

two terms. Thereafter he served as Ambassador to the United Nations, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, Chief of the United States Liaison Office in the People's Republic of China, and Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

From 1980 through 1988, he served President Ronald Reagan and our Nation with distinction as Vice President, with responsibility for multiple areas of government. His eloquent tribute to Mr. Reagan at the National Cathedral last Friday reflected his great friendship and working relationship with President Reagan as well as the late President's values and sense of humor.

In 1988 George H.W. Bush won the Republican nomination for President and was elected as the Forty-First President of the United States. His Administration was marked by a magnitude of historic change as well as challenge. During his Presidency, building on the policies and achievements of President Reagan and previous Administrations, the Communist empire dissolved, the Soviet Union ceased to exist, and the Berlin Wall fell.

During his Presidency, American troops overthrew the corrupt regime of General Manuel Noriega. And during his Administration President Bush launched what would become one of the most successful military campaigns of the late 20th century—Operation Desert Storm. President Bush rallied the United States, Congress, and the United Nations in a campaign that would defeat Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's million-man army which invaded Kuwait and threatened to move into Saudi Arabia. Over 500,000 American military personnel were joined by 200,000 military and other personnel from allied nations, and the cost of the war was shared by many nations who participated.

I remember this time well, not only for what it meant to our Nation, but because it also occurred during a time of personal challenge for my family. On the day that President Bush announced Desert Storm—just before he went on national television to announce the campaign—he took time from the immense pressures of the day to call and extend his best wishes to my family who were gathered at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. This gesture speaks volumes about his character and the compassion he demonstrated in countless ways and in his Points of Light vision for the country. It is one of the most poignant moments in my family's life and one for which I will be eternally grateful.

George H.W. Bush has been my friend for many years. We were both Navy pilots, and we are from the same generation and close to the same age. He has been an inspiration to me and to so many, as he gave so much of himself to his country—and at the same time also was a devoted husband to Barbara and a great father to his children, our current President George W. Bush, the Honorable Jeb Bush, Neil Bush, Marvin Bush, Dorothy Bush Koch, and for a brief but precious time to his little girl, Robin, who died tragically in early childhood.

Mr. Speaker, today I am honored to join my colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to former President George H.W. Bush for his lifetime of service on behalf of our Nation and to honor him on the occasion of his 80th birthday. May God continue to bless him and his family—and may he be blessed with the opportunity to make another solo jump.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETRI). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 653, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### RECOGNIZING AND HONORING SERVICE OF THOSE WHO VOLUNTEER TIME TO PARTICIPATE IN FUNERAL HONOR GUARDS AT INTERMENT OR MEMORIALIZATION OF DECEASED VETERANS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES OF UNITED STATES AT NATIONAL CEMETERIES

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 260) recognizing and honoring the service of those who volunteer their time to participate in funeral honor guards at the interment or memorialization of deceased veterans of the uniformed services of the United States at national cemeteries across the country.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 260

Whereas it is important that the Nation provide proper respect and fitting recognition to deceased veterans;

Whereas members of the uniformed services of the United States make significant contributions to the general welfare of the United States;

Whereas the furnishing of an honor guard at the interment or memorialization of a deceased veteran shows the proper respect to those who have passed away after serving their country;

Whereas the family of a deceased veteran may request an honor guard service and deserves the comfort of knowing that a respectful service will take place; and

Whereas currently there are many demands placed on active duty units across the country and there are not enough active duty honor guard units available to perform these important services: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),* That Congress hereby recognizes and honors the service of those outside the active components of the Armed Forces who volunteer their time to participate in funeral honor guards at the interment or memorialization of deceased veterans of the uniformed services of the United States at national cemeteries across the country, as exemplified by the proud work performed by the members of numerous patriotic organizations across the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

South Carolina (Mr. BROWN) and the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BROWN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 260.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from South Carolina?

There was no objection.

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 260, to recognize and honor the service of those who volunteer their time to represent the military at veterans' funerals.

Approximately 1,800 veterans of our Armed Forces die every day. Eleven hundred of them are World War II veterans. An average of 236 burials take place each weekday at the various VA national cemeteries located throughout the country. The families of many of these veterans request that their military service be recognized as they are laid to rest.

A grateful Nation has assigned the Department of Defense the responsibility for responding to those family requests through its military funeral honors program. However, because active duty service members are not always available, the Department must rely on volunteers to provide the appropriate honors in about one-third of the requests. The remainder are performed by active duty and reserve service members of the five military branches or National Guard members.

Since 2001, the law has required that at least two members of the funeral honors detail be members of the Armed Forces, and at least one of them be a member of the branch of service in which the deceased veteran served. The remainder of the honor guard may consist of members of the Armed Forces or members of veterans organizations or other organizations approved by the Secretary of Defense. At a minimum, the honor detail performs a ceremony that includes the folding and presenting of the American flag to the veteran's next of kin and the playing of Taps.

Mr. Speaker, according to the Department of Defense, the number of volunteers who participate with the military in performing military funeral honors at both national and private cemeteries increased from 27,767 in 2000, to 51,688 in 2003. Given the demands being placed on those currently serving on active duty, this increased volunteer participation is indispensable to meeting our obligation to honor the service of each deceased veteran.

Thus, it is an appropriate time that we recognize and thank those volunteers. They are indeed proud and patriotic veterans who selflessly give back to their comrades and provide comfort to the veteran's family and friends. As any veteran will tell you, their allegiance to the military and its service members does not end when they are discharged from service. This is a bond that lasts for a lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. BONO) for introducing concurrent resolution, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 260. This important measure recognizes and honors the service of individuals who volunteer as honor guards during funeral and memorial services at national cemeteries.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Chairman SMITH), the ranking member, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), and my good friend, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Benefits, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BROWN), for their steady leadership of veterans issues in the committee.

I also want to commend the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. BONO) for her work on this resolution, and I want to thank all my colleagues who helped to bring this before us today. Additionally, I would like to recognize the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) for her work on a similar resolution that recognizes the United States Army Volunteer Reserve for its distinguished service to veterans and their families.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to represent the Second Congressional District in the State of Maine. My State has one of the highest percentage of veterans populations in the country. I am sure that they support this resolution and join me when I say that the veterans of this Nation deserve nothing less than an honorable and dignified final resting place.

I would like to personally recognize the 23 members of Maine's honor guard for their service. Ten of these individuals are currently deployed and we pray for their quick and safe return. These 23 soldiers serve above and beyond their normal duties to participate in the honor guard, performing over 50 missions a year. Without their effort and sacrifice, our Nation would not shine so bright and we would not live as free as we do today.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, many of the brave men and women who put on the uniform to protect us during World War II and the Korean War are passing away every day. We also find ourselves engaged in hostilities in Afghanistan, Iraq and around the world, and, because of this, we are now burying vet-

erans of a new generation much too soon.

Mr. Speaker, it is our responsibility to provide our brave men and women in uniform an honorable and dignified memorial service. Indeed, without the sacrifice of these volunteer honor guards, we would have a more difficult time fulfilling our responsibility. I thank them for their service and appreciate their efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I support this measure, and I urge all Members to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 260.

Mrs. BONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 260, which I introduced last year on behalf of myself and Representatives HENRY BROWN, MIKE BILIRAKIS, KEN CALVERT, JIM DEMINT, JOHNNY ISAKSON, JERRY LEWIS, JOHN SHADEGG and ZACH WAMP. This resolution recognizes and honors the important service of those who volunteer their time to participate in funeral honor guards. These volunteers serve at the interment or memorialization of deceased veterans of the uniformed services of the United States at national cemeteries across the country.

A veteran's family may request the presence of active duty military personnel to provide honor guard services at their loved one's funeral. Unfortunately at times like this when our military is so desperately needed overseas, there is a shortage of available active duty personnel who can perform this duty. Numerous veteran volunteers help fill this void and perform the honor guard duty themselves. These volunteers are once again answering our Nation's call by honoring the military service of their fellow veterans. I feel it is incumbent upon Congress to recognize the service of volunteer honor guards as well as the continuing contribution that these individuals make to our Nation and the families of their fallen brethren.

I would like to specifically honor the many of my district's military retirees who are members of Semper Fi No. 1, an organization that performs volunteer honor guard services at Riverside National Cemetery and has been a driving force behind the creation of volunteer honor guard service throughout the Nation. I am proud to represent the many military retirees who serve as volunteer honor guards.

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BROWN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 260.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### MODIFYING CERTAIN DEADLINES FOR MACHINE-READABLE, TAMPER-RESISTANT ENTRY AND EXIT DOCUMENTS

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4417) to modify certain deadlines pertaining to machine-readable, tamper-resistant entry and exit documents.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4417

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN DEADLINES FOR MACHINE-READABLE, TAMPER-RESISTANT ENTRY AND EXIT DOCUMENTS.

Section 303 of the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act of 2002 (8 U.S.C. 1732) is amended, in each of subsections (b)(2)(A), (c)(1), and (c)(2), by striking "2004," and inserting "2005,".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4417.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4417. The Visa Waiver Program allows travelers from certain designated countries to come to the United States as temporary visitors without having to obtain a non-immigrant visa. There are currently more than 10 million foreign visitors entering the United States every year under this program.

Since its creation in 1986, the program has greatly facilitated travel to the United States from participating foreign countries. Through reciprocal arrangements, American international travelers also benefit with greater ease of travel.

The Visa Waiver Program was established on the premise that nationals from participating countries pose little security risk or threat of overstaying their period of admittance, which under the current program is a maximum of 90 days. After the tragic events of September 11, we recognize that a traveler from a visa waiver country can pose a serious threat, especially when the country of origin differs from the country that issues the passport used to enter our country.

It was, in part, to address threats like this that I offered the Enhanced Visa Security and Visa Entry Reform Act of 2002. The act requires the Visa