

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, this weekend, I had a really wonderful opportunity. The Southwestern Company of Nashville, Tennessee, a company that I worked with through my college years and then as soon as I graduated from college, celebrated their 150th anniversary.

What we did was bring together alums of this great company for a reunion. We had a great time. Our focus was on the principles and the skills that Southwestern teaches that have not only made it a great company, but have also added to this country's free enterprise system.

We talked about how this is a company that builds character in young people. It builds the skills that are necessary to become entrepreneurs: tenacity, perseverance, self-reliance, vision, how to be self-reliant in your business, to be small business people, to build an understanding that hard work pays off, and that you should seek risk and the rewards that go with that risk.

This is all an understanding of free enterprise and how free enterprise works.

Madam Speaker, this Nation has the best, the greatest free enterprise system on the face of the planet. That is why we have seen 146,000 jobs created, we have had 25 consecutive months of economic growth, and unemployment is at near historic lows.

Madam Speaker, I commend the Southwestern Company, and I commend the small business people and entrepreneurs of this great Nation who build this free enterprise system.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 3 p.m.

□ 1500

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina) at 3 o'clock p.m.

RECOGNIZING 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF ESTABLISHMENT OF VET- ERANS ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 361) recognizing the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Veterans Administration on July 21, 1930.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 361

Whereas in the history of the United States, more than 48,000,000 citizen-soldiers have served the Nation in uniform, of whom more than 1,000,000 gave their lives as a consequence of their duties;

Whereas as of July 21, 2005, there are more than 25,000,000 living veterans;

Whereas the Nation's obligation to its veterans is encapsulated in the following words of President Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, delivered on March 4, 1865, ". . . to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan";

Whereas on July 21, 1930, President Herbert Hoover issued an executive order creating a new agency, the Veterans Administration, to "consolidate and coordinate Government activities affecting war veterans";

Whereas on October 25, 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed into law the Department of Veterans Affairs Act (Public Law 100-527) under which, effective as of March 15, 1989, the Veterans Administration was established as an executive department and redesignated as the Department of Veterans Affairs, with the mission of providing Federal benefits to veterans and their families; and

Whereas in 2005, the 230,000 employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs continue the tradition of their predecessors, caring for the Nation's veterans with dedication and compassion and upholding the high standards required of them as stewards of the public's gratitude to those veterans: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Veterans' Administration; and

(2) acknowledges the achievements of the employees of the Veterans Administration and the Department of Veterans Affairs and commends them for their contributions to the Nation's veterans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN).

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 361 recognizes the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Veterans Administration, the forerunner of today's Department of Veterans Affairs, that will be observed on Thursday of this week.

Throughout the history of the United States, more than 48 million men and women have served America well and faithfully in military uniform. More than 1 million made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom, and 25 million veterans are living among us today. These men and women selflessly set aside their civilian lives to put on the uniform and serve us.

The Nation's obligation to its defenders is as old as the Nation itself. Thomas Jefferson noted in 1809 that "the care of human life is the first and only legitimate object of good government." And in his second inaugural address in 1865, President Abraham Lincoln clearly expressed the obligation "to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan."

On July 21, 1930, pursuant to a congressional authorization, President Hoover issued an executive order to "consolidate and coordinate Government activities affecting war veterans," creating the Veterans Administration. The new agency was charged with ensuring that America's veterans received the benefits and services they had earned from their military service.

The Department of Veterans Affairs was subsequently created from the Veterans Administration on March 15, 1989, when President Ronald Reagan signed P.L. 100-527, the Department of Veterans Affairs Act. Today, the 230,000 public servants of the Department of Veterans Affairs continue in the noble tradition of their predecessors to carry out the words of Jefferson and Lincoln by serving veterans and their families.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution would not only recognize the anniversary of the VA as an organization, but it would also acknowledge and commend the achievements and contributions of the men and women who have dedicated themselves to the mission of the VA. In war and in peace, they have always been there for our veterans to provide them the benefits, the care, and the support of a grateful country.

These are the men and women who man the phones at the call centers, work the claims, provide high-quality medical care, and keep the cemeteries looking like national shrines. They are the real VA, and too often we forget to thank them for their dedicated work.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) for his remarks, and I rise also in support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, 3 days from now the Department of Veterans Affairs, formerly called the Veterans Administration, will mark 7½ decades as a government agency. But the measure before us is not just to acknowledge a mere milestone of existence. On July 21, we will recognize 75 years of a consolidated, organized and formal national effort to carry out what I and many others believe is our most noble mission, to care for those, as Lincoln said, who have borne the battle and for their dependents and survivors. That is why we strongly support H. Res. 361.

More than half of the citizen soldiers who have ever served in uniform in the Nation's lifetime are living today. That is 25 million living veterans to whom we owe the greatest debt, our freedom for their sacrifices. This measure