

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN C. KILPATRICK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 10, 2003

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, due to personal business, I was unable to record my vote on four votes ordered for Nov. 7. Had I been present I would have voted "aye" on the motion offered by Representative MARSHALL to recommit the bill H.R. 1588, the Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004, rollcall No. 616; "no" on final passage of the conference report on H.R. 1588, rollcall No. 617; "aye" on the motion to instruct conferees to H.R. 6 offered by Representative FILNER, rollcall No. 618; and "aye" on the motion to instruct conferees to H.R. 1 offered by Representative CARDOZA, rollcall No. 619.

VETERANS DAY

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 10, 2003

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, during this season we pause to celebrate Veterans Day.

We pay tribute to the veterans who have honored us with their service, and their sacrifice. Some have even paid the ultimate price for freedom. In dying they renewed and sustained the freedom and the promise to our Nation.

In the last paragraph of his second inaugural address, Abraham Lincoln uttered the words that would ultimately comfort untold numbers of veterans and their families for generations to come. Lincoln challenged the divided nation to "Bind up the Nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan."

This is the test and the measure of our Nation. Is it any wonder that architects emblazoned these words on the walls of the Lincoln Memorial? They are also engraved on a plaque on the headquarters building of the Veterans Affairs Administration in Washington.

As a Nation, we are united in honoring our war dead, we need to be as united in honoring our living veterans.

Because our Armed Forces have borne the battles of freedom, the United States enjoys an unprecedented position of international leadership.

Yet, the promise of lifelong health care that this country made to our men and women in

uniform is being threatened, not by the aggression of a foreign power, but by inadequate funding.

Mr. Speaker, as our veterans grow older, they require increased dependence on health care services.

Before I served as the chief psychiatric nurse at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Dallas during the 70's. I was privileged to serve in the day care and rehabilitation center of the facility for 15 years. I know firsthand that caring for America's veterans is the ongoing cost of war.

The Republican budget cuts will adversely affect over 70,000 Texas veterans. This number includes more than 18,000 veterans in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Proposed cuts to the budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs will halt enrollment in the VA Health Care System. Texas veterans will be driven from the system. It is estimated that 5,200 active patients in the Dallas-Fort Worth area will drop out of the VA Health Care System.

Thousands of other veterans in my home State face the grim prospect of increasing health care costs in the VA system. The budget will also increase fees for veterans who utilize the VA Health Care System; forcing thousands in and around the Dallas metroplex to drop out.

An estimated 60,000 Texas veterans, including over 20,000 veterans receiving active VA care, are unlikely to be able to afford this increase.

Mr. Speaker, how can Congress and this administration even consider slashing benefits at a time when our young men and women are still in harm's way in Iraq, Afghanistan and Southwest Asia.

Veterans should not be expected to wait in longer lines, and travel farther for health care services at a diminished level. If we fail our obligation to veterans, how can we justify sending more and more young service members into harm's way?

As we celebrate Veterans Day, it is fitting and proper that we honor an African-American sailor who paid the ultimate price for our freedom.

I am planning to introduce legislation soon that calls for awarding the Congressional Medal of Honor to Dorie Miller posthumously for his heroic actions during World War II. This recognition is long overdue for a man who served his country with distinction and valor during the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Dorie Miller is just one example of African-American war heroes and veterans who have gone beyond and above the call of duty to preserve freedom's full measure, although they themselves were denied it in many quarters at home.

As Americans, we owe a debt of gratitude to our veterans. It is our duty to ensure that they receive the support they need from the country they so diligently served.

As we daily witness the courageous and professional efforts of our Armed Forces engaged in Iraq, Afghanistan and in Southeast Asia, we are all reminded of the tremendous sacrifices our veterans have made on our behalf.

As we celebrate another Veterans Day this November, we must back up our promises with our meaningful action.

HONORING SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS WEEK

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 10, 2003

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the work of school psychologists in Suffolk County, New York during the week of November 10, 2003.

The children of Suffolk County have a natural desire and propensity to learn and the inalienable right to an education. It is imperative that our society supports the needs of children and youth and invest in education as our top priority.

Children's mental health is closely linked to their successful learning and development. Schools must apply sound psychological principles to instruction, learning and oversight, cultivate children's intellectual, social and emotional development, meet the educational and developmental needs of culturally diverse student populations and promote prevention and early intervention to ensure students' achievement.

Suffolk County schools must ensure a safe, healthy learning environment for all children and be able to recognize and respond to their emotional and psychological difficulties.

Suffolk County school psychologists and other trained school-based professionals have the opportunity and ability to help parents identify and access needed community resources to help their children.

Suffolk County school psychologists are leaders in delivering mental health services to children. It is appropriate that Americans recognize the important and vital role that school psychologists play in the personal and academic development of our Nation's children.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.