

839—Arthur V. Watkins Dam Enlargement Act.

COMMENDING MARCUS HIGH SCHOOL

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate students of Marcus High School for their remarkable performance in the state Academic Decathlon competition. This is a competition that includes some of the brightest students in the State of Texas.

Academic Decathlon is a nation-wide competition which tests high school students in the following 10 academic events: speech, interview, essay, super quiz, language and literature, economics, art, music, social science, and math. The competition takes place at a regional, state, and national level. The theme for this year's categories was "China and its Influence on the World."

The team from Marcus High School finished 3rd at the regional competition and 18th overall at the state competition. Jonathan Neal was awarded a gold medal in the language and literature category. Other contestants from Marcus were Jake Burley, Chelsea Carroll, Preston Hale, Robert Handley, Matthew Henry, Jacqueline Hurlbutt, Emily Robertson, and Tyler Stevenson. Lou Ann Kemper and Dorrie Loughborough were the coaches for the team.

I would like to recognize Principal Kevin Rogers and the entire Marcus High School faculty for their dedication to education. It is also necessary to honor the parents of these students for the active role that they have taken in their children's education. I commend all of the participants for their diligence and commitment to academic achievement. I wish them the best as they continue onward, and I am very proud and honored to be their Representative in the 26th District of Texas.

TRIBUTE TO PATRICK MCGUIRE

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, our community of Northwest Ohio has lost a leader and academic activist whose reach was national in scope. Patrick McGuire lost his battle with cancer on March 18, 2007 and passed from this life at the age of 53 years.

A native of Malone, New York, Mr. McGuire was a Toledo, Ohio resident since accepting a teaching position with the University of Toledo in 1987. He continued teaching throughout, but took on the directorship of the university's Urban Affairs Center in 2000. His leadership oversaw an expansion of that institution and a national recognition of his and the center's efforts. His respected research of community sustainability and development, urban sprawl, the creation of a municipal electrical company, and the so called "brain drain" of young professionals was nationally known.

Equally important to his academic and community leadership, Pat McGuire was dedicated

to his personal life. His family and friends knew him to be a gourmet cook who loved fly fishing. We extend our sympathies to his life partner Linda and children Seamus and Erin, his parents, sister and brother, niece and nephew. We know their loss is profound, and hope comfort is found in the memories they share.

Perhaps the best summation of the life and work of Patrick McGuire was offered by his successor at the Urban Affairs Center: "Patrick was a person with a lot of heart, he was tenacious and righteous, and he fought absolutely for what he believed in . . ." A fine legacy indeed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, on Monday, March 19, 2007, I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 157, agreeing to H. Res. 138—Recognizing the importance of Hot Springs National Park on its 175th anniversary.

SENATOR SIMPSON'S WISDOM REBUTS GENERAL PACE'S PREJUDICE

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, March 14, former Senator Alan Simpson published an eloquent and well-reasoned argument for total repeal of the restrictions that now exist on patriotic gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people serving in the military. It is particularly noteworthy that Senator Simpson, like General John Shalikashvili, was an influential supporter of the current restrictive policy when it was imposed in 1993. Like General Shalikashvili, Alan Simpson with the forthrightness and intellectual honesty that marked his distinguished career in the Senate now says that it is time to end that policy, noting that there has been a substantial diminution of anti-gay and lesbian prejudice among the American people, which means that the argument that allowing those of us who are gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered openly to serve would somehow cause morale problems because of widespread prejudice against us.

Senator Simpson goes on to note that at a time when we are facing a shortage of people able and willing to serve in the military, it is particularly foolish to refuse to allow people who want to serve to do so based on outdated prejudices against them. And I do want to note in this context that even when he was defending a total ban on gays and lesbians in the military in 1990, then General Colin Powell acknowledged that that was not because there was any reason to conclude that gay or lesbian people would be inferior members of the military, but again, only that we were the victims of a prejudice that could be disruptive.

It is particularly disappointing to me, Madam Speaker, therefore, that just as Senator Simpson and General Shalikashvili have acknowledged the diminution of this prejudice, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Peter Pace, has tried to reinvigorate it. General Pace's comment that we who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered are "immoral" solely because of that fact, without any judgment about how we in fact interact with other human beings, is prejudice at its worst. If he were a private citizen, the fact that he felt so unfairly negative towards so many of his fellow citizens would be purely his business. But in fact he cited his condemnation of us as one of the main justifications for a public policy that excludes patriotic gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people from serving in the military. He has since, of course, retracted that part of his statement, but it is clear that he did so only because he has been criticized for it, and not because there has been any change in his opinion.

