

“thank you, welcome home,” and “God bless you” for your selfless service. Your actions will never be forgotten.

I urge my colleagues to support our troops and vote in the affirmative for the underlying resolution.

□ 1100

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to rise today in support of House Resolution 754, which honors the citizen-soldiers of the Pennsylvania National Guard, including the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, on its return to the United States from a deployment in Iraq. I am proud to have authored this resolution with my colleague, Mr. HOLDEN from Pennsylvania. It is an honor, as I said, to speak in favor of this resolution and to have the support and cosponsorship of the entire Pennsylvania delegation.

The men and women being honored today are not only brave soldiers; they are also our neighbors, friends, and relatives. Their mission in Iraq was vital to our national security, and they served with honor and distinction.

In November of last year, I was joined by my colleagues, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. GERLACH and Mr. DENT, to visit the members of the 56th Stryker Brigade when they were training at Camp Shelby in Mississippi and at Fort Polk in Louisiana in preparation for their deployment.

In June of this year, Mr. HOLDEN and I, along with Mr. DENT and Mrs. DAHLKEMPER, visited Iraq to meet with our deployed troops from Pennsylvania to thank them for their service. We also met with troops at Camp Liberty outside of Baghdad, and in Taji. While there, we also were able to meet with General Odierno, the commander of the Multinational Force in Iraq. And General Odierno spoke in glowing terms of the Pennsylvania Guard and told us that our soldiers are doing an outstanding job bringing security to Iraq.

I also had the opportunity to meet with many of my constituents, and there were dozens and dozens. And they truly are citizen-soldiers. I just want to highlight three of them. Lieutenant Colonel Sam Hayes, who is a native of Tyrone, Pennsylvania. His father also happened to be the former Pennsylvania Agriculture Secretary. Sergeant Buchanan, a resident of Altoona, Pennsylvania, and is employed by McAleers Plumbing and Heating. He is my plumber and spent time in my basement trying to fix leaky plumbing. So it is good to have Sergeant Buchanan home. And, finally, Sergeant Gibbons, another neighbor, a friend. His son plays on the Hollysburgh High School soccer team with my son. In fact, I will be on the sidelines tonight talking to Sergeant Gibbons.

I also wanted to thank and to remember Chad Edmundson, one of my constituents who gave the ultimate sacrifice. Our thoughts and our prayers

continue to go out to his family and, again, to thank him for his service and his sacrifice to this Nation.

The text of this resolution speaks for itself. It is my pleasure to express our gratitude and commend our soldiers on their most recent deployment and recognize their achievements. I hope to be participating on November 8 in a major parade in Tyrone, Pennsylvania, welcoming home our soldiers.

I would also like to thank my staff for their work on this resolution, in particular my Army fellow, Lieutenant Colonel Eric Estep, for his great work and late hours in putting this together.

I urge all Members of the House to support this important resolution.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 754, which honors the Pennsylvania National Guard's 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team on its return to the United States from its deployment to Iraq.

The 56th Stryker Brigade is comprised of more than 4,000 citizen soldiers from across the Commonwealth.

The 56th served North of Baghdad and conducted more than 800 operations with the Iraqi Security Forces.

These soldiers served their country with great distinction, and it is my great honor to represent them in Congress.

I would also ask the House of Representatives to extend its deepest condolences to the families of two members of the 56th who gave the ultimate sacrifice while serving in Iraq.

Staff Sergeant Mark C. Baum, 32, of Quakertown, was killed when hit by small arms fire on Feb. 21 and

Specialist Chad A. Edmondson, 20, of Williamsburg, was killed by an improvised bomb explosion on May 27.

Passing this resolution today honors the memory of these brave soldiers of the 56th Stryker Brigade and marks the significant contribution that this unit has made to defend our Nation.

