

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS NICHOLAS SKINNER

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to a great patriot, PFC Nicholas Skinner, U.S. Marine Corps. Private First Class Skinner courageously gave his life on August 26, 2004, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom when he was shot during a heavy exchange of gunfire in Najaf, Iraq. Private First Class Skinner is survived by his father Randy Skinner, his mother Laura Hamann, his older brother James and his younger sister Stephanie. This brave young soldier was only 20 years old. In his short life he made a lasting impression on his friends, family and fellow soldiers.

I ask my colleagues in the Senate and my fellow Americans to join me today in paying tribute to my fellow Iowan, Private First Class Skinner, for his sacrifice on behalf of our country. My deepest sympathy goes out to his family and friends. Private First Class Skinner was a great man that dedicated himself to his duty as a soldier. Private First Class Skinner told his grandmother that he joined the Marines because "They're over there fighting for me and my country, I want to go over there and fight for you and my country." Private First Class Skinner is the example of a fine man and a strong soldier. I salute him for his sense of duty and his service to the American people.

We can all be proud of this extraordinary soldier. He did not die in vain, but died for his country that he loved to serve. Private First Class Skinner has entered the ranks of our Nation's greatest patriots. He will always be honored as a hero who gave the ultimate sacrifice for liberty. He will be greatly missed.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MICHIGAN OLYMPIANS

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I take this opportunity to congratulate all of the athletes who competed in the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. The Olympic Games celebrate years of training, struggle and perseverance in overcoming obstacles and striving to become the best. It was wonderful to see so many athletes from across the globe come together in peaceful competition.

Greece did a tremendous job of hosting the Games. The scenery was breathtaking, and the venues were spectacular. These Games were especially notable because of the return of the Olympics to its birthplace in Greece. The historic legacy of Greece was particularly noteworthy for the marathon competitors who began their journey in the ancient city of Marathon, the original location of the event, and for the shot-put competitors who competed in the original Olympic stadium in Olympia.

Over a 16-day span, the Olympic spirit was embodied by the athletic prowess

and grace displayed by the best athletes our country has to offer, including many from Michigan. Michigan continued our long tradition of contributing world-class athletes to both the Summer and Winter Olympic Games with athletes competing in 13 different sports in this year's Games. It was inspiring to witness their total effort, and in many cases, the realization of their dreams. There are legions of young athletes who watched these Games and will continue to dream and strive to one day represent their country with the same pride, grace and determination that was on display at these Games.

I am particularly proud of the 28 individuals from Michigan who competed for the United States in the 2004 Athens Olympics. All of the athletes on Team USA achieved amazing feats to qualify for these Games. The Michigan Olympians included Martin Boonzaayer in judo; Tim Broe in track and field; Swin Cash in basketball; Tara Cunningham in weightlifting; Andre Dirrell in boxing; Kate Johnson in rowing; Kara Lynn Joyce in swimming; Klete Keller in swimming; Dan Ketchum in swimming; Rachel Komisarz in swimming; Kate MacKenzie in rowing; Tom Malchow in swimming; Kate Markgraf in soccer; Jamie Nieto in track and field; Carly Piper in swimming; Andy Potts in the triathlon; Jasna Reed in table tennis; Ruth Riley in basketball; Dathan Ritzenhein in track and field; Artour Samsonov in rowing; Jeff Smoke in canoe/kayak; Daryl Szarenski in shooting; Sheila Taormina in the triathlon; Lindsay Tarpley in soccer; Paul Terek in track and field; Peter Vanderkaay in swimming; Steve Warner in rowing; and Lauryn Williams in track and field. This outstanding group of athletes brought honor to our State and Nation and accounted for a total of 15 medals for the United States: eight gold, five silver, and two bronze.

In addition, competing at these Games were nine other athletes with ties to Michigan: Michael Phelps in swimming, who will be attending the University of Michigan, U of M; Alan Webb in track and field, who attended the U of M; and Venus Williams in tennis, who lived in Michigan, competed for Team USA. In addition, six athletes with Michigan ties competed for other countries: Courtney Babcock for Canada in track and field; Carlos Delfino for Argentina in basketball; Chris Demetral for Greece in baseball; Andrew Hurd for Canada in swimming; Kevin Sullivan for Canada in track and field; and Nick Willis for New Zealand in track and field.

Every two years we watch the Summer and Winter Games to catch a glimpse of these extraordinary athletes' struggles and successes. An Olympian's life is about sacrifice, about showing up to grueling practices day after day, about working hard to become the best in the world. It was riveting to watch these Games unfold.

