

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Ms. CARSON. Madam Speaker, I regret that I was not able to cast votes on the evening of Tuesday, April 17, 2007 due to the cancellation of my scheduled flight from Indianapolis to Washington's Reagan National Airport and subsequent flight cancellations at Indianapolis. I understand that there was a backlog of eastbound travelers and limited flight options due to previous significant storm systems in the northeast.

Had I been available to vote, I would have voted yes on: roll No. 214; roll No. 215; roll No. 216; roll No. 217 and roll No. 218.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE OPENING OF THE ED AND RAE SCHOLLMAYER SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Texas Wesleyan University on the completion of the new Ed and Rae Schollmaier Science and Technology Center.

This new learning center will facilitate access to genomic databases for use in biology, chemistry and computer science courses at Texas Wesleyan. The technology center will be a valued resource for students and faculty working in the disciplines of biology, chemistry, physics, computer science, and math. Texas Wesleyan science educators will be able to provide state-of-the-art learning opportunities to its diverse student body. Undergraduate students at Texas Wesleyan will be provided with scientific research opportunities that are typically available only to graduate students.

Founded in 1890 in Fort Worth, Texas, Wesleyan University is a United Methodist institution dedicated to the education of students in the region and beyond. The University offers a wide range of degrees for undergraduate and graduate students and educates international students from 28 countries

I congratulate Texas Wesleyan University as it continues to progress as a distinguished and diverse educational institution, and I am proud to represent them in Congress.

OFFERING HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES TO THE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES REGARDING THE HORRIFIC VIOLENCE AT VIRGINIA TECH AND TO STUDENTS, FACULTY, ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF AND THEIR FAMILIES WHO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, the thoughts and prayers of the entire Nation go out to the families and friends of those who lost loved ones.

What happened at Virginia Tech on Monday was a senseless tragedy and it is important for us to come together and find strength at such a sad time.

This is a time of profound mourning as there are few things more heart wrenching than the loss of so many young lives.

The sight of students and faculty coming together to comfort and support each other, however, is a stirring reminder of our Nation's resolve.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution has my support and the support of everyone who lives in the Fourth Congressional District.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MONTGOMERY G.I. BILL IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. TERRY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Montgomery G.I. Bill Improvement Act of 2007 to eliminate the burdensome enrollment fee that prevents more of our young soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines from gaining a college education.

Today's military members are consummate professionals meeting the difficult challenges of their service with courage, skill and expertise. Obtaining a college education is critical to expanding their expertise to better serve the United States and the cause of freedom. However, the current \$100 monthly enrollment fee required for participation in the Montgomery G.I. Bill could prevent young enlisted military families from furthering their education.

More than half of the enlisted men and women in our armed forces have family responsibilities that limit their income choices. Currently, only 3.9 percent of enlisted active-duty members of the armed forces have a bachelor's degree, compared to 86.6 percent of the officers' corps. The \$100 per month enrollment fee required for participation in the G.I. Bill sets up an unnecessary barrier to educational opportunities for enlisted military families trying to make ends meet and care for their children.

I have heard from current and former military members, public housing organizations, and groups advocating on behalf of military families that enlisted military members at pay grades E-5 and below would most benefit from the elimination of the \$1,200 annual enrollment fee.

For these families who struggle to meet their basic needs and the needs of their children, an additional \$1,200 each year will have a significant impact on the family budget. The legislation I am introducing today will allow servicemembers to utilize G.I. Bill education benefits to improve their family's circumstances and their future career opportunities.

This legislation would help improve military families' quality of life by ensuring the G.I. Bill continues to provide realistic and relevant educational opportunities to servicemembers defending our country.

The G.I. Bill Improvement Act of 2007 would accomplish two critical goals: Eliminate the \$1,200 G.I. Bill enrollment fee for active duty servicemembers at pay grades E-5 and below, and allow all servicemembers and women serving on active duty to opt into the G.I. Bill with no penalty or enrollment fee.

This is an issue of fundamental fairness. The men and women serving our country in wartime should not have to choose between the long-term benefits of the G.I. Bill and the short-term demands of their paycheck.

