

**CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE**

April 24, 2007

**S4910**

**TECHNICAL SERGEANT TIMOTHY WEINER, SENIOR AIRMAN DANIEL MILLER AND SENIOR AIRMAN ELIZABETH LONCKI**

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to three members of Hill Air Force Base’s 75th Air Base Wing who, together, lost their lives in Iraq in performance of their duties. Tsgt Timothy Weiner of Tamarack, FL, SrA Daniel Miller of Galesburg, IL, and SrA Elizabeth Loncki of New Castle, DE, were killed while disarming an explosive device.

One of the core values of the Air Force is “Service Before Self.” These airmen met this standard every day while disarming improvised explosive devices and clearing munitions to protect their fellow servicemen and the people of Iraq. All three knew the risks inherent in their assignment, but still chose to volunteer so that others may be safe.

Technical Sergeant Weiner was the youngest of four sons of Ken Weiner, a Korean war veteran, and Marcia Fenster. It should be noted that all the sons of the Weiner family have worn the uniform of their Nation. Technical Sergeant Weiner’s mother said, “he was an unbelievable father and husband who could do a job that was rough and so demanding but was also a man who could show love and was not afraid to.”

This was Sergeant Weiner’s second tour and professionalised best exemplified by the fact that, in a previous assignment, he was part of explosive ordnance disposal team that provided protection for the President. He is survived by his wife Debbie and son Jonathan. The technical sergeant had planned to retire within a couple of weeks. It was wonderful. We had a picture perfect family and the two weeks were perfect.”

The Captain was a 1999 West Point graduate, who, after returning home, planned to attend graduate school. He had already received an important letter of recommendation from the Governor of Karbala who wrote: “Freeman has assisted in forming a warmer relationship with the Army . . . I think Capt. Freeman genuinely cares about what happens to Karbala and its people.”

For a member of a civil affairs unit, whose responsibility is to assist the local community, building and maintaining close relationships with indigenous government officials, I cannot think of any higher praise. Not surprisingly, Captain Freeman had been decorated with two Army commendation medals, two Army achievement medals, a national defense service medal and a global war on terrorism service medal. I also understand that he was a member of the Army’s bob-sledding team.

Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the loss of CPT Brian S. Freeman whose mother, Kathleen Snyder, is a resident of Utah.

Captain Freeman died while performing his duties in Karbala, Iraq, where he was assigned to the 412th Civil Affairs Battalion, U.S. Army Reserve, based in Whitehall, OH. Captain Freeman resided in Temecula, CA, with his wife Charlotte, a 3-year-old son, Gunnar, and a 3-month-old daughter, Ingrid. The captain had just returned to Iraq after a 2-week Christmas leave. Charlotte Freeman commented about that time, “We did all the family things packed into two weeks. It was wonderful. We had a picture perfect family and the two weeks were perfect.”

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America has lost another decorated hero. Captain Freeman had hope to make a difference during his time in Iraq. I believe that anyone who looks at the life and actions of Captain Freeman will see that he more than achieved that goal.

Captain Freeman and his family will always be in my prayers.

**ANNIVERSARY OF THE L’AMBANCE PLAZA COLLAPSE**

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, yesterday marked the 20th anniversary of a dark day in my State’s history: the day the L’Ambance Plaza towers collapsed in Bridgeport and took with them the lives of 28 Connecticut construction workers.

For millions of people in Connecticut, that day’s images are still fresh; time can blunt their pain, but it can never erase them. We remember the shock: 16 stories of new apartments reduced with a roar, within seconds, to ruined concrete and steel. We remember the hundreds of volunteers who combed the wrecked piles for their friends. This is how one newspaper reported their remarkable endurance: “daily task of seeking and sometimes finding the bodies of friends and loved ones, some of the volunteers have pushed themselves to exhaustion, working around the clock and then begging to go on working.” We remember their frantic search for survivors, and the slow-dawning truth that there were none.

But above all, we remember 28 men who died too soon. They were union members from Bridgeport and Waterbury who poured concrete, laid pipe, and fixed steel. Not a single one of them went to work that morning expecting to die; but each knew the high risks of his trade, and willingly took them on to make a good living for his family.

We can clear rubble and rebuild towers, but not a single life can be replaced. If this tragedy can give us anything to be thankful for, it is the end of the dangerous lift-slab construction method that led to the collapse. We can and must demand the safest conditions for all workers, and do everything it takes to protect them. But try as we might, we will never be able to outlaw collapse, or regulate accidents, or legislate against tragedy.

We can only send our thanks to the men and women who risk themselves so we can lie down and wake up in safety and comfort. For those who died 20 years ago, we can pledge to keep their memories fresh. And today, we can repeat their names:

Michael Addona
Augustus Alman
Glen Canning
Mario Colelo
William Daddona
Francesco D’Addona
Donald Emanuel
Vincent Figliomeni
Herbert Goldman
Terrance Gruber
John Hughes
Joseph Lowe
Joel Magnoli
Rocco Mancini
Richard McGill