Mr. SHUSTER. With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 754.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING 100 YEARS OF MILITARY AVIATION

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 445) recognizing 100 years of military aviation and expressing continued support for military aviators of the United States Armed Forces, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 445

Whereas Orville and Wilbur Wright secured the patent for their powered airplane in 1906, affording them the opportunity to compete for contracts with the Army;

Whereas the United States Army Signal Corps made its first purchase of an airplane, the Wright Military Flyer, in 1909 at a cost of \$30,000;

Whereas the Wright Military Flyer carried a passenger over a distance of 125 miles;

Whereas today's military aircraft can travel around the world without landing;

Whereas the importance of military aviation and air superiority in battle was first demonstrated in World War I;

Whereas, during World War II, United States Naval aviation was decisive in reversing the Japanese advance and winning the war in the Pacific;

Whereas United States Army Air Corps played a crucial role in executing strategic bombing campaigns in both the European and Pacific theaters;

Whereas the National Security Act of 1947 established the United States Army Air Corps as a separate military branch, the United States Air Force;

Whereas the Vietnam War brought about new, more modern fighter jets and bombers, including the F-105 Thunderchief and the F-4 Phantom;

Whereas military aviators continue to provide invaluable offensive, defensive, logistical, and intelligence support to the Armed Forces;

Whereas military aviators have been on the front lines of combat and humanitarian missions in Iraq and Afghanistan;

Whereas the increase in technology over the last century has made military aircraft an essential component in the safety and security of the United States homeland; and

Whereas the National Air and Space Museum of the Smithsonian Institution will commemorate the centennial of military aviation with programs and exhibits throughout 2009: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes 100 years of military aviation and expresses its continued support for military aviators of the United States Armed Forces.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Washington. I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

I rise to support House Resolution 445 and thank my colleague from Texas (Mr. OLSON) for introducing this measure.

This resolution recognizes 100 years of military aviation and expresses continued support for military aviators of the United States Armed Forces.

As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I am privileged to

be joined here today by a number of my colleagues in the House to recognize the service, sacrifice, professionalism, and commitment of all those who serve and have served our Nation as aviators in the United States Armed Forces.

Our Nation's military aviation began on August 2, 1909 when the United States Army accepted its first aircraft built by the Wright brothers. Military aviation quickly expanded to the other services. Less than 2 years later, in 1911, the Navy ordered its first aircraft. Marine Corps aviation had its inception in 1912 when the first Marine Corps officer reported for duty at the Naval Aviation Camp in Annapolis, Maryland, and qualified as a pilot less than 3 months later. Coast Guard aviation began in 1916, when its first officer received orders for flight training.

World War I focused more attention on aviation. Despite a combat record of only 9 months, February–November 1918, the Air Service made a respectable showing during World War I. The 740 American aircraft assigned to squadrons at the front on November 11, 1918, Armistice Day, represented little more than 10 percent of the total aircraft strength of Allied nations, but the Air Service had conducted 150 separate bombing attacks.

World War II began an enormous expansion of military aviation. The U.S. Army Air Forces strength in World War II would swell from 26,500 men and 2,200 aircraft in 1939 to over 2.2 million men and 63,000 aircraft by 1945. Similarly, U.S. naval aviation began the war with one small and seven large aircraft carriers, about 5,200 aircraft and about 27,000 men. During that war, this force grew to over 100 carriers of various types, over 40,000 aircraft, 160 airships, and 60,000 pilots.

After World War II, President Truman signed the National Security Act of 1947, which created today's Department of the Air Force. Since World War II, military aviation forces have played major roles in such conflicts as the Korean and Vietnam Wars, as well as all major humanitarian and combat operations. America's first seven astronauts were all military aviators, paving the way for future decades of American leadership in space.

Today's military aviators have been engaged in Operation Noble Eagle since September 2001, Enduring Freedom since October 2001, and Iraqi Freedom since March 2003, and are performing with valor, distinction, and steadfast commitment to accomplish this mission.

As a Representative of the Ninth District of the State of Washington, I would also like to take a moment to especially note McChord Air Force Base. Their service is part of the Air Mobility Command, primarily flying C-17s and serving our country across the world.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to honor 100 years of air service in the military. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of House Resolution 445 to recog-

nize those 100 years of military aviation and express continued support for military aviators of the United States Armed Forces.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to yield to my colleague from Texas, who served as a naval aviator, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON), for as much time as he may consume.

Mr. OLSON. I thank my colleague from Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to rise today in support of House Resolution 445, a resolution I introduced earlier this year honoring 100 years of military aviation.

Before I begin my remarks, I would like to thank Armed Services Chairman SKELTON, Ranking Member MCKEON, as well as Subcommittee Chair Abercrombie and Ranking Member Bartlett.

Mr. Speaker, as a former naval aviator, I have firsthand knowledge of the vital and essential role the airmen of the United States military play in protecting our homeland and strengthening our global alliances.

