

the woods a few days after the New London winter emergency shelter closed. Bill died in the woods—technically in Waterford—but he was a New London resident. His last residence had been the shelter at St. James Church around the corner, but his last proper home was an apartment in the Mohican just down State Street from here. But Bill was invisible, and so he died, without the minimal attention any human being requires and is entitled to. Like Lazarus, the poor beggar in Jesus' parable, Bill was our brother, and most of us didn't see him.

So we gather here today in the First Congregational Church of New London, the church where Bill worshipped, and where he ate breakfast many mornings. Because the beloved community includes not only like-minded people who worship together, but people who break bread together, people who eat together. As the prophet Isaiah says, the life God asks of his people, of us, is a practical life of friendship and service. God requires of us that we "share our bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into our house" (Isa. 58:7). It is appropriate, then, that we gather this morning and remember Bill, and pray for him and for ourselves.

But we will not be the beloved community if we do not accept our responsibility for Bill's neglect, and for his death. The great rabbi Abraham Heschel said that "in a democracy, some are guilty, but all are responsible." All of us, as a community, as the people of the City of New London, are responsible when some of our brothers and sisters, some of our neighbors made in the image of God, have no place to lay their head. Thomas Jefferson said about slavery in America, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just." Well, friends, I tremble for our country today. There are more than three million homeless people in the richest nation in the world. We are that rich man, who went to hell not because he was rich but because he allowed his brother Lazarus to become invisible. We have an opportunity to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and shelter the homeless. It's no use blaming other towns and cities. God will judge them. It is myself and my city that I tremble for. It is for New London that I will be judged.

So I ask you this morning, as we remember Bill Walsh, to join the struggle in our city to make him and others like him visible. I invite you this morning to see the homeless poor, many of whom are present in this house of worship today. Look around you. See your neighbors. Some of your neighbors have homes to go to tonight. Some don't. But all of us are neighbors. All of us are brothers and sisters to Bill Walsh and to one another. Let us resolve today, in his memory, to make our city a "city on a hill," to which everyone can look for inspiration, to make our country "a light to the nations," that cares for its neediest citizens. We have to see each other to do that. As the great labor organizer Mother Jones said, "we've got to mourn the dead, but fight like hell for the living." We can't bring Bill Walsh back from the dead. He is with Lazarus, the poor beggar that Jesus talked about, "in Abraham's bosom." But we can see the invisible poor, and shelter the homeless and needy, and not find ourselves under judgment for our failure to see.

Now let us remember Bill. But let us get up tomorrow morning and start to work together to create a homeless hospitality center in New London that will be a model for the rest of our region and our nation. Let us see the invisible poor, and live together with all our sisters and brothers in the beloved community the God of justice invites us to become. Then Bill will be like one who has risen from the dead and brought us to the promised land.

TRIBUTE TO THE COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF BLACK PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND SCIENTISTS

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the history and invaluable contributions of an exceptional organization in the 1st Congressional District of Colorado. It is both fitting and proper that we recognize this organization for its educational leadership and record of extraordinary service benefiting underrepresented young people in Colorado and the Denver area. It is to commend this exemplary organization that I rise to honor the Colorado Association of Black Professional Engineers and Scientists on the occasion of its 25th anniversary.

The growing importance of innovation in science and engineering to our economic well-being and to a better quality of life for our citizens is well documented. Currently, there is much discussion and concern in this Congress about the ability of the United States to sustain its scientific and technological superiority. Sustaining our leadership hinges upon expanding our human capital to meet the technical challenges of a new economy and its increasingly global and complex systems. In this regard, cultivating students with the requisite skills to enter the pipeline of future engineers and scientists has become a priority.

Over 25 years ago, a group of committed African-American engineers anticipated the future. They recognized the need to expand the pool of talent entering our colleges and universities. In 1980, they founded the Colorado Association of Black Professional Engineers and Scientists (CABPES) with the express purpose of increasing the representation of minorities in the fields of engineering and applied sciences. CABPES has been in the vanguard of cultivating talented youth and it has become a learning gateway for students from all walks of life desiring to expand their horizons. Its commitment to the future is longstanding and our communities are well-advised by its example and the foresight of its founders.

