

a position of great responsibility distinguished themselves with outstanding and exceptional service to the Armed Forces of the United States, the National Guard, or the National Guard Association of the United States.

To fully comprehend the magnitude of this honor, it is important to note the criteria for the selection of the Patrick Henry Award. Superior performance of normal duty alone does not justify award of this honor. An individual must have provided exceptionally strong support for the National Guard such that the readiness and the future of the National Guard must have been positively impacted.

Christopher has provided a tremendous service to our Nation's military, as the United States continues to wage a war on terrorism in this post-9/11 era. Additionally, he has demonstrated a remarkable amount of enthusiasm for ensuring that the Armed Forces and National Guard have the readiness capabilities to defend our country. The assistance he has provided the National Guard will not be easily matched; however, for Christopher this level of dedication is par for the course.

I applaud the National Guard Association of the United States for recognizing Christopher's behind-the-scenes work to increase National Guard funding and champion projects of special interest to the Guard. Christopher also strives to provide the legislative tools necessary to give soldiers and airmen the best support available. He has worked hard on these issues—each time jumping in feet first, soaking up knowledge, and moving legislation forward in this often complicated process.

I urge my colleagues to join me today in commending Christopher K. Bradish for his receipt of the Patrick Henry Award and his leadership on behalf of the Armed Forces of the United States, the National Guard, and the National Guard Association of the United States.

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL SANCTIONS ON IRAN

Mr. SMITH. Madam President, I wish to speak on the latest round of United Nations Security Council sanctions on Iran.

This past Monday, the Security Council voted 14 to 0 to increase sanctions on Iran in response to its continued enrichment of uranium. I applaud the United Nations for pursuing the diplomacy necessary to avoid hostilities. The vote was another step on the long diplomatic path toward increasing stability in the Middle East, but more remains to be done. Among other measures, these sanctions are important in restricting the travel and freezing the assets of certain Iranian officials and banks. The U.N. is now following the American lead in taking action against banks like Bank Mellī which are deeply involved financially with the Iranian Government and its nuclear program.

The near unanimity shown by members of the Security Council, including

the five veto-holding countries, was a strong and unmistakable signal of the international community's condemnation of Iranian policies. That signal would be even stronger if the Security Council members—and Russia and China in particular—would take further economic measures, including against Iran's energy sector. These countries need to realize that a nuclear-armed Iran does not just threaten the United States or the West but indeed the entire Middle East, the nuclear nonproliferation regime, and potentially the world. The very idea of a nuclear Iran is chilling.

In March of last year, Senator DURBIN and I introduced the Iran Counter-Proliferation Act, a bill outlining steps the United States and its allies should take to prevent Iran from continuing its nuclear program. I am pleased that this legislation currently has 69 cosponsors, and the Bush administration has taken many of the measures I suggested. Other nations, particularly our European allies, should follow the United States in using additional sanctions to supplement the actions of the Security Council. The international community particularly needs the cooperation of states which actively do business with Iran to draw down that business, in addition to holding key Iranian leaders personally responsible.

Some of the foreign countries which engage Iran economically have been cooperative in reducing the extent of that cooperation, like Germany, which is steadily decreasing the export credits granted to investments in Iran. Others have been far more recalcitrant, especially Russia, which continues to provide nuclear and military assistance to Tehran. This cooperation, under the circumstances, is unacceptable.

The diplomacy of the United States and the United Nations must continue to intensify until Iran verifiably agrees to forego its nuclear ambitions. Until that day, and until Iran's political leaders decide they have more to gain from cooperation than from conflict, the sanctions enacted today and others like them will continue.

EQUAL CARE FOR ARMED FORCES

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak to an important piece of legislation to secure equal care for members of the armed services who suffer from a mental illness. I am pleased to have my colleagues Senators EVAN BAYH and BILL NELSON joining me in this cause by serving as original cosponsors of this bill, the Travel Assistance for Family Members of our Troops Act of 2008.

There is no greater obligation than caring for those who have served this country through their military service. We would be remiss if we did not ensure that the health care of our heroes in arms is the finest medicine has to offer.

What we now refer to as post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, was once

described as "soldier's heart" in the Civil War, "shell shock" in World War I, and "combat fatigue" in World War II. Whatever the name, they are serious mental illnesses and deserve equal attention and care as a physical wound.

In recent reports, we have heard that 20 to 40 service men and women are evacuated each month from Iraq due to mental health problems. In addition to those who are identified, there are many more who will return home after their service to face readjustment challenges. Some will need appropriate mental health care to help them adjust back to "normal" life, while others will need medical assistance to heal more serious PTSD issues. Yet others will need help to mentally cope with their physical wounds.

So many of our veterans from previous conflicts, such as World War II and the Korean and Vietnam wars, needed similar programs once they returned home. Yet I fear that we didn't do enough to help them. With proper and early support systems in place, including support of their families, we can work to prevent the more serious and chronic mental health issues that come from a lack of intervention.

The legislation I am introducing today will provide support for family members of our uniformed service men and women receiving inpatient treatment for serious psychiatric conditions. Right now, the Department of Defense does not classify Active-Duty servicemembers receiving treatment for mental illnesses as "Very Seriously Ill" or "Seriously Ill."

Therefore, under current policy, family members are not eligible to receive the same travel allowances as patients being treated for physical injuries.

This bill will eliminate the current disparity in treatment against our country's men and woman who are bravely serving in the armed services. We have already taken legislative steps through the Defense reauthorization bill to begin to address needed improvements in the quality of health care, both from mental and physical injuries. This bill is another important piece in that process.