In Athens, as is the case in every Olympiad, there were many amazing moments that will resonate in our minds for years to come. Let me take a moment to highlight a few of them.

Representing the WNBA Champion Detroit Shock on the gold medal winning women's basketball team were Ruth Riley and Swin Cash. The women won the gold medal by going unbeaten, increasing their Olympic winning streak to an incredible 25 games. Another notable achievement was accomplished by Andre Dirrell of Flint, who won a bronze medal in the middleweight division in boxing. Dirrell showed the heart of a champion as one of only two U.S. boxers to win a medal in these Games.

First-time Olympian Lauryn Williams of Detroit won the silver medal in the 100-meter sprint. In an extremely close race, Williams edged out a Jamaican runner to finish with the silver and a personal best time. In addition, Kate Johnson, from the U of M, won a silver medal as part of the women's eight rowing team. The team set a world record in one of their preliminary heats en route to winning their medal.

On the soccer field, the U.S. women's team took the gold medal with an extremely thrilling 2 to 1 overtime victory over Brazil. Michigan residents Kate Markgraf and Lindsay Tarpley helped the team achieve this victory over the tough Brazilian team. Tarpley, a midfielder from Kalamazoo, tallied one assist against Greece and scored the first goal in the gold medal match against Brazil. Markgraf of Bloomfield Hills, starting in all six games as a defender, helped her team remain undefeated. This was her second time representing the United States in the Olympics.

Another heart pounder came in the men's 4x200 meter freestyle swimming relay. The U.S. men's team, which included Peter Vanderkaay from Royal Oak, Klete Keller from Ann Arbor, U of M alumnus Dan Ketchum and future Wolverine Michael Phelps, held off a strong Australian team to win the gold and set an American record. In addition to this golden performance, Keller won the bronze medal in the 400-meter freestyle, and Michael Phelps won an additional five gold and two bronze medals to establish himself as one of the stars of this or any Olympiad.

For the women's swim team, Kara Lynn Joyce from Ann Arbor won a silver medal as a part of the 4x100 meter medley relay team. Additionally, Joyce, along with teammate Rachel Komisarz from Warren, won a silver medal in the 4x100 meter freestyle relay. Another victory was secured by the women's 4x200 meter freestyle relay team, which included Komisarz and Carly Piper from Grosse Pointe Woods who swam in the finals. In the finals, the U.S. women broke the world record.

The athletes with Michigan ties who represented other countries had many

notable achievements as well. Second baseman and Troy resident Chris Demetral, a Greek American, assisted the Greek baseball team to a 7th overall finish. In men's basketball, Carlos Delfino, who was drafted by the World Champion Detroit Pistons in 2003 and will be joining the team this year, competed for the Argentinean Olympic team.

Our athletes were supported by a great number of coaches and staff who made their success in the Games possible. The coaches with ties to Michigan include Bob Bowman of the U of M in swimming; Larry Brown of the Detroit Pistons in basketball; Todd Dagenais of Michigan State University in volleyball; Steven Fraser from the U of M in wrestling; Kevin Jackson from Jackson in wrestling; Al Mitchell of Northern Michigan University in boxing, and Jon Urbanchek of the U of M in swimming. In addition to the coaching staff, three U of M alumni were involved in the administration of the Games. Jeffrey Benz is the current general counsel and Abigail Tompkins is a member of the United States Olympic Committee, USOC. Thomas Miller is the current United States Ambassador to Greece. All of these individuals worked tirelessly to assist the athletes in their pursuit of greatness at these Games.

I know I speak for all Michigani-ans in expressing appreciation and congratulations to all of the Michigan athletes, coaches, and administrators who took part in the 2004 Summer Olympic Games. The Games last a few short weeks, but the memories will be ingrained in the minds of all who saw them and shared vicariously in the efforts of these great athletes. For their commitment, drive and competitive spirit, I congratulate all the athletes of the 2004 Olympic Games, but it is with particular pride that I salute the athletes and coaches from Michigan.

2004 OLYMPIC GAMES

Mr. FEINGOLD. Madam President, I am sure that my colleagues will join me in congratulating the American athletes who competed in the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, Greece.

The Olympics have a rich history, with records dating the first Olympic Games to 776 B.C. in Olympia, Greece. The early athletic contests allowed youths to highlight their physical prowess, with victory reflecting well upon the competitor's home city. The modern Olympic Games have endured for over a century, through times of war and peace, and this year, the Olympics returned to its origins.