Professional mentoring sets CABPES apart and a cadre of dedicated parents and committed volunteers are responsible for its outreach and educational programs including: the Junior Engineers, Tomorrow's Scientists Program which concentrates on developing student interest in engineering and applied sciences; the Math Enrichment Program which tutors students with their mathematics assignments; the SAT Preparation Program which prepares students for the college entrance examination; and the Widening Our World Program which gives CABPES' students the opportunity to use their computer skills and develop leadership abilities through community service. These programs have served to enrich the learning experience by providing an environment that offers real-world perspective, dialogue and exchange. Students have gained a richer and deeper understanding from practitioners who not only impart a passion and enthusiasm for their disciplines, but convey the sense of wonder that accompanies discovery and scientific endeavor.

We are indeed fortunate to have CABPES in our community. It is an invaluable resource

and I am deeply appreciative of the good work CABPES does in making science and engineering careers more attractive to all our students, particularly the under-represented. CABPES' programs help improve performance in the classroom and its mentors provide solid role models that encourage achievement. We owe a debt of gratitude not only to CABPES' founders, its board, volunteers and management professionals, but to its private sector partners as well. Their engagement and support of this organization make a real difference in the lives of our young people and thereby, in the communities CABPES serves.

Please join me in commending the Colorado Association of Black Professional Engineers and Scientists. It is the strong leadership and meaningful service this organization provides on a daily basis that continually enhances our lives and builds a better future for all Americans.

STATEMENT ON DISCHARGE PETITION ON H.J. RES. 55, THE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. FORCES FROM IRAQ RESOLUTION OF 2005

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the discharge petition for H.J. Res. 55 not because I support the substance of the underlying resolution, but because I believe a full and open debate of our Iraq policy on the floor of this House is long overdue.

I believe the invasion of Iraq was a mistake. It has diverted resources from the fight against Osama bin Laden and those who attacked our country on September 11, 2001. It has fueled al Qaeda with fresh recruits and inflamed anti-American sentiment around the world. It has resulted in the loss of the lives of thousands of American soldiers and tens of thousands of Iraqis. It has cost the American taxpayer hundreds of billions of dollars. It has made us less, not more, secure.

From the outset I have been an outspoken opponent of the Bush administration's decision to go to war in Iraq. I argued strongly that the United States should support the request of the United Nations' weapons inspectors for additional time to complete their mission. The Bush administration spurned that request. We know the result—the primary justification given for going to war in Iraq, namely the alleged existence of stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction and the alleged collaboration between the government of Iraq and al Qaeda, proved to be false.

Many of us warned repeatedly that invading Iraq would open Pandora's box and unleash forces and historic rivalries that we would not be able to control. The rising sectarian conflict, the insurgency and the brutal executions carried out by militias were foreseeable. The total failure of the administration to plan for the aftermath of the invasion made what was certain to be a bad situation even worse.

We went to war in Iraq in an irresponsible manner; we should leave Iraq in a responsible way. Having invaded Iraq, we have both a moral and national security obligation to do everything possible to prevent the situation and sectarian conflict from spiraling even farther out of control. We must devise a plan to

leave Iraq in a way that maximizes the chances for stability and minimizes the possibility for the eruption of a full scale civil war with even more bloodletting than there is today. We must leave Iraq in a way that does not allow al Qaeda—which did not have a base in Iraq before the war—to develop a stronghold there. We must not compound the blunders of the Bush administration by creating the conditions for even more bloodshed in Iraq and allowing it to become a launching pad for terrorist activities. That is why I have not supported proposals that set a date certain for the total withdrawal of all American forces from Iraq. I believe such well-intentioned legislation, like H.J. Res. 55, would have the unintended consequence of accelerating a budding civil war and strengthening the hands of those who would like to see Iraq plunged into even greater chaos and bloodshed.

