

INTRODUCTION OF HIS PRIVATE BILL FOR THE RELIEF OF JUDITH TANJOH AND HER CHILDREN SERGE, MARIE, EMMANUEL AND ROGER TIKUM

### HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, today I have introduced a bill for the relief of Judith Tanjoh and her children Serge, Marie, Emmanuel and Roger Tikum.

This family last entered the United States in 1988 in A-2 diplomatic status from the Republic of Cameroon when the now deceased husband of Judith Tanjoh was attached to the Cameroon Embassy. For the next several years the family lived in lawful status in the U.S. through December 31, 1997 when the husband was recalled to the Cameroon because of Judith's political activities against the Cameroon government.

Cameroon has been found by the U.S. State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices to possess a "poor human rights record", continuing to commit "numerous serious abuses". After her husband's recall, Judith decided to file for asylum. However, in turn her application was denied by the INS Asylum Office, the Immigration Judge, the Board of Immigration Appeals, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit.

When the Board of Immigration Appeals "affirmed without opinion" the denial of the asylum application by the Immigration Judge on December 17, 2002, it also permitted the family to "voluntarily depart the U.S. . . . within 30 days from the date of this order or any extension beyond that time as may be granted by the district director [of the INS]". Within that 30 day period, Judith's attorneys filed for an extension of the voluntary departure period and a Petition for Review in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit. Each filing was in accordance with the family's statutory and regulatory rights.

The INS has never responded to the request for extension of the voluntary departure period. The 4th Circuit issued its mandate on November 10, 2003 "enforcing the Board's order of December 17, 2002". Of course, part of that order was permitting the family to voluntarily depart within 30 days.

While these proceedings were pending, INS issued Judith authorization to work and she obtained employment as a certified nursing assistant. Her employer has sponsored her (and her children derivatively) for lawful permanent residence via the Labor Certification process. That application, initially filed prior to April 30, 2001, has been certified by the U.S. Department of Labor and an Immigrant Worker's Visa Classification Petition has been pending with INS since July, 2003.

An INS General Counsel's Memo advises INS Government Attorneys to no longer apply the "exceptional and compelling circumstances" standard to motions to reopen for consideration of adjustment of status to lawful permanent residence for persons who have been in deportation proceedings. The Memo instructs that the INS should join in such a motion (which otherwise could not be filed if more than 3 months have expired since the decision of the Board of Immigration Ap-

peals) if the alien is statutorily eligible and warrants a favorable exercise of discretion. Judith's attorneys have twice requested the INS Chief Counsel's Office in Baltimore to join in such a motion in this case. Since Judith's labor certification was timely filed to allow her to adjust her status to permanent residence, she is statutorily eligible.

The family also clearly warrants a favorable exercise of discretion. Judith has been a hard-working, tax-paying certified nursing assistant for several years as she has worked with INS permission. The children have successfully progressed through our school system for the last 15 years. Roger Tikum graduated college and is now married, employed and living in Wisconsin. Although his wife is a U.S. citizen who has filed a Visa Petition to accord him Immediate Relative status, because he was previously riding on his mother's denied asylum application he faces deportation. Serge won a football scholarship to the University of Massachusetts at Amherst where he is a starting linebacker and an excellent student. Marie is doing well at Montgomery Community College. Emmanuel is a star football player at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, where he has also made honor roll.

The Tanjoh/Tikum family are not criminals. They are not terrorists. The children fear being uprooted from their true home in the U.S. and forced to live in a human rights abusive country which they do not know and whose predominant language they do not speak.

Yet, the INS Government Attorneys have coldly rejected each overture for clemency. First, by insisting that the harsher "exceptional and compelling circumstances" standard applies and that these circumstances were neither exceptional nor compelling. Second, by stating that the family was not statutorily eligible for permanent residence because they overstayed the Board of Immigration Appeals' December 17, 2002 Order granting a 30 day voluntary departure period even though the INS has never responded to the extension requests and even though the family timely pursued their Petition for Review rights to the 4th Circuit which only enforced the Board's Order on November 10, 2003.

Therefore, today I have introduced a Private Bill that will enable Judith Tanjoh and the Tikum children to obtain permanent residency. I hope my action today will help bring this heartbreaking story to a close.

### TRIBUTE TO ALEWEL'S COUNTRY MEATS

### HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity to honor Alewel's Country Meats for their contribution in shipping more than 1,000 pounds of beef jerky to provide our Missouri National Guardsmen serving in Iraq a taste of home.