The symbols of the Games—the motto, the flames, the rings—carry important meanings. The Olympic motto “citius—altius—fortius”, which is Latin for “faster—higher—stronger” encourages all to strive to achieve their personal best. The Olympic flame, lit by the sun's rays in Olympia and passed around the world, burns

bright while the competitions continue. The five Olympic rings represent the five continents, interwoven to demonstrate the universality of the Games.

Being an Olympian is a tremendous honor, and I commend the many athletes who represented our Nation well. America's 2004 Olympians are some of the finest athletes in the world. Dedicated to their sport, these individuals often devote years of their lives to training for the ultimate experience of competing in the Olympics. All competed well, and their hard efforts were rewarded as a remarkable 103 medals were earned by Americans in Athens.

I would like to particularly recognize the Olympians from my home State of Wisconsin. Fifteen athletes competing in the 2004 Olympic games have ties to Wisconsin, and I am proud of their efforts. These 15 athletes traveled to Athens to compete in a variety of sporting events, events that ranged from rowing to gymnastics to the modern pentathlon. It is my honor to recognize these fine competitors from Wisconsin:

Chris Ahrens. A graduate of Whitefish Bay High School and two-time Olympian, Chris earned a gold medal this year as a member of the men's eight rowing team.

Deirdre Demet-Barry. A seven-time national cycling champion originally from Milwaukee, Deirdre competed in women's cycling while in Athens.

Rebecca Giddens. A kayaker since age 10, this Green Bay native earned the bronze medal in the women's K1 flat kayak slalom.

James Gruenwald. Originally hailing from Greendale, James competed in his second Olympics in the men's Greco-Roman wrestling competition.

Dennis Hall. A proud cheesehead and Plover resident, Dennis competed in the men's Greco-Roman wrestling for his third Olympics.

Paul Hamm. A native of Waukesha, Paul won gold and silver medals in men's gymnastics events in his second Olympic Games.

Morgan Hamm. As a member of the U.S. men's gymnastics team, this Waukesha native helped lead the team to a silver medal.

Ben Holbrook. Ben is originally from Hartland and competed in the Men's quadruple sculls rowing competition in Athens.

Beau Hoopman. Raised in Plymouth, Beau rowed at the University of Wisconsin and won a gold medal in Athens with the men's eight rowing team.

Mary Beth Larsen-Iagorashvili. A graduate of Mukwonago High School who attended Marquette University, Mary Beth competed in the women's modern pentathlon.

Garrett Lowney. Athens was the second Olympic Games at which this Freedom resident competed in men's Greco-Roman wrestling.

Erin Mirabella. Erin, a native of Racine and former student at UW-Parkside, won the bronze medal for her performance in women's track cycling.

Jeff Nygaard. Jeff showed his Wisconsin roots when he named Brett Favre as a favorite athlete. From Madison, Jeff competed in men's beach volleyball.

Andrew Rock. A student at UW-La Crosse, Andrew won a gold medal as a member of the men's 1,600 meter relay in Athens.

Matt Smith. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Matt currently serves our country as an infantry captain for the U.S. Army. He competed as a rower in the men's lightweight four.

Neil Walker. A swimmer originally from Verona, Neil earned two Olympic medals—a bronze in the men's 4 x 100 freestyle relay and a gold medal in the men's 4 x 100 medley relay.

Mike Wherley. A Sun Prairie High School graduate, Mike rowed in his first Olympics with the men's four in Athens.

I offer my congratulations to these athletes. They demonstrated great passion and dedication to their sport and to the spirit of the Olympics. They made Wisconsin proud.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. TALENT. Madam President, I was unavoidably detained and unable to participate in rollcall vote No. 164 that took place on September 7, 2004. My flight was diverted from its intended destination of Reagan National Airport to Dulles International Airport and prevented me from being able to cast my vote. Had I been present I would have voted in favor of the nomination of Virginia Maria Hernandez Covington to be U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mr. GRAHAM of Florida. Mr. President, I rise today to say thank you on behalf of the millions of citizens of my State who have been affected by the incredible events of the last month.

Thank you to all of the State and local officials who took quick and decisive actions that saved many lives. Thank you to the first responders who helped citizens evacuate and continued working to keep people safe throughout these major storms. Thank you to the thousands of volunteers from the Red Cross, who staffed hundreds of shelters that served as the only safe haven for many Floridians. Thank you to the professionals from FEMA and the Small Business Administration, who activated immediately and began to respond in a manner I have not witnessed before.

I did a workday as a hurricane recovery volunteer in Port Charlotte, FL, on August 31, assisting Red Cross volunteers to distribute midday meals to people who were still without power and then going door-to-door with FEMA workers for follow-up damage assessments. I was moved by the gratitude on the faces of people fighting to