While I do not support H.J. Res. 55 in its current form, I believe the Congress must have a serious and full debate on our strategy for bringing our troops home. Since the President declared “Mission Accomplished” in April 2003, we have seen more death and destruction in Iraq. The administration’s efforts to achieve a political solution have been grossly inadequate. This House was wrong to give the President a blank check to go to war in Iraq. It now must fulfill its obligation to bring our troops home in a responsible manner. Let us honor our troops by having a serious debate. That is why I am signing the discharge petition for H.J. Res. 55.

TRIBUTE TO KELLY KEEFE
BROOKS

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay special tribute to my dear friend Kelly Keefe Brooks, who passed away on Wednesday, April 26, 2006 at the age of 43 after a courageous battle with breast cancer. Kelly was a devoted wife, loving mother of two girls, and a warm and caring friend.

Kelly fought a courageous battle against her cancer while remaining the same loving, jovial, and caring woman that her friends and loved ones will always admire. She has become a role model and inspiration to all who knew her and all who face the same struggle against cancer. I ask unanimous consent to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the eulogy delivered by Kelly’s good friend Suzanne Galvin Harvey on Saturday, April 29, 2006, which was partially written by Kelly Keefe Brooks herself.

Good Afternoon.

First let me begin by saying that Kelly did a very unusual thing before she died; she wrote her own eulogy. Anyone that knew her would not be surprised. Kelly knew what she wanted and was not afraid to tell you. I asked her if I could add to it and surprisingly, she agreed. Her words are all about saying goodbye to the people in her life. I’d like to start first by saying goodbye to her.

It has been my distinct honor and privilege to have called Kelly Keefe Brooks my friend for almost thirty years. We met as freshmen at Lowell High School when she asked me to share a locker with her. She introduced me to the seven friends we still have to this

day—Our Girls Club. I’ll be forever grateful for that gift she gave me.

Kelly was fortunate to have married Billy, who she called “the love of her life”. A few days ago she said, “Sue, let’s face it, who else could have stood me?” I repeated that to Billy recently and he said he “enjoyed every minute of the ride.” “Well maybe not every minute!”

Kelly gave Billy the same wonderful gift she gave me . . . an abundance of friends. She had a way about her that drew people to her in droves. She crammed many of us into her short life with 4th of July cookouts by the pool on Wilder Street; Superbowl parties; Cinco de Mayo celebrations on Clark Road; and founding Our Girls Club and presiding over it with an iron fist. From the folks at the Post Office to her golfing buddies at Longmeadow; from Our Girls Club to her sisters’ original Girls Club; and from Billy’s mom and family to her own family, there is no shortage of supporters for Billy and the girls with this entourage she built for them.

We all admired Kelly and Billy’s love for each other so much. God sent her a peach when he sent her Billy Brooks. His devotion was unending and he would have done anything for her, whether she had cancer or not. His only regret is that Kelly wanted to see Hawaii before she died. When he got the news that her health was declining, he was thinking of ways to get her there just to see it. “I was thinking maybe I could get her on a medical plane—but it would be too far if something happened,” he said. That’s the kind of guy Billy Brooks is.

Together they were blessed with two beautiful daughters—Emma and Molly. She may have seemed a little tough on you girls at times, but she loved you with all her heart. These past few months she spent so much thought on giving you both special memories and personalized mementos to last a lifetime. Her likes have become your likes—New York City, General Hospital, stalking celebrities outside the Daytime Emmy awards and looking for stars around the streets of New York. I know she will always be the real star in your eyes and has become a celebrity in her own rite, which was evident from the turnout at her wake last night. Your mom also liked pictures—not so much taking them as having people take them of her and plenty with both of you, those pictures are a chronicle of your life with her. Another wonderful gift she gave you, gave all of us.