This legislation will provide tremendous benefits to our Nation. The G.I. Bill is one of the greatest investments ever made by the American people in our economy and the lives of young men and women who selflessly serve in the military. The "Greatest Generation" servicemembers who returned home from WWII and received a higher education under the G.I. Bill became our Nation's entrepreneurs, teachers, doctors and community leaders.

R.C. Thompson, a former Commanding Officer of Top Gun, and a former Commander of a carrier airwing in Afghanistan, said: "This legislation would send a great signal to our young men and women in uniform that our Nation is unified behind them, and our sense of purpose remains strong. I was fortunate to receive my education through the G.I. Bill, and I know that \$100 a month is a lot of money to a young married person serving overseas. This legislation will enable them to do a lot of good for their families when they return home."

I urge my colleagues to join me in improving opportunities for our servicemembers and their families by cosponsoring the Montgomery G.I. Bill Improvement Act of 2007.

H.R. 1495, WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2007; VOTE 233: ON THE MOTION TO RECOMMEND WITH INSTRUCTIONS

HON. JOHN J. HALL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. HALL of New York. Madam Speaker, although I am a staunch advocate of increasing the use of hydroelectric power to meet America's energy needs, I voted against the motion to recommit H.R. 1495 because it does not constitute a good-faith effort to meet this important goal.

Under the guise of supporting renewable energy, the amending language contained in the motion to recommit would have directed the Secretary to undertake a boundless survey of America's waterways and wherever possible to augment existing hydroelectric dams

or build new ones. While supporters of the motion may attempt to portray it as advancing “green” solutions to our energy challenges, the reality is that the language only required economic considerations to be taken into account and provided no framework or guidance regarding the environmental suitability of potential hydroelectric sites or requirements to account for environmental impact mitigation or wildlife protection.

I am strongly supportive of exploring beneficial ways to increase the role that hydroelectricity plays in our energy mix, and look forward to working with my colleagues on pursuing environmentally responsible hydroelectric options such as installing low-head hydroelectric turbines in existing small dams. It is extremely important that we explore such alternatives, but we must do so in a way that is thoughtful, measured, and responsible. The language in the motion to recommit could have opened the door to reckless, counterproductive hydroelectric projects and so I chose to vote against it.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 23RD STREET ASSOCIATION AND ITS 2007 DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN, MR. JOSEPH ROBERTO OF NORTH FORK BANK

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the 23rd Street Association, Inc., of New York City, its President, Sharon L. Ullman, and its honoree Joseph Roberto on the occasion of its annual Distinguished Citizen Award Luncheon. This year, the Association is bestowing its Distinguished Citizen Award upon Mr. Joseph Roberto, Divisional Senior Vice President of North Fork Bank, for his outstanding service to the community.

The 23rd Street Association was formed in 1929 by 22 local business leaders to improve environmental conditions and promote economic development in Manhattan. Since that time, the 23rd Street Association and its civic-minded members have devoted themselves to maintaining and improving the quality of life for both businesses and residents of the vital and thriving area of Lower Manhattan between 18th and 28th Streets. Today, the Association plays an active role in the development and growth of the 23rd Street area, including the Gramercy Park and Flatiron neighborhoods and the Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village middle-income housing developments.

The Association also addresses a broad range of citizen complaints and concerns by working closely with local community boards as well as city, state and federal government agencies. Whether forming a partnership with the New York City Department of Transportation to ameliorate traffic congestion in Lower Manhattan or purchasing and planting hundreds of trees in conjunction with the City Parks Department, the Association's commitment to improving the neighborhoods and communities it serves has been truly remarkable. In recent years, the 23rd Street Association worked to block a plan to substitute a nearby women's shelter with a facility for high-

risk men, a proposal forcefully fought by many local businesses and residents.

This year, the 23rd Street Association is honoring Mr. Joseph Roberto of North Fork Bank with its Distinguished Citizen Award. A veteran of New York's business community, Joseph Roberto began his career by working in his family business, a chain of retail stores known as Pzaz, from 1979 through 1998. In 1998, Mr. Roberto joined North Fork Bank, where he currently serves as the Divisional Senior Vice President for Manhattan. Overseeing the bank's 45 Manhattan locations, Mr. Roberto has still found time and boundless energy to devote to his community and to countless worthy causes ranging from the American Cancer Society to United Cerebral Palsy to the Special Olympics.

