

have a compromise and a deal now to help these families.

REVEREND JEROME R. MILTON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Today, when the House opens for regular session, we will be led by visiting chaplain Reverend Jerome R. Milton. This extraordinary man is a friend, and he is an inspiration to me.

To borrow from a testimonial sermon of his, Reverend Milton, as a very small child, was left to die with his brother and sister in a rundown California motel. The San Diego County welfare department found them and placed them in a horrific orphanage, called the Hillcrest Orphanage, where abuse of all kinds imaginable and unimaginable were inflicted upon them. Many of the children in such terrible conditions committed suicide, which included his brother and sister. After the horrors of this orphanage, he was placed in 13 different foster homes, where he suffered more unfathomable abuse and inhuman treatment.

Finally, as Jerome says, "God heard the cry of the lamb," and he was placed in his 14th home, that of Dadie Florence Johnson Brown. She could not read or write, but she was a good woman with a big heart and a stronger will. She took Jerome, and she said she could not imagine all the abuse he had been through, that it just sounded too unbelievable, but she looked him in the eye and said, Don't let your abuse be your excuse. She said, Someday, you can be a great juvenile judge or a case worker or something special.

But there was a lot of rebellion and anger in the young man. He hated lots of people and things, and especially God. Ms. Brown would not heed Jerome's pleas to leave him alone. She kept praying for him every single day by name. She said she knew there was good in him, but prayed that God would not let him end up in jail or in prison, because she knew God could do something very special with him.

He eventually tried the praying thing himself, but he was very cynical. He wanted to go to college, he wanted to be a coach, but he knew no one who had money. Then he found out he could run really fast, and he could play football really well. Though his teacher told him he was too black and too stupid to ever amount to anything, he proved her wrong when, just 4½ years later, he taught in a classroom right next to hers.

As Reverend Milton says, God moved him from foster care to people care. This angry, black, abused, hopeless shell of a downtrodden young boy had God-given potential. This is what Dadie Brown saw in him. Before she died, she told Jerome, All you can do for me is, if you can do for a group of children what I've done for you, then my living will not have been in vain.

She said, I don't have \$1 million, but I hope I made a \$1 million difference. When she died, she had raised 44 children, giving hope to each one.

Jerome says she led him to Jesus and that Jesus opened his heart. He providentially met and married Charlene Olgis, and together, they have nine children. Six of them were adopted through the foster care program. Tyler, Texas, is where two Heisman Trophy winners grew up, Earl Campbell and Johnny Manziel, but it is also the mission field of Reverend Jerome R. Milton and his wife, Charlene, and that's where they've invested their lives.

He is the senior pastor of the Greater New Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Tyler. He has been there for 25 years. He established the Dadie Florence Brown children's home for homeless mothers and abused children. He has been the head track and field coach at Bishop Gorman Catholic High School for 24 years, leading his team to 10 State track and field championships, and he has helped 150 athletes earn scholarships. He has also been the Tyler Citizen of the Year, winning the T.B. Butler Award. His work toward spanning race and religion and all types of barriers is boundless, and his list of accomplishments would take all day long to read.

He has blessed our town, our district, our State, and our country. It is an honor and an inspiration to know him and to count him as a friend. I so look forward to having my friend as a visiting chaplain today at noon eastern time when he opens the official part of this session in Congress.

God bless America, and God bless Jerome Milton.

THE WIND INDUSTRY AND OUR VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCNERNEY. This morning, I rise to talk about two issues I care very passionately about: wind energy and veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I spent more than 20 years in the wind industry as a technology development engineer. In those early days, we saw some spectacular failures and dramatic failures, but every year, we put more into the technology development. We put a little bit this year in the gear box, in the foundations. Every year, we put a little increment of improvement in the control systems, in the field testing, in the power electronics so that we understood what was going on.

□ 1030

Today we have an industry that is a spectacular industry. The wind turbines now are hundreds of feet tall. They are extremely reliable. They produce power for 4 to 5 cents a kilowatt hour, depending on the resource. It's been a very successful business.

In the early days, the United States of America dominated that business because of consistent policies, consistent tax policies. We could rely on the policies being there year after year. Investors came in; engineers came in. But in the early 1980s, those policies began to change, and the technology began to leave our country.

We've seen, I've seen in my career, the incentives come and go over the years. I can tell you, it's devastating to the industry. It takes years to develop the infrastructure to produce wind turbines. The bearings are 20 feet in diameter. It takes expertise. In order to get a project in, you need to get a power purchase agreement. You need to get permits. You need to get investments, and then you need to order products. The products have a 1- to 2-year lead time they're so large. We're putting a lot at risk by ending the production tax credit.

And not only that, we'll see at least 40,000 jobs lost when the production tax credit expires at the end of this year. A lot of those jobs go to United States veterans, veterans of our armed services. And I can tell you what, when soldiers are trained, they're trained on large equipment. They're trained on big projects. They're well disciplined. They're reliable. They work in very adverse conditions. And that's exactly the kind of training you need to be a windsmith and a wind turbine installer, so it's been a very good fit.

There's one company in particular, Airstreams. They train wind turbine windsmiths, and 80 percent of their graduates are veterans. They get good jobs in this country. And when the production tax credit goes away, that removes the hope of many of our veterans.

Now, the veterans of our country were soldiers and sailors. They volunteered their time for our country. They put themselves in grave danger, and they came home and found a very bad employment situation. The wind energy has been a tremendous opportunity for them, and to take this hope away from our veterans is a travesty. Eliminating those jobs for veterans is absolutely unacceptable.

Now, the production tax credit, itself, is a very effective way to produce energy. You get paid for when you deliver energy in the production tax credit. In the early days, the credits went to investments, and a lot of investments were not so good. But today, the motive is to have a very reliable, a very productive set of equipment, and that's what happens when the production tax credit is extended. It creates jobs. It helps develop the manufacturing base in this country. And I can tell you, if you want to be a great country, you have to have a big manufacturing base. Of those things that are at risk of going overseas, our manufacturing base, our engineering expertise, jobs, investment, this will be a real loss for our country. It will hurt our veterans. And the last thing it will hurt is our climate.