Alewel's Country Meats was started in the year 1932 by Hugo and Emil Alewel of Concordia, Missouri. Originally called Alewel Brothers, the name was later changed to Alewel's Country Meats in 1964. The plant grew to enormous size and in 1974 they expanded to Warrensburg, Missouri. My good

friend, Roger Alewel, once ran Alewel's Country Meats, and his able son, Randy, now runs the company.

Alewel's Country Meats is known for their prize winning country hams, bacon, and sausage which are produced from the freshest meat of mid-Missouri. With a legacy of over 70 years, Alewel's Country Meats has become known not only for their quality meats but also for their charitable donations to rural Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, the generous contribution by Alewel's Country Meats is inspirational to all of us. I know the Members of the House will join me in paying tribute to the outstanding commitment to our service members shown by the men and women who work there.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. ROBIN HAYES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I was detained on Thursday, July 15 and Monday, July 19, 2004. Had I been present I would have voted in the following manner: "Yea" on roll No. 385, "nay" on roll No. 386, "yea" on roll No. 387, "nay" on roll No. 388, "nay" on roll No. 389, "nay" on roll No. 390, "yea" on roll No. 391, "yea" on roll No. 392, and "yea" on roll No. 393.

### HONORING THE 32ND MILITARY POLICY COMPANY

### HON. MARK GREEN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize before this House the courageous soldiers of the 32nd Military Police Company, who tomorrow will return home to Wisconsin after spending 16 months fighting for peace and stability in Iraq.

In the face of constant danger, the members of the 32nd helped pave the way for Iraq's steady march toward democracy. Throughout their tour, these brave men and women provided vital security in and around Baghdad, and helped train the new civilian Iraqi police force. Their tireless efforts proved instrumental in helping the new Iraqi government take control of their fledgling democracy, and their sacrifice reminds us all that freedom is not free.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to pay tribute to the 32nd Military Police Company. With 23 Purple Hearts awarded, their unit suffered more injuries from hostile action than any Wisconsin National Guard unit since World War II. On behalf of the citizens of Wisconsin's Eighth Congressional District, and a grateful nation, it is my honor to recognize and welcome home these great Americans.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, on July 9, 2004, I inadvertently missed rollcall vote 357.

I would like the record to show that, had I voted, I would have voted "yea."

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR ROGER B. BROWN (RET.) AND MR. E. PAUL VOORHEES

### HON. MAC COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 22, 2004*

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate two prominent members of the Columbus, Georgia community, Army Ranger, Major Retired Roger B. Brown and Mr. E. Paul Voorhees for being inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame on July 8, 2004 at Fort Benning Army Base in Columbus. These two extremely worthy inductees have made endless lists of astonishing contributions and are recognized for this reason. The Ranger Hall of Fame honors and preserves the legacies of America's most extraordinary Rangers and friends of the Army Rangers. They signify selfless sacrifice, professional excellence, and remarkable accomplishment in the defense of the greatest nation in the world and to the highest ideals of service. These gentlemen stand as examples to all professionals.

In addition to Ranger Brown's many accomplishments, he is inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame for his phenomenal service as an Non-Commissioned Officer NCO and Officer in the modern Rangers. During the Vietnam War, Ranger Brown served three combat tours as an NCO in Ranger Units. He also served numerous tours with the Ranger Department. Ranger Brown served as team leader with both the 173rd Airborne Brigade's Long Reconnaissance Patrol and with the 101st Airborne Division's F/58th Infantry. His exploits are recorded as legend. His teams' accomplishments were those by which others were judged. Ranger Brown served with the F/58th Infantry, those who served with him still admire his leadership qualities of understanding and compassion supported by the highest standards of fitness, discipline, training, and morality. He attended Officer Candidate School where he received a Commission as a 2LT in the Infantry, he retired at the rank of Major. Distinguished as an outstanding Ranger, everyone who served with Ranger Brown had only the highest regard for him. Sergeant Major of the Army Retired, Julian Gates, has stated that "Roger is a great American, a great Ranger, a great soldier leader." For many, Ranger Brown has always followed the Rangers motto and "led the way."

Mr. E. Paul Voorhees, a licensed, ordained minister, is renowned for his selfless sacrifice. Serving the children and the underprivileged, his compassion is celebrated in the Valley Rescue Mission in Columbus, Georgia. In 2003, he traveled at his own expense to Amman, Jordan, and Baghdad, Iraq to visit with and minister to the troops during Operation Iraqi Freedom. He served on the National Staff, Royal Rangers, Assemblies of God, from 1967 to 1985. He has also been a partner-in-education at Stowers Elementary School, Fort Benning. He received a proclamation by the Mayor of Columbus, along with many other community citations, he has earned the Fort Benning's Commander's

Award for public service and the St. Maurice Medal. Paul currently serves on the board of directors, National Infantry Association, is a member of the Association of the U.S. Army AUSA, a charter member of the Georgia Sheriffs's Association chaplain's division, and is a chaplain and reserve deputy in Harris County, Georgia.