The 23rd Street Association's president, Sharon L. Ullman, has compiled an exceptional record of service to the community. She spearheaded the establishment of the new Flatiron/23rd Street Partnership Business Improvement District, working tirelessly for 5 years planning the project, raising the funding needed to bring it to fruition, and inspiring the will and energy to make it such an outstanding success for local businesses and residents alike. She has also dedicated herself to the community by serving as the Warden of Madison Square Park and as a longtime board member of worthwhile organizations like the Associated Blind, Inc. Ms. Ullman was also named one of the top 100 New Yorkers by New York Resident magazine.

Madam Speaker, I request that my colleagues join me in paying tribute to the 23rd Street Association, its president, Sharon L. Ullman, and its honoree, Joseph Roberto, for their outstanding service and dedication to the civic life of our nation's greatest metropolis.

THE GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE SECURITY OVERSIGHT ACT

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. MARKEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Global Climate Change Security Oversight Act.

The nexus between global warming and the national security of the United States is a crucial, yet long-ignored, issue. The adverse consequences of rising global temperatures present not only a potential environmental catastrophe but a national security emergency.

The security-related consequences of global warming will range from hampering U.S. military operations to worsening the scarcity of essential resources in already unstable regions—which can lead to the failed states that are a central breeding ground for terrorism. But because the U.S. intelligence community has never analyzed the potential for global warming to harm our national security, we lack a thorough understanding of what these threats are. This means that the Department of Defense and other security agencies cannot comprehensively plan for the security consequences of global warming the way that they plan for countless other serious contingencies.

Today, I am introducing the “Global Climate Change Security Oversight Act.” This bill is

cosponsored by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARTLETT) the gentleman from Connecticut, Mr. LARSON, the gentelady from California, Ms. ESHOO, the gentelady from California, Ms. SOLIS, the gentelady from New York, Mr. HALL, the gentleman from Washington, Mr. McDERMOTT, and the gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. OLVER. This legislation will jump-start U.S. defense planning for the security consequences of global warming by authorizing a National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) to assess the implications of global warming to United States security and military operations. Our bill, the House companion to legislation already introduced by Senator DURBIN and Senator HAGEL, will provide a crucial planning and risk-assessment tool as the Congress seeks innovative solutions to global warming. Developed to assess the most serious threats to the United States, NIEs are the most authoritative intelligence judgments on national security issues. This legislation will also fund research by the Defense Department into the consequences for U.S. military operations posed by global warming.

It seems clear that our geopolitical and national security posture will only grow worse if we do not act forcefully to curb our dangerous dependence on imported oil and reduce our emissions of global warming pollution. At the beginning of February, the world's top scientists, as part of the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), provided a scientific smoking gun that human activities were unequivocally responsible for global warming. Two weeks ago, their second report told us what happens when the climatic bullet hits. The developing world will bear the brunt of the collateral damage from our historic global warming emissions, but the United States will experience its own self-inflicted wounds, including threats to our national security and military readiness.

The United States must act now to understand the security implications of global warming. The Global Climate Change Security Oversight Act will allow us to do so.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. WILLIE BEASLEY ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 94TH BIRTHDAY ON APRIL 28TH, 2007

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, It is with great pleasure that I rise to congratulate Mr. Willie Beasley on the occasion of his 94th birthday which will take place on April 28, 2007. Madam Speaker, to live a long life is indeed desirable and many of us would find it most desirable. However, to live a long, healthy wholesome and productive life is awesome. Such has been the blessed fate of Mr. Willie Beasley who has been a great husband, wonderful father, tremendous churchman and a civic leader who has understood what it should mean to live in a free and democratic society. For many years, Mr. Beasley was an outstanding leader at the Carey Certentenary AME Church, he and his family were anchored in the community and to this day his children Ward and Carol continue in his and the family's tradition.