

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DUANE GERREN

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 3, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today to pay tribute to Duane Gerren and thank him for his outstanding commitment to serving the people of Colorado as a Dolores County Commissioner. As he celebrates his retirement, let it be known that he leaves behind a wonderful and strong legacy of dedication to the citizens of Dolores County and the State of Colorado.

For the past four years, Duane has served Dolores County as a county commissioner. He also serves on the Dolores County Senior Advisory Board where he represented Dolores County to the 2002 Philanthropy Days for the Southwest. This enabled the Dolores County Senior Services to receive grants to help sustain the senior program. Duane's extensive civic involvement also includes serving on the Canyon of the Ancients Advisory Board, San Juan Basin Area Agency on Aging, and Housing Solutions for the Southwest.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that County Commissioner Duane Gerren has ceaselessly dedicated his time and efforts to serving his county and the people of Colorado as a County Commissioner for Dolores County. I am honored to bring his hard work and commitment to the attention of this body of Congress and this nation today. Thank you for all your service Duane, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

FALLEN HEROES

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES F. BASS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Mr. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Sergeant William John Tracy, Jr. of Webster, New Hampshire. He bravely served the Army's Company B, 5-158th Aviation, supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. Sgt. Tracy made the ultimate sacrifice to protect his country and aid the Afghani people when his Blackhawk helicopter tragically crashed in Kuwait on February 25, 2003.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Sergeant William John Tracy, Jr. and our other service men and women who have courageously given their own lives in order to protect and defend the democracy we enjoy in America and to extend the freedoms that come with democracy to those who live in fear and oppression worldwide.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE ACT

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 3, 2004

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill, which I am offering to ensure the continued success of vocational and technical education programs into the future. The bill, the Vocational and Technical Education for the Future Act, includes a number of positive reforms that will help strengthen vocational and technical education programs and improve opportunities for students.

Vocational and technical education, authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act and known as the Perkins program, aims to prepare youth and adults for the future by building their academic and technical skills and ensuring they are equipped to proceed with postsecondary education or pursue other avenues. This program represents one of the largest federal investments in our Nation's high schools and is a key component of our secondary and postsecondary education systems.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 66 percent of all public secondary schools have one or more vocational and technical education programs with approximately 96 percent of high school students taking at least one vocational and technical course during their secondary studies. Vocational and technical education is an important postsecondary option as well. Over 2,600 postsecondary sub-baccalaureate institutions, such as community colleges, technical institutes, skill centers, and other public and private colleges, also offer vocational and technical education.

Reforms made to the Perkins Act in 1998 increased the focus on ensuring that participating students at both the secondary and postsecondary levels acquired academic and technical skills, as well as completed their respective programs and transitioned into successful employment or further education. Some progress has been made as states have created an initial performance accountability system and the focus on academic performance among students participating in vocational and technical education courses has been strengthened.

Today, I am offering the Vocational and Technical Education for the Future Act to build on the 1998 reforms, and ensure vocational and technical education continues to prepare students for whatever they choose to pursue upon graduation. Should a student choose to proceed with postsecondary education, enter the military, or pursue other opportunities, the goal of the Perkins program must be to prepare students with the right combination of academic and technical skills so that they may succeed in whatever path they choose.

The bill I am offering includes a number of reforms designed to enhance achievement

and accountability, streamline programs so that states may better utilize federal dollars, and provide a model sequence of courses that will enhance vocational and technical education programs and partnerships.

The bill include important steps to increase accountability, and emphasizes continued improvement in student achievement. The bill establishes separate performance indicators for secondary and postsecondary students, improving on current law by recognizing the need for distinct measures to be applied to differing students. The bill also requires states to make continued and substantial improvement in the academic and vocational and technical achievement of students, and establishes incentive grants for states exceeding their own high standards.

