

leaving her mother and her siblings dependent on public assistance. Although this incident proved to be tragic, just like the saying goes, "only the most beautiful flowers bloom in adversity," Ms. Walker emerged from this hardship as the main provider and supporter of the family, eventually getting her family off of welfare.

Ms. Walker earned her bachelors degree and law degree in a special 6-year program in which students earned both a bachelors and law degree. She is recognized as being the first African-American woman to graduate from the St. John's University School of Law in 1946. Recognizing the disparity between the number of black and white lawyers, Ms. Walker spent much of her career working for the National Bar Association, the organization of Black lawyers formed to support the advancement of Blacks in the progression and helped found the Associations Counsel Conference, an annual meeting that helped black lawyers cultivate relationships with corporate clients. It is through her work within this organization and others that gave her the skills to become the first woman to serve as president of the Harlem Lawyers Association.

Although she was admitted to the Bar in 1947, the color of her skin still proved to be the only measure being used to judge her capabilities and worth. A woman who defied so many odds, who found the self-will within, to do the unthinkable, whose courage should have been commended, was still black. Sadly, the only position offered to her was the position to be the firms' secretary. Unwilling to write the story of a woman who came, fought the great battle and lost, she decided to re-write history with her own thoughts utilizing her own gifts.

Her efforts culminated in the establishment of her own firm. Although she ran unsuccessfully for the New York Senate in 1958 and 1964, she was recognized at that time as being one of the most powerful leaders in Harlem. Her legacy rings true even today. Not only does the African American community mourn her loss, but all the lives she touched by being a symbol for justice everywhere as well feel her loss.

I enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the obituary published in the New York Times on July 24, 2006. She has truly left her mark on our society and she will always be remembered for that. As the percentages of African American lawyers continue to increase across the country, we must acknowledge the pioneers whose contributions to justice and equality made the opportunities we have today a reality.

[From the New York Times, July 20, 2006]

CORA WALKER, 84, DIES; LAWYER WHO BROKE RACIAL GROUND  
(By Margalit Fox)

Cora T. Walker, a prominent New York lawyer who nearly 60 years ago became one of the first black women to practice law in the state, died last Thursday at her home in Manhattan. She was 84.

The cause was cancer, said her son Lawrence R. Bailey Jr., a lawyer, who practiced with his mother for many years.

For decades, Ms. Walker ran a private practice in Harlem, first on 125th Street and later from a restored brownstone at 270 Lenox Avenue. From 1976 until her retirement in 1999, she was the senior partner in Walker & Bailey, one of the city's few black law firms, which she established with her son.

The firm's practice eventually included corporate clients like Conrail, the Ford Motor Company, Texas Instruments and Kentucky Fried Chicken. But Ms. Walker continued drawing up wills and preparing personal-injury claims for the men and women she described as the "plain, ordinary, not elegant people" of her Harlem community.

Active in Republican politics, Ms. Walker ran unsuccessfully for the New York State Senate in 1958 and 1964. In 1970, The New York Times included her—the only woman—on a list of the most powerful leaders in Harlem.

Cora Thomasina Walker was born on June 20, 1922, in Charlotte, N.C., one of nine children of William and Benetta Jones Walker. The family moved to the Bronx when she was a child. When she was an adolescent, her parents separated, leaving her, her mother and her siblings dependent on public assistance.

After graduating from James Monroe High School in the Bronx, Ms. Walker promptly informed the Welfare Department that their help was no longer required; she would support the family. She took a night job as a teletype operator with Western Union and also sold Christmas cards.

At the same time, Ms. Walker was enrolled at St. John's University, then in Brooklyn, in a special six-year program in which students earned both a bachelor's degree and a law degree. She received a bachelor's degree in accounting from St. John's in 1945 and a law degree the next year.

For much of her career, Ms. Walker was active in the National Bar Association, a historically black organization. She helped found the association's Corporate Counsel Conference, an annual meeting sponsored by its commercial law section. Begun in 1988, the conference helps black lawyers cultivate relationships with corporate clients.

In the 1960s, Ms. Walker became the first woman to serve as president of the Harlem Lawyers Association.

Ms. Walker's marriage, to Lawrence R. Bailey Sr., a lawyer, ended in divorce. In addition to her son Lawrence Jr., of the Bronx, she is survived by another son, Bruce E. Bailey, a physician, of Norwich, Conn.; a sister, Danetta Black, formerly of White Plains; and three grandchildren.

In 1947, when Ms. Walker was admitted to the New York bar, she found the doors of the city's law firms tightly shut. (One firm rented and offered her a position—as a secretary.) So she struck out on her own.