Given the air superiority the United States enjoys today, it is easy to forget that 100 years ago there was much skepticism about the usefulness of aircraft for our Armed Forces. Shortly after the Signal Corps purchased its first aircraft for military purposes, "Scientific American," a respected publication wrote, "Outside of scouting duties, we are inclined to think that the field of the aeroplane will be rather limited. Because of its small carrying capacity and the necessity for its operation at great altitude, if it is to escape hostile fire, the amount of damage it will do by dropping explosives upon cities, forts, hostile camps, or bodies of troops in the field, to say nothing of battleships at sea, will be so limited as to have no material effects on the issues of a campaign."

One hundred years later, American courage, ingenuity, and innovation have proven them very wrong. We have come a very long way since Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt, recommended that the Secretary investigate Professor Samuel Langley's so-called "flying machine" and report on its potentiality for use in combat.

The earliest planes were open-cockpit, single-seat mounts, and the only weapon was a sidearm and perhaps a few bricks that could be dropped on the enemy. During World War I, America's first military aviators wrote their instruction manual as they lived it and created traditions that are still honored and followed today.

In the aftermath of Pearl Harbor, America's airmen delivered the first moral victory of World War II. Flying B-25s from the deck of the Aircraft Carrier Hornet 400 miles from the shore of Japan, Colonel Jimmy Doolittle and the Knights of the Air struck back and

struck back hard. And less than 2 months later, U.S. military aviation changed world history at the Battle of Midway.

In 1947, Congress and President Truman wisely recognized the important role our country's airmen play on the battlefield and established the United States Air Force, a new, separate branch of military service.

From the hills of Korea, where our newest branch rose to the occasion and won 10 out of every 11 air engagements, to the jungles of Vietnam, where the ingenuity and versatility of our military aviators were tested like never before, the stories of the valor and the courage displayed by our country's airmen throughout our history are too numerous to tell.

On September 11, 2001, as F-16s were flowing low over Washington, D.C. and our country entered a new, unconventional war against an unknown enemy, America's brave airmen were on duty ready to defend. Whether pinpointing enemy fighters along the ridges of eastern Afghanistan from the cockpit of a P-3 Orion, manning a C-17 to deliver needed supplies to our troops on the ground, or operating strategic air strikes with a Predator drone from thousands of miles away, today in Iraq and Afghanistan our military aviators remain on guard.

General Curtis Lemay once said, "If we maintain our faith in God, love of freedom, and superior global air power, the future looks good. And, today, as we look back on 100 years of military aviation in the United States of America, we honor the heroes of military aviation and thank them for the shining path they created for our country. Indeed, the future looks good."

I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 445.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 445, which was introduced by my friend from Texas (Mr. OLSON). As I added earlier, he served as a naval aviator. We appreciate his service.

This resolution recognizes 100 years of military aviation and expresses continued support for our military aviators in the United States Armed Forces.

As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I am proud to speak in strong support of this resolution that honors the service, sacrifices, professionalism, and commitment of all those who have served as aviators.

For the last 100 years, the fact of the matter is that whether in times of peace or war, whether in Iraq or Afghanistan or somewhere else in the world, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week military aviators are always engaged, putting their lives at risk to protect our country. So I am honored to speak in favor of this resolution, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H. Res. 445.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 445, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING THE 81ST BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM OF THE WASHINGTON ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 627) honoring the citizen-soldiers of the National Guard of the State of Washington, including the 81st Brigade Combat Team (Heavy) of the Washington Army National Guard, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 627

Whereas the members of the Army National Guard and Air National Guard of the State of Washington reside throughout the State and come from various communities, backgrounds, and professions;

Whereas units and members of the Washington National Guard have been deployed, and are continuously being deployed, in support of United States military operations at home and overseas in Iraq, Afghanistan, and dozens of other countries;

Whereas one such unit, the 81st Brigade Combat Team (Heavy) of the Washington Army National Guard, is composed of approximately 2,478 citizen-soldiers from throughout the State of Washington, 843 soldiers from the California Army National Guard, 80 soldiers from the Texas Army National Guard, 38 soldiers from the Indiana Army National Guard, 23 soldiers from the Arkansas Army National Guard, 20 soldiers from the United States Army Reserve, 13 soldiers from the Montana Army National Guard, 2 soldiers from the Kentucky Army National Guard, 2 soldiers from the Maryland Army National Guard, and 1 soldier from each of the Alabama Army National Guard, New Mexico Army National Guard, Virgin Island Army National Guard, Wisconsin Army National Guard, Hawaii Army National Guard, New York Army National Guard, Utah Army National Guard, Minnesota Army National Guard, Massachusetts Army National Guard, Illinois Army National Guard, and Michigan Army National Guard;

