

It is not often that a nation is blessed with a great military leader whose powerful ideas make lasting and important contributions to the future. Sometimes it is only through the passage of time and history that their greatness is recognized fully. After some decades, Rear Admiral William A. Moffett eventually became known as the father of naval aviation. Admiral Hyman G. Rickover was recognized as the father of the nuclear Navy. I believe that Vice Admiral Arthur K. Cebrowski will become known as the father of a network centric military, and students of warfare and peace-making will study his ideas and marvel at his contributions for decades to come.

TRIBUTE TO DICK TSCHIDER

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 15, 2005

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to recognize the remarkable career of one of the all-time leaders in North Dakota healthcare.

Dick Tschider, CEO of the St Alexius Medical Center in Bismarck, North Dakota, for the past 29 years, is retiring from this position. He has devoted his entire career to this outstanding facility, joining it right out of college, 45 years ago.

We all know about the revolution in health care that has occurred during the last four and a half decades. Under Dick Tschider's leadership, St. Alexius has grown dramatically during this period, and is now recognized throughout the region as one of the premier multi-specialty hospitals in the area.

In fact, when ranked in terms of quality of care and patient safety, it is one of the top 100 hospitals in the entire country. Several aspects of St. Alexius care—notably cardiac care—are exceptional, as determined by the competitive analysis of external reviewers.

It has been my personal and professional privilege to know Dick and work closely with him during the last 20 years as I served as North Dakota's Insurance Commissioner and Congressman. Dick was an exceptional football player and he would throw himself into healthcare reimbursement issues with the zeal and intensity he formerly used against gridiron opponents.

During the years of our working relationship, sometimes we agreed, sometimes we didn't, but we maintained a constructive and productive association throughout all of these years. This relationship led to a very significant achievement for North Dakota in the Medicare Modernization Act passed 2 years ago. Dick and other leading members of the medical community convincingly documented the threat discounted Medicare reimbursements held for healthcare—especially in North Dakota. Senator CONRAD, Senator DORGAN and I fought to get an equitable reimbursement adjustment in the Medicare Modernization Act and then worked feverishly to pass the bill which made it by the slimmest margins.

Dick Tschider is an energetic and compassionate man of considerable abilities. Western North Dakota has been fortunate to have someone of his talent and commitment advancing healthcare in our region. I have been fortunate to have him as a friend.

The career of Dick Tschider is an example of leadership and achievement in service to others. I wish him the best in retirement.

AMERICA'S UNSUNG HEROES—THE CRIME VICTIM ADVOCATES

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 15, 2005

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, each and every Member of Congress has crime victim advocates in his or her District. It's likely you hear from them now and again, particularly when critical funding for crime victim services is at stake—like the Administration's proposal to drain the Crime Victim Fund to balance the budget—or you may hear from them when they plead that victims' rights are enforced in accordance with the law. It's also likely that you have an inkling of what these folks do for a living. But I'm pretty sure that you don't know just how much victim advocates are the “unsung heroes” of America today.

Back when I was a prosecutor in the great state of Texas, we didn't have “victim advocates.” There was nobody to provide the victim with support and guidance. The criminal and juvenile justice systems were like a maze to them and, let me tell you, the laboratory mice did a lot better in finding the cheese! Crime victims were lost. Crime victims were forgotten. Crime victims were merely “evidence” used to successfully prosecute criminal cases. Crime victims were “re-victimized” on a daily basis by a system that should be designed to protect them.

At the end of my days as a prosecutor and the beginning of my days as a judge, I started to see these folks called “victim advocates” in court. Back then, their job was to notify victims of the status of their cases and offenders, and explain to them what is often an overwhelming criminal justice process. But if you listened to victims back then, they would tell you that their advocates were so much more. They were a “Rock of Gibraltar” in a rocking sea of confusion. They were there to hold their hands and provide comfort. They were, as one prosecutor from Texas last month noted, “the centerpiece of the courtroom” when it came to helping crime victims and witnesses.

I was privileged earlier this month to deliver a keynote speech at the National Conference of State VOCA Assistance and Crime Victim Compensation Administrators in New Mexico. These are folks that, every single minute of every single day, are on “the front line for victims of crime.” There were over 300 “victim advocates” in the house, and I think it is well worth the time of the U.S. Congress to recognize them.

You should know about the remarkable victim advocates who spent the last year planning this conference, and spent some really quality time learning from each other about how to better help crime victims. For 4 days, state-level victim advocates who oversee funding for vital victim services, and manage state victim compensation programs that help victims recover from the financial losses resulting from crime, came together to teach each other, and learn from each other, and figure out ways to improve assistance to crime victims in ALL our Districts.

Let me begin by saluting John Gillis, the Director of the U.S. Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime. John knows too well the impact of crime on victims. When he was an LAPD detective almost 30 years ago, his beautiful daughter Louarna was murdered by gang members in a vicious “kill a cop's kid” murder that would move them up the gang hierarchy.

John and his wife Patsy reacted to Louarna's death as so many crime victims and survivors do. They became activists to change how our criminal justice system treats victims, and change how our society views victims. John has spent the last three decades fighting for crime victims' rights, and does so now at the helm of the Office for Victims of Crime, considered the “mother ship” of victim assistance in America. John has become a friend and someone whom I admire and deeply respect. He is our nation's leading “victim advocate” and crime victims everywhere in America are fortunate to have him at the Office for Victims of Crime.

Next, I would like to recognize the Directors of the two national associations that help states manage funding for victim services and victim compensation.

Steve Derene is the Director of the National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators. Back in 1984, he helped craft the Victims of Crime Act, which uses fines and fees assessed against convicted Federal offenders to support crime victim services. He has been a true advocate for victims in Wisconsin and, in the past five years, for victims across our nation. He is known as “Stevie Wonder” because he, more than most, has embraced technology as a means to facilitate more effective justice processes and victim assistance; and because it seems he is on call 24/7 to help victims and those who serve them.

Dan Eddy is the Director of the National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards. Dan is a quiet, unassuming victim advocate, but the impact of his work is far-reaching. Under his direction, victims of crime in all of our Districts have received millions of dollars—again, not from taxpayers but from convicted offenders—to help them cope with the financial impact of crime. Dan Eddy is truly an “unsung hero” whose efforts are felt in states, communities, neighborhoods and homes across America each and every day.

The Presidents of both Associations—Joe Hood from Georgia and Larry Tackman from New Mexico—also deserve mention. These are two men with a true vision for the field of crime victim services. When they are not managing their state VOCA and compensation programs, they are working hard to promote strength and unity in victim services across our land. With their respective Boards of Directors, they put on a fine conference, and deserve our thanks.

I am guessing ya'll have attended events where everything ran very smoothly. I can assure you this doesn't happen by “accident.” So let me tip my hat to Ms. Gillian Nevers, who had an illustrious career as a Wisconsin victim advocate, and who earlier this month facilitated one of the best victim assistance training conferences ever.

And now I'd like to introduce you to some wonderful victim advocates from New Mexico, and know that my colleagues from New Mexico join me in thanking them. These are the folks who not only put on the conference I attended, but also help victims of their state

every day, in ways large and small. These are people for whom compassion is part of their DNA. Let me introduce you to the staff of the New Mexico Crime Victims Reparation Commission: Kristy Ring, Deputy Director; Robin Brassie, VOCA Administrator; Sheila Allen, VAWA Administrator; Julie Duren, Reparation Officer Supervisor; Terri Ruegger, Financial & HR Officer; Dorothy Padilla; Randy Vallejos; Debra Yepa; Jacqueline Chavez; Denise Jaramillo; Mary Anne Garcia; Michele Threlkel; Moises Valdez; Paula Smith; Debra Simpson; Suzanne Gallegos; Wendy Archibeque, and Robert Norfor.

You are simply hearing their names. But I had the chance to meet them, and want you to know that our Nation is a better place because of their ongoing commitment to helping victims of crime.

And that's just the way it is.

THE CONFERENCE REPORT ON THE FISCAL YEAR 2006 AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT (H.R. 2744)

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 15, 2005

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Conference Report on the fiscal year 2006 Agriculture Appropriations Act. While this bill takes some positive steps, overall it is a missed opportunity.

This bill provides increased funding for critical food assistance programs, including Women, Infants and Children, WIC, and school lunch. The conference report also upholds current adjunctive eligibility requirements for WIC and Medicaid. This will save local WIC agencies in six states, including Minnesota, from having to conduct 275,000 duplicative eligibility determinations and keep resources devoted to nutrition assistance.

Voluntary conservation programs that I support, such as the Conservation Reserve Program, CRP, and the Wetlands Reserve Program, WRP, receive \$840 million in funding. For generations, farmers and others working close to the land have made positive contributions to the conservation effort. Programs like CRP and WRP assist landowners in reducing erosion, improving soil and water quality, and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat.

Funding for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, APHIS, is increased to address food safety and emerging diseases, namely avian influenza. Prompt action is needed to safeguard against further spread of this deadly strain and to be prepared for a potential outbreak at home or abroad.

Despite these positive aspects, Congress missed an opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of families by failing to provide relief for the millions of Americans facing soaring prescription drug prices. I supported language passed by the House of Representatives to allow reimportation of prescription drugs. Unfortunately, this language—which would have barred the Food and Drug Admin-

istration, FDA, from preventing prescription drug reimportation—was stripped in conference committee for a third year in a row. It is unacceptable for anyone to suffer because prescription drugs have become too expensive, and it is disappointing that once again Congress has prioritized pharmaceutical companies over families.

This bill also imposes further delays upon implementation of mandatory Country-of-Origin Labeling, COOL, requirements. COOL provides our families with important information on meat, fish, fruits and vegetables. It also gives U.S. producers credit for the considerable investment they make in the quality and safety of their products. The 2002 Farm Bill required mandatory labeling by 2004, but the fiscal year 2004 Agriculture Appropriations Act delayed implementation of COOL to 2006. This conference report further delays implementation of COOL until 2008.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2419, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 9, 2005

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this conference report.

I would first like to thank the Chairman of the Subcommittee, Mr. HOBSON, and the Ranking Member, Mr. VISCLOSKY, for their work in putting together the Energy and Water Appropriations Bill, and in negotiating with the Senate on this conference report.

I also want to thank both of them for including \$48 million in the conference report to continue funding the Port of Oakland's 50-foot dredging project in my district in California, and for including \$5,585,000 for Operations and Maintenance.

As the fourth largest container port in the country, the Port of Oakland serves as one of our premier international trade gateways to Asia and the Pacific.

The 50-foot dredging project will underpin an \$800 million expansion project funded by the Port that will improve infrastructure, expand capacity and increase efficiencies throughout the distribution chain.

Once this project is finished, the Port projects that an additional 8,800 jobs will be added, business revenue will increase by \$1.9 billion, and local tax revenues will go up by \$55.5 million. Best of all, 100 percent of the dredged materials will be reused for wetlands restoration, habitat enhancement, and upland use within the San Francisco Bay Area.

I appreciate the Subcommittee's support for this project and I look forward to continuing to work with the chairman and ranking member to complete it.

COMMENDING THE SUPPORT PROVIDED BY EMPLOYERS OF MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVES

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 15, 2005

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 302, recognizing and commending the support provided by the employers of members of the National Guard and other reserve divisions who have been mobilized during the Global War on Terror.

More than 433,000 members of the reserve components of the United States Army have been mobilized for active duty since September 11, 2001. During this difficult time for them and their families, the commitment of their employers is essential. The obligations of the National Guard and other reserve components will continue for years to come, and job security and support for those who are mobilized in defense of our nation is crucial for the country in continuing the War on Terror.

In my home town of Chicago, many employers have demonstrated their commitment to the safety of the nation and to those who fight to secure it. When National Guard employees of Chicago law firm Bell, Boyd & Lloyd learned they would be deployed, the firm responded by asking how it could help. Whether the need was for supplying care packages to the troops or redoubling their support as deployments were extended, this firm has provided tremendous assistance to its employees and their families.

Doug Ewing, the former president of Ewing-Doherty Mechanical, Inc., left a strong legacy of support for our troops. When his employees were deployed, Mr. Ewing supplied them with necessary provisions and equipment. He also frequently contacted his employees' families in order to boost their morale and ensure that they were provided with any necessary assistance. Mr. Ewing has sadly passed away, but his commitment and compassion will long be remembered by his employees and their families.

The Chicago Fire Departments and Chicago Police Department also merit recognition for the support they give to their employees who have been mobilized during the War on Terror and their families. These employers have shown themselves to be dedicated to the security of the nation, and have provided support beyond that which is required. They deserve our most sincere recognition and gratitude. I would like to offer my praise for their contributions, and encourage the Department of Defense to continue its efforts to maintain a high level of support between deployed Guardsmen and their employers.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in recognizing and commending the strong support provided by employers for those who work to secure the goals and safety of the United States.