To increase accountability and achievement at the local level, the bill requires local programs to establish local adjusted levels of performance similar to current statewide performance level expectations. The Vocational and Technical Education for the Future Act also establishes local improvement plans and permits states to apply sanctions for local recipients that, after receiving technical assistance, fail to show improvement or continually do not meet local adjusted levels of performance.

To better streamline and target federal funding, the bill combines funding for the TechPrep and Perkins state grant programs into one program funding stream, and incorporates the activities of Tech-Prep into the basic grant program. This consolidation will increase flexibility for states, streamline funding, and ensure current activities continue to exist while the program as a whole is updated to meet the challenges of the future.

The Vocational and Technical Education for the Future Act includes an important new element that will build upon efforts to coordinate secondary and postsecondary vocational and technical education. The bill requires states to develop model sequences of courses for vocational and technical programs to be used as an option at the local level. These model sequences of courses will incorporate both secondary and postsecondary elements, include rigorous and challenging academic and vocational and technical content in a coordinated, nonduplicative progression of courses, and lead to a degree or credential.

Technology and economic competition are combining in ways that are changing the nature of work and are redefining the American workplace. The need for higher literacy, numeracy, communication, and interpersonal skills in the workplace has grown over the past decade and will continue to be an important factor in the workplace in the future. The skills needed to be successful in postsecondary education are similar to the skills that are required by employers. The need for a strong academic and technical background makes it imperative that the current vocational and technical education system adapt in order to provide the knowledge and skills needed to succeed.

The bill I am offering today seeks to meet the challenges of a changing economy and

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

workplace by building upon the current successes of vocational and technical education. Our challenge is to ensure that all vocational and technical education students have access to programs that are sufficiently rigorous in both their academic and technical content, as well as provide clear connections with the education and training beyond high school that most Americans need for continued workplace success. I believe this bill fulfills those high standards, and I am pleased to be offering it today.

H. CON. RES. 413

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 2, 2004

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the resolution honoring the contributions of the more than 6 million American women, symbolized by "Rosie the Riveter", who served our country on the homefront during World War II and the changes to our society that came about because of them. These women stepped forward when our country needed them to work as engineers and welders and riveters to produce the ships and planes and tanks necessary for us to win the war.

I recently visited a factory in Athens, New York, that makes electric boats. They told me that even in this town of less than 4000 people, this boat factory was filled with women workers during World War II. The women factory workers made hundreds of thousands of life rafts to support the troops serving at sea. The whole country turned into a big factory to support the war effort, and the women workers were the force behind that factory.

The legacy of Rosie the Riveter is a broadening of opportunities to all Americans. For the first time in America, during World War II, women and minorities gained access to high-paying jobs in industry. Employee-sponsored health care and services such as child care for children of workers originated at this time. I join my colleagues today in applauding the improvements in the workplace and our society during the Rosie the Riveter Era and in honoring these women for stepping forward when their country needed them.

A TRIBUTE TO THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 3, 2004

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the City of San Diego Community and Economic Development. The City of San Diego Community and Economic Development is the winner of the Economic Development Administration's Excellence in Economic Development Award for 2004 in the category of Excellence in Urban or Suburban Economic Development. San Diego Community and Economic Development was given this honor for the program of Business Fi-

nance Section by a panel of economic development experts. The city of San Diego and the state of California should be extremely proud of this achievement.

Helping businesses in San Diego grow and flourish is a major focus of the City of San Diego. The Community and Economic Development Department is dedicated to helping foster the region's economic base to improve the quality of life for its citizens and business community. Through many continuing programs and projects, the City creates opportunities for businesses to succeed. The Department is a key component in attracting, retaining and expanding businesses, creating jobs and increasing investment in San Diego.

San Diego Community and Economic Development's Business Finance Team works to facilitate the flow of capital and other resources to the underserved areas of the city. Activities of the Business Development Team include issuance of industrial development bonds and direct loans. The Team also works closely with the banking community and encourages banks to develop and commit to San Diego-specific programs that provide expanded credit and banking services access for low-income communities and small and minority-owned businesses.

