

Command Sergeant Major Debra L. Strickland continues to distinguish herself as an invaluable leader in the U.S. Army, and it is an honor for each member of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues to recognize the courage and commitment of CSM Strickland and all women in the military.

**DISAPPOINTED BY DECISION TO
CLOSE INPATIENT CARE AT VA
HOSPITAL IN SAGINAW**

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2004

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my disappointment in the Secretary of Veteran Affairs decision to eliminate the inpatient care services at the Aleda E. Lutz Veterans Medical Center in Saginaw, Michigan. This decision will have a devastating impact on the quality and accessibility of medical care for over 60,000 veterans in Mid-Michigan.

In Michigan, 130,000 veterans rely on the services and benefits of the Veteran Affairs' health care system. Every one of those veterans, regardless of location, deserves immediate and convenient access to the best medical care services available. Removing the inpatient beds at the Lutz Medical Center will hinder the delivery and accessibility of medical care to veterans in our area.

We can not allow the Bush Administration to turn its back on our veterans and disrupt access to health services that they are entitled to receive. None of our nation's 26 million veterans should ever be denied or stripped of essential medical services. It is unconscionable and unacceptable that our local veterans will be forced to travel more than two hours to the nearest Veteran Medical Center for inpatient care.

I urge my colleagues to fight against the Secretary of Veteran Affairs' decision to realign or eliminate medical care services from VA hospitals across this country. We owe it to our veterans to fight this decision to show our gratitude for their service and sacrifice to our country. We must continue to work together to make sure that America's heroes receive the best medical care available.

**HONORING THE AMERICAN LUNG
ASSOCIATION CELEBRATING ITS
100TH ANNIVERSARY**

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2004

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to extend my sincere congratulations to the American Lung Association on its 100th anniversary. The American people have no better ally in the fight against lung disease, and I am proud to join with the American Lung Association as it commemorates this special occasion.

In 1904, a dedicated group of physicians, nurses and volunteers came together and founded the American Lung Association in order to fight for the eradication of tuberculosis. Over the years, the Lung Association

has expanded its research, education and advocacy program to address chronic lung disease.

Programs like Open Airways For Schools, which is an elementary-school education program that teaches children with asthma how to manage their disease, is just one example of the many ways the American Lung Association has improved the lives of individuals afflicted with lung disease.

The Lung Association has also been a strong advocate for pollution control and environmental health. Air pollution can be particularly harmful to individuals who suffer from lung disease, and the Lung Association's annual State of the Air report is nationally recognized for providing an indepth study of air quality across the country.

The people of the American Lung Association deserve to be recognized for their invaluable public service. I wish them all the best as they celebrate their first 100 years.

**MILLER MOTION TO INSTRUCT
CONFEREES ON FY04 LABOR-HHS
BILL, H.R. 2660**

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2004

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I support the Miller motion to instruct conferees because it ensures that those making as little as \$23,660 a year are able to retain the overtime privileges they currently receive.

Mr. Speaker, I was a human resources professional for ten years in a manufacturing company, and then for ten more years, I had my own company, advising high tech companies on their personnel policies and practices . . . including wage and salary structures. I know a thing or two about work structures.

Under the new overtime rules a "team leader" would be ineligible for overtime. I'm going to tell you what a team leader is: first of all, a team leader is not a professional that has a whole group of professional people working as a team negotiating for some grand project in some community. That team leader is a professional period, not a person paid on an hourly rate or a salaried nonexempt person.

In reality a team leader is a senior employee who has the background and the experience to earn the top of their pay rate. And because they've been around, because they know something, they've been asked to show more junior workers how to do the work, and to give them confidence and to give them guidance.

But they're doing the work right alongside of the worker they are mentoring. Today this person earns the top of their pay grade plus overtime. Under the new rules, without that overtime, that "Team Leader" is probably going to earn less than the person that they're working and guiding. The person the "Team Leader" guides will still qualify for overtime for the same hours worked.

So what are we talking about here? We're talking about people at the top of their pay grade getting less because they happen to have institutional knowledge, even though they are doing the same job. And I just don't see how anybody here in this chamber believes that any new rules that impact workers like these are good for most Americans.

These rules help big business plain and simple, such as the newspaper publishers who were standing up and cheering Secretary Chao when she announced how these rules would allow them to stop paying overtime to journalists. They knew they were going to save money, lots of money.

Well, a rule that works for a handful of business owners and against most of the workers can't be the rule that works for the people of this country.

