

remembered at Placer High School as an extraordinary athlete. He did his school so proud on the football field that they retired his helmet when he graduated. He was one of those big, hulking kids who stand up for whoever's being picked on.

I spoke with his wife and with his mother today and they both told me exactly the same thing: that he was first and foremost a family man, willing to do anything for his family and for his friends and for his country.

He joined the Army just 3 years ago. He'd already risen to the rank of sergeant and carried a chest of ribbons, including the Bronze Star. Perhaps the most eloquent testimonies to his service are the remembrances from younger soldiers that he'd taken under his wing to help. In fact, that was his next assignment, to come back to the States and help his returning comrades.

His football coach, Mark Sabins, remembered seeing him back home last year after the first tour of duty in Iraq and tells how excited he was to be marrying a remarkable young lady, Olivia, and how energized he was about his work in the Army and his plans for a family and how he looked forward to a full and promising life ahead.

Instead, Joshua Hardt will return home tomorrow for the last time. His family and friends will come to mourn him and to honor him and to remember him. His community will hold him up as an example of all that is heroic and virtuous. His Nation will record his name onto its most hallowed rolls that he never be forgotten.

Centuries from now, flags will be placed on his grave every year as future generations gather to consider the cost of their freedom. And perhaps in Kamdesh, Afghanistan, they will gather around a monument where Outpost Keating once stood and give thanks for the men who paid everything to purchase for them so celestial an article as freedom.

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

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

#### SUPPORTING 287(g)

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support and the support of Arkansas' Third District residents for the 287(g) program.

Two years ago, Benton and Washington County Sheriff's Departments and the cities of Rogers and Springdale sent 19 northwest Arkansas officers and deputies for training in the identification and possible detainment of illegal immigrant offenders they encoun-

ter during their regular daily law enforcement activities. I thank Rogers' Mayor Steve Womack in being a driving force behind this task force. His leadership has been instrumental in cracking down on illegal immigrants in northwest Arkansas.

Thanks to these law enforcement personnel, more than 1,500 illegal aliens have been arrested and have or are in the process of being deported in northwest Arkansas. 287(g) has a proven track record of success nationwide. According to Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency, since January of 2007, the program is credited with identifying more than 100,000 potentially removable aliens, mostly at local jails. The numbers tell the story. 287(g) is an effective program, and that is why I'm a champion for it.

This week, I signed a letter to President Obama showing my support for the 287(g) program and asking that the funding be continued. I believe that Federal, State, and local cooperation is key to combating illegal immigration, and continuing the 287(g) program is a commonsense solution.

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### THE PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, my name is KEITH ELLISON, and I'm a Congressman from the great State of Minnesota, and I'm honored to claim this Special Order, this 1 hour, for the Progressive Caucus to talk about the values of Progressive ideals, the values associated with a progressive America in which people are included and which we believe in generosity, where we believe in valuing people, where we believe in civil rights, care for the Earth and creation, where we care about liv-

ing in a world in which middle class people, working people, the hard-working people of America and the world can have a prosperous life and where people can do well.

The Progressive Caucus, designed and approved and coming together to signal to the American people that in Congress there is a body of Members of the Congress who are willing to stand up for the values that have made America great, values such as workers' rights, such as the weekend, such as the 5-day week, such as work and safety laws, such as worker's compensation, such as Social Security.

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These are all progressive steps forward, such as civil rights, women's rights, gay rights, such as the respect for all religious groups and religious tolerance in our country.

Recently, Mr. Speaker, our focus has been on health care because health care is such an essential component of what it means to be a middle class American trying to put food on the table for your family. Health care, if we can correct health care, the disparities in health care, the cost increases in health care, if we can correct health care 60 years in the making, we can improve the quality of life for all Americans and thereby enact a piece of legislation that is on the order of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the 1965 Voting Rights Act, the passage of the Medicare bill, which helped millions of seniors all around our country live a life of quality, and ended seniors who lived a life of poverty and of insecurity.

This bill, which is right within our grasp at this time, we are so happy to be able to step forward. And I just want to let you know, Mr. Speaker, that it's an honor to be joined by such a courageous Congressperson as Congresswoman DIANE WATSON from the great State of California, who for years and years has been sticking up for progressive values, never backing down, always there for the American middle class and working class people.

So we are going to talk a little health care tonight. I am going to yield to the gentelady to make a few introductory remarks, and then maybe she and I can have a little colloquy as we move on in the evening.

I yield to the gentelady from California, DIANE WATSON.

Ms. WATSON. I thank you very much, Congressman ELLISON, for yielding to me. You are doing a marvelous job. I watch you every evening as you take the mic on the floor of the House to explain to the general public what a benefit health care reform is to all Americans.

And I want to say that we speak to all Americans and we say to them, we are presenting to you a reform of health care as you have known it in the past. Because in my own State of California, if you have insurance, your fees are going to go up somewhere around \$1,800 for a family of four annually. People are going without coverage because they cannot afford it.