

chance to talk to and help the people who called and came in our front door. Happily, she agreed to take the new job, and did it so well we promoted her to legislative assistant four months later.

Letitia has always been someone I could turn to for the most difficult jobs. When it appeared we would never convince Congress in 1983 to pay for a flood control project that would protect more than a million Southern California residents, she helped convince colleagues from four counties to work together—and got the project started in our district.

She has also shared with me a desire to encourage innovation and small business. Years ago, I asked Letitia to help me make sure the Pentagon provided increased funding for rapid development of a radical new technology—unmanned aerial vehicles. Through her work, we managed to move up testing and evaluation of the Predator UAV program by two years. Now, of course, it is one of the most highly touted new weapons in our war against terrorism.

After years of toiling in the legislative trenches and solving problems for my constituents and district, Letitia became an appropriations associate in 1986, and now works directly with the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. Since taking that job, she has taken the dedication to constituent service to a new level.

Appropriations staff members have a special role in Congress, helping to ensure that our government spending meets the needs of the public and stays within our budget. At the same time, they must help us to win the support of a majority of Congress, since these spending bills must pass every year. New staff members working on appropriations would do well to learn from Letitia, who has made an art of providing “constituent” service to other House members and the agencies we oversee.

She is the epitome of what we mean when we speak of dwelling on the positive. She looks for the good in people, and really works at building on their strengths. At the same time, she uses every bit of her energy to help them succeed in what they need. The members of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, on both sides of the aisle, will attest to Letitia’s intelligence, hard work, courtesy and optimism. She is one of the primary reasons we are able to pass a \$300 billion spending bill with almost no debate or rancor.

Twenty years after she took her first call as a receptionist, Letitia still jumps to answer the telephone when she is in the front office. She will still spend 15 minutes talking to constituents who are in town for a visit, and then take on the most technical meetings with generals and assistant cabinet secretaries. She will undertake any job and work nights, weekends and through her vacation to get it done. And she lives by a rule I often quote: It’s amazing what we can accomplish if we don’t worry about who gets the credit.

Mr. Speaker, we often think of our congressional staff members as our “family,” and many times during the year they spend more time with us than their real families. We certainly owe a debt of gratitude to Letitia’s husband, Dick White, for being understanding when she must work long hours—and then take more work home. I ask you and my colleagues to join in thanking Letitia for her dedication to the American people, and wishing her well in the years to come.

H. RES. 264, PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2975; TO COMBAT TERRORISM

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to object to this rule in the strongest possible terms. I believe that both the path taken and the point at which we have arrived this morning are an affront to the democratic process and are stunning examples of a breakdown in the systems that have served our country and the Congress for over two hundred years.

The issues addressed in this legislation are of profound importance to the safety and security of our constituents and to the continued safety of the country as a whole. I believe that there is no more important duty undertaken by a member of this body than to protect the welfare of his or her constituents while also protecting the civil liberties for which so many Americans have given their lives. The procedural tactics employed this morning in the name of expediency, however, threaten not only to derail a legislative process that would have resulted in a widely supported bill to protect Americans, it also threatens to undermine the civil liberties enjoyed by Americans and the democratic principles enshrined in this very chamber.

The outrage of this morning is tremendously disturbing to me and many of my colleagues. Rather than allowing a widely supported bill—passed unanimously by a committee that is often viewed as one of the most partisan in the Congress—to come to the floor for debate and a vote, the leadership of this body has decided to craft an alternative bill in the dead of night without providing the membership of the body at-large sufficient time to study its contents. I cannot understand why the leadership would threaten the wonderful spirit of bipartisanship that has flourished in the Congress over the last month by resorting to these types of procedural tactics and back-room deal making.

I arrived at the Capitol this morning buoyed by the prospects that a thoughtfully deliberated and considered bill would be presented on the floor of the House for additional debate and consideration. I was monumentally disappointed to discover, however, that the bill had been pulled and replaced by an unstudied substitute, the contents of which remain largely a mystery to even many senior members of the Judiciary Committee. At nearly two hundred pages of esoteric and technical language, the bill is beyond the length that a member of this body may be reasonably assumed to have read and understood.

By opposing this unfair rule, I am standing in support of fairness and the democratic process. I fully understand the need to implement new measures that will allow law enforcement to respond to the new threats posed to the United States by those who would do us harm, but I must urge my colleagues to oppose the rule. By defeating this rule, we will allow sufficient time to pass so that we may, in good conscience, examine this new bill and cast our votes confident that we understand its contents and its implications for law enforcement and democracy.

TRIBUTE TO KIM GREGURICH

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Pleasant Hill, Illinois, as well as all Americans who have given their support to the cause of bringing home our POWs.

Like thousands of other Americans, Kim is the owner of a POW/MIA bracelet—a copper band inscribed with the name of a soldier who was either listed as missing in action or as a prisoner of war during our time in Vietnam. The name on Kim’s bracelet is Lieutenant Commander Robert Shumaker, a pilot shot down in 1965. She has had the bracelet for over thirty years; she bought it to show her support of our armed forces, and promised never to take it off unless her POW was released. These bracelets were a method of putting public pressure on the Vietnamese government to send our soldiers home.

It worked. Lieutenant Commander Shumaker was released on the Flight to Freedom in 1975 in part, he says, because the Vietnamese knew how closely the American people were watching them. Ms. Gregurich heard that happy report on the radio and was finally able to take off her bracelet.

Now, twenty-six years later, she has decided to go one step further—she has taken the initiative to locate Mr. Shumaker and send him the copper band. “I wasn’t sure if it would be a bad memory,” she said, “but I just wanted him to know that there was one more person thinking about him while he was gone.”

But Mr. Speaker, while Ms. Gregurich’s tale is heartwarming, it is also a sad reminder—many Americans have not yet been able to take off their bracelets. There are 1,948 Americans that are still missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War; there are another 58,000 whose fate we know all too well. These men and women will never come home; so, like Ms. Gregurich, I will hold a bracelet for each of them in my heart.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Gregurich and others who put their hearts into this support deserve our thanks; and them men and women who fought and died for our country deserve our eternal gratitude. May God bless them, and may God bless the United States of America.

COMMENDING THE WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I want to note the vital contribution the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) has made to the daunting clean up task at the World Trade Center’s “Red Zone,” better known as “Ground Zero.” The IUOE’s National Hazardous Materials (Hazmat) Program is based in Beaver, West Virginia. I am proud to represent them in Congress as part of the Third Congressional District of West Virginia.

Don Carson, the Director of IUOE’s Hazmat program, and a team of workers from the Beaver facility were among the first out-of-state

workers to be sent to work at Ground Zero immediately after the September 11th terrorist attacks. Mr. Carson has sent me heart-wrenching pictures of the twisted metal that show the depth of the tragedy and the danger of the rescue work. But that danger has not deterred any of the workers who have been involved in the rescue, and now recovery, effort.

Ever since the tragedy occurred, IUOE, and the Hazmat Center, have played a major role in the rescue and recovery effort. In fact, Mr. Carson has been coordinating the Hazmat workers' activities based out of a command post trailer parked on the right field warning track of a baseball field near Stuyvesant High School.

Today, Mr. Carson sent me an article from the New York Daily News. The article describes how Mr. Carson "has been handing out respirators, hardhats and protective vests since the attacks."

The workers' health has come into question as the long weeks pass since the attacks. They have developed a cough that doctors refer to as the "World Trade Center cough." Don Carson and IUOE's Hazmat Center are trying to tackle this. They are working with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the New York City Department of Health (DOH) to conduct a respirator fit test and orientation for all workers assigned to Ground Zero. The workers must have a DOH sticker affixed to the credentials in order to work in the Red Zone.

After the workers take their respirator fit test, they will be given an American flag hard hat.

The News article notes that these workers "battle constant danger, fumes and fatigue, as well as their own emotions. "Our guys have seen things that God never intended," said Bobby Gray, 46, the union's master mechanic. "But they soldier through."

The IUOE workers have "pulled bodies from the rubble, cleared hills of jagged steel and recovered million of dollars in gold bullion trapped under the fallen towers."

The farther down the workers go below ground level, the more dangerous it gets. They must drill 8-inch cables into the concrete retaining wall—the "bathtub wall"—that circles the World Trade Center site to make sure it is anchored to the bedrock.

If the "bathtub wall" would burst, the Hudson River would rush in and flood the site. But the IUOE workers press on, risking this incredible danger as they drill the holes.

The News article follows the IUOE workers' tasks as they operate "twenty five cranes, 75 excavators and countless front-loaders, pay-loaders and machine drills." For example, crane operator Steve Nolan operates a 438-foot crane, navigating a one-and-one-half ton man-basket from inside the rig's cab.

"A crane like this is not to be run by the seat of your pants," Nolan said. "If you have an oops" on a job like this people are dead."

"Even when I'm wrecking a building, it's usually a happy job because we are replacing it with something new," said Steve Nolan. "When I sit in the crane, I ask myself. 'What kind of sick hatred could do this?'"

NORTH CAROLINA'S ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVES STRENGTHENING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to take this opportunity to recognize a great partnership of the public school system and private sector in my congressional district in North Carolina, "Bright Ideas." Bright Ideas is sponsored by North Carolina's 27 electric cooperatives. Each cooperative and their statewide association, the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives, make grants directly to classroom teachers. Bright Ideas allows teachers with imagination and creativity to go the extra mile and, of course, students and the educational process are the ultimate beneficiaries.

As a democratic nation, we enjoy and cherish unmatched rights and freedom. We are a land where individuals, regardless of background and circumstances of birth, can aspire to do great things. We need more "Bright Ideas," not only in North Carolina but also throughout the nation. And we must make sure there is no pulling back, no reduction of support for our public schools as a result of the crises we face. It would be yet another tragedy if we somehow lost sight of our priorities and our public schools suffered. The Greek philosopher, Aristotle said 2500 years ago that, "The fate of empires depends on the education of youth." As we work to ensure a secure future for our nation in light of unprecedented assaults on our way of life, it is important to remember this fact.

During these uncertain times we must not lose sight of education as the foundation of our democratic and free society. We invest in our people by investing in our public education system. As we fight to preserve our way of life, public education—that solid rock upon which our society is built—absolutely must remain a top priority. And support must continue to come from both the public and private sectors.

North Carolina's electric cooperatives are as committed to the public schools and to North Carolina's classroom teachers as they were in 1994 when they made their first Bright Ideas grant. Since then, the cooperatives have made almost \$2.5 million in Bright Ideas grants to classroom teachers all across North Carolina to encourage creative instruction. This year alone they have budgeted almost \$400,000 for grants. The North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives and the 27 local cooperatives are providing the funds.

Bright Ideas projects are designed to spark the imagination of students through hands-on projects and to make learning experiences exciting, enjoyable and rewarding. In 2001, hundreds of North Carolina classrooms will become "Bright Ideas Classrooms," and 70,000 students will have unique educational experiences that would not have been possible without this investment from the private sector.

When I am asked, "What can we do to help improve public school education?" I often point to Bright Ideas as an example. This one program says a lot about the impact companies and organizations can have with a modest investment in our public schools and good

teaching. Creative partnerships are desperately needed in most school systems to provide laboratory and telecommunications equipment, extra-classroom experiences, resources for athletic teams and bands who often receive little public funding, and grants for classrooms teachers, such as those North Carolina's electric cooperatives provide through "Bright Ideas."

Bright Ideas is not a one-size-fits-all grant program. It is unique because it begins in the classroom where teachers and students put their heads together and devise their own learning initiatives. Then the teacher asks the cooperatives to fund the project they have devised.

Our President has urged us to not allow our lives to be further disrupted by the September 11 tragedies. I would add that while doing that we should make sure that our priorities remain firm. Former president Lyndon Johnson, who faced tremendous challenges during his administration, said, "At the desk where I sit, I have learned one great truth. The answer for all our national problems—the answer for all the problems of the world—comes to a single word. The word is 'education.'"

Continue to focus on improving public education. One great way to do that is to encourage public-private partnerships such as the Bright Ideas program in North Carolina that our electric cooperatives have initiated and, working closely with teachers, made so effective.

America's future is bright, and one reason is Bright Ideas. I salute North Carolina's electric cooperatives for their continuing commitment to this program that enhances teaching in our public school classrooms, and I commend Bright Ideas.

HONORING COMMANDER VINCENT WILCZYNSKI

HON. ROB SIMMONS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and pay tribute to Commander Vincent Wilczynski, an Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut. A resident of Old Lyme, he is a Commander in the U.S. Coast Guard, an educator, an administrator and civic leader in our community.

Joined by various members of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, the U.S. Coast Guard, friends, and family, he was honored today by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education and the Carnegie Foundation who recognized CDR Wilczynski's achievements throughout the years by honoring him with the "2001 Professor of the Year for a Baccalaureate Institution" award presented at the National Press Club. He was chosen from a group of over 400 extremely qualified nominees.

CDR Wilczynski is a 1983 U.S. Coast Guard Academy graduate, and received his masters and doctorate degrees from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Catholic University. He has served in the Department of Engineering for the United States Coast Guard Academy for almost nine years. During this time he has introduced innovative and creative techniques to the classrooms and laboratories. He