That's why I urge my colleagues to support the Miller motion to instruct conferees and prevent our hard working Americans from losing the overtime they have come to depend on.

**HONORING THE VISITING NURSE
ASSOCIATION OF SOMERSET
HILLS, NEW JERSEY**

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2004

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Visiting Nurse Association of Somerset Hills, Somerset County, New Jersey in my Congressional District. The Visiting Nurse Association of Somerset Hills is celebrating one hundred years of providing excellence in community health care.

Despite its humble beginnings, the Association's history is a proud one. The Visiting Nurse Association began as the vision of Miss Lillian Nichols, a parish nurse connected to St. Bernard's Episcopal Church who attended to the ailing and meager in 1903. In 1904, a group was fashioned and be accountable for her assistance to the people of Somerset Hills consisting of the towns of Basking Ridge, Bernardsville, Chester Borough, Gladstone, and Mendham Borough, to name a few. And so began the Visiting Nurse Association, one of the original 100 groups in the United States. Soon, as more and more of her thankful patients availed themselves of its services, it became clear that the Association was desperately needed in this fast-growing area in Northern New Jersey.

The founding committee was incorporated in 1906 as the Visiting Nurse Association and transferred into a habitat built by the friends of the Association on Olcott Avenue in Bernardsville. In 1910 the VNA started educational programs on sanitation and preventative health procedures that carry on in the present day. In 1933 the Great Depression forced the VNA to increase its efforts at social work. They provided milk, cod liver oil and coal to reduce poverty and malnutrition, and 708 patients visited that year, an increase of six-fold in one year!

By 1937 the new VNA Constitution and bylaws increased the number of Board of Trustees members to 40. In 1970 the 'Year of Vaccination for the VNA' nurses attempted to eliminate Rubella, or German measles, through the vaccination of 4,435 children. Soon after, diabetes screening by the VNA started. And in 1984, the treatment of the incurably sick at home, was started by the VNA and their Hospice Program flourished. Five years later, the Somerset Hills Adult Day Care Center opened, a VNA affiliate that offers a social day care program to the elderly and disabled.

Today, with the same careful attention and dedicated service Lillian Nichols provided a century ago, the nurses of the Visiting Nurse Association of Somerset Hills are helping to heal the sick, the injured, the elderly and the needy of Somerset County.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues in the House of Representatives join with me in congratulating the Visiting Nurse Association of Somerset Hills, and all of the association's outstanding staff, employees and volunteers, upon celebrating its 100th Anniversary.

HONORING CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT MARGARET C. BURGESS FROM THE U.S. AIR FORCE

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2004

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of myself, Congresswoman CAPITO and that entire Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues to recognize the 7th Annual Women in the Military Wreath Laying Ceremony hosted by the Caucus at Arlington National Cemetery. The purpose of this event is to honor our Nation's servicewomen and female veterans for their courage and achievements, and to remember women who have died in service to the United States.

Today, we have the opportunity to recognize 5 outstanding female servicewomen, one selected from each branch of the military. These women serve their respective branches with honor, dignity, and courage. These highly decorated leaders chose to defend our freedom and embody the spirit of those that served before them.

From the U.S. Air Force, we will honor Chief Master Sergeant Margaret C. Burgess, who is currently serving as the Superintendent, Intelligence, 920th Rescue Wing, Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. Sergeant Burgess has served the Air Force at a variety of duty stations and capacities. She distinguished herself early in her career by meritorious service during her first assignment as Target Intelligence Specialist at the Royal Air Force Bentwaters, England, where she made outstanding contributions to the wing's combat mission folder program, significantly contributing to the wing's combat readiness. Her thorough understanding of United States Air Forces in Europe and North Atlantic Treaty Organization war plans, and her in-depth knowledge of A-10 combat deployment, made her a key member of the intelligence team during exercises and evaluations.

Sergeant Burgess has repeatedly demonstrated outstanding performance, leadership and devotion to the U.S. Air Force. Of note, Sergeant Burgess engineered the intelligence repatriation process of returned isolated personnel to Ahmed Al Jaber Airbase, Kuwait, and operated successfully during the repatriation of an F-14 aircrew that had ejected over southern Iraq. She demonstrated superb organizational skills by developing comprehensive, all-source ground order battle files of Iraq that were later adopted as the standard by other theater intelligence assets, which resulted in the successful completion of 5 combat rescues, 4 combat recoveries and more than 16

combat support sorties. Among her many achievements, Sergeant Burgess was also awarded the Bronze Star for her work during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Chief Master Sergeant Margaret C. Burgess continues to distinguish herself as an invaluable leader in the Air Force, and it is an honor for each member of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues to recognize the courage and commitment of Sergeant Burgess and all women in the military.

