

# TRIBUTE TO THE 761ST BLACK PANTHER TANK BATTALION

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 30, 1996*

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 761st Black Panther Tank Battalion. These World War II veterans were the first of three African-American tank battalions to go into combat. These men fought with courage and honor; we should remember them as the heroes that they are.

The 761st Tank Battalion trained at Camp Hood, TX. Gen. George Patton, Jr., commander of the Third Army, requested their service in World War II, as the general ordered only the best troops for his division.

"Come out Fighting", the 761st's motto, was certainly appropriate. The Black Panther Tank Battalion participated in four allied campaigns through six European countries. The Battle of the Bulge was among the many battles in which they fought. The 761st Tank Battalion fought for 183 consecutive days during World War II when most tank battalions only fought for 10 to 15 days at a time.

Let us remember these unsung heroes. In 1978, the 761st Tank Battalion received the Presidential Unit Citation. However, it took 33 years for the veterans to achieve this award. I was privileged to assist the battalion in gaining this important recognition.

On August 23, 1996, Fort Hood, TX broke ground for the 761st Tank Battalion Monument. Ms. Beverly Taylor worked for several years to make this memorial a reality. History books have traditionally overlooked African-American veterans' contributions to the wars in which the United States participated. The 761st Tank Battalion Monument is a positive step towards the acknowledgment that these veterans deserve. The Nation has benefitted greatly from the efforts made by these champions, the likeness of which many people do not even know. We must continue to work to make sure that the 761st Black Panther Tank achieves their rightful place in American history.

## TRIBUTE TO DON FERGUSON

HON. PETE GEREN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 30, 1996*

Mr. PETE GEREN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to honor Don Ferguson upon his retirement from Bell Helicopter Textron in Fort Worth, TX. Don has worked at Bell for 12 years, joining that company following his retirement from Active Army duty in 1984. Don, an Army aviator, retired as a colonel after 28 years of service to his country. During the course of his Army career, Don was stationed overseas in Europe and Southeast Asia as well as a variety of military posts in the United States. His military awards include the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, 3 awards, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, 3 awards, Joint Services Commendation Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal.

Mr. Speaker, Bell Helicopter is in the congressional district I represent, and I have worked closely with that company throughout my tenure. I had the pleasure of meeting Don shortly after being elected to Congress and was immediately impressed with his knowledge of a wide range of subjects that affected Bell Helicopter and the Department of Defense. My staff and I grew to depend on him for timely and thoughtful responses to inquiries about Bell's operations and programs. On the rare occasions that Don did not know the answer to a question himself, he knew where to go to get it.

During my many visits to the Bell Helicopter facilities, either on my own or with other Members of Congress, Don would invariably be the first to greet us with his "Welcome to Bell" overview. This briefing set the tone for many successful and informative visits. Don's Army experience allowed him to provide a unique perspective in representing not just the manufacturer of these helicopters, but also that of the men and women whose job it was to fly them. His understanding of the issues coupled with his wry sense of humor and quick wit gave Don the uncanny ability of always being able to put friends and strangers alike immediately at ease.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, I can proudly say that Don Ferguson has served his country with distinction for over 40 years. Twenty-eight of those years in uniform; the remainder in civilian clothes, yet still dedicated to ensuring that our fighting men and women had the very best possible equipment that American industry could provide. During all that time, Don has continually demonstrated those qualities which we all admire and aspire to achieve—devotion to duty, honor, and integrity.

I know that all who have had the privilege of getting to know Don over the years will miss him and join me in wishing him and his wife, Marilyn, an enjoyable and well-deserved retirement.

## MEDICAID OSTEOPATHIC CERTIFICATION ACT OF 1996

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 30, 1996*

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to express my strong support for H.R. 1791, the Medicaid Osteopathic Certification Act of 1996. This critical bill, which Congress passed this week, will ensure that our Nation's osteopathic physicians will continue to be able to provide high-quality health care services to millions of our Nation's most vulnerable people.

As you know, osteopathic physicians were recognized in the original Medicaid statute as being fully qualified to participate in this important program. However, due to an oversight in the 1990 Budget Reconciliation Act, osteopaths were excluded from further participation in Medicaid. While we have been able to temporarily postpone the enactment of this flawed section of the 1990 legislation, the only way to permanently rectify this oversight was by passing H.R. 1791.

For several years, I have fought for the reinstatement of osteopaths into the Medicaid Pro-

gram. These dedicated men and women have been faithful stewards of our commitment to provide access to quality health care to our Nation's most vulnerable.

Osteopathic physicians are part of the success story of our health care system. Of the 40,000 D.O.s in our Nation today, more than half of them practice in primary care fields. Nowhere do osteopaths represent a bigger or more vital part of the health care community than in my State of Michigan. In fact, while osteopathic physicians compromise only about six percent of all doctors nationwide, 25 percent of the physicians who live and work in Michigan are D.O.s. The effect of excluding 25 percent of Michigan's doctors from the Medicaid Program would have a terrible impact on the poorest and most vulnerable people in our State.

In the 10th Congressional District, some 350 osteopathic physicians care for the poor, pregnant women, and children. A significant portion of that care is provided through two osteopathic hospitals in Macomb County, Bi-County Community Hospital in Warren, and Mt. Clemens General Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, passage of this common-sense bill is long overdue. Our health care system needs improvement in many areas. But osteopaths are part of what is right with our system. We must do all that we can to see that they can continue to provide high-quality care to those who need it. I am pleased to join my colleagues in approving this important bill.

## TRIBUTE TO ALABAMA'S OLDEST FAMILY-OWNED NEWSPAPER, THE SOUTHERN STAR OF OZARK

HON. TERRY EVERETT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 30, 1996*

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay special tribute today to the accomplishments of a dear friend and fellow newspaper publisher in my congressional district, Mr. Joe Adams of Ozark, AL.

Joe Adams is the editor-publisher of The Southern Star, a weekly newspaper in Dale County which occupies a special place in Alabama history. This year the Southern Star turns 129 years old, and as such, is the oldest family-owned newspaper in the State of Alabama.

The Southern Star is widely known and respected in southeast Alabama having been created and shepherded by five generations of the Adams family of Ozark: Joseph A. Adams, founder, 1867-1887; Joseph H. Adams, 1887-1907; John Q. Adams Sr., 1907-1925; Jesse B. Adams, 1925-1952; John Q. Adams Jr., 1952-1969; and Joseph H. Adams, 1969-Present.

The Southern Star was recognized earlier this year for its unique state-wide distinction by the Alabama Press Association, an organization of Alabama's newspaper publishers.

I have known Joe Adams for many years and am proud to call him a good friend. And I wish to congratulate him for his family's contributions to Alabama journalism.