His store, Ranger Joe's International has grown under his leadership with the worldwide distribution store in Hinesville, Georgia, and two stores in Columbus. Mr. Voorhees was selected as "Small Business Giant, 2003" by the Columbus Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Voorhees is a brilliant example of what U.S. Army Rangers epitomize—excellence in leadership; excellence in performance of duties; and excellence of character.

I congratulate Major Roger B. Brown and Mr. E. Paul Voorhees for their outstanding performances and contributions to the United States Army Rangers. They are a tremendous source of pride and inspiration to all Americans.

### INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO REPLACE THE PROVISIONS OF LAW MAKING REEMPLOYED ANNUITANTS INELIGIBLE FOR PHYSICIANS COMPARABILITY ALLOWANCES AND SPECIAL PAY FOR PHYSICIANS AND DENTISTS

### HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 22, 2004*

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to provide rehired annuitant physicians eligibility to receive a Physicians Comparability Allowance (PCA) and Physicians Special Pay (PSP) under Title 38. This bill would aid in the recruitment and retention of qualified physicians to the federal workforce.

The PCA and PSP are both mechanisms by which federal agencies can provide physicians allowances when these agencies are experiencing recruitment and retention problems. Currently, civilian rehired annuitant physicians are prohibited by law from receiving these benefits. However, retired military that join the civilian federal workforce are currently not subject to an exclusion from the PSP and PCA.

We are all aware of the possibilities of a shortage of federal employees due to an aging federal workforce. We must begin now to ensure that we have available pools of talent to replace the current workforce. We must make the Federal Government a viable option for talented and committed Americans. This legislation will provide additional flexibility and authority for attracting and retaining experienced physicians to the federal government.

This issue was brought to my attention by my constituent, Dr. Nancy Scher, who is a Medical Officer in the Division of Oncology Drug Products, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER) at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Dr. Scher is prohibited by law from receiving a PCA or PSP in her current position at the FDA because she is a reemployed civilian annuitant.

Dr. Scher spent 20 years as a part-time physician at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Huntington, West Virginia while also em-

ployed as a full-time Professor of Medicine at Marshall University. At the VA, Dr. Scher provided a high level of specialty medical care to veterans in a part of the country and at a time when this was a scarce resource. Because of her increasing duties as Chief of Hematology-Oncology at Marshall University, Dr. Scher took an early retirement from the VA with a deceased retirement benefit.

Dr. Scher is devoted to her craft and being denied PCA and PSP will not prevent her from continuing her position at the FDA. However, the law should be changed to make her eligible for these allowances. It would be a shame for the Federal Government not to give highly skilled and experienced physicians like Dr. Scher all the possible advantages available to stay in the federal workforce. The FDA currently pays a PCA and PSP to younger and less experienced physicians. Dr. Scher, as a rehired annuitant is prohibited from receiving these benefits.

Thousands of federal employees over the years have been responsible for breaking new ground in science and medicine. We must continue this tradition by ensuring that the Federal government becomes the employer of choice for scientific and medical talent.

### TRIBUTE TO RETIRING COLONEL DONALD R. CURTIS, JR.

### HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 22, 2004*

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that Colonel Donald R. Curtis, Jr. is retiring after a long and distinguished career.

Colonel Curtis' outstanding service to the nation has been marked by meritorious service in increasingly demanding command and staff positions in both the United States and overseas. Throughout his career, Colonel Curtis demonstrated strong, outstanding executive ability, and dedication to the spirit and mission of the United States Army.

Colonel Curtis was commissioned from the United States Military Academy in 1979. He is a graduate of Ohio State University, holding a Master of Science Degree in Civil Engineering. He also graduated from the Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced Courses School, the United States Army Command and General Staff College, and the United States War College. He is a registered Professional Engineer as well.

Colonel Curtis served in command and staff positions over the past twenty-five years. He served as a platoon leader in the 902nd Engineer Company (Assault Float Bridge) at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. He was commander of B Company, 44th Engineer Battalion in the Republic of Korea. Then he did a tour as Assistant Resident Engineer for the Fort Leonard Wood Resident Office, Kansas City District. He served as Battalion Operations Officer, 12th Engineer Battalion, 1st Armored Division at Mannheim, Germany, and served in a joint assignment with the Defense Intelligence Agency. He was the commander of the Walla Walla District from 1996–1998, and then did a tour on the Army Staff. He now is retiring from the Army after having served his last assignment as the District Engineer for the Fort