In 2002, 83 percent of the operating expenses of the Business Finance Team came from portfolio earnings and outside grants. Beginning in 1993, the Economic Development Administration has awarded three revolving loan fund investments for economic development in the city of San Diego. These investments were, in large part, possible due to the excellent stewardship exhibited by the Community and Economic Development's Business Finance Team.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the outstanding achievement of the City of San Diego's Community and Economic Development and applaud their success in creating jobs and business growth in the San Diego region.

THE BENEFITS OF BIOTECH FOODS

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 3, 2004

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member commends to his colleagues the following editorial from the May 20, 2004, Omaha World-Herald. The editorial highlights the findings in a recent report issued by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. As the U.N. report noted, biotech foods have been found to be safe and hold the potential to alleviate world hunger and disease. Biotech crops have already provided improved crop yields and reduced the demand for chemicals. While reasonable safeguards must remain in place, the continued research and use of biotech foods should be expanded. Those suffering from hunger in developing countries should not be deprived of the benefits of biotech foods simply due to irrational and unscientific fears.

[From the Omaha World-Herald]

BIOTECH'S BENEFITS

A United Nations food agency's new report offering a positive outlook on biotech foods should spur more thoughtful research and regulations on the world stage.

The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization's report found that genetically modified crops have been a help to the world's small farmers without posing any food safety threats. In fact, the group said, the major problem is that the technology hasn't spread fast enough or focused enough on the most beneficial crops.

Basic food crops of the poor such as cassava, potato, rice and wheat receive little attention from scientists, the agency said. Biotechnology holds promise for other important applications, too, such as animal vaccines and breeding.

The recent U.N. report notes that scientists are almost universally agreed that GM crops currently on the market are safe to eat. Even the European Union, where activists have poisoned consumers with fears of GM foods' hazards, has bowed to science and recently ended a moratorium on approving new biotech crops. (Approval of new crops will likely continue to be slow, however, and consumer acceptance limited.)

The U.N. agency offers no blank check for genetic engineering, however, nor should it. Careful environmental scrutiny is needed for each new crop, as the possibility of genes' reaching wild populations exists. Keeping medicinal crops, like those which erroneously reached an Aurora, Neb., co-op elevator a few years ago, in proper channels also must be considered.

But GM foods have brought real help already to the world's poor farmers—more money from improved crop yields, fewer dangers through the reduced use of pesticides. On the horizon is the promise of more nutritious foods and crops that grow in water-parched areas.

World efforts and research dollars should be funneled into those areas.

At the very least, we hope the U.N. report chokes off the fears that have left donated foods rotting in ports while African populations starve.

FALLEN HEROES

SPEECH OF

HON. MAC THORNBERRY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, on this Memorial Day, let us remember Air Force Captain Eric Das. He was a young man from my district who loved our country, and who lost his life fighting for its ideals in Iraq.

Captain Eric Das, 30, of Amarillo, Texas, was an Air Force pilot for the 333rd Fighter Squadron of the 4th Fighter Wing at North Carolina's Seymour Air Force Base. He was pronounced killed in action on April 18, 2003. Eric was on a bombing mission, flying an F-15E Strike Eagle jet over Iraq, when his plane was shot down on April 6, 2003. Eric has been awarded the Purple Heart, the Meritorious Service Award, and the Distinguished Flying Cross. He has also been installed in the Amarillo High School Hall of Fame. He will be remembered for his strong, sure faith in God.

Eric leaves behind his wife, 1st Lieutenant Nikki Das; parents, Bruce and Rosie Das of Amarillo; two sisters, Melody Neumann and Elisa Das, both of Amarillo; and his grandmother, Jessie Renne of Minnesota. Eric was not only a soldier, but a friend to many, a committed husband, and he will be remembered for the lasting impact he had on those who knew him.