

## HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I rise to pay tribute to 35 young Americans who have been killed in Iraq since July 23, 2007. This brings to 812 the number of soldiers who were either from California or based in California that have been killed while serving our country in Iraq. This represents 21 percent of all U.S. deaths in Iraq.

Hospitalman Daniel S. Noble, 21, died July 24, as a result of enemy action while conducting security operations in the Dilaya Province of Iraq. Hospitalman Noble was permanently assigned to 1st Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force Pacific, Camp Pendleton, CA. He was from Whittier, CA.

SSG Joshua P. Mattero, 29, died on July 24, in Baqubah, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his patrol. Staff Sergeant Mattero was assigned to the 725th Ordnance Company, 63rd Ordnance Battalion, 52nd Ordnance Group, Fort Drum, NY. He was from San Diego, CA.

CPL Matthew R. Zindars, 21, died July 24, while conducting combat operations in the Diyala province of Iraq. Corporal Zindars was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

SPC Jaime Rodriguez, Jr., 19, died July 26, in Saqlawiyah, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. Specialist Rodriguez was assigned to the 5th Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, GA. He was from Oxnard, CA.

CPL Sean A. Stokes, 24, died July 30, from wounds suffered while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Corporal Stokes was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA. He was from Auburn, CA.

SPC Daniel F. Reyes, 24, died July 31, in Tunis, Iraq, of wounds suffered from enemy indirect fire. Specialist Reyes was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, Airborne, 25th Infantry Division, Fort Richardson, AK. He was from San Diego, CA.

LCpl Cristian Vasquez, 20, died August 2, from wounds suffered while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Lance Corporal Vasquez was assigned to 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA. He was from Coalinga, CA.

SGT Jon E. Bonnell Jr., 22, died August 7, from wounds suffered while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Sergeant Bonnell was assigned to 1st Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

SGT Michael E. Tayaotao, 27, died August 9, from wounds suffered while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Sergeant Tayaotao was assigned to 7th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA. He was from Sunnyvale, CA.

SSG Sean P. Fisher, 29, died August 14, in Al Taqqadam, Iraq, of injuries suffered when his helicopter crashed. Staff Sergeant Fisher was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, Task Force 49, Fort Wainwright, AK. He was from Santee, CA.

SGT Matthew L. Tallman, 30, died August 22, in Multaka, Iraq, of injuries suffered when his helicopter crashed. Sergeant Tallman was assigned to the 4th Squadron, 6th U.S. Air Cavalry Regiment, Fort Lewis, WA. He was from Groveland, CA.

SSG Jason L. Paton, 25, died August 22, in Multaka, Iraq, of injuries suffered when his helicopter crashed. Staff Sergeant Paton was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, HI. He was from Poway, CA.

CPL Nathan C. Hubbard, 21, died August 22, in Multaka, Iraq, of injuries suffered when his helicopter crashed. Corporal Hubbard was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, HI. He was from Clovis, CA.

LCpl Matthew S. Medlicott, 21, died August 25, from wounds suffered while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Lance Corporal Medlicott was assigned to 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

LCpl Rogelio A. Ramirez, 21, died August 26, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Lance Corporal Ramirez was assigned to 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA. He was from Pasadena, CA.

CPL John C. Tanner, 21, died August 29, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Corporal Tanner was assigned to 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

SGT Michael J. Yarbrough, 24, died September 6, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Sergeant Yarbrough was assigned to 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

SSG John C. Stock, 26, died September 6, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Staff Sergeant Stock was assigned to 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine

Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

CPL Bryan J. Scripsick, 22, died September 6, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Corporal Scripsick was assigned to 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

CPL Christopher L. Poole Jr., 22, died September 6, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Corporal Poole was assigned to 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

SPC Marisol Heredia, 19, died on September 7, at Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, TX, of injuries sustained on July 18, in Baghdad, Iraq, from a non-combat related incident. Specialist Heredia was assigned to the 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX. She was from El Monte, CA.

CAPT Drew N. Jensen, 27, died September 7, in Seattle of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit using small arms fire during combat operations May 7 in Ba'qubah, Iraq. Captain Jensen was assigned to the 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (Stryker Brigade Combat Team), Fort Lewis, WA. He was from Clackamas, CA.

LCpl Lance M. Clark, 21, died September 7, from a non-hostile incident in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. He was assigned to 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

CPL Carlos E. Gilorozco, 23, died September 10, while conducting combat operations in the Al Anbar province of Iraq. Corporal Gilorozco was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, NC. He was from San Jose, CA.

SPC Nicholas P. Olson, 22, died September 18, in Muqadadiyah, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his unit during combat operations. Specialist Olson was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Fort Lewis, WA. He was from Novato, CA.

CPL Anthony K. Bento, 23, died September 24, in Bayji, Iraq, of injuries sustained when his dismounted patrol encountered small arms fire. Corporal Bento was assigned to A Company, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, NC. He was from San Diego, CA.

SGT Robert T. Ayres III, 23, died on September 29, in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries sustained when he encountered small arms fire while on dismounted patrol. Sergeant Ayres was assigned to A Company, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker

Cavalry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, Vilseck, Germany. He was from Los Angeles, CA.

SPC Avealalo Milo, 23, died October 4, in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit using small arms fire. Specialist Milo was assigned to the 2nd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Vilseck, Germany. He was from Hayward, CA.

LCpl Jeremy W. Burris, 22, died October 8, while conducting combat operations in Al Anbar province, Iraq. Lance Corporal Burris was assigned to 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA.

CPL Gilberto A. Meza, 21, died October 6, in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his unit. Corporal Meza was assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, Vilseck, Germany. He was from Oxnard, CA.

SPC Frank L. Cady III, 20, died on October 10, in Baghdad, Iraq, when his vehicle overturned. Specialist Cady was assigned to B Company, 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, KS. He was from Sacramento, CA.

SPC Vincent A. Madero, 22, died October 17, in Balad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. Specialist Madero was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX. He was from Port Hueneme, CA.

CPL Erik T. Garoutte, 22, died October 19, in Baghdad, Iraq. Corporal Garoutte was assigned to 1st Fleet Anti-terrorism Security Team Company, Marine Corps Security Force Battalion, II Marine Expeditionary Force, Norfolk, VA. He was from Santee, CA.

SPC Wayne M. Geiger, 23, died October 18, in Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. Specialist Geiger was assigned to 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, Vilseck, Germany. He was from Lone Pine, CA.

SSG David A. Wieger, 28, died November 1, near Balad Air Base, Iraq, of wounds suffered from an improvised explosive device. Staff Sergeant Weiger was a special agent with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations and was assigned to Detachment 303, Travis Air Force Base, CA.

I would also like to pay tribute to the five soldiers from California who have died while serving our country in Operation Enduring Freedom since July 23.

SGT Travon T. Johnson, 29, died on July 23, in the Sarobi District of Afghanistan of injuries sustained when

an improvised explosive device detonated near his mounted patrol. Sergeant Johnson was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade, Caserma Ederle, Italy. He was from Palmdale, CA.

MSG Patrick D. Magnani, 38, died September 4, near Bagram, Afghanistan, in a non-combat related incident. Master Sergeant Magnani was assigned to the 31st Medical Support Squadron, Aviano Air Base, Italy. He was from Martinez, CA.

CPL Travis M. Woods, 21, died September 9, from wounds suffered while conducting combat operations in the Northern Helmand province of Afghanistan. Corporal Woods was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, CA. He was from Redding, CA.

PFC Mathew D. Taylor, 21, died September 26, in San Antonio of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle July 23, in the Sarobi District of Afghanistan. Private First Class Taylor was assigned to the 1st Battalion, Airborne, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, Vicenza, Italy. He was from Cameron Park, CA.

SSG Joseph F. Curreri, 27, died October 27, in Siet, Lake Jolo Island, Philippines, from injuries sustained in a non-combat related incident. Staff Sergeant Curreri was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group, Airborne, Fort Lewis, WA. He was from Los Angeles, CA.

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#### COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE APPROPRIATIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, as chairwoman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, I rise today to notify the Senate that I sponsored an amendment to H.R. 3093, the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act that provided \$3 million in funding for Teach for America, headquartered in New York, NY, to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education.

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#### PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an excerpt from the remarks by President George W. Bush at the Presidential Medal of Freedom presentation at the White House on November 5, 2007, honoring Harper Lee of Monroeville, AL.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.

Good morning. Laura and I are thrilled to welcome you to the White

House. We welcome the members of Congress, the members of the Cabinet, and other distinguished guests. It's an honor to be with the Medal of Freedom recipients, as well as their family members and friends. We're sure glad you're here.

The Medal of Freedom is the highest civil honor that a President can bestow. By an executive order of John F. Kennedy, the medal is designed to recognize great contributions to national security, the cause of peace and freedom, science, the arts, literature, and many other fields. The eight men and women came to this distinction by very different paths. Each of them, by effort and by character, has earned the respect of the American people, and holds a unique place in the story of our time.

The story of an old order, and the glimmers of humanity that would one day overtake it, was unforgettably told in a book by Miss Harper Lee. Soon after its publication a reviewer said this: "A hundred pounds of sermons on tolerance, or an equal measure of invective deploring the lack of it, will weigh far less in the scale of enlightenment than a mere 18 ounces of a new fiction bearing the title *To Kill a Mockingbird*."

Given her legendary stature as a novelist, you may be surprised to learn that Harper Lee, early in her career, was an airline reservation clerk. Fortunately for all of us, she didn't stick to writing itineraries. Her beautiful book, with its grateful prose and memorable characters, became one of the biggest-selling novels of the 20th century.

Forty-six years after winning the Pulitzer Prize, *To Kill a Mockingbird* still touches and inspires every reader. We're moved by the story of a man falsely accused—with old prejudice massed against him, and an old sense of honor that rises to his defense. We learn that courage can be a solitary business. As the lawyer Atticus Finch tells his daughter, "before I can live with other folks I've got to live with myself. The one thing that doesn't abide by majority rule is a person's conscience."

Years after *To Kill a Mockingbird* was put to film, the character of Atticus Finch was voted the greatest movie hero of all time. It won Gregory Peck the Oscar. He was said to believe the role "brought him closest to being the kind of man he aspired to be." The great actor counted Harper Lee among his good friends, and we're so pleased that Gregory Peck's wife, Veronique, is with us today. Thank you for coming.

One reason *To Kill a Mockingbird* succeeded is the wise and kind heart of the author, which comes through on every page. This daughter of Monroeville, Alabama had something to say about honor, and tolerance, and, most of all, love—and it still resonates. Last year Harper Lee received an honorary