

Mr. Speaker, I join with the Fifth District in congratulating Sheridan and Mildred Ostrander on their fiftieth wedding anniversary, and wish them and their extended family all the happiness in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, on March 29, I was in New York City for meetings to discuss a number of homeland security issues with various officials and, therefore, missed two recorded votes.

I take my voting responsibility very seriously and would like the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to reflect that, had I been present, I would have voted, "yes" on recorded vote No. 94 and "yes" on recorded vote 95.

TANF REFORM

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, we have failed to make a real TANF reform that helps the working poor low-income single parents, children of poverty stricken families, and especially the men and women who have a drug conviction.

The TANF program contains several provisions that could decrease funding for individuals who received a drug felony conviction, which includes use, possession, or distribution. There is a lifetime ban on TANF and food stamps for individuals who receive a drug felony conviction after August 22, 1996, unless the State enacts legislation to disregard the ban completely or narrow it. Only 7 States and the District of Columbia have completely opted out of the ban with another 18 states allowing benefits to be paid to individuals with drug felony conviction in certain circumstances. For instance, in only three states the ban does not apply to those who finish their sentence and comply with their parole or probation, six states do not apply the ban to those in treatment or who have completed treatment. However, 41% of States ban TANF and food stamps based on the conviction alone. A report in 2002 estimated that the ban affected 92,000 women in 23 States studied.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a State issue. This is our Nation's issue. If we do not help all of those in need, if we stop giving assistance to some of our most needy, those with an addiction or who have been falsely accused of this conviction, our Nation will end up paying for it with higher rates of crime, higher recidivism rate, and a number of individuals remaining drug-users. The National Treatment Improvement Evaluation Study found that women treated in federally funded treatment programs increased their employment and decreased their use of welfare. The number who reported being employed in the year after treatment increased by 25 percent. Incomes also increased by 6 percent while the number receiving public assistance decreased by 8 percent.

This clearly demonstrates that punishment and banning assistance is not the answer. Instead, federal assistance will assist to produce working, tax-paying citizens.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM DeMINT

OF SOUTH CAROLINA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. DeMINT. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during rollcall votes 94 and 95. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on each of those rollcall votes.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LINCOLN DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 93, HR. 3905—Community Recognition Act of 2003, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

PAYING TRIBUTE TO SGT. ROBERT JEPSEN

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to rise and pay tribute to an outstanding patriot from my home state of Colorado. Sergeant Robert Jepsen recently returned from serving our nation in Operation Iraqi Freedom. While there, Robert was injured in a terrorist bombing attack near Baghdad. Sadly, the attack also claimed the lives of three of Robert's fellow 82nd Airborne Paratroopers. While we mourn the loss of Robert's comrades, I think it is appropriate to call the attention of this body of Congress, and our nation, to the sacrifices that Robert and his fellow soldiers have made on behalf of a grateful nation.

After graduating from high school, Robert answered his country's call to duty when he entered the United States Army. From the outset, it was clear that Robert had the qualities of a tremendous soldier. His bravery, intelligence and outstanding leadership did not go unnoticed, and Robert earned his Ranger Tab with the 101st Airborne Division, (Air Assault).

Throughout his recovery, Robert has drawn on the qualities that made him a great soldier. He continues to maintain a positive attitude and high spirits while recuperating at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and plans to return to school to realize his dream of becoming a pediatrician.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise and pay tribute to Sergeant Robert Jepsen. Robert's personal sacrifice and unwavering heroism is the true embodiment of patriotism. On behalf of my fellow Coloradans, and Americans, I wish to thank Robert for his bravery and noble service.