Madam Speaker, it is entirely wrong for such a high position as Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff to be occupied by someone who is prepared to consign millions of other Americans to second class status because he disapproves of consensual, mutually respectful intimate behavior—that the Supreme Court has made clear can never be criminalized—between consenting adults. Such an effort to use public policy to enforce private views would be strongly rejected, I hope, by the President and others in the administration if it were to be aimed at any other group. I deeply regret that we have not seen a similar reaction when the victims are those of us who are gay or lesbian.

The article by Alan Simpson follows:

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 14, 2007]

BIGOTRY THAT HURTS OUR MILITARY

(By Alan K. Simpson)

As a lifelong Republican who served in the Army in Germany, I believe it is critical that we review—and overturn—the ban on gay service in the military: I voted for "don't ask, don't tell." But much has changed since 1993.

My thinking shifted when I read that the military was firing translators because they are gay. According to the Government Accountability Office, more than 300 language experts have been fired under "don't ask, don't tell," including more than 50 who are fluent in Arabic. This when even Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently acknowledged the nation's "foreign language deficit" and how much our government needs Farsi and Arabic speakers. Is there a "straight" way to translate Arabic? Is there a "gay" Farsi? My God, we'd better start talking sense before it is too late. We need every able-bodied, smart patriot to help us win this war.

In today's perilous global security situation, the real question is whether allowing homosexuals to serve openly would enhance or degrade our readiness. The best way to answer this is to reconsider the original points of opposition to open service.

First, America's views on homosexuals serving openly in the military have changed dramatically. The percentage of Americans in favor has grown from 57 percent in 1993 to a whopping 91 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds surveyed in a Gallup poll in 2003.

Military attitudes have also shifted. Fully three-quarters of 500 vets returning from Iraq and Afghanistan said in a December Zogby poll that they were comfortable interacting with gay people. Also last year, a

Zogby poll showed that a majority of service members who knew a gay member in their unit said the person's presence had no negative impact on the unit or personal morale. Senior leaders such as retired Gen. John Shalikashvili and Lt. Gen. Daniel Christman, a former West Point superintendent, are calling for a second look.

Second, 24 nations, including 12 in Operation Enduring Freedom and nine in Operation Iraqi Freedom, permit open service. Despite controversy surrounding the policy change, it has had no negative impact on morale, cohesion, readiness or recruitment. Our allies did not display such acceptance back when we voted on "don't ask, don't tell," but we should consider their commonsense example.

Third, there are not enough troops to perform the required mission. The Army is "about broken," in the words of Colin Powell. The Army's chief of staff, Gen. Peter Schoomaker, told the House Armed Services Committee in December that "the active-duty Army of 507,000 will break unless the force is expanded by 7,000 more soldiers a year." To fill its needs, the Army is granting a record number of "moral waivers," allowing even felons to enlist. Yet we turn away patriotic gay and lesbian citizens.

The Urban Institute estimates that 65,000 gays are serving and that there are 1 million gay veterans. These gay vets include Capt. Cholene Espinoza, a former U-2 pilot who logged more than 200 combat hours over Iraq, and Marine Staff Sgt. Eric Alva, who lost his right leg to an Iraqi land mine. Since 2005, more than 800 personnel have been discharged from "critical fields"—jobs considered essential but difficult in terms of training or retraining, such as linguists, medical personnel and combat engineers. Aside from allowing us to recruit and retain more personnel, permitting gays to serve openly would enhance the quality of the armed forces.

In World War II, a British mathematician named Alan Turing led the effort to crack the Nazis' communication code. He mastered the complex German enciphering machine, helping to save the world, and his work laid the basis for modern computer science. Does it matter that Turing was gay? This week, Gen. Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs, said that homosexuality is "immoral" and that the ban on open service should therefore not be changed. Would Pace call Turing "immoral"?

Since 1993, I have had the rich satisfaction of knowing and working with many openly gay and lesbian Americans, and I have come to realize that "gay" is an artificial category when it comes to measuring a man or woman's on-the-job performance or commitment to shared goals. It says little about the person. Our differences and prejudices pale next to our historic challenge. Gen. Pace is entitled, like anyone, to his personal opinion, even if it is completely out of the mainstream of American thinking. But he should know better than to assert this opinion as the basis for policy of a military that represents and serves an entire nation. Let us end "don't ask, don't tell." This policy has become a serious detriment to the readiness of America's forces as they attempt to accomplish what is arguably the most challenging mission in our long and cherished history.