Whereas the 81st Brigade Combat Team was placed on Federal active duty for a second overseas mobilization on August 18, 2008, and deployed to Iraq in October 2008;

Whereas, during the deployment of the 81st Brigade Combat Team in Iraq, the brigade was primarily engaged in convoy security, force protection, provincial reconstruction, and base operations missions; and

Whereas the 81st Brigade Combat Team returned to the United States and demobilized in August 2009, upon completion of one year

of service in support of military operations in Iraq: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its gratitude to the members of the Army National Guard and Air National Guard of the State of Washington and their families for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States;

(2) commends the members of the 81st Brigade Combat Team (Heavy) from the Washington Army National Guard, the Army Reserve, and the other State National Guards specified in the preamble on the completion of their most-recent deployment in Iraq; and

(3) recognizes the achievements of the members of the 81st Brigade Combat Team, and all other formerly and presently deployed Washington Army and Air National Guard units and members, for their exemplary service.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

□ 1115

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I rise today to pay tribute to the men and women of the Washington National Guard, including the members of the 81st Brigade Combat Team, who recently returned from an overseas deployment in Iraq.

I want to thank the entire Washington State delegation, who have all cosponsored this resolution in honoring this unit for their service to our State and to our country.

Throughout the Nation, hundreds of thousands of men and women in the Guard and Reserves serve our country. Over the last 8 years, we have asked more of them than anybody could have possibly imagined, and every single time, they have answered that call at great personal sacrifice. These are men and women who have lives, they have other jobs, they have families, and it is highly unpredictable when they are going to be called up and asked to serve, and yet they always respond.

It is critical to the safety and security of our country that they do this. They do it with great courage and dedication, and they honor our country by their service.

In my home State, various elements of the Washington National Guard have been deployed over that time period overseas in Iraq and Afghanistan, but also we must remember that the Guard and Reserves serve us here at home as well. We have had numerous emer-

gencies in the State of Washington during that time period on which the Guard and Reserves have helped us out. As well, we have had them deployed across the country in places like Louisiana. When Hurricane Katrina hit, they were called upon to do that. Their service continues for all of us in the State and across the country.

Most recently, the 81st Brigade Combat Team, led by Colonel Ronald Kapral and Command Sergeant Major Robert Sweeney, just completed their second 12-month deployment to Iraq. The brigade primarily engaged in convoy security, force protection, provincial reconstruction, and base operations missions around Iraq during their yearlong deployment.

They made our State proud during this service, as they have during all of their previous deployments. Again, this is done at no small sacrifice both by the individual members of our Army National Guard and also by their families, who have to deal with the disruption.

One of the most important things we can do in our State and across the country is to always support the families when the men and women are deployed, and to let them know that they are not alone in their service.

Their deployment was highly successful, honored by all who watched them serve. Tragically, one member of the team died during the course of his service. Specialist Samuel Stone, of Port Orchard, was killed on May 30, 2009. We all honor his loss and his service, and I ask that we keep him and his family in our thoughts and prayers.

The National Guard serves our State and our country in ways that most of us are unaware of, but it is absolutely critical to the security of our country. With our all-volunteer force, it simply could not function without men and women who are willing to take on this dual responsibility to continue in their civilian lives and who are also making themselves available for service whenever they are called, and they do not know when that is going to be.

As I said, it can be from the Governor in the State or across our country, or as has happened most recently, overseas deployments can come up when they are asked by our Federal Government to serve our Nation. Yet they are always ready, and they always respond, and they have served our Nation in a way that should make us all proud.

We literally could not have the national security we have in this country without their willingness to serve, and I thank the 81st Brigade Combat Team for their service on this most recent deployment, and I thank all those in the Washington National Guard who have served and who, today, stand ready to continue to serve. We honor their service. We thank them.

Again, I want to thank my colleagues in the Washington State delegation for unanimously signing onto this resolution honoring their service.

I reserve the balance of my time.