TWO OTHER WAYS TO HELP AND HONOR OUR TROOPS

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise in support of two important bills enacted by the House earlier today that will provide much-needed and deserved assistance to the families of U.S. troops, and provide special recognition for the distinguished service of our military personnel in the global war against terrorism. This legislation would reimburse U.S. service personnel for their transportation costs and create two new campaign medals designating military service in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The first bill, S. 2057, builds on the much-needed and highly successful Operation Hero Miles, which allows Americans to donate their unused frequent flier mileage, by also reimbursing troops for travel expenses to their final destinations. Under the U.S. Armed Forces Central Command Rest and Recuperation Leave Program, those troops who traveled before Dec. 19, 2003 are not eligible to be reimbursed for commercial airfare beyond U.S. points of entry—Atlanta, Baltimore, Dallas-Fort Worth, or Los Angeles. Also, there is still a need for travel assistance for soldiers on emergency leave, and for family members of soldiers being treated at U.S. military hospitals. This bill would allow troops to seek reimbursement retroactive to Sept. 25, 2003 which will help many of their families save hundreds of dollars each.

I am also proud to cosponsor and vote for a second bill passed by the House today, H.R. 3104, which would create separate campaign medals specifically designed to recognize service by members of the Armed Forces who participated in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. These decorations will be worn proudly by our troops and provide important symbolic recognition by distinguishing their service in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and emphasizing their specific and unique significance in our mission to win the global war against terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, I salute the troops for their continuing valor, patriotism and commitment to our Nation. We thank them for their heroism and sacrifices, and we support these bills to honor their service and to provide much-needed relief for their families. Now that a year has passed since U.S. troops were deployed to Iraq, we wish them all a safe return and hope this legislation makes their trip home a little easier.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CLIMATE STEWARDSHIP ACT

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind that global warming is happening and that man is contributing to it. Now, it is our responsibility to work to mitigate the impacts of potentially catastrophic climate change.

It is clear we must begin taking steps to reduce U.S. emissions and the Climate Stewardship Act lays out a scientifically sound, economically feasible and environmentally progressive formula for doing so.

By limiting the combined global warming emissions of major polluters, creating a trading market for emissions allowances and reductions through a National Greenhouse Gas Database, and funding transition assistance for workers, industries and consumers, this bill takes a responsible first step toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions in a way that is timely, meaningful and cost-effective.

The Climate Stewardship Act targets emissions from the electricity generation, transportation, industrial, and commercial economic sectors, which together account for 85 percent of overall U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. (Starting in 2010, the bill would cap U.S. aggregate emissions for the covered sectors at the 2000 level. The bill's emissions limits would not apply to the agricultural and the residential sectors.)

It applies a successful, market-based approach to reducing emissions, and the result will be cleaner air and a healthier environment.

The Climate Stewardship Act charts a new, more responsible course on climate policy and reflects a cognizance of the very real threat global warming poses to our Nation and the rest of the world.

We simply will not have a world to live in if we continue our neglectful ways.

CHILD NUTRITION IMPROVEMENT AND INTEGRITY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I supported H.R. 3873, the Child Nutrition Improvement and Integrity Act last week on the House floor and again commend Chairman BOEHNER, Ranking Member MILLER, Subcommittee Chairman CASTLE and Ranking Member WOOLSEY for their hard work and collaboration on a bipartisan bill which continues to feed our Nation's children.

However, due to our Nation's budget being in the red, it is bothersome that we can not feed more of our Nation's children whose parents are hard working Americans. It is bothersome that there are children whose families can not even afford the reduced price meals but are simply not poor enough to receive free lunch. With over 500 school boards and many state boards of education urging Congress to eliminate the reduced price charge—Congress has replied with “we just can not afford to help your children eat”.

It is also bothersome that some in Congress feel that it is inappropriate to recommend what foods are healthy and should be given to students and what unhealthy foods should be kept off the menu. The argument is why would schools attempt to provide healthy foods when students can simply get the unhealthy foods outside of school. Should our schools begin to give up on a student in the 9th or 10th grade because neither parent graduated high school? Should our schools not teach a stu-

dent to read because neither parent is literate nor does the home provides newspapers or books to read? Should our schools not teach algebra, geometry, or calculus because the parent can only do simply math with a calculator?

Our schools have been the stepping stone to a better life for many individuals than the life of which their parents had academically, socially, emotionally and there is no reason why nutritionally can not be added to the list.

Mr. Speaker, I supported this reauthorization last week—but only wish we could have done more to prevent more children from going hungry.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM DeMINT

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during rollcall vote 88. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay” on the vote.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOHN RINO

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to pay tribute today to John Rino for his admirable service and dedication to his Trinidad, Colorado community. His volunteer efforts for Trinidad seniors were recently recognized at the Harry R. Sayre Senior Center where a new wing was dedicated in his name. I would like to congratulate John on receiving this honor and thank him for his unwavering commitment to the City of Trinidad and the State of Colorado.

An active member in city politics, John served on the Trinidad city council for sixteen years, and served for two terms as mayor. During his years in public service, John was instrumental in making significant improvements to the city. He organized the county ambulance district, saw that neglected streets were paved, saw that wooden water transmission lines were replaced with metal lines, and extended water lines to areas of the city that were not previously provided with city water. For the last sixteen years, John has volunteered his time with the senior citizen center, organizing and cooking spaghetti dinner fund-raisers that usually have 150 or more people in attendance.

Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that John Rino is a person who possesses dedication and commitment to his pursuit of public service, and it is my distinct pleasure to honor John before this body of Congress and this nation today. Naming the new wing after John is the center's way of saying thanks for his selfless efforts and leadership, and is a well-deserved testament to his ongoing efforts to better his community. I wish John all the best in his future endeavors.

LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM TREA SENIOR CITIZENS LEAGUE

HON. GENE TAYLOR

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, in January I introduced H.J. Res. 88, a bill proposing a Constitutional amendment to make the Social Security trust funds, the Medicare trust funds, the military retirement trust fund, and the civil service retirement trust fund off-budget so that the annual budget deficit will reflect the true costs of the obligations that accrue each year.

My bill has been endorsed by the TREA Senior Citizens League, an affiliate of The Retired Enlisted Association. I would like to insert the letter of support from George A. Smith, Chairman of TREA Senior Citizens League into the RECORD:

JANUARY 15, 2004.

Hon. GENE TAYLOR
Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN TAYLOR: TSCL, a non-partisan advocacy organization consisting of some 1.2 million members and supporters nationwide, understands that you intend to reintroduce a constitutional amendment resolution that would lock Social Security, Medicare and military retirement trust funds off budget. On behalf of our members and supporters, I want to convey our strong support for your resolution.

Contrary to popular belief, Social Security and other trust fund monies are not kept separate from other government funds. The government uses those monies when it needs to, and simply writes an IOU to the trust fund. I believe the American people would be outraged if they truly understood this was happening.

Also, because of the way the government counts the surpluses that we have in the various trust funds, the deficit appears to be less than it really is. Once again, I believe if the American people would see the true size of the deficit, there would be an end to business as usual in Washington. As Comptroller General David Walker said in a September 2003 speech, “while we are starting off in a financial hole, we don't really have a very good picture of how deep it is” because the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Management and Budget's current measurement and scorekeeping approaches relay an incomplete and misleading picture of the government's financial condition.” [Roll Call, September 18, 2003]

TSCL also applauds the approach you are taking by introducing a constitutional amendment resolution. If legislation only were to be enacted, we believe that Congress and the White House would ignore or work around the law. This is why it is imperative that a constitutional amendment be ratified.

TSCL's parent organization is The Retired Enlisted Association. As such, we are especially grateful for the protections you seek not only for Social Security and Medicare trust funds, but also for the military retirement and disability trust fund.

Please be assured, Rep. Taylor, that we will be doing whatever we can do to move this resolution forward. Again, thank you for your efforts. We look forward to working with you on this critical matter.

Warm Regards,

GEORGE A. SMITH,
Chairman.