

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 13, 2005

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my extreme disappointment in the mediocre efforts of the Republican administration and leadership to adequately fund the Veterans Administration. Their lack of consideration and foresight led to an enormous shortfall in veterans' health care funding which we must immediately remedy.

Time after time, the Republican majority has shown our beloved veterans where their priorities lie. For the 2005 and 2006 budgets, they were unwilling to listen to Democrats who have consistently fought for increases for veterans' health care. More than a year ago, my distinguished colleague from Illinois, Mr. EVANS, made it known that the funding for the VA would fall immensely short of what is required for proper health services—over \$1.3 billion short.

Despite these figures, the Administration and Republican leadership continued their indifference towards helping our veterans. They were reluctant to admit any shortfall in VA health care funding until recently, when they reversed their position by asking for supplemental funding of \$975 million. Still, my Democratic colleagues and I were dissatisfied because it still fell short of the \$1.3 billion total that was necessary. Finally, just yesterday, the Bush Administration admitted that an additional \$300 million was needed to secure veterans' health care for FY05.

While it is nice to see that the Republican leadership has finally decided to take care of our veterans, this delayed and belated action is unacceptable. Many VA medical facilities have already been affected by the lack of funds. They have begun cutting nursing and medical staff, closing operating rooms, and not scheduling medical appointments.

Though many speak of acknowledging the contributions of our veterans, actions speak louder than words.

It is not enough to thank our veterans for their contributions and then fail to provide them with the fundamental right of access to health care.

We must continue the work we have seen from the Senate and supplement the budget with an additional \$1.5 billion in funding for veterans' health care.

It is the least we can do for those that have sacrificed to defend our country.

A TRIBUTE TO ARMY RESERVE PRIVATE FIRST CLASS LOWELL W. BELLAR

HON. PETER J. VISCOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2005

Mr. VISCOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and respect that I pay tribute to Army Reserve Private First Class Lowell W. Bellar for his bravery in the field of battle and his willingness to fight for his country. Private First Class Bellar lost his life on December 1, 1950 in North Korea. Almost 55 years later, his sacrifice will be remembered at funeral services on Friday, July 15, 2005, on his birthday.

A native of Gary, Indiana, Private Lowell Bellar graduated from Horace Mann High School. It came as no surprise to those who knew Private Bellar that he would serve his country. A true patriot, his love for his country was evident from the time he was a child. He wanted to help make a difference in the world. Private Bellar entered active duty on his 17th birthday in 1948. He was one of more than 1,000 soldiers who had to be left behind in the Battle of Chosin Reservoir as enemy troops from the People's Republic of China overran the region.

Private Bellar was reportedly killed on December 1, 1950, during the Korean War. He was among more than 8,000 United Nations soldiers that never returned home. Private Bellar was classified as missing in action until recently. In April 2005 his family was notified that his remains were recovered. Private Lowell Bellar will finally be buried with full military honors on his birthday, more than a half-century after he was declared missing in action in North Korea. His courage and heroism will always be remembered, and his sacrifice will forever live in the hearts and minds of those for whom he battled. He gave his life so that the freedoms and values that he treasured could be enjoyed by those around the world.

Although he loved his unit and his country, Private Bellar treasured his family above all else. He is survived by his brother, George Bellar, also an Army veteran, his wife Pat, their children and grandchildren. These individuals were the heroes to a man that we will forever call a hero, and we should honor them in this tumultuous moment as well.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring a fallen hero, United States Army Private Lowell W. Bellar. He will forever remain a hero in the eyes of his family, his community, and his country. Let us never forget the sacrifice he made to preserve the ideals of freedom and democracy.

CONGRATULATING THE STROUDSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA, FRATERNAL ORDER OF EAGLES AERIE 1106 ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 14, 2005

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues to pay tribute to the Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 1106 which is celebrating a century of service this month.

Founded by 6 theater owners in Seattle, Washington, in 1898, while discussing their mutual interest in a musician's strike, the Eagles went on to attract members from the performing arts including actors, stagehands, playwrights, etc. That accounted for the rapid growth of the organization in the first decade of the 20th century because performers often toured the country and, as they did, they recruited more and more people who desired to belong to such an organization.

The stated mission of the Fraternal Order of Eagles is to unite fraternally for mutual benefit, protection, improvement, social enjoyment and association, all persons of good moral character who believe in a Supreme Being to inculcate the principles of liberty, truth, justice and equality; to perpetuate itself as a fraternal organization and to provide for its government as its constitution, laws, rituals, by-laws or other rules and regulations may, from time to time, provide and to promote the general welfare and to raise funds for duly authorized charities.

Over the years, the Eagles fought and won many battles. Among them are a Workman's Compensation Act, Mothers and Old Age Pensions and Social Security. The Eagles also continue to raise funds for the Art Ehrmann Cancer Fund, the Max Bear Heart Fund, the Jimmy Durante Children's Fund, the "Doc" Dunlap Kidney Fund and the Diabetes Fund.

Many great social and political leaders have belonged to the Eagles. President Theodore Roosevelt was a member and he praised the order for its humanitarian accomplishments. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt echoed those comments and President Harry S. Truman often said that the Eagles was his type of organization, one founded by and for the common man.

Locally, the Stroudsburg Fraternal Order of Eagles, which boasts 1,700 members and 450 auxiliary members, has labored tirelessly on behalf of abused women and children, Alzheimer's victims and the heart, kidney and cancer funds.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Stroudsburg Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 1106 on the occasion of its 100th anniversary. The greater Stroudsburg community is blessed to have such a wonderful organization advocating on its behalf and raising the quality of life in that part of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

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