

and further deny these men and women health care is yet another slap in the face. The health system failed these people once, and it should not fail them again.

This rule is arbitrary. It is dangerous. And it is wrong.

Even the Department of Health and Human Services agrees that it is unnecessary. There is no evidence that illegal immigrants are getting Medicaid illegally.

This is very dangerous. If this becomes law, state and county officials will decide how to enforce this rule. Therefore, anyone with dark skin, or an accent or who looks like an undocumented immigrant will be at great risk for discrimination.

American citizens, particularly the poor, minorities, and the very old, who are eligible for Medicaid, will be denied the health care that they need. All for a misguided attempt to keep undocumented immigrants from receiving health care. It is unjust and it is wrong. It is un-American and I ask my colleagues to join me in opposing this provision.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOHN
WILLIAM RICHEY

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to John William Richey of Smiths Station, AL. Mr. Richey is a man of integrity and great accomplishment in the pharmaceutical field. He was chosen as the 2005 Good Neighbor Pharmacist of the Year, selected out of an astounding 4,000 applicants across the entire country.

In 1971, Mr. Richey opened Plaza Pharmacy in Smiths Station with a partner and later became the sole owner. Mr. Richey proves his commitment to his customers daily; he is often found opening the pharmacy willingly after hours for emergencies. His unparalleled generosity and good will towards human life extends beyond his business into his personal life. In 2000, he kindly donated one of his kidneys to his friend. He has four children and three grandchildren.

His business has been a landmark in Smiths Station for decades, and today Mr. Richey fills the prescriptions for grandchildren of his first customers. I am proud to acknowledge Mr. Richey in the House on this day and congratulate him on his dedication to his family, to pharmaceutical service, and to his customers.

RECOGNIZES CENTENARIAN JESUS
HERNANDEZ OF SPRING HILL,
FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jesus Hernandez of Spring Hill, FL. Jesus has done

something that all of us strive for but that very few of us will ever accomplish, celebrate his 100th birthday.

Jesus was born November 26, 1905 in Ciales, PR. Located in the central mountain range of the island, Jesus's parents owned and operated a small farm. He grew up with his brothers and sisters where he cared for cattle and horses and performed agricultural chores while attending school. Other than the love and respect he had for his parents, working on the farm and playing sports are the fondest memories of his childhood.

During the Great Depression Jesus moved to New York City to work and help provide for his family during hard times. In 1932, he returned to Puerto Rico where he met and married his wife Carmen. Blessed with two sons, five grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren, Jesus says that the happiest moment in his life was the birth of his two sons, Ed and Lou.

During the Second World War Jesus tried to enlist in the military like his brothers but was unable to do so because of a heart condition. Jesus instead went to work for the railroad until 1944 when he decided to return to New York City with his wife and sons.

Jesus moved to Spring Hill in 2004 where he lives with his son Lou, who retired from the U.S. Army, and his daughter-in-law Marge. Today, Jesus says he gets the most pleasure from walking in the morning, playing dominos and helping to maintain the trees and plants in his son's backyard. He says that the only thing he would change if he had the chance to do his life over would be to travel the world.

Jesus says that despite his health he remains a positive person and possesses a great sense of humor. Jesus's secret to a long life is that he watches what he eats, does not drink alcoholic beverages and does not smoke. His advice to the young people is to "finish your education, have respect and consideration for your parents and everyone as a whole, work hard and save your money to be self-dependent." Finally, Jesus says that "he is proud to be an American and all it stands for. God Bless America."

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Jesus Hernandez for reaching his 100th birthday. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as he has.

SOWING THE SEEDS THROUGH
SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING RE-
SEARCH ACT

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to complement two previously introduced bills, H.R. 4434 and H.R. 4435, to authorize additional recommendations from a committee of the National Academy of Sciences, chaired by Mr. Norman Augustine. The recommendations of the committee's report, *Rising Above the Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future*, reflect the consensus forged among nationally-recognized industry, academic and government experts.

With this bill, *Sowing the Seeds Through Science and Engineering Research Act*, and the previously introduced bills, I have taken steps to implement the Augustine Committee's highest priority, which is to improve K-12 math and science education by enhancing the skills and qualifications of math and science teachers, and to respond to the committee's call to "sustain and strengthen the nation's traditional commitment to the long-term basic research that has the potential to be transformational to maintain the flow of new ideas that fuel the economy, provide security, and enhance the quality of life."

The bill I introduced today authorizes 10% increases per year in funding for basic research in the physical sciences, mathematical sciences, and engineering at the principal federal agencies supporting such research. These increases, if sustained, would lead to a doubling of basic research funding in these critical areas over 7 years.

The bill also takes action to develop the research talent needed for the future by providing for up to 200 new awards per year, of \$100,000 per year for 5 years, to outstanding early-career researchers. It seeks to enlarge the pool of graduate students in science, math and engineering by creating a graduate fellowship program, with 5000 new fellowships per year for individuals pursuing studies in areas of national need.

Finally, the bill establishes a presidential innovation award to stimulate scientific and engineering advances in the national interest and provides for the refurbