

now used by businesses that is very successful in getting employees to sign up to become organ donors at death. Despite these advances, in Louisiana and across our nation, a lot more public education is needed to raise awareness of the critical shortage of organs. In addition, Louisiana has also benefited from the services provided by the Oschner Multi-Organ Transplant Center, where over 50 liver transplants are performed each year. The help these organizations provide to patients in Louisiana are immeasurable.

For example, in Louisiana today there are about 1,600 individuals—mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, sons, daughters—awaiting a life-saving transplant. Nationally, more than 73,000 men, women and children awake in hope each day that it will be the day when they receive their new organ, before it's too late for them. But needs far exceed organ donations each year. One organ donor can save the lives of as many as eight others. Organs from 100 individuals in Louisiana were donated last year, providing 365 organs for transplant. Those 100 selfless humans in Louisiana gave the gift of life to strangers as their legacy. Organ donation is the last act of selfless generosity that one human being can perform for another.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 31 and H.R. 624, both expressing Congress' acknowledgment of the need for organ donors and organ donor support for all citizens.

In 1996, I introduced H.R. 457 (Public Law No. 106–56), the Organ Donor Leave Act, because I am a firm believer in the life-saving power of organ donation. This legislation allows federal employees up to 30 days paid leave after having made an organ donation and 7 days for those employees making a bone marrow donation. Through we have made progress in the fight for increasing the support for organ donors, it is out of that same unshaken belief that I recognize the need for legislation like H. Con. Res. 31 and H.R. 624. I know the truth and the truth is that there is still much that can be improved.

Over 60,000 Americans are awaiting for an organ donation, while 12 people die each day waiting for a transplant.

Every sixteen minutes, a new name in need of an organ, tissue, or bone marrow transplant is added to a waiting list.

Each year, despite the efforts of countless Americans who are organ donors, over 4,000 Americans die in need of a transplant.

These grim statistics are the real reason why I stand behind H.R. 624, the Organ Donation Improvement Act of 2001, which will not only foster increased public awareness through studies and demonstrations, but also supports organ donors through financial assistance incurred toward living organ donation. Furthermore, as H. Con. Res. 31 states, I fully support National Donor Day which promotes awareness and while educating ALL about organ, tissue, bone marrow, and blood donation.

In both of these bills, we move another step forward in helping to eliminate a solvable problem, paving the way toward answering the hopes and needs of those who now wait too long for a second chance at life.

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, today, I rise in support of H.R. 624, the Organ Donation Improvement Act. As we all know, there is a shortage of organ donors across the United

States. In fact, the waiting list for organ transplants has grown by over 300 percent in the last decade.

I am, however, proud that my state of Wisconsin has an excellent record in organ procurement. Wisconsin's two organ donation agencies, the Wisconsin Donor Network in Milwaukee and the University of Wisconsin Organ Procurement organization, are nationally recognized for their donation rates. Each year in Wisconsin, nearly 150 people give more than 600 citizens the opportunity for a new beginning.

In order to decrease the number of individuals on the wait list for organ transplants, we need to increase people's willingness to become donors. Wisconsin has a model intensive education program that works closely with schools, community groups, church groups and the hospitals to allay individuals' questions and concerns related to organ donation. I am proud to be a cosponsor of the Organ Donation Improvement Act that would provide grants to states to build programs similar to our successful program in Wisconsin.

This bill recognizes the critical role that states can play in improving organ donation. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. BENTSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Organ Donation Improvement Act (H.R. 624), legislation that will help the 60,000 people in the United States who are currently waiting for organ transplant surgery. This year, approximately 20,000 people will receive these lifesaving operations, but 40,000 people will not. This legislation is an important first step in helping these patients and their families to get the organs that they desperately need.

As the representative for the Texas Medical Center where many of these transplantations occur, I am concerned about the need to find more organs for these patients. Many of these lifesaving procedures are conducted at the transplant departments at these teaching hospitals in my district. During the past decade, the waiting list for organs has grown by more than 300 percent. Clearly, we are not finding sufficient donors to meet the demand for these patients.

As an original cosponsor of this legislation, I strongly support this effort to increase organ donations. First, this measure authorizes \$5 million for each of the next five years to help pay for the cost of travel and subsistence expenses for people who donate their organs. With advanced technology and techniques, today there are more opportunities for people to donate organs. However, many patients cannot afford to travel and pay for the costs associated with organ donation surgeries. This bill would encourage more patients to donate an organ if they know that both their travel and subsistence expenses will be covered. These grants would be given to only those low-income patients who cannot afford to travel to another state in order to donate an organ. In addition, these grants can help donors to receive supplemental income during the time period when they are donating an organ.

This bill would also require the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to conduct a public awareness program on organ donation. With more awareness, it is my hope that more families will discuss organ donation and will give the "gift of life" to another patient.

This measure also includes a provision to authorize grants for studies and pilot projects to increase organ donations to private organizations.

I am also pleased that the American Hospital Association and the Patient Access to Transplantation Coalition have expressed their strong support for this bill. I urge my colleagues to vote for this legislation.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 624, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

HONORING 21 MEMBERS OF NATIONAL GUARD KILLED IN CRASH ON MARCH 3, 2001

Mr. SCHROCK. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 47) honoring the 21 members of the National Guard who were killed in the crash of a National Guard aircraft on March 3, 2001, in south-central Georgia.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 47

Whereas a C-23 Sherpa National Guard aircraft crashed in south-central Georgia on March 3, 2001, killing all 21 National Guard members on board;

Whereas of the 21 National Guard members on board, 18 were members of the Virginia Air National Guard from the Hampton Roads area of Virginia returning home following two weeks of training duty in Florida and the other 3 were members of the Florida Army National Guard who comprised the flight crew of the aircraft;

Whereas the Virginia National Guard members killed, all of whom were members of the 203rd Red Horse Engineering Flight of Virginia Beach, Virginia, were Master Sergeant James Beninati, 46, of Virginia Beach, Virginia; Staff Sergeant Paul J. Blancato, 38, of Norfolk, Virginia; Technical Sergeant Ernest Blawas, 47, of Virginia Beach, Virginia; Staff Sergeant Andrew H. Bridges, 33, of Chesapeake, Virginia; Master Sergeant Eric Bulman, 59, of Virginia Beach, Virginia; Staff Sergeant Paul Cramer, 43, of Norfolk, Virginia; Technical Sergeant Michael East, 40, of Parksley, Virginia; Staff Sergeant Ronald Elkin, 43, of Norfolk, Virginia; Staff Sergeant James Ferguson, 41, of Newport News, Virginia; Staff Sergeant Randy Johnson, 40, of Emporia, Virginia; Senior Airman Mathew Kidd, 23, of Hampton, Virginia; Master Sergeant Michael Lane, 34, of Moyock, North Carolina; Technical Sergeant Edwin Richardson, 48, of Virginia Beach, Virginia; Technical Sergeant Dean Shelby, 39, of

Virginia Beach, Virginia; Staff Sergeant John Sincavage, 27, of Chesapeake, Virginia; Staff Sergeant Gregory Skurupey, 34, of Gloucester, Virginia; Staff Sergeant Richard Summerell, 51, of Franklin, Virginia; and Major Frederick Watkins, III, 35, of Virginia Beach, Virginia;

Whereas the Florida National Guard members killed, all of whom were members of Detachment 1, 1st Battalion, 171st Aviation, of Lakeland, Florida, were Chief Warrant Officer John Duce, 49, of Orange Park, Florida; Chief Warrant Officer Eric Larson, 34, of Land-O-Lakes, Florida; and Staff Sergeant Robert Ward, 35, of Lakeland, Florida;

Whereas these members of the National Guard were performing their duty in furtherance of the national security interests of the United States;

Whereas the members of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard, are routinely called upon to perform duties that place their lives at risk; and

Whereas the members of the National Guard who lost their lives as a result of the aircraft crash on March 3, 2001, died in the honorable service to the Nation and exemplified all that is best in the American people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) honors the 18 members of the Virginia Air National Guard and 3 members of the Florida Army National Guard who were killed on March 3, 2001, in the crash of a C-23 Sherpa National Guard aircraft in south-central Georgia; and

(2) sends heartfelt condolences to their families, friends, and loved ones.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCHROCK) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SISISKY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCHROCK).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCHROCK. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the legislation under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. SCHROCK. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer House Concurrent Resolution 47 to honor the 21 members of the National Guard who tragically lost their lives last Saturday.

Eighteen members of the 203rd Red Horse Engineering Flight from the Virginia Air National Guard based at Camp Pendleton in the district I represent and three members of the 171st Aviation Battalion of the Florida Army National Guard were killed when their Army C-23 Sherpa aircraft crashed in a field in south-central Georgia.

Red Horse squadrons are civil engineer units that can be deployed rapidly to erect tent cities and other facilities for troops in the field. The airmen from Camp Pendleton were returning home after spending 2 weeks in Florida at a Florida base doing electrical work and

other types of construction. The Virginia National Guard lost 18 great men from the 203rd Red Horse Engineering Flight Squadron. Their names are:

Major Frederick Watkins of Virginia Beach,

Master Sergeant James Beninati of Virginia Beach,

Staff Sergeant Paul J. Blancato of Norfolk,

Technical Sergeant Ernest Blawas of Virginia Beach,

Staff Sergeant Andrew H. Bridges of Chesapeake,

Master Sergeant Eric G. Bulman of Virginia Beach,

Staff Sergeant Paul E. Cramer of Norfolk,

Technical Sergeant Michael E. East of Parksley,

Staff Sergeant Ronald L. Elkin of Norfolk,

Staff Sergeant James P. Ferguson of Newport News,

Staff Sergeant Randy V. Johnson of Emporia,

Senior Airman Mathrew E. Kidd of Hampton,

Master Sergeant Michael E. Lane of Moyock, North Carolina,

Technical Sergeant Edwin B. Richardson of Virginia Beach,

Technical Sergeant Dean J. Shelby of Virginia Beach,

Staff Sergeant John L. Sincavage of Chesapeake,

Staff Sergeant Gregory T. Skurupey of Gloucester, and

Staff Sergeant Richard L. Summerell of Franklin.

Military service involves great danger in both times of peace and war. Men and women in uniform and their families make sacrifices each and every day. This tragic loss reminds us of the dedication that men and women give to their country when they serve in the Armed Forces. These exceptional airmen were killed in the execution of their duties, and their sacrifice was in the service of their country. Their loss is greatly felt by their families, their communities and their country.

I stand here with my colleagues to proudly honor the lives of these 21 heroes, and the Congress sends their families, friends, and loved ones our heartfelt condolences.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SISISKY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I join my Virginia colleague in honoring the members of the Virginia and Florida National Guard who perished in this terrible tragedy. All House Members pay tribute to each of the men lost in the crash last Saturday. I know they join me in sending a heartfelt message of condolence to the families and loved ones.

I am particularly grieved because four of those who died were from my congressional district. But it is not just that. The tragedy that occurred 4 days ago is really a national tragedy. The guardsmen aboard that plane were

among the finest citizens of this Nation. So all of us lost something very, very precious that day.

The sacrifice of those who lost their lives exemplifies all that is best in the American people. Those who serve our country in the National Guard and Reserve are dedicated, industrious and selfless. They are patriots, committed to the goal of making America great. So we mourn their loss and extend our sympathies to those they have left behind.

But I want their loved ones to know they should be extremely proud of the lives that they lived. Not only were these men serving their country, they were serving their communities and families. They were dedicated, devoted church and family men from Emporia and Franklin. They included a fireman and an insurance man from Chesapeake, always ready to lend a helping hand. You would see them in church on Sunday or pitching in to clean up their town after the terrible floods last year. They spent time building homes for Habitat for Humanity. They loved their children and their families. Sacrifices they made for Virginia and Florida and our Nation made our country better and stronger. The United States would not be what it is today were it not for the efforts of the many unsung heroes who lost their lives in this tragedy.

General Omar Bradley spoke of freedom as the greatest of all ideals. He said the following:

No other word held out greater hope, demanded greater sacrifice, needed more to be nurtured, blessed more than the giver, demanded more than its discharge, or come closer to being God's will on earth.

The men, families and loved ones we honor know all too well the full meaning of the word freedom. But there is also a Bible story about soldiers who died which tells us how to remember them:

They were beloved and pleasant in life, and in death they were together; they were swifter than eagles, they were strong as lions.

So it is also our responsibility to love and support their families, protect and defend their country and honor their memory forever. I know that those who survive face the toughest challenge. I want them to know that all Americans share their loss and are deeply grateful for their sacrifice. America is blessed to have citizens of such caliber. God bless them, their families and loved ones.

I know I speak for all Members in extending to their families and friends our deepest and heartfelt sympathy.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHROCK. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS).

Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the two previous gentlemen from Virginia.

Madam Speaker, it is with great sorrow that I come to the floor of the

House today. Just 4 days ago, 21 men perished in a tragic accident in south-central Georgia. These men represented the finest America and our military has to offer. Twenty-one men died, 18 from the Commonwealth of Virginia, and 3 from the State of Florida. Twenty-one men.

Madam Speaker, all these men served in the Air National Guard. They regularly would give up a weekend a month and 2 weeks during the year, if not more, to serve their country. These men were returning from those 2 weeks of duty, and when many of their families gathered to greet them, they received the tragic news that their loved ones' plane had crashed. While I have spoken with some family members, it is simply impossible for me to really know how they feel. But I do know this. Twenty-one lives were lost tragically. With each of these 21 airmen, there is a story. A story of fathers, a story of volunteers, of firemen and civil servants.

Madam Speaker, each and every one of these men were civil servants in the truest sense. They would give up time that could have been spent with their loved ones to serve us, the public. We often do not think about that. We should.

Madam Speaker, I thought about coming down to the floor to address the critical needs of the military in light of this accident, but there will be time for that in the near future. Today is a time for mourning. Today the Commonwealth of Virginia lost 18 men, perhaps the most tragic loss of life for the Commonwealth since the Bedford unit of the Virginia National Guard was lost on D-Day.

While time heals all wounds, it will take time. I can say with assurance that in this circumstance, it will take a long time. My heart goes out to the families of these men. I am praying for all of them. However, Madam Speaker, I would like to extend my condolences directly to the families of Staff Sergeant Gregory Skurupey, Staff Sergeant James Ferguson, Technical Sergeant Michael East, Senior Airman Mathrew Kidd and Major Rick Watkins.

I pray that our Lord will grant these families comfort and solace in their time of loss. And I pray that these men who so tragically died rest in peace and may His perpetual light shine on them.

Mr. SISISKY. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia for yielding me this time.

I rise to lend my name in support as a cosponsor of the resolution my esteemed colleagues from Hampton Roads, Virginia, have offered honoring the 21 heroes who lost their lives in a plane crash last weekend. Eighteen of the men were members of an Air National Guard unit stationed at Camp Pendleton near Virginia Beach, Virginia.

The men assigned to the Red Horse 203rd Civil Engineering Squadron provided support to the squadron's combat operations. They stood ready to step in at a moment's notice to assist in accomplishing any military mission. Whether it was building or repairing a strategic airfield, drilling wells for water, or building roads to move material and troops, they would complete these pertinent tasks under some of the most adverse and hostile circumstances. Just as important to note, the 203rd also answered the call when civilian local and State authorities required assistance when dealing with an unforeseen disaster or recovery operations. Time and time again they performed admirably whenever called to duty.

These men were more than just soldiers, more than just volunteers that served their country. They were husbands, boyfriends, fathers, brothers, sons, friends and neighbors. They had lives outside the Guard that we need to celebrate as well. They loved and were loved. They worked to better themselves and the people around them. They were part of our community, a community that will miss them. What they contributed is very typical of what so many National Guardsmen have to do each and every day. They served their Nation with pride and honor.

Today we take a moment to honor them and their families for the sacrifice they have made for us and our country. It is a sacrifice and a loss we do not take lightly. These men were the epitome of both our country and the Air National Guard. The service that all the men and women of the Guard give every day is a part of what makes our country great.

Madam Speaker, our condolences go to their families. I therefore ask my colleagues to join in passing House Concurrent Resolution 47 to honor these fallen men.

□ 1330

Mr. SCHROCK. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS).

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCHROCK) for bringing this resolution forward.

Madam Speaker, I, too, want to extend my sincere condolences to the families of these brave soldiers who unfortunately died in this crash that occurred in my congressional district on Saturday morning. I really want to tell those folks how much we appreciate the sacrifice that they have made, because in the military it is a family affair. By families, we mean not only other men and women who serve in every branch of the military, but the close family ties that each of these men and women have with their own internal families. They are the ones that suffer from this and we sure do extend our condolences to them.

I particularly want to recommend and commend to the folks that were on

the scene in Dooley County, Georgia, on Saturday morning, who responded very quickly when the call came in that this crash had occurred. Sheriff Van Peavy, who is a dear friend, he and his folks just responded in a very quick and efficient manner to secure the premises. Commissioner Wayne West and all of his employees, Mayor Willie Davis of Vienna, Georgia, and the folks from Unadilla, Georgia responded in a very efficient manner and did a great job of securing the premises until the security personnel from Robbins Air Force Base could get there.

Colonel Seward and his folks, Colonel Seward is commander of the 78th Air Base Wing at Robbins Air Force Base, and he was the commanding officer on the scene. And he and his personnel did a great job. Colonel Michael Norri was also the on-scene commander of the security forces there. They told me that at one point in time they had over 300 meals that went out to serve the volunteers and the personnel, military and civilian personnel, who were assisting with the cleanup and attending to the damage that was on the field.

To the many EMTs, the volunteer firemen who responded to this emergency crash, we just extend our sincere congratulations and thank them for the job that they did.

Once again, we really extend our condolences to the family members of these brave men.

Mr. SISISKY. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHROCK. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS).

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCHROCK) and commend him for this resolution. I know that it is not a happy duty for him.

Madam Speaker, I, too, rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 47, a resolution honoring the 21 members of the National Guard who were killed in the crash of the National Guard aircraft on March 3, 2001. Like all Americans, of course, I am saddened by the news of this very tragic plane crash.

The Army C-23 Sherpa and its flight crew of three soldiers belonged to Detachment 1, 1st Battalion, 171st Aviation in Lakeland, Florida. The 18 Air Guard members belonged to the 203rd Red Horse Flight Engineering Unit and were returning to Virginia from Florida after spending 2 weeks of annual training at Hurlburt Field near Fort Walton Beach.

One of the aircraft's pilots, Eric Larson, was from my congressional district. On Monday, this past Monday, I spoke with Eric's wife Jennifer to express my deepest sympathies to her and Eric's family, but I also want to send my heartfelt condolences to all of the families killed in this tragic plane crash.

Wearing a uniform of one's nation, as already has been said today, is never easy, and this loss reminds us all of the tremendous sacrifices made by our men and women in our Armed Forces.

The loss also reminds us that freedom does not come without a price. Too often we take for granted the many liberties we enjoy in America. We must never forget that they have all been earned through the ultimate sacrifice paid by so many members of our Armed Forces.

Again, Madam Speaker, I want to send my deepest sympathy to the families of those killed; and I urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 47.

Mr. SISISKY. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHROCK. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS).

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCHROCK) for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. The cost is the spilled blood of our sons and daughters. I rise today in support of this resolution paying tribute to the 21 members of the National Guard who were killed on March 3.

One of those soldiers, Master Sergeant Michael Lane, was a native of Staunton, Illinois, in my congressional district. Master Sergeant Lane was remembered by his aunt, Betty Roberson, when she spoke to the Alton Telegraph earlier this week. Betty said, it is terrible. We are all supposed to be outlived by our kids.

She noted that he was a super kid, the kind of kid that any parent would be proud of. A graduate of Staunton High School, Master Sergeant Lane was a straight A student, involved in sports and particularly enjoyed country music and golf. Yet it was the love of his parents and his country that drove Michael to devote himself to the military and the defense of our freedoms.

Michael and his wife Roxanne lived in North Carolina where he became a full-time member of the Virginia National Guard.

While each of the National Guard members need to be recognized and deserve recognition by this body and a grateful nation, I must speak out on behalf of Michael's family and his many friends to say thank you.

Madam Speaker, we recognize Michael's commitment to his principles, his love of country and his family. We also know that he left this life while training and preparing to defend our Nation. Yet his Aunt Betty said, knowing that does not make your loss or the loss of your comrades any easier.

The price of freedom is eternal vigilance. The cost is the blood of our sons and daughters. God bless the victims, their families and the United States of America.

Mr. SISISKY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I spent the last week traveling to visit servicemen pretty much around the world, including the Sinai Desert, where we have 860

American service people. I am just absolutely amazed, and we are the luckiest people on earth, to have the quality of people that serve us, and the mixture we have around the world in our reservists and National Guard people. And I would just hope that the American public, who do not have the opportunity to see these young men and women, to see these young men and women act in the responsible way that they do not to make a lot of money but to serve their country is indeed a wonderful thing. These guardsmen were the same way to sacrifice their lives.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support House Concurrent Resolution 47 and express my condolences to the 21 families that lost loved ones in the Florida Army National Guard aircraft crash of March 3, 2001.

Every day, the men and women of the Armed Forces put their lives on the line to protect the freedoms we enjoy in the United States. A vital part of our Nation's protection comes from the personnel of our National Guard personnel. The mission of our National Guard force has increased over recent years in order to take on continued deployments and training missions throughout the world and here at home.

The 21 individuals lost in this tragic crash were training in Florida to be prepared for whatever mission this nation asked them to undertake. They will be remembered as tireless workers and positive examples to their families and communities. Many communities and organizations have been touched by this loss, but our Nation has felt the largest loss.

This resolution allows Congress to honor the commitment and sacrifice given to this nation by the 21 military personnel lost on March 3d. This accident will be felt for years to come as both the 203d Red Horse of the Virginia Air National Guard and the 1-171st Aviation Battalion of the Florida Army National Guard attempt to replace their fallen colleagues.

Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that we honor these guardsmen today.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I support H. Con. Res. 47, a resolution which honors the 21 members of the National Guard who were killed in the crash of a National Guard aircraft on March 3, 2001 in south-central Georgia.

The Florida Air National Guard plane that was bringing 18 members of the Virginia Air National Guard home to Virginia Beach after 2 weeks of training in Florida crashed unexpectedly several days ago. The C-23 Sherpa twin-engine turboprop plane which included a crew of three from the Florida Army National Guard, lost control during a torrential rainstorm.

The passengers were members of the 203d Red Horse Flight, a rapid-response engineering unit of the Virginia Air National Guard based at Camp Pendleton State Military Reservation. Their mission is to deploy into remote areas and quickly construct housing, airstrips, and other critical infrastructure to support military units.

The men who perished while serving in the 203d Red Horse Flight were fathers, husbands, and brothers. All of the victims were traditional members of the Guard, holding down a civilian job while serving part-time. Six Guardsmen were from Virginia Beach, three

from Norfolk, and two from Chesapeake. Their commanders spoke highly of the Guardsmen, reminiscing about how close they were, many having worked construction together in their civilian jobs. Some served together in the 203d for more than 10 years. These were dedicated and patriotic men who believed in serving their country.

Today, I join my colleagues in extending my condolences to the families of the fallen guardsmen. Their patriotism should never be forgotten. Their sacrifices serve to remind us that freedom should never be taken for granted. In training missions each and every day, men and women in the Armed Forces risk making the ultimate sacrifice to protect and defend America. We owe these guardsmen and their surviving family members a debt of gratitude.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this resolution offered by the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. SCHROCK, and the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. HOSTETTLER. The accident that occurred this past weekend in Georgia was indeed a tragic one. Twenty-one citizen soldiers lost their lives on the way back from their annual 2-week training exercise.

One of the National Guardsmen, Master Sergeant Michael Lane, was from Moyock, North Carolina, which I have the privilege to represent. As this resolution indicates, the thoughts and prayers of this Congress and this nation are with the family and friends of the victims. However, it is important to ensure that the tragic deaths of these 21 soldiers, as well as the deaths of the 2 Marine aviators killed in a Harrier crash on February 3, the 6 Army personnel killed in the Blackhawk accident on February 12, and the 2 Navy personnel killed in a T-45 Goshawk crash on February 21, did not happen in vain.

These accidents should serve as stark reminders that the freedoms America enjoys are not without cost. Every day, the men and women of our Armed Forces risk their lives in the defense of our national interests. It is a dangerous job whether they are stationed on the DMZ in Korea or as these accidents demonstrate, training here at home. We owe it to these brave souls to support them, honor them, and thank them for everything that they and their predecessors have given us.

I urge my colleagues to pass this resolution. Most of all, I urge them to remember the sacrifices made daily by both our men and women in uniform and by their families.

Mr. REYES. Madam Speaker, it is with sadness that we remember the 21 National Guard members recently killed in the Saturday, March 3, plane crash. Eighteen members of the Virginia Air National Guard's 203d Red Horse Unit and 3 members of the Florida Air National Guard perished when the C-23 Sherpa plane in which they were traveling crashed in Unadilla, Georgia while en route from Hurlbert Field, Fort Walton Beach, Florida to Oceana Naval Air Station, Virginia Beach, Virginia. Bad weather may have contributed to the crash, which left the plane in a plowed field, slippery with thick mud. The 203d is a rapid response construction unit capable of constructing runways and other critical facilities and has spent time in Kuwait and other remote locations in the Middle East in recent years.

Having just completed 2 weeks of annual training, working in ditches and laying water,

sewer and electrical lines in Florida, these Guard members were returning home to their families and civilian jobs. We cannot forget the tremendous contribution that the National Guard makes to this country. These citizen soldiers contribute to society in many ways. Both in civilian professions such as firefighter, small business owner or attorney and in the National Guard, contributing weekends and forfeiting vacations to participate in annual training, National Guard members are prepared and willing to serve this country when and where needed. Let us not forget these admirable young men who served their country honorably. They will be remembered for their sacrifice.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, our thoughts and prayers are with the families and loved ones of the 21 brave men who died while serving their nation. Serving in the military is a tough and demanding job not only for those who choose to serve, but the families who are forced to live without them, who wave goodbye knowing they may never see them again. I met recently with General Harrison with the Florida National Guard, and we talked about the great work the guard was doing, all the while being called for more and more missions. We are particularly thankful for the Guard in my home State of Florida because of the great support they offer. Whether it's fighting our wildfires or preparing for our hurricanes, the Guard is always there for us in our time of need.

I speak for my colleagues and all my constituents in thanking every man and woman who puts their life on the line for this country. Not just when tragedy strikes, but for everyday that you protect us from harm.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for introducing this resolution. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families and friends of these soldiers, and this tragedy serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by those who serve and protect our country. As many of us know, the plane's crew were members of the 171st Aviation Battalion of the Army Air National Guard based in Lakeland, Florida. I came to find out that the Command pilot, Chief Warrant Officer John Duce was from my district. I especially want to convey my heartfelt sympathies to his wife, son, and daughter.

It should be no surprise to those who knew John Duce that he was an extremely dedicated pilot and family man. He was a decorated veteran, having served in Vietnam and Desert Storm. It has been said that he was a man you would want to go into combat with.

Chief Warrant Officer John Duce, his co-pilot Chief Warrant Officer Eric Larson, and Staff Sergeant Robert Ward, and the 18 Virginia Guardsmen were all equally dedicated to their jobs, their families, and their communities. The men and women in our armed services place their lives on the line daily, where even routine training missions can carry the same risk as actual combat.

So I ask my colleagues to remember those who serve our Nation. They may not have the notoriety, but their service is immeasurable. I thank Mr. SCHROCK again for introducing this resolution and urge its adoption.

Mr. COLLINS. Madam Speaker, on March 3, a C-23 Sherpa aircraft was returning 18 members of the Virginia National Guard to their home following two weeks of training duty in Florida, and tragically, the plane never

arrived. The aircraft crashed in Unadilla, Georgia, killing all 21 National Guardsmen on board and forever leaving a void in the lives of the families and friends of those brave individuals.

I wish to offer my most heart-felt condolences to those affected by this terrible accident. While it may be inadequate consolation, it is important to remember that all of these individuals serve as a shining example of the honor and self-sacrifice which has inspired the men and women of our armed forces throughout the history of our great country. All of these individuals knew the inherent risks of military service, yet none of them backed away from their commitment. Again, to the families and friends of those killed in this tragic crash, your Nation owes you the highest debt of gratitude for this ultimate sacrifice made by your loved ones in service of the United States of America.

Mr. SISISKY. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHROCK. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCHROCK) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H.Con.Res. 47.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. SCHROCK. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will now put the question on each motion to suspend the rules on which further proceedings were postponed earlier today in the order in which that motion was entertained.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

House Concurrent Resolution 31, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 624, as amended, by the yeas and nays; and

House Concurrent Resolution 47, by the yeas and nays.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first such vote in this series.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING IMPORTANCE OF ORGAN, TISSUE, BONE MARROW AND BLOOD DONATION AND SUPPORTING NATIONAL DONOR DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the concurrent resolution, H.Con.Res. 31.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 31, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 418, nays 0, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 30]

YEAS—418

Abercrombie	Davis (IL)	Holden
Aderholt	Davis, Jo Ann	Holt
Akin	Davis, Tom	Honda
Allen	Deal	Hooley
Andrews	DeFazio	Horn
Armey	DeGette	Hostettler
Baca	Delahunt	Houghton
Bachus	DeLauro	Hoyer
Baird	DeLay	Hulshof
Baker	DeMint	Hunter
Baldacci	Deutsch	Hutchinson
Baldwin	Diaz-Balart	Hyde
Ballenger	Dicks	Inlee
Barcia	Dingell	Isakson
Barr	Doggett	Israel
Barrett	Dooley	Issa
Bartlett	Doyle	Istook
Barton	Dreier	Jackson (IL)
Bass	Duncan	Jackson-Lee
Bentsen	Dunn	(TX)
Bereuter	Edwards	Jefferson
Berkley	Ehlers	Jenkins
Berman	Ehrlich	John
Berry	Emerson	Johnson (CT)
Biggert	Engel	Johnson (IL)
Bilirakis	English	Johnson, E. B.
Blagojevich	Eshoo	Jones (NC)
Blumenauer	Etheridge	Jones (OH)
Blunt	Evans	Kanjorski
Boehlert	Everett	Kaptur
Boehner	Farr	Keller
Bonilla	Fattah	Kelly
Bonior	Ferguson	Kennedy (MN)
Bono	Filner	Kennedy (RI)
Borski	Flake	Kerns
Boswell	Fletcher	Kildee
Boucher	Foley	Kilpatrick
Boyd	Ford	Kind (WI)
Brady (PA)	Fossella	King (NY)
Brady (TX)	Frank	Kingston
Brown (FL)	Frelinghuysen	Kirk
Brown (OH)	Frost	Kleccka
Brown (SC)	Galleghy	Knollenberg
Bryant	Ganske	Kolbe
Burr	Gekas	Kucinich
Burton	Gephardt	LaFalce
Buyer	Gibbons	LaHood
Callahan	Gilchrest	Lampson
Calvert	Gillmor	Langevin
Camp	Gilman	Lantos
Cantor	Gonzalez	Largent
Capito	Goode	Larsen (WA)
Capps	Goodlatte	Larson (CT)
Capuano	Gordon	Latham
Cardin	Goss	Leach
Carson (IN)	Graham	Lee
Carson (OK)	Granger	Levin
Castle	Graves	Lewis (GA)
Chabot	Green (TX)	Lewis (KY)
Chambliss	Green (WI)	Linder
Clay	Greenwood	Lipinski
Clayton	Grucci	LoBiondo
Clement	Gutierrez	Lofgren
Clyburn	Gutknecht	Lowe
Coble	Hall (OH)	Lucas (KY)
Collins	Hall (TX)	Lucas (OK)
Combest	Hansen	Luther
Condit	Harman	Maloney (CT)
Conyers	Hart	Maloney (NY)
Cooksey	Hastings (FL)	Manzullo
Costello	Hastings (WA)	Markey
Cox	Hayes	Mascara
Coyne	Hayworth	Matheson
Cramer	Hefley	Matsui
Crane	Herger	McCarthy (MO)
Crenshaw	Hill	McCarthy (NY)
Crowley	Hilleary	McCollum
Cubin	Hilliard	McCrery
Culberson	Hinchey	McDermott
Cummings	Hinojosa	McGovern
Cunningham	Hobson	McHugh
Davis (CA)	Hoefel	McInnis
Davis (FL)	Hoekstra	McIntyre