Travel Assistance for Family Members of our Troops Act of 2008 ensures that patients with serious mental impairments can spend time with their family—the same treatment we currently are providing to patients with physical injuries requiring inpatient care.

We urge our colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE MINNEAPOLIS EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

● Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I wish to recognize the Minneapolis Emergency Communications Center, which is being honored today as the Nation's Outstanding Call Center.

Too often, the exceptional work and service that 9-1-1 call centers and workers perform every day across America goes unrecognized.

Before I came to Washington, I served as the chief prosecutor for Hennepin County, Minnesota's largest county, for 8 years. During that time, I saw firsthand the critical contributions 9-1-1 call centers make to public safety on a daily basis—helping to save lives and bring criminals to justice—and gained an unending appreciation for their work.

Today, I wish to thank all 9-1-1 operators for all they do to keep our communities safe—for coordinating the response to each and every emergency, and for doing it all with composure and compassion, and never with complaint.

But today is a special honor for the Minneapolis Emergency Communications Center, now recognized as the Outstanding Call Center of 2007 for its response to the tragic I-35W bridge collapse in August of 2007.

I would like to congratulate and thank director John Dejung, deputy director Heather Hunt, and each of the 77 call center agents involved in the response.

In the minutes and hours following the bridge collapse, the response of Minnesota's fire fighters, police, and other emergency personnel was extraordinary. One of the most enduring images of the response is that of brave young firefighter Shanna Hansen who, with a rope tied around her waist, kept diving down into the depths of the Mississippi to search for any survivors.

What wasn't seen was how the Minneapolis Emergency Communications Center directed the response. Under the most difficult of circumstance, center personnel produced the very best of results and no doubt saved lives. The entire Nation saw Minnesota's finest on display in those first few hours after the collapse, and it was made possible by the 9-1-1 responders we are honoring today and their colleagues in Minneapolis.

So it is with great pride that I congratulate the Minneapolis Emergency Communications Center for this well-deserved award of Outstanding Call Center of 2007.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:21 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 816. An act to provide for the release of certain land from the Sunrise Mountain Instant Study Area in the State of Nevada and to grant a right-of-way across the released land for the construction and maintenance of a flood control project.

H.R. 1143. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to lease certain lands in Virgin Islands National Park, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1311. An act to provide for the conveyance of the Alta-Hualapai Site to the Nevada Cancer Institute, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1922. An act to designate the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse and the surrounding Federal land in the State of Florida as an Outstanding Natural Area and as a unit of the National Landscape Conservation System, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3111. An act to provide for the administration of Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3473. An act to provide for a land exchange with the City of Bountiful, Utah, involving National Forest System land in the Wasatch-Cache National Forest and to further land ownership consolidation in that national forest, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5137. An act to ensure that hunting remains a purpose of the New River Gorge National River.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 816. An act to provide for the release of certain land from the Sunrise Mountain Instant Study Area in the State of Nevada and to grant a right-of-way across the released land for the construction and maintenance of a flood control project; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1143. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to lease certain lands in Virgin Islands National Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1311. An act to provide for the conveyance of the Alta-Hualapai Site to the Nevada Cancer Institute, and for other purposes, to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 3111. An act to provide for the administration of Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

H. R. 3473. An act to provide for a land exchange with the City of Bountiful, Utah, involving National Forest System land in the Wasatch-Cache National Forest and to further land ownership consolidation in that national forest, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 5137. An act to ensure that hunting remains a purpose of the New River Gorge National River; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

S. 2712. A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to complete at least 700 miles of reinforced fencing along the Southwest border by December 31, 2010, and for other purposes.

S. 2713. A bill to prohibit appropriated funds from being used in contravention of section 642(a) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996.

S. 2716. A bill to authorize the National Guard to provide support for the border control activities of the United States Customs and Border Protection of the Departments of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

S. 2718. A bill to withhold 10 percent of the Federal funding apportioned for highway construction and maintenance from States that issue driver's licenses to individuals without verifying the legal status of such individuals.

S. 2711. A bill to improve the enforcement of laws prohibiting the employment of unauthorized aliens and for other purposes.

S. 2710. A bill to authorize the Department of Homeland Security to use an employer's failure to timely resolve discrepancies with the Social Security Administration after receiving a "no match" notice as evidence that the employer violated section 274A of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

S. 2715. A bill to amend title 4, United States Code, to declare English as the national language of the Government of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2709. A bill to increase the criminal penalties for illegally reentering the United States and for other purposes.

S. 2714. A bill to close the loophole that allowed the 9/11 hijackers to obtain credit cards from United States banks that financed their terrorist activities, to ensure that illegal immigrants cannot obtain credit cards to evade United States immigration laws, and for other purposes.

S. 2719. A bill to provide that Executive Order 13166 shall have no force or effect, and to prohibit the use of funds for certain purposes.

S. 2722. A bill to prohibit aliens who are repeat drunk drivers from obtaining legal status or immigration benefits.

S. 2720. A bill to withhold Federal financial assistance from each country that denies or unreasonably delays the acceptance of nationals of such country who have been ordered removed from the United States and to prohibit the issuance of visas to nationals of such country.

S. 2717. A bill to provide for enhanced Federal enforcement of, and State and local assistance in the enforcement of, the immigration laws of the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 2721. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to prescribe the binding oath or affirmation of renunciation and allegiance required to be naturalized as a citizen of the United States, to encourage and support the efforts of prospective citizens of the United States to become citizens, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-5299. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Methoxyfenozide; Pesticide Tolerances and Time-Limited Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL