

this remarkable young man whose life was cut tragically short in Iraq last month.

Today, I want to take to the floor to share with my colleagues and with the American people this young man's story and his untimely sacrifice.

So, who was this young man? He was a proud member of Delta Co., 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry, 101st Airborne Division, Mad Dog 5th Platoon stationed at Fort Campbell, Ky. His awards and decorations include: National Defense Service Medal; Global War on Terrorism Service Medal; Army Service Ribbon; and Weapons Qualification, M4, expert. At his memorial service, Wisconsin Army National Guard BG Mark Anderson presented the family four medals, including a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart.

He was devoted to family and a caring son to his mother, Michell, herself having served in the Air Force. According to Michell Christofferson, he was an older brother who loved his siblings and earned their respect. And, in her words, he deserved it because "he was kind and he was thoughtful, and he was a caring young man."

According to his mother, in e-mail exchanges with her, he said he would be her angel. She praised him for being a best friend to his younger brothers—Dakota (17) and Dillon (11)—as well as defending them when needed or taking action to keep them on the straight and narrow if called to do so. He was caring, positive and respectful, a protector of his family.

He grew up too fast and was taken too soon.

He was also a valuable member of a community. Christofferson was a 2006 graduate of Cudahy High School, where he was a member of the football, wrestling and track teams. He will be sorely missed. His Cudahy High School Principal, Christopher Haeger, remembered encountering Steven the day he enlisted in the Army. "He was very, very excited," Haeger said. "I know it was an important part of his life." Or as his brother Dakota put it, "He felt like he had to do something, go help people."

He deployed to Iraq in September. But he kept in close touch with his family. According to media reports, he spoke with his mother and brother just hours before his death.

I can find no words more appropriate than those of Steven's own mother to sum up my brief remarks on this remarkable life. At his memorial service earlier this year, his mother closed—expressing the sentiments of a community and a grateful Nation—with these words: "Fly with the angels, my baby boy. We miss you lots and love you more."

The Bible says we should give honor to those whom honor are due and respect to those whom respect is due. Today, I rise to honor this young man and to ask that the balance of my time be reserved for a moment of silence as a mark of tribute to Specialist Steven Christofferson and of support for his family.

TRIBUTE TO GENERAL RICHARD CODY ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE U.S. ARMY

### HON. JOHN P. MURTHA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 22, 2008*

Mr. MURTHA. Madam Speaker, on August 4 of this year, the name of one of the great military leaders of our time will pass on to the retirement rolls. I am speaking of my good friend, GEN Richard Cody, the 31st vice chief of staff of the United States Army.

On August 4 our Armed Forces will lose one of its greatest warriors. GEN Dick Cody has commanded American soldiers for 20 of his 36 years of service. In 1991, then Lieutenant Colonel Cody personally led Task Force Normandy, the joint aviation task force that fired the opening salvos of the gulf war, and, as GEN H. Norman Schwarzkopf recounted, "plucked out the eyes" of Saddam Hussein's air defenses. Cody went on to command the First Cavalry Division's Aviation Brigade; the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment; the fabled 101st Airborne Division "Screaming Eagles"; as well as commanding in our Nation's most elite special operations unit.

On August 4 our Armed Forces will lose a gifted strategic leader. With 1.3 million men and women serving around the globe, there are few organizations in the world as large and complex as the United States Army. For 6 years, spanning the tenures of 3 Army Chiefs of Staff, 4 Secretaries of the Army, and 3 Chairmen of the Joints Chiefs of Staff, Dick Cody has provided stalwart leadership to our Army. He has overseen the day-to-day details of a plethora of daunting tasks. He oversaw the Army's transformation from a Cold War-era, division-based force, to a modular, brigade-centric force. He revitalized and modernized the Army's aviation forces. He supervised the transformation of the reserve component from a strategic reserve to a part of the operational Army. He is the architect of the Army's growth and restationing plans, which will eventually relocate over one-third of the Army. He has also completely revitalized the outpatient care systems for our wounded warriors and their families.

On August 4 our Armed Forces will lose one of its "straightest shooters." We in Congress rely on senior uniformed leaders to give us apolitical, straight forward assessments based on their years of military experience. No one shoots straighter with the Congress and the American people than Dick Cody. Going back to his first testimony before the Congress in 1999, when he warned the Nation to "beware of a 14 division mission with a 12 division Army," he has never flinched from hard questions, and he never sugar coats the truth.

On August 4 the head of a wonderful Army family will retire, a man who is just as proud to be known as "Vicki's husband" and "Tyler and Clint's Dad" as he is proud of the stars on this shoulders. The Cody boys, with six combat tours between them, will continue to serve. Vicki Cody will never stop advocating for soldiers and their families, and Dick Cody's own personal "Rendezvous with Destiny" will continue.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge a 36 year career of heroic and selfless service, one that reflects all that is good and right about our Nation and her Armed Forces. On behalf of the United States Congress, we say "thank you" to a man and a family who place the well-being of the American soldier ahead of their own ambitions and dreams. God Bless Dick and Vicki Cody, their sons Tyler and Clint, and God Bless the American soldier who they love so much.

HONORING NEWLY INDUCTED COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME COACH, COACH W.C. GORDON

### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 22, 2008*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, it gives me immense pleasure to recognize the life and accomplishments of one of America's most prolific icons in college football history, Coach William "W.C." Gordon.

Coach Gordon's career in college football began at Tennessee State University, TSU, where he played wide receiver and earned All-Mid Western Conference honors. He was also a 4-year baseball letterman at first base and team captain for the TSU Tigers. After graduating from Tennessee State University in 1952, he went on to serve in the U.S. Army from 1953 to 1955.

After serving in the military, Gordon returned to sports as athletic director and coach for Eva Gordon High School, in Magnolia, MS. He also served at Temple High School, in Vicksburg, MS, in 1966, where he coached his team to the High School Football Negro Big 8 Conference state championship with an 11-0 record in 1966.

From 1967 to 1994, Coach Gordon led and mentored at Jackson State University in a multitude of coaching capacities. Though most known for football, Coach Gordon served as head baseball coach from 1971 to 1972, leading the Tigers to the Southwestern Athletic Conference, SWAC, baseball title in 1972.

As interim and head football coach, Gordon became one of the most winning coaches in the history of college football with 28 consecutive league victories and a career record of 119-47-5. Gordon coached 65 JSU players into the National Football League. Gordon was inducted into the SWAC Hall of Fame in 1994.

Gordon coached the Tigers to eight SWAC Championships and was awarded SWAC Coach of the Year honors six times. He has been inducted into Mississippi Conferences Hall of Fame & Museum in 1977 and most recently was enshrined in the National Football Foundation's College Football Hall of Fame in South Bend, IN on July 18-19.

Again, it gives me great pleasure to recognize and honor one of America's finest legendary football icons and true patriots of the game, Coach W.C. Gordon. His legacy not only left a mark on Black college football but also on college football at-large.