COMMEMORATING 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF BROWN VS. BOARD OF EDUCATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 2004

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, this is an enormously important day in the lives of African Americans and in the history of this country.

Brown vs. Board of Education, almost without question, is the most important Supreme Court case of the twentieth century. With Brown, the Court threw out decades of doctrine and centuries of racist practice in this country in their conclusion that "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." By making this just assertion, they forced this nation to begin to live up to its own promises and its own ideals. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Brown represented a "joyous daybreak to end the long night of enforced segregation."

Brown was a transforming moment in the life of this country. Sadly, it was not immediately transformative, nor is the metamorphosis complete, even today. It took years—even decades in many cities and states—for the mandate of the Court to be carried out. In many places, it was met with fervent political opposition and violent resistance.

In Virginia, for instance, the Governor closed the public school system rather than allow it to be integrated. And in 1957, National Guard troops had to be sent in to guard school children in Little Rock, Arkansas when they tried to begin their studies at Central High School.

In the years after Brown, many, heroic people risked and sometimes lost their lives in the fight to desegregate schools, universities, stores and lunch counters, the workplace. And they risked their well-being in the fight to ensure that they enjoyed that fundamental American right of being able to vote.

But in the end, the forces of racism did not prevail because of the Thurgood Marshalls of the world, the Medger Evers, the Rosa Parks, the Fannie Lou Hamers, the Martin Luther King Jrs, and the Malcolm X's. They ensured that this nation would live up to its own promises, the guarantees that were laid out in Brown.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, for instance, came about because brave men and women demanded it through bus boycotts and sit-ins and marches on Washington and a thousand other battles.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 came about because people like Fannie Lou Hamer dared to fight to register to vote, dared to form the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, dared to take on the Democratic Party and the establishment, and dared to win.

The Civil Rights Act of 1968, which established the principles of fair access to housing, came about because African Americans demanded the full rights of citizenship and because they knew that housing is a human right. Unfortunately, there are some people in Washington today who still need to recognize that fact.

Thanks to their efforts, Brown became the reality of the nation, not just the law of the land.

Today, on this 50th anniversary, Brown is still the law of the land, but it is no longer a national reality. Legal walls of segregation have been replaced in many areas by de facto separation by neighborhood and community. Our schools are becoming less integrated by the year, and in too many cases, integration has vanished entirely from some schools.

Across the country, efforts have been made—some of which have been successful, unfortunately—to undo the affirmative action programs, whose goal has been to create the fully diverse and integrated justice that the Supreme Court envisioned.

In my home state of California, an African American, Ward Connerly, led the Proposition 209 initiative in 1996, which eliminated affirmative action programs for women and people of color run by state or local governments in the areas of public employment, contracting, and education.

As chair of the California Black Legislature at the time, I fought against it, as did many, many Californians of all races.

In what was a giant setback for Brown and racial equality, Proposition 209 passed, and in one fell swoop, it wiped out a very significant program that was intended to level an extremely uneven playing field. The results have been devastating. African American and Latino enrollments at far too many of our state's universities are in serious decline.

As a recent story in the San Francisco Chronicle indicated, African American admissions at UC—Berkeley, which is in my district, are down 29 percent this year. In this year's freshman class, fewer than two and a half percent of the students accepted were African American. Two and a half percent. And compounding this serious injustice, Governor Schwarzenegger is cutting the budget for the outreach efforts of our universities.

These numbers are an embarrassment. They are an embarrassment for our students, ourselves, and for the promise of Brown. These shameful statistics have profound economic, political, and cultural meaning.

Do these bleak numbers that I have cited mean that Brown v Board of Education failed? No, but it means that our revolution is not over yet. It means that our revolution is still incomplete.

On this 50th anniversary of this enormous Supreme Court victory, we must rededicate ourselves to carry out that opinion whose words rang out clear as a bell when Earl Warren, the former California governor and Oakland resident, read them, "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

We can not—we will not—let the victories that were won so hard 50 years ago by Thurgood Marshall, Linda Brown, and so many others be reversed.

Tonight we celebrate that moment, and we rededicate ourselves to ensuring that justice thrives in this country.