

blast exposures, as the Army National Guard (NG) has already done. The NG initiative records the exposure to blasts in troops' personnel records in order to document the incident in the event of problems associated with traumatic brain injury or exposure to contaminants. This database will help determine eligibility for appropriate treatment, care, and disability entitlements. A comprehensive blast tracking system will also assist in efforts to research blast injuries and mild TBI and improve outreach, education, and follow-up for injured personnel who might otherwise fall through the cracks.

Second, I am appreciative of the inclusion of language that I submitted regarding the awarding of the Purple Heart to individuals who have sustained traumatic brain injuries, which calls on the Secretary to review its policies and procedures for determining eligibility and awarding of the Purple Heart as it relates to TBI. Media reports and anecdotal evidence have suggested that Purple Hearts may have been awarded inconsistently to service personnel who have sustained combat-related TBIs, suggesting that individuals with more severe TBIs may be eligible for the distinguished Purple Heart while individuals with less severe ones often receive refusals.

We believe that the Purple Heart criteria set out in regulation encompass soldiers who sustain a TBI or concussion as the result of enemy action. The Department of Defense's own Legislative Affairs has, however, stated that a brain injury that requires minimal medical attention would not suffice. I would caution against the use of such absolutes in the face of uncertainty about the effects of blast-related TBIs. Because the field of science still knows relatively little about effective interventions and the long-term consequences of traumatic brain injuries, particularly mild ones and those caused by blasts, the Department of Defense' interpretation of treatment should not preclude injured soldiers who fulfill all other Purple Heart criteria from receiving the recognition and benefits they deserve.

Third, I am pleased to see the inclusion of legislation introduced by Congressman WALTER JONES, of which I am an original co-sponsor. This important language permits separated service members to seek a review of their discharge if their post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or TBI was not taken into consideration when determining their separation and mandates a physical exam for active duty service members before an administrative separation proceeding if the service member had been diagnosed with PTSD or TBI. The effects and prevalence of PTSD and TBI have become too harsh and too widespread for our military leaders to overlook, and ensuring that the full facts of soldiers' injuries are considered upon discharge is the least we can do to ensure these individuals receive the care and benefits they deserve.

Finally, I praise the Committee for its recognition of the need for civilian and military collaboration in the science of the brain by providing for a Visiting NIH Senior Neuroscience Fellowship Program. This will provide an important opportunity for the military to learn from the work occurring at the National Institutes of Health on neuroscience and vice versa.

Thank you again to Chairman SKELTON, and I look forward to continuing to work with the Committee as we make further improvements

to the care and benefits that we provide to the brave men and women that put their lives on the line for our freedom.

#### TRIBUTE TO LARRY E. REIDER

### HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 25, 2009*

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Larry E. Reider, a resident and community leader from Bakersfield, California, on his retirement as Kern County Superintendent of Schools and to recognize his remarkable and distinguished leadership while serving the students of Kern county. Over the last 44 years, Larry has been instrumental in advancing Kern County's public education system.

Larry was born in the State of Washington and was raised on his family's farm. In 1965, he earned his bachelor's degree from Central Washington State University and made the move to Kern County to teach in the Arvin Union School District. A dedicated math teacher, Larry spent 19 years in Arvin schools' classrooms and later as a school administrator. He also earned advanced degrees from the California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo and the University of Southern California.

In 1984, Larry joined the Office of the Kern County Superintendent of Schools as a district advisory consultant. Recognizing his dedication and commitment to the schools, students, and parents of the community, the Kern County Board of Education tapped him to be the Kern County Superintendent of Schools in 1999.

Since becoming Kern County Superintendent of Schools, Larry has been integral to a plethora of local initiatives and projects designed to enhance the reading, writing, and mathematical skills of elementary school students in the county. For instance, he partnered with the Bakersfield Californian to develop the Community Reading Project, which places volunteer reading tutors throughout various classrooms in the county to aid second graders in becoming more proficient readers. Additionally, he developed the Kern Reading Collaborative, an association that analyzes which reading programs are productive and investigates ways those programs can reach more students. Larry also established the Do The Math program, a bi-weekly television homework help channel where teachers assist students in both English and Spanish with their math problems both on and off the air, as well as Ready to Start, a summer pilot program that prepares pre-kindergartners to learn more efficiently as they begin their academic career.

As a former teacher, Larry was always cognizant that highly qualified and effective teachers in the classroom are the best recipe for successful students. To that end, he co-chaired a task force which formulated various approaches to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers in Kern County schools and get them in the classroom. This initiative has been highly successful, and our schools have some of the best and brightest teachers in the region. He also recognized that new generations of students are exceedingly technology savvy,

and so opened a learning center that helps teachers integrate technology into the classroom to better teach and engage their students. This not only helps teachers be more effective, it also helps ensure their students continue to develop the skills necessary to be successful in the technology-driven workplace of today.

Not only has Larry harnessed cutting-edge technology in the classroom, he has also been an advocate to use technology to help keep our environment clean. Under Larry's leadership, Kern County schools are in the process of converting their current diesel school bus fleet to clean burning Compressed Natural Gas (CNG). More than half of the diesel buses have already been replaced. As part of this initiative, in 2006, the Superintendent of Schools opened a CNG fueling station, which serves Kern County school buses and is open to the public. As Kern County unfortunately has some of the dirtiest air in the United States, this initiative is extremely important to helping clean the air in the Central Valley.

Larry is also active in several community organizations, including the Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce, Kern County Network for Children, United Way, Rotary Club of Bakersfield, and Vision 2020. He has also been honored by several local and state organizations over the years for his leadership by organizations such as the Community Action Partnership of Kern, California State University-Bakersfield School of Education, Association of California School Administrators, California Teachers Association, Kern Council of Governments, and Kern Reading Association.

Larry exemplifies how one can serve their community with great enthusiasm, fortitude, and dedication. Over the years, I have enjoyed working with Larry and always found his perpetual optimism infectious. There was never an obstacle he did not challenge head-on in his amiable, but no-nonsense style, and fight for the best interests of the students of Kern County. After 44 years in public service, I know that Larry looks forward to spending more time with his wife, Sandy, a retired junior high language arts and drama teacher, and his daughter Mikhail. I know that Larry will be missed in the Kern County public education system, and I salute his lifetime of service and wish him the best as he begins this new chapter in his life.

#### EARMARK DECLARATION

### HON. LEONARD LANCE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 25, 2009*

Mr. LANCE. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information regarding earmarks I received as part of H.R. 2996, The FY 2010 Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act:

Agency: Environmental Protection Agency  
Account: STAG Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Project  
Amount: \$500,000  
Project: Railroad Avenue/Main Street stormwater improvements, Borough of Califon, NJ

Recipient: Borough of Califon, 39 Academy Street, Califon, NJ 07830