

and the recollection of his good deeds will transcend into future generations.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE SPECIAL JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS IN NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK

**HON. MICHAEL R. McNULTY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 26, 2002*

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, September 6 of this year, a special Joint Session of the United States Congress convened in New York City to reflect on the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. This most rare and somber session served as a necessary reminder of the human loss and heroism that the City and State of New York, our nation, and our world experienced on that fateful day. I am proud and blessed—as an American, and as a New Yorker—to have been able to take part.

We met at Federal Hall, the very same site where the first Congress met over two centuries ago. We met just blocks from where the World Trade Center towers once pierced the city's majestic skyline.

Mr. Speaker, most importantly, we remembered the almost 3,000 innocent civilians who died and their families. We prayed then—and we should pray now—for all of the victims of this most heinous terrorist act. Though a year has passed, the loss of every single person who perished that day is still felt by all those who loved them. The sons and daughters, the brothers and sisters, the mothers and fathers lost that day will never be replaced. We simply hope that the pain will subside, and that the memories will remain strong and vibrant.

Mr. Speaker, we also expressed our deepest gratitude to the firefighters, police officers and emergency personnel who served on that fateful day and in the weeks and months that followed. These brave men and women, and their peers across the country, put their lives on the line—day in and day out—to ensure the safety and well being of the citizens of our communities. Recognition of the heroism and service of our "First Responders" is overdue and well deserved. We must continue to acknowledge their bravery and sacrifice. And we in Congress must resolve to provide them with the support they need to continue to excel in their chosen duty—to save lives.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we reaffirmed our commitment, as a Congress and as a nation, to eradicate the ability of terrorists to ever again carry out such a horrific and offensive act—against us or against other innocent people around the world. We reaffirmed our promise to bring these cowards to justice. A terrorist is, by definition, a coward. It is a person who cannot get what he wants by the power of persuasion, and therefore resorts to the killing of innocent men, women and children.

Mr. Speaker, the American men and women in our Armed Forces are now dispersed throughout the world, seeking out these cowards and introducing them to the might of a nation that finds its heart bruised but its strength renewed. Freedom is not free. We have paid a tremendous price for it. We must not forget those before us who gave their lives, or those who put their lives on the line

today, to allow us the privilege of living in the freest and most open democracy on the face of the earth. Our patriots fight for the cause of freedom, and we shall support them every step of the way.

The events of September 11, 2001, were basic violations of the fundamental principle that life is to give—not to take. I am proud that this Congress gathered on September 6, in the shadow of Ground Zero, to remember and honor both the victims and the heroes—and to remind the world that the forces of evil shall never prevail.

REFORM OF ENERGY WORKERS  
COMPENSATION ACT (REWCA)

**HON. TED STRICKLAND**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 26, 2002*

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to reform the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA).

The Department of Energy (DOE) has conceded that, over the 50 year history of making nuclear weapons, it consistently placed production imperatives ahead of worker health and safety. In the fall of 1999, DOE admitted that it had placed these Cold War Veterans in harm's way without their knowledge or consent and that compensation was due.

In the spring of 2000, the President's National Economic Council issued a report that identified 14 DOE facilities where there was an excess rate of cancer which was attributable to radiation. This report also noted that state worker compensation systems were not well-suited for compensating occupational diseases due to a variety of hurdles, such as statutes of limitations. Also in the spring of 2000, the House and Senate introduced bipartisan legislation to establish a federal compensation program for these sick nuclear workers and their survivors. Congress held hearings in the House and Senate on legislation that would provide compensation to employees of DOE who were exposed to radiation, beryllium, silica and numerous other toxic substances used in making nuclear weapons.

The compromise which emerged from the conference committee in October 2000 created two separate programs: one for workers exposed to radiation, beryllium and silica which is administered by the Department of Labor, and a second for workers exposed to toxic substances and other hazardous materials which is administered, in part, by the Department of Energy. This second program, codified under Subtitle D, is the primary focus of the reform legislation today.

Under Subtitle D, the Department of Energy is required to use a Physician's Panel to review claims related to exposure to toxic substance. This Panel determines whether an illness is work related and relies upon individual state worker compensation programs to make payments for wage loss and medical costs. However, this approach, by DOE's own admission, will not work for these occupational illness cases because at least 50 percent of the claimants will not have a "willing payor" who will honor the findings of the Department of Energy Physician's Panel. Congress intended

to create a uniform, adequate and equitable federal compensation program for these workers who toiled in the nation's nuclear weapons factories in service to our nation. It is simply unacceptable for the government to tell these workers that help is on the way, and then move forward with a program where potentially there is no one to pay as many as half the claims. This law needs to be fixed.

The introduction of REWCA, the Reform of Energy Workers Compensation Act, aims to fulfill Congress' original objectives and ensure all of the nation's nuclear workers who were made sick from their jobs in nuclear weapons factories through no fault of their own receive a measure of just compensation for their disabilities and illnesses.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO EDWARD R.  
HEATH SR.

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 26, 2002*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize Mr. Edward R. Heath Sr. of Mechanic Falls, Maine for his dedication and commitment to the United States military and this nation. Mr. Heath, a disabled Vietnam Era Veteran, was recently elected National Commander of Disabled American Veterans. As we celebrate achievement, I would like to pay tribute to the achievements and contributions he has made to military veterans throughout the country.

Throughout his life, Mr. Heath has embodied the principles of courage, honor, and integrity that we, as Americans, have come to expect from the men and women in our nation's military. Mr. Heath enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1954, where he served in many foreign theatres including France, Germany, and Korea. Mr. Heath also served at a variety of army posts in the United States, including a tour with the 1st Armored Division during the Cuban Missile Crisis. In 1967, Mr. Heath was seriously injured in a car accident with a civilian vehicle, and due to his injuries, was forced to retire from the military in 1968.

Although his injuries were a major challenge, Mr. Heath would not let his misfortune impede his future service to his country. Mr. Heath went to and graduated from the University of Southern Maine. He continued his education by earning a law degree at the New England School of Law in Boston, MA, in 1978. From there, Mr. Heath began working for the Board of Veteran's appeals, which specializes in Veteran claims on issues such as radiation exposure and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. In 1989, Mr. Heath began working for the Disabled American Veteran's (DAV), representing veterans at the US Court of Appeals. In 2002, he was elected National Commander of the DAV at the Organization's National Convention in Dallas.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct privilege to recognize Mr. Edward R. Heath before this Congress and this nation for the extraordinary service he has given to the United States military and to disabled veterans throughout the country. As a soldier he served his country with courage and honor, as a lawyer he served with integrity and benevolence. Congratulations on your new achievement and good luck in your future endeavors.