Kim and Sharon. She couldn’t have asked for two better sisters who were always there for her and the girls. Auntie Sharon, always thinking of ways to help with the girls, or buying things for the house, or helping Kel decorate for the holidays or change of seasons. So glad you could be with her the morning she died. Auntie Kim, always there with at least seven or eight phone calls a day, checking in with her and being there for the girls as well. I cannot imagine the loss the two of you will feel. Not only sisters, you were true friends.

And finally her loving parents, Paul and Maryanne. Tomorrow was supposed to be a surprise 50th Anniversary party for you. Kelly has been feverishly planning that for the last few months. The video she created for you and the songs she chose—what a tremendous gift she has left for you. No parent should have to bury a child, and that is what bothered her the most when she was diagnosed—worrying about what that would do to her Mom and Dad. You should be so proud of the wonderful daughter you raised.

Kelly has been a role model for hundreds of us: family, friends, medical staff, and even to complete strangers right here in Lowell, who have been inflicted with this devastating disease. Never complaining, showing tremendous courage and spirit, fighting the uphill

battle against all odds, always with a smile on her face, and never losing faith in her doctors and caregivers or in her God. There was no time for tears with Kelly—she had much to do before she left us. Like demand a list of exactly what people were bringing over for meals. “Enough pasta!” she’d say “Can’t a girl get a couple of pork chops?” Thanks to Denise Perrin and Lesley Byrne for spearheading all those dinners and house cleanings.

Goodbye Kelly and in the motto of Our Girls Club, which is engraved into the gold heart shaped charms that hang from our bracelets, we will truly be “friends forever” and we will all miss you dearly.

That is the end of my portion of this—my tribute to her. I think she asked me to do this because she thought I was funny. I’m glad I could provide you with some comic relief but sorry Kel I didn’t have them rolling in the aisles because I didn’t feel much like entertaining and laughing today. I did, however, briefly consider wearing my nun costume up here. But I think I traumatized my mom enough with that once before. Thank you mom for helping me write this for Kelly—she would really have been happy that it came from both of us. And now for Kelly’s own words.

EULOGY

(By Kelly Keefe Brooks)

Good afternoon.

Surprise, surprise! You didn’t think I would leave and not get the last word in. Seriously, I wanted to take this time to thank some people and to let you know my thoughts; you know how the cancer really changed me. Who am I kidding? To know me is to love me!

Everyone always told me I had a great attitude and I did, but I had so much help from family, friends, co-workers and medical professionals. That is what made it possible.

I do have some requests from a few of you. Babs, Cathie, Lesley, Mary and Carolyn—you have all become the monkey in the middle for Sharon and Kim. I hope they are laughing. Emma and Molly, take care of Dad, he probably doesn’t remember what he had for lunch yesterday, so go easy and get along with each other. With all the women out there I am not concerned about how many mothers you girls are going to have. And you thought I was bad. Good luck girls! You thought I was annoying, ha!

Girls be successful in life and by that I mean be happy. Get careers not jobs, a big mistake most people make. Emma, I hope you live in NYC for at least a brief period of time. Molly, even though you are the youngest you will be the glue to keep the family together and I don’t mean just you, Emma, and Dad. I mean everyone. It’s a big job but I have no doubts.

What can I say about my girls club? They cooked, cleaned, sat with me on that king-sized bed and watched movies. Thank you!

Theresa and Dr. Anamour—thank you for giving me the extra time in life.

I don’t have words for my parents only I am sorry they had to bury me first.

Sharon and Kim—take care of the girls and each other. Remember they see what you do.

Billy as much as I hated the post office, it is where I met you and hunted you down like a dog. Thank god for Denise, Mary and the keg (good times) you gave me two beautiful girls and Papa two beautiful grandchildren. Now you are his favorite son-in-law. There also is not another man who can make me laugh like you do, or could stand being married to me. I didn’t get the nickname Paulette for nothing. I love you with all my heart.

Hope you all have a great time at the mercy meal, I can’t tell you how mad I am