TRIBUTE ON THE OCCASION OF
THE 186TH ANNIVERSARY OF
GREEK INDEPENDENCE

HON. MICHAEL R. McNULTY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Mr. McNULTY. Madam Speaker, the American people join with the people of Greece in celebrating the 186th anniversary of the revolution that freed the Greek people from the Ottoman Empire.

The bedrock of our close relationship with Greece is our mutual devotion to freedom and democracy and our unshakable determination to fight, if need be, to protect these rights.

Greek philosophers and political leaders—Cleisthenes and Pericles and their successors—had great influence upon America's Founding Fathers in their creation of these United States.

We, as a Nation, owe a great debt to Greece. Greece is the birthplace of democracy, as we know it.

Thomas Jefferson said, "To the ancient Greeks, we are all indebted for the light which led ourselves (American colonists) out of Gothic darkness."

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 were an attack on democracy and freedom—not just against our people, but also against all freedom-loving people everywhere in the world. The Greek people understand this.

I congratulate the people of Greece and wish them a Happy National Birthday.

ON THE 4TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE IRAQ WAR

HON. ELLJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my support both for the men and women fighting for our Nation with immeasurable courage and commitment and for the legislation that would bring them home, the "U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health and Iraq Accountability Act."

While I have opposed this war from the beginning, our duty now is to resolve this conflict as quickly as possible. We must stabilize the country, protect innocent Iraqis, and lay the groundwork to return our troops to their families.

We were lead into war on the basis of false presumptions drawn from faulty intelligence. Our soldiers are now being attacked daily by anonymous road-side bombs that the factions fighting in a civil war are targeting against our troops—whom we were told would be greeted as liberators.

Billions of taxpayer dollars have simply vanished in Iraq, while billions more have been given away in no-bid contracts or embezzled. At the same time, our troops are going without the body armor and the advanced HUMVEE protections—such as the MRAP system—that would reduce casualties. This is simply inexcusable.

Further, at the present time, according to a survey by USA Today and other media, 6 in 10 Iraqis (61 percent) believe their lives are

going badly, while only a third (35 percent) agree that improvements in current conditions are on the horizon.

Unfortunately, there are no easy answers to the disaster that the Administration's actions in Iraq have created.

However, I believe we must try to ensure that we do not leave Iraq worse off than it was before the invasion. Until Iraqis feel safe in their country and see progress in their lives, it will not be possible to bring stability to that nation.

Importantly, as the most recent National Intelligence Estimate has made clear, this is not something that can be accomplished by the use of military force—it can be achieved only when Iraqis come together to make the difficult political decisions that will create a government truly capable of governing.

Further, the Iraq Study Group advised that a gradual draw-down of troops is most likely to stabilize the country when combined with serious negotiations with all of Iraq's neighbors—including Iran and Syria.

This is why I stand here today in support of the "U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Health and Iraq Accountability Act." This bill would hold the President and Iraq to the benchmarks President Bush himself has stated must be reached to resolve this crisis.

If these benchmarks are not being met in the months to come, this Act would require that our troops be redeployed. Frankly, if we are not making progress in Iraq, we have no reason to be there.

Further, we owe it to the Iraqis, who have lost tens of thousands of their loved ones, to require that the political solutions that are central to their success are the benchmarks against which we measure our progress.

Additionally, let me note that this bill would also require that all forces sent to battle be adequately rested, trained, and equipped. While the President could waive this requirement, frankly I do not believe it is ever in our interest to send forces into combat who are not fully ready and who do not have the latest protective equipment we can provide.

Our forces have done all and more than we have asked of them and their families have been patiently sacrificing for four long years. We owe it to them to adequately protect them while they are deployed and to bring them home before the 5th anniversary of this war passes.

That is why I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

IN MEMORY OF BOB HATTOY

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, Bob Hattoy was a true American original. Sadly, he passed away earlier this month due to AIDS-related complications. His passionate voice on social justice and environmental issues helped break down barriers and moved the country in a better direction.

Bob's defining trait was his passion. He always fought hard for what he believed in—no matter who or what stood in his way. This was especially true during his time as the California regional director for the Sierra Club.