorable things of life.

Little Brother, if I don't come back, you will have to be Mom and Dad's protectors when they get older because you will be the only one they have. You must grow up to take my place as well as your own in their life and heart.

Last of all, don't forget your brother. Pray for him to come back from this war, and if it is God's will that he does not, be the kind of boy and man your brother wants you to be.

Kiss Mother, Dad, and Inez for me every night. Goodbye for now, Little Brother. With love to you and all the family, Your Brother.

Mr. Speaker, these are the words of a brave man, and they ring as true today as they did over 70 years ago when they were written. They embody the ideals of this great Nation and the ethos of our Armed Forces that have fought, sacrificed, and died for our country so that we can remain free.

My friends and colleagues, next week, when we recognize these men and women on Veterans Day, look them in the eye and say, "Thank you." For their bravery and sacrifices, they deserve our unwavering gratitude and respect.

May God bless them, and may God bless these United States of America.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF WILLIAM "BRIT" KIRWAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, first, I would say I was moved by the remarks of the gentleman who just spoke, and I know we all join him in his sentiments.