

Mr. Newton's legacy of commitment and dedication as a volunteer firefighter will find a permanent place in the Delaware volunteer fire service mantra, reminding future volunteer firefighters of the importance of their mission. On behalf of the citizens of Delaware, I offer my condolences to Sharon Newton and the entire family on the untimely and tragic death of a true American hero, Mr. Jonathan Newton.

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HONORING MICHAEL EAKIN

HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to J. Michael Eakin who was recently elected as Pennsylvania Superior Court Judge and is ending his tenure as Cumberland County District Attorney. For over 20 years he has served the citizens of Pennsylvania's 19th Congressional District by dedicating his career to protecting those who live in Cumberland County and ensuring the laws of the Commonwealth are upheld.

Mr. Eakin's accomplishments in both enforcement and prevention are numerous. He is responsible for establishing the first multicounty drug task force in Pennsylvania's history. He has also dedicated much of his time to working with at-risk youth through programs such as drug abuse resistance education. In addition, Mr. Eakin has led efforts to reduce Cumberland County's alcohol-related fatalities by developing innovative programs which work to expeditiously apprehend and process drunk drivers. Several community service groups including Mother's Against Drunk Drivers and the Cumberland-Perry Drug and Alcohol Council have recognized Mr. Eakin for these achievements.

Mr. Eakin has contributed a great deal to the professional development of attorneys and law enforcement personnel. Currently recognized by the Pennsylvania District Attorney's Association and Pennsylvania Bar Association as an authority on law enforcement, he has developed and led training sessions for new district attorneys throughout the State.

Mr. Speaker, by working hand in hand with the community, Michael Eakin has exemplified the true definition of public service. On behalf of the people of Pennsylvania's 19th Congressional District, I thank him for his years of dedication and wish him continued success as superior court judge.

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SRI LANKA'S NATIONAL DAY

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, Sunday, February 4, 1996, marked the 48th anniversary of the independence of Sri Lanka. I know my colleagues will want to join me in saluting our good friends in Sri Lanka on this momentous occasion.

Sri Lanka and the United States have much in common. Both are committed to political pluralism, and both believe in the efficacy of

free markets and private enterprise. In addition, Sri Lanka has been a good friend to the United States for many years. We work together on regional issues and in the United Nations. We collaborate on a range of critical transnational issues such as population, food security, and the environment. The United States is Sri Lanka's largest trading partner. Sri Lanka has long hosted an important Voice of America facility on its territory.

Sadly, what should have been a day of celebration for our friends in Sri Lanka was instead a time of mourning. Several days before National Day, Colombo, the Sri Lankan capital, was rocked by a terrorist explosion that claimed nearly 100 lives; 1,400 other men, women, and children were injured in the blast.

Sri Lankan officials have blamed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] for this despicable act of terrorism, which, if true, would make the Colombo attack merely the latest in a long line of cowardly terrorist acts the LTTE has taken. The world community should be forthright in its denunciations of this group. Let there be no doubt on this score: Genuine freedom fighters do not wantonly take the lives of the very people they claim to be liberating.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to conclude by reiterating my congratulations to the brave people of Sri Lanka on the occasion of their National Day, as well as my deepest condolences for this horrid act of terrorism that struck down so many innocent people.

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CONGRESS MISSES THE MAGIC SHOW

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, in passing a Defense authorization bill which includes a cruel and wholly unjustified provision requiring the discharge of all service members who are HIV-positive, Congress served itself and the Nation very badly. Our former colleague, who is now the junior Senator from California [Ms. BOXER] recently illustrated how unwise and unfair this new policy is with an article in the Los Angeles Times for February 6. Because we still have a chance to redeem ourselves by repealing this provision before it goes into effect, it is very important that all Members reflect on the truth of what our former colleague has written and so I ask that the article entitled "Congress Misses the Magic Show" by BARBARA BOXER, in the February 6, Los Angeles Times be reprinted here.

[From the Los Angeles Times, Feb. 6, 1996]

CONGRESS MISSES THE 'MAGIC' SHOW

(By Barbara Boxer)

Americans cheered last week as Earvin "Magic" Johnson triumphantly returned to the Los Angeles Lakers. In just 27 minutes, he scored 19 points and dispelled any remaining doubt about his ability to compete at the highest level.

To their credit, Magic's fans, coaches, teammates and even his NBA opponents welcomed him back with open arms. Imagine how absurd it would be if Congress, just as Magic demonstrated his Hall of Fame talent, passed a law requiring the NBA to fire all basketball players who have the HIV virus.

This past week, Congress did something just that absurd.

A little-noticed provision of the annual military spending bill requires the Pentagon to fire all soldiers, sailors and Marines who test positive for the HIV virus, even if they perform their duties as skillfully as Magic Johnson makes a no-look pass. The military strongly objected to this provision, but Congress did not care. The president has called the new policy unfair, but because it is part of a larger bill that includes urgently needed funding for our troops in Bosnia, he will sign it into law.

Under current policy, military personnel with the HIV virus are permitted to remain in the services as long as they are able to perform their duties. If their health deteriorates, the military initiates separation procedures and provides disability benefits and continued health insurance coverage for them and their dependents. So they can remain near health care providers, military personnel with HIV are placed on "worldwide nondeployable status," which means that they cannot be sent on overseas missions. Soldiers with other serious chronic illnesses, such as severe asthma, cancer and diabetes are also nondeployable. In fact, only about 20% of the more than 5,000 nondeployable personnel are infected with HIV.

The congressional authors of the new policy, led by Rep. Robert K. Dornan of Orange County, argue that nondeployable personnel degrade military readiness because they cannot be sent overseas. However, their true motive appears to be less lofty than protecting the readiness of our forces. The new policy irrationally singles out military personnel with HIV. If backers truly believe that nondeployable personnel harmed readiness, why wouldn't they seek to oust soldiers with diabetes and asthma? The only conceivable answer is that readiness is not their real motivation. Their motivation is discrimination, pure and simple.

Can anyone seriously contend that 1,059 HIV-positive soldiers—less than 0.1% of the total force—can meaningfully affect readiness? The Pentagon doesn't think so. Its top personnel policy expert, Assistant Defense Secretary Fred Pang, recently wrote that "as long as these members can perform their required duties, we see no prudent reason to separate and replace them. . . . The proposed provision would not improve military readiness or the personnel policies of the department."

If Magic Johnson can run and leap with the best of them, why can't a military clerk file with the best of them, or a military driver drive with the best of them?

Perhaps the worst aspect of the new policy is its total rejection of the compassion and camaraderie for which the armed forces are rightfully praised. The United States of America does not kick its soldiers when they are down. We have a proud tradition of standing by those courageous enough to dedicate their careers to the defense of our nation. That tradition will end the day this new policy is enacted.

Military personnel discharged under the new policy will lose their jobs even if they exhibit no signs of illness. They will lose their right to disability benefits and their spouses and children will lose their health care coverage. This policy is worse than wrong, it is un-American.

The same day that President Clinton signs the bill that includes this new policy, a bipartisan group of senators will introduce legislation to repeal it. The president and our senior military leaders support repeal. Despite their strong support, the odds are unclear. But I am certain about one thing: