

□ 1830

RENAMING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, as of today, H.R. 346, my legislation to designate the Department of Navy as the Department of Navy and Marine Corps, has 60 cosponsors.

The language of this bill has already passed the full House of Representatives last month as part of the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act. This is the sixth year in a row that the House has voted to support this change.

As a Member of Congress, I have heard for 14 years that the Navy and Marine Corps are one fighting team. If this is true, should not the team carry the name of both the Navy and the Marine Corps? The Marines do not serve beneath the Navy, they are coequal partners.

I was very pleased to read a comment by the new Senate Armed Services Committee chairman, CARL LEVIN, in an article by The Hill newspaper last month, May 24, 2007, and I quote, "When asked, LEVIN said he would 'keep an open mind' on whether to support [language in the House bill to change the name of the Navy to the Department of Navy and Marine Corps]."

Mr. Speaker, there is no cost to this change. Renaming the Department is a symbolic gesture, but is very important to the team. It is the right thing to do for the team.

Let me quote the Honorable Wade Sanders, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Reserve Affairs between the years 1993 and 1998. He voiced his support for this change, and I quote, "As a combat veteran and former Naval officer, I understand the importance of the team dynamic, and the importance of recognizing the contributions of team components.

"The Navy and Marine Corps team is just that, a dynamic partnership, and it is important to symbolically recognize the balance of that partnership."

I will also quote Admiral Stansfield Turner, United States Navy, Retired, former Director of Central Intelligence, who said, and I quote, "I think this change in title enhances the prestige and pride of the people in the Marine Corps. And it does not necessarily take away anything from the Navy in that process."

Mr. Speaker, last year, an editorial in the Chicago Tribune on April 21 of 2006 also supported the change stating, and I quote, "No service branch shows more respect for tradition than the United States Marine Corps does, which makes it all the more ironic that tradition denies the Corps an important show of respect: Equal billing with the other service branches."

That again, Mr. Speaker, is from the Chicago Tribune.

Mr. Speaker, to further state the importance of this, I have beside me an enlargement of the orders for the Silver Star for a Marine from Camp Lejeune who was killed in Iraq. It says, "The Secretary of the Navy Washington, DC., Navy flag, the President of the United States take pleasure in presenting the Silver Star to the family." I will not read in its entirety.

But Mr. Speaker, I'd like to show you what, if the Senate will accept the House position, what this does. With the same orders for the Silver Star for this brave Marine who gave his life for this country, it says, "The Secretary of the Navy and Marine Corps, Washington, DC.," with the zip code. It still has the Navy flag on one side and the Marine flag.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that the Senate accept the House position. This is the right thing to do for the fighting team. The team is the Navy and Marine Corps fighting team. And I hope that the Senate, and I'm very encouraged by Chairman LEVIN that he said, "I'm open to the thought of this possibility."

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform and to please bless the United States of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WATERS addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EDUCATION IS CRITICAL FOR TODAY'S YOUTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus to discuss the important issue of education. Obtaining an education is critical for today's youth. An individual's prosperity and quality of life will be directly affected by the education they receive.

We all know the phrase, "The more you learn, the more you earn." In addition to increased earnings, individuals with higher levels of education are less likely to be unemployed, less likely to need public assistance, and less likely to become involved in the criminal justice system.

Mr. Speaker, today's communities will also benefit by increased education. Those communities will suffer lower crime rates, have fewer people on welfare, and will benefit from a better economy.

In fact, we have found that in this global economy, our competitive advantage is in education because we can't compete on wages. There are people in countries around the world who work for pennies and a few dollars a

day. We're not going to compete with that.

We can't compete because people don't have to be in the United States to work. If you can work with your coworkers from across the hall, you can work with your coworkers across the globe. All you need is a cell phone, a computer and a modem, a fax machine, you can work anywhere in the world.

You don't need to be close to your customers. You can manufacture your goods anywhere and send them anywhere else in the world almost overnight.

And you don't need to be in the United States to finance a new plant. Used to be you had to be here to finance a plant. With worldwide banking you can have that plant located anywhere in the world.

The competitive advantage we have is the fact that businesses know that they can get well-educated and well-trained workers if they locate in the United States. But unfortunately, we're losing that competitive advantage.

In a recent measure of high school achievement, we found that students in the United States ranked below dozens of other countries in math and science. And so we're losing that competitive advantage. And the Education and Labor Committee is, therefore, focused on improving our international standing.

Earlier this year, the House passed the bill to renew the Head Start program with renewed emphasis on early Head Start. These programs are critical to getting our children on the right path early in life and the earlier, the better. At the K-12 level, the committee is also working towards renewing the No Child Left Behind Act. We will be addressing issues in that bill, for example, finding ways to meaningfully measure and reduce the achievement gap; ensuring that all students have access to high-quality teachers, and to effectively improve those schools which fail to make adequate yearly progress.

One of the most critical issues that must be addressed in No Child Left Behind is the fact that approximately one-third of all high school students in the United States fail to graduate with their peers. And in some communities, as many as half of the students fail to graduate and find themselves on the path to hopelessness.

The Education and Labor Committee will also consider renewing the Higher Education Act, which is primarily focused on access to college. Last year, approximately 1 million qualified students did not go to college because they could not afford the cost. Since the 2001/2002 school year, tuition at a public 4-year college has risen 55 percent. But during that same period the maximum Pell Grant only went up about 8 percent, and in the last 4 years didn't go up at all.

Unfortunately, this means that many of today's students, unlike previous

generations, are being denied the opportunity to live to their fullest potential because they were denied the opportunity of a college education.

This year, the Education and Labor Committee is leading legislation that will significantly improve access to college with improved Pell Grants and cuts in student loans.

So, Mr. Speaker, education affects many issues that we deal with: economic competitiveness, crime and welfare. And so I'd like to thank the gentlelady from Michigan, the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Ms. KILPATRICK, for organizing the effort to focus on education tonight.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE TRUE GOAL OF OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. described the end result of education as a person having the ability to think intensively and critically. He embraced the idea that intelligence plus character should be the true goal of our education system. This truly is the goal that we must strive and work towards.

Helping our children to think is crucial; however, the blocks to build to that point are difficult to create. It takes support, resources, confidence and opportunity, but most importantly, these pieces must be available for each individual no matter who or where they come from.

Today we find our public school systems throughout America in many places in disarray, underfunded, overpopulated, and, in many districts, underattended. As a Nation, we have moved forward, and then there are times when it looks as though we're doing the Watusi, that is, two steps forward, and two steps back.

I can remember a time when, in almost any community that you went, people realized and recognized that education was the absolute key to progress.

According to the Abecedarian study, the importance of early childhood education is critical. The report shows that children who receive a formal early childhood education overwhelmingly do better in school.

Unfortunately, 55 percent of children whose families are below the poverty line do not receive a formal early childhood education. An overwhelming number of these children, whose mothers are unemployed, do not have access

to early childhood education. These numbers are astonishing, especially given what we already know.

We are engaged in competitiveness, not just in communities and neighborhoods or States, but from a global perspective, and unless children get an early beginning, they find themselves continuously behind and finding it difficult to catch up.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, one of the areas that I have a tremendous amount of concern about is the fact that African American males are graduating from high school at a rate of less than 50 percent. As a matter of fact, many of them drop out as early as third or fourth grade.

And it's my contention that they drop out because, for many of them, they have never seen a male figure with a book in his hand. They've never had a male teacher who looked like them. They've never seen a male at home with a book. And so they contend that education is a female or woman or girl kind of thing.

And we must find ways to get more male teachers in the classroom, more male teachers involved in Head Start. And we must get communities totally engaged and totally involved, so that as children grow up, they will know that education has been and will continue to be the great equalizer, and without it they don't have a chance.

So I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Congressional Black Caucus, our chairman, Representative KILPATRICK, for setting aside this time to address education issues, especially affecting African American communities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1845

INEQUITIES IN EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, today we members of the Congressional Black Caucus, under the leadership of our chairwoman, CAROLYN CHEEKS KILPATRICK, are taking time to commemorate Juneteenth and reflect on this historical event in 1865 when the news of their emancipation was finally received by 250,000 enslaved in Texas, 2 years late. And as we do so, it seems appropriate that we reflect on the inequities that continue to plague the African American community, the remedies for which are also too late.

And so, as we take the floor of the seat of government in our country, we say the time is now. Again, better later

than never for this 110th Congress to bring another message of freedom to African Americans, freedom from economic blight, from lack of access to quality and comprehensive health care, from substandard housing, and from the issue that is the subject of our discussion tonight: rundown, poorly equipped, and understaffed schools and the overall inequities in our Nation's educational system.

June also marks the celebration of graduation season across the Nation. And as we cheer millions of high school graduates, we must not forget the 1.2 million students who left school this year without a high school diploma.

Dropouts are twice as likely to be unemployed. Even those who work, for those who work the pay is low. Opportunity for advancement is limited, and health insurance is essentially unavailable.

This is a particular problem in communities of color. For African Americans and Latinos, the dropout rate approaches an astonishing and alarming 50 percent and affects all communities, large or small, rural or urban, including our territories. This high rate of high school dropout and the consequent unemployment disproportionately affect African American males. According to the last U.S. Census, the fraction of black men with a high school education or less is about 50 percent, nearly half of the black male population.

A report published by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation last year indicated that the employment for what they call less educated black men has been in decline during the last decade, and this, despite the fact that opportunities exist to reverse this because of discrimination in hiring.

The racial difference in the labor force participation rates are sharpest for those without a high school degree. Only half of prime-age black men without a high school degree are in the labor force.

Mr. Speaker, education is everyone's issue. However, the current administration seems to have an opposing view as they propose to completely cut funding for the Dropout Prevention Program. The Youth Activities Program, under their fiscal year 2008 budget proposal, would lose \$100 million of funding compared to 2006, and Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities grant program would almost be cut by \$150 million. This funding needs to be restored. These programs are part of the solution to the dropout problem.

So we in the Congressional Black Caucus are issuing a call to action across our Nation to reduce the dropout rate and raise the graduation rate above its current level of 70 percent. Keeping our people in improved schools must be a part of the debate and be addressed as we move to reauthorize and fund an amended and improved No Child Left Behind.

Today the Campaign for High School Equity met on the Hill to address and