Her first client was an undertaker, for whom she did collections. Before long, by dint of reading self-improvement books, Ms. Walker had learned to "join everything, give everybody a card, join a political club," as she told The New York Times in 1989.

In 1999, the New York County Lawyers' Association installed a plaque outside the Lenox Avenue brownstone where Ms. Walker had her office, commemorating her half-century in the law. The building has since been sold, her son said, and the plaque is now gone.

#### KC-135 REPLACEMENT PROGRAM TECHNOLOGY

#### HON. TERRY EVERETT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 28, 2006

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, it is more important than ever that our military have the best technologies available in their weapon systems and equipment. The tremendous

strides that have been made in the area of technology have allowed us to do more with less. With a smaller force, it becomes imperative to provide the best technology and the best capabilities to our warfighters.

Our front line systems require cutting edge technologies to preserve the maximum advantage over our adversaries. It is important that we remain mindful of this as we look to the KC-135 Tanker replacement aircraft the Air Force is scheduled to purchase. We would be ill advised to disregard the technologies available in the aircraft being offered, as this aircraft will be in our inventory for decades.

This KC-X competition involves an older aircraft and a newer one. Old technology built today is still old, and offers little in the competitive environment. Retrofitting add-on technologies into older aircrafts' cockpits and elsewhere are costly modifications that offer only a partial solution to acquiring the best available aircraft.

Instead, the Air Force should consider the value of buying the latest, proven generation of commercial aircraft with modern technology already integrated into the platform. In closing, I believe we must procure the most advanced technology available for this aircraft to both accomplish the mission and to ensure the highest level of performance over its service life. The Air Force has a clear opportunity to procure the most advanced aircraft for the KC-X and our warfighters deserve no less.

#### CELEBRATING THE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FRANKLIN SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

#### HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 28, 2006

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Franklin Special School District. For a century this district has served as a shining example of quality in public school education.

FSSD is recognized within the State of Tennessee and nationally for excellence. It has received straight A's in the 2005 Tennessee State Report Card which is based on student achievement and academic gains. The faculty and staff have demonstrated incredible dedication to the mission of educating students. That's something we all ought to applaud.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the parents and students of the FSSD. I also ask my colleagues to join me in sending a special thanks to Dr. David Snowden, Director of Schools and the Franklin Special School District teachers and staff for educating the leaders of tomorrow. We wish them all the best in the years ahead.

#### IN HONOR OF COLONEL RICK RIERA, "SEEKER AND DEFENDER OF FREEDOM"

#### HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 28, 2006

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great soldier and a great

American, Colonel Rick R. Riera, who is giving up command next week at Fort Benning, GA, the "Home of the Infantry."

Colonel Riera was born on June 4, 1959 in Matanzas, Cuba. At the tender age of nine years old, he and his family fled the Communist government and were granted political asylum in this country. They were flown via a Liberty Flight to Miami, Florida, where Colonel Riera grew up.

Riera was admitted to the United States Military Academy and in 1981 graduated and reported for training at Fort Benning. After his initial training, he was assigned as a Rifle and Scout Platoon Leader on the Demilitarized Zone in Korea.

During his career, Colonel Riera has served in six Infantry Regiments (8th, 15th, 18th, 23rd, 30th, and 75th) and four Infantry Divisions (2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 24th). His service highlights have included assignments as a Ranger Rifle Platoon Leader during the invasion of Grenada, command of two mechanized Infantry companies in Germany during the Cold War, and command of the Infantry's first M2A3 Bradley Battalion during the Division Capstone Exercise.

Staff experience consists of duty as a Battalion S-3, Battalion XO, Brigade S-4, Brigade S-3, and Brigade XO with the Sledgehammer Brigade on Kelley Hill. Colonel Riera also served as the Chief of Crew Training for U.S. Army Europe's New Equipment Training Team during the fielding of Bradleys to the 3rd AD and 2nd ACR. Additionally, he was the first Chief of the Bradley Crew Evaluator Training Team for standardized gunnery at Grafenwoehr.

Joint experience consists of service with J-3 Southern Command in Panama and the Andean Ridge as a counterdrug operations officer at the height of the Drug War against the Medellin and Cali Cartels. Colonel Riera later served as the Army Special Assistant to the Commander in Chief of U.S. Southern Command following its move to Miami, Florida.

In addition to completing Infantry courses here at Fort Benning, he is a graduate of the Regional Studies Course at the J.F.K. Special Warfare Center, the Command and General Staff Course at the U.S. Army School of the Americas, and the Inter-American Defense College. His awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Combat Infantryman's Badge, Expert Infantryman's Badge, and Valorous Unit Award.

Colonel Riera is married to the former Rosario Moreno of San Juan, Puerto Rico. They have two children, Rebeca and Ricky.

