

Needs Trust to ensure their surviving dependent child's future care.

This bill will provide veterans with the ability to direct their Survivor Benefit Plan annuity payments to a Special Needs Trust. The creation of an SNT will ensure that a dependent, disabled child will continue to qualify for means-tested benefits, such as Social Security Disability Insurance and Medicaid. Assets placed into a Special Needs Trust are not generally counted as income or assets, allowing dependent children to remain eligible for these benefits throughout their lifetime.

This bill would impact approximately 1,065 military dependents who are incapacitated beneficiaries under Survivor Benefit Plan and with individual care costs for a disabled child exceeding \$100,000 a year, this additional benefit will increase their quality of life significantly.

For those who believe this bill may contribute to abuse, it must be noted that a Special Needs Trust is administered under both federal and state law. Appointed fiduciaries are subject to auditing and are responsible for managing a benefit for a specific group. Annuities are also placed in Special Needs Trusts that are subject to income tax. Therefore, beneficiaries are shielded from abuse considering each trust has significant oversight.

Finally, I am proud that this bill has 4 esteemed public servants as original co-sponsors: Congressmen CAPPS, POLIS, RANGEL, and ROTHMAN. This bill is also supported by the Military Officers Association of America.

TRIBUTE TO VERNON
VALENZUELA

HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the life and service of longtime Kern County veterans' advocate and Vietnam veteran, Vernon Valenzuela, who recently passed away due to cancer at the age of 63.

Vernon began his career in service to our country during the Vietnam war where he was wounded in 1968. Upon returning home, he attended Bakersfield College and became president of the Associated Veterans Student Club, where he developed his passion for helping his fellow veterans and their families in Bakersfield and around Kern County.

Vernon cared deeply about the well being of veterans, and he eventually became a Marriage and Family Therapist specializing in helping veterans with Post Traumatic Stress transition into civilian life after experiencing combat. In 2008, after advocating for a Vet Center to be built in Kern County, Vernon was hired as the Team Leader for the Bakersfield Vet Center where he was further able to help veterans transition and re-enter civilian life.

His most recent legacy is the establishment of the Veterans Justice Program in Kern County, which helps provide veterans—some of whom may have mental or other combat-related illnesses—who get in trouble with the law a second chance by ensuring they receive access to mental health and substance abuse programs provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs. While many doubted such a jus-

tice program could be formed and much less work, Vernon made it happen by bringing everyone together on behalf of all the local veterans returning from war and in need of help.

Vernon's work has touched the lives and benefited thousands of local veterans and their families. The loss of Vernon will surely be felt in our communities, and we express our deepest condolences to his wife Lise, his son Robert, and his daughters Alison and Katherine. His selflessness, perseverance, and service-minded dedication will continue to serve as an inspiration in our community and remain a constant reminder we must all continue to have of our commitment to the men and women in the Armed Forces who bravely serve our country.

HONORING THE LIFE OF REV.
BONIFACE HARDIN

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, today, I am proud to honor the life of Reverend Boniface Hardin, a luminary of the civil rights movement and a pioneer in higher education from Indiana's Seventh Congressional District who passed away this past Saturday.

Reverend Hardin became a Benedictine monk in 1953 at the young age of twenty, was ordained a Roman Catholic priest in 1959, and received a master of divinity degree in 1960. While serving as an associate pastor at the Holy Angels Catholic Church in Indianapolis, he became a vocal advocate for racial and socio-economic equality during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

His spiritual commitment and dedication to self-improvement led him to found the Martin Center in 1969 and later the Indianapolis Sickle Cell Center in 1977. Under his leadership, the Martin Center College became Martin University, a fully accredited institution offering undergraduate and graduate degrees to low-income and minority adult learners.

Recognizing his limitless compassion and unceasing commitment to education, Reverend Hardin was named a "Living Legend" in 2002 by the Indiana Historical Society for the indelible mark he made on the City of Indianapolis and the State of Indiana.

It is with a heavy heart and profound sense of sadness that I express my condolences to the family and friends of Reverend Hardin. But it is with gratitude and admiration that I remember his life and contributions to our community. We were all truly lucky to have had such a caring, giving servant in our midst.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$15,580,211,803,539.46. We've added \$4,953,334,754,626.38 to our debt in 3

years. This is debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF
LISA REED

HON. LEONARD LANCE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the work of Lisa Reed for her accomplished career in public service to the State of New Jersey. Lisa began her career in law enforcement with the Plainfield Police Department. She later joined the Hunterdon County Prosecutor's Office where she specialized in sexual assault and child abuse investigations.

Her distinguished work prompted her promotion to Detective Sergeant and supervisor of the Sex Crimes and Child Abuse Unit. She was a tremendous asset and valued member of the Prosecutor's Office and her portfolio expanded to homicides and narcotics. Lisa was later assigned to the Somerset County Police Academy as the Continuing Education Coordinator. There she shared her expertise with young officers until her retirement in 2005.

Lisa developed a small business with her talents, Lisa S. Reed Investigations of Flemington, New Jersey. Lisa's most noted accomplishment is her vital role in the arrest of Roger Day, a fugitive who led an international conspiracy to defraud the military. This criminal was named a member of "America's Most Wanted" and Lisa's work was part of a three-year effort that brought Roger Day to justice.

Lisa Reed is an outstanding public servant who has continually demonstrated bravery in the critical area of public safety. I congratulate her on this long and distinguished career.

HONORING REAR ADMIRAL (RADM)
HEWITT FOR HIS SERVICE IN
THE U.S. COAST GUARD

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a fellow Oregonian and leader for his extraordinary service in United States Coast Guard. Rear Admiral (RADM) Ronald T. Hewitt served his country for 34 years in the Coast Guard and on April 6th, RADM Hewitt will retire as the Assistant Commandant for Human Resources at Coast Guard Headquarters, a position he has held since May 2009. We all owe him a debt of gratitude for his commitment to service and to our country.

His efforts were pivotal to improving the Service's readiness while providing advancement, professional development and quality of life enhancements for all Coast Guard personnel. He established a comprehensive strategy to enhance diversity within the Coast Guard, developing and leveraging important partnerships with Congress, the Administration, academic institutions, and key outreach and affinity organizations, setting new heights