

to make people laugh. He was a great guy to be around."

His enthusiasm and thirst for excitement led to his decision to join the Marines shortly before graduation from Seaford Christian Academy in June of 2004. His mother Carol stated, "That's all he ever wanted to do, and he was thrilled when he was doing military duty." Rick's father, when speaking to several hundred friends, family, and members of the community gathered for his son's memorial service, said that "He always wanted to have the hardest job. In baseball, he wanted to be the catcher. In soccer, he wanted to be center-midfielder. He wanted to be involved." Above all, Mr. James reminded us that "Rick had a dream and he followed it." He then urged us all, "If you have a dream, follow it."

This was Rick's second tour of duty in Iraq serving with Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 8th Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force. The day the young lance corporal lost his life, he was providing security at an over-watch position within a building when he was struck by small arms fire near Ramadi, Iraq. Ramadi is one of the most dangerous spots for our troops in Iraq where, according to an embedded reporter on assignment for USA Today, "about 8 out of 10 of Kilo's foot patrols engage in contact with the enemy." On a daily basis, our marines in Ramadi face threats of sniper attacks and catastrophic roadside bombs.

Rick James grew up in the tightly knit community of Seaford, DE. News of Rick's death rocked the community, as he was the second Marine from Seaford to die in a week's span, and the town's third Iraq war fatality since operations began in 2003. With two funerals within days of one another, the city of Seaford turned out in force to support the families of the fallen soldiers, lining the streets with American flags, in a demonstration of overwhelming compassion and patriotism.

One always wonders how a family survives a tragedy like this. After spending time with Rick's loved ones, it was very clear to me that this family, and their son Rick, found their strength through an unwavering faith in God and the support of their family, friends, and community. Pastor John Reynolds, the lance corporal's cousin said, "Rick had a passion for his family. Rick had a passion for the Marine Corps. Rick knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that if something were to happen he'd spend eternity with his God. Rick died offering himself for the sake of others." Pastor Donnie Reynolds who spoke at the service for Rick perhaps said it best. "Rick did not just exist. He lived out God's plan. I believe Rick James is an American hero." The evening before, during a quiet moment as we paid our respects to the family, Rick's father said, "People now refer to his son as a hero, but he has always been a hero to me."

I rise today to commemorate Rick, to celebrate his life, and to offer his

family our support and our deepest sympathy on their tragic loss.

FLAG PROTECTION AMENDMENT

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise today, Flag Day, in support of S.J. Res. 12, which seeks to establish a constitutional amendment to ban the desecration of our flag.

From the time of our Revolutionary War to this very moment, Old Glory has been the undying symbol of our Nation. While it is a symbol that has many different meanings to many different people, it is the one symbol that represents the hopes and dreams of millions of people who have fled tyranny in another land and fought to preserve freedom here at home. More than anything else, it represents the selfless sacrifices of previous generations who have willingly laid down their lives so that we can live in the most prosperous and free nation in the history of the world.

As a Marine, I served under our flag as I proudly do now as the Senator from the great State of Montana. Thus, I know a thing or two about what our flag stands for—as does most every veteran who served and sacrificed under our flag, or who has fired and been fired upon in combat defending what our flag stands for. Countless millions of American soldiers have done and continue to do the same. As we speak, there are over 14,000 Montanans in the service of their country, 1,365 of whom are now serving overseas.

It is simply an insult to these brave Americans that the sacrifices they have made in the name of liberty under the American flag are spit on by people who would burn, trample, or otherwise willfully desecrate our flag. While we rightly honor the brave men and women who have sacrificed their lives, we do not yet honor the symbol for which those sacrifices were made by protecting our flag. That is why we need a constitutional amendment.

Some argue that that it is a form of speech. However, it is sad that someone cannot defend their arguments or clearly state their national hatred without setting a fire? Frankly, if the totality of your argument can be summed with gasoline and matches, then you just do not have much of an argument to begin with.

Even more striking is that these people, devoid of new ideas, resort to tactics used by our enemies abroad. Look at the video of those who would destroy us—protests in Iran, for example. Our enemies burn our flag while calling for our deaths because they know it is our symbol. They want to destroy us and have no respect for our freedoms and way of life. Sadly, there are some in this country that, while they may or may not share that goal, do share that tactic.

We owe it to the generations who came before us and to the brave men and women who protect us now to protect the symbol which meant so much

to them. Far too many have sacrificed too much serving under our flag for me to sit on the sidelines and do nothing. That is why I see it as my duty to voice my support on behalf of all Montanans for a constitutional amendment prohibiting flag desecration.

RETIREMENT OF SUPERINTENDENT JAMES McCANN

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am honored to recognize James McCann, a tireless and dynamic educator, on his retirement after 40 years of service in Michigan. For 20 years, Jim has served as district superintendent of the Lamphere School District with unparalleled leadership and vision. His efforts have led to numerous opportunities for his teachers, staff, students, and their families, as well as others across Michigan, and have earned the Lamphere School District many awards and achievements over the years. I know I join many in Michigan in congratulating him on a stellar career that has spanned decades and has inspired generations of students to strive for excellence.

After earning a teaching degree from Eastern Michigan University and a master's degree in educational administration from the University of Michigan, Mr. McCann has focused his efforts in southeast Michigan. He began as an educator with the Archdiocese of Detroit. Five years later, he accepted a position with the Lamphere Schools. During his tenure with the Lamphere Schools, he served as an administrative assistant, assistant principal, and a principal at various schools in the district, and in 1986, he was named the district superintendent.

Jim's passion for integrating technology into the classroom has earned him national recognition, and I am familiar with Jim's energetic and passionate approach to educating young people. I have been privileged to work with Jim on an effort to enhance learning across Michigan, and that project has benefited greatly from his innovation and enthusiasm.

In 1982, Jim attended a summer institute at Harvard University that emphasized the importance of using technology to teach multiple learning styles. Recognizing an urgent need to train teachers and staff in the district in computer networking, programming and software use, he developed an innovative plan to install cable and wiring in classrooms and to provide a 2-week training program for his teachers. This innovative approach led to Lamphere being the first district in Michigan to have Internet access in the classroom, which occurred in 1992.

Jim has been the chairman of the Oakland County Superintendents' Committee for Instructional Technology since 1992 and through this position has helped to improve and advance the use of educational technology in schools throughout Oakland County. In 1996, he was instrumental in bringing