

Another commonsense issue of national cohesion that really hits at the heart of what makes this country great was when the Senate voted in favor of an amendment by Senator INHOFE to require that English be declared our national language of the United States. As people listened to that and digested what it meant, people said: Well, of course English is a necessary tool for every aspiring American to be successful and to join the mainstream of American society.

That is just an example of a few of the amendments. Again, we have considered a number of amendments, and we will consider a number more as we go forward.

It was last October when I said we would start with border security and we would build out a comprehensive approach to this very challenging problem of thousands—indeed, hundreds of thousands—of people coming across our borders illegally and millions working in this country illegally and many taking advantage of our social services illegally in this country. So we have made real progress—again starting in October—and we will complete that process by the Memorial Day recess, with the action I took tonight.

Mr. President, given our policy meetings tomorrow afternoon, I now ask unanimous consent that the filing deadline under rule XXII be extended until 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

##### SERGEANT JAMES A. SHERRILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to reflect on the tremendous sacrifice and dedication displayed on a daily basis by our country's soldiers. In particular, I wish to call to my colleagues' attention the story of one young man who laid down his life defending our country.

While words cannot lessen the anguish of those who knew and loved him, they can illuminate his heroism and sacrifice. So it is entirely appropriate that we pause today to remember and celebrate the life of SGT James A. Sherrill of Ekron, KY.

Sergeant Sherrill served in the Kentucky Army National Guard's 2113th Transportation Company based out of Paducah, KY. Tragically, he died in Bayji, Iraq, on April 3, 2005, as he and his fellow soldiers were escorting a supply convoy. An improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle. He was 27 years old.

For his valorous service, Sergeant Sherrill was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart. He had previously received both the Army Good Conduct Medal and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal, and he was awarded the Kentucky Distinguished Service Medal, the second highest honor that the Commonwealth of Kentucky can bestow.

James moved around the country a bit growing up, but while he was still young, the Sherrill family settled in Kentucky—Ekron, to be precise, a small town of a few hundred people in Meade County and the birthplace of legendary Baseball Hall of Famer Pee Wee Reese. In Ekron, James and his younger brother B.J. would grow up together and become well known throughout the community.

The Sherrills are a close-knit family. William "Buddy" Sherrill and his wife Beatrice, two soft-spoken people, have a lifetime of memories of their son James. William and Beatrice raised James and B.J. to love others, respect authority, and to be true gentlemen.

Being the older brother, James took his role as his brother's keeper seriously—most of the time. Beatrice recalls, however, when James and B.J. were still very young, one time when B.J. imagined himself to be the superhero Batman. To inaugurate his career as a caped crusader and to strike fear in the hearts of criminals, B.J. decided to jump out a window.

But heights can be intimidating, especially to a small child. Even one wearing a cape and a mask. So just as he was about to jump, B.J. hesitated.

Noticing his younger brother sitting on the edge of the windowsill in the Sherrill home, James decided it was up to him to help his brother out the only way he knew how. So James came up behind B.J. and gave him the push he wasn't looking for.

Asked why he had just pushed his brother out the window, James looked up at his parents and told them sincerely he was only "trying to help his brother." Thankfully, no one was seriously hurt, and James's understanding of how best to help others, shall we say, "evolved" over time.

A few years later, James found success on the football field. He soon became cocaptain of the Meade County High School varsity football team. His drive on the field spilled over into the weight room, where he broke several of his school's weightlifting records.

James's greatest moments on the field came his senior year with brother B.J., then a sophomore, also on the team. James played fullback, blocking opponents and creating holes for his ball-carrying brother, who played halfback. Over the course of the season, this one-two brotherly combination would amass an outstanding record. "Our whole community knew him because of [the] sports he played," B.J. said of his brother James.

Beyond the yards gained or the touchdowns scored, this portrait of one

brother leading the way for the other illustrated the relationship the two shared throughout James's life. William Sherrill said:

B.J. always looked up to James. They were best friends. Losing James has been particularly hard on B.J. . . . he's more serious now.

James was a protector, not only for B.J. but for others he helped mentor, such as the children at his local church and his fellow soldiers in Iraq. Given the choice between going to college or joining the military, James opted for the Marines, where he expanded his skills, traveled the world, and developed his faith.

After completing his tour with the Marines, James returned home to Ekron, where he decided to continue serving his country and joined the Kentucky National Guard. He also became a student at Elizabethtown Community College, hoping to pursue a career in law enforcement, and he met the love of his life.

James used his experience from the Marines to, as his father put it, "become a leader that everyone looked to." He always emphasized the importance of being focused on the mission at hand to his squad. He constantly double-checked his team to make sure they all knew their roles. James knew he and his fellow soldiers would be navigating some of the most deadly stretches of highway in the world.

Whenever he called home, however, he said the dangers of his job did not worry him. James's father recalls that his son felt at peace with what he was doing, even though he knew he may never make it home. William Sherrill attributes this serenity to his son's faith.

James reached his final resting place on April 12, 2005, in a small plot of land adjacent to the Zion Grove Baptist Church in Ekron. Sergeant Sherrill was buried with full military honors. Later that afternoon, William Sherrill rested on the front porch of a neighbor's home to reflect on the day's events.

Eventually, he looked up to see, stretched out across the sky, one of the brightest rainbows he had ever witnessed. This magnificent rainbow seemed to spring up from the Sherrill family home, stretch into the sky, and then arc downward, delicately landing near the cemetery of Zion Grove Baptist Church.

Every day when William Sherrill drives his truck home from work, his route usually takes him past James's grave site. And every day he is sure to slow his vehicle and blow his son a gentle kiss.

I am grateful to William and Beatrice Sherrill today for sharing their stories of James with us. We are thinking of James's brother, B.J., today as well.

Across the Nation, other families understand the simple gesture of blowing a kiss, for they, too, have lost a loved one in the line of duty. As a nation, we all grieve with these families. Yet we feel a sense of pride as well; pride at