Mr. Speaker, Colonel Riera is stepping down as the garrison commander at Fort Benning next week, and I stand here to honor him today for his years of service to this Nation. He escaped tyranny in his native land and, with his family, sought freedom and opportunity in America. He found his freedom and is now dedicating every day of his life to protecting it for his children and for each and every one of us. I thank him for his service, particularly his leadership at Fort Benning, and wish him luck in his future assignment at Fort Sam Houston as Deputy Chief of Staff of Operations, U.S. Army, South.

#### TRIBUTE TO ROBERT F. KERLEY

### HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 28, 2006*

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a distinguished American, Robert F. Kerley, who died on July 7, 2006.

Robert Kerley was born and educated in California. He served his country during World War II as a member of General Mark Clark's staff in Italy. After the war he earned his B.S. Degree at the University of California Berkeley, and then began his quarter century career with the University. He was at Berkeley from 1951 until 1964 when he left to become the Vice President for Business Affairs and Treasurer at the University of Kentucky, and went on to serve as Vice President for Administration and Treasurer at Johns Hopkins. He returned to Berkeley in 1970 and served as Vice Chancellor of Administration until his retirement in 1982. Upon his retirement he received the Berkeley Citation, U.C. Berkeley's highest honor. The California Alumni Association awarded him the Alumni Citation for excellence in service and he was named a Berkeley Fellow in 2003, an honor given to a select group for extraordinary service to the University.

Robert Kerley is survived by his beloved wife Betty whom he met at Berkeley and married in 1975 at the Chancellor's residence. He also leaves his children Kathleen James, Maureen Douglas, Barbara Neill, William Kerley and his step-children Katherine Strehl and William Strehl. He also leaves 10 beloved grandchildren . . . Adriana, Allison, Andrew, Brent, Carolyn, Cecily, Christina, Jake, Joseph and Meredith.

Robert Kerley was a member of the Board of Regents of John F. Kennedy University, a member and Chair of the National Association of Colleges and Universities, as well as a member of the Council on Higher Education. He was a founding member and Chair of the governing board of the Center for Independent Living in Berkeley, the first group run by and for people with disabilities, and an advisor to Alta Bates Medical Center.

It has been a personal privilege to have known Mr. Kerley's step-daughter for many years. Her integrity and commitment to public service are an eloquent statement about her, as well as her father.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this good and great American and in extending our deepest sympathy to his family. Robert Kerley contributed greatly to our community and our country, and in doing so, made us a stronger and better nation.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLAY COUNTY COURTHOUSE

### HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 28, 2006*

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully request the House's attention today to pay tribute to the people of Clay County, Alabama, who on August 12, 2006,

will celebrate the centennial anniversary of their county's beautiful and historic Courthouse.

Known across East Alabama as an architectural gem, the Clay County Courthouse was built in 1906 overlooking the square with a Seth Thomas clock. The building has been the site of a number of historic events over the years.

Over the last decade, Clay County citizens have witnessed the ongoing restoration of this beautiful building. In recent years these renovations were completed, helping bring the landmark back to its historic splendor. Today it continues to serve as the county seat in Ashland, Alabama, and features an art gallery, a small museum dedicated to Hugo Black, and a historical display of World War I arms.

The community centennial celebration will occur on Saturday, August 12, where locals will gather for music, food, arts and crafts downtown.

I am delighted to be able to congratulate the people of Clay County at the celebration of this historic milestone, and hope this fine building will continue to serve the people of Alabama well into its next one hundred years. I thank the House for its attention on this important day.

#### RECOGNIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ON ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY

### HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, July 28, 2006*

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 75th anniversary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and the tens of thousands of men and women serving America's veterans in the VA system. With its establishment as the Veterans Administration on July 21st, 1931, the United States formalized its commitment to providing benefits to America's veterans.

The freedom that we enjoy in the United States exists because of the sacrifices of the brave men and women who have served and protected our nation. Since America's humble beginnings in the Pilgrim colonies, our country has honored the great sacrifice of our veterans by committing to serve them upon their return from duty. Today, the United States provides the most comprehensive system of assistance for veterans of any nation in the world.

Congress must ensure that this tradition of serving veterans remains strong. Many veterans returning from combat in Iraq, Afghanistan and around the world have suffered multiple severe injuries, presenting challenges that were unimaginable in past wars. In Minnesota, the Minneapolis VA Medical Center is a leader in the nation in providing the state-of-the-art, life-saving care at its new polytrauma rehabilitation center. These new challenges require that Congress commit to fully funding research and care for these veterans who have given so much in the line of duty.

Nationwide, more than 144,000 returning troops from Iraq and Afghanistan have now sought health care with the VA, and it is estimated that one in four Americans are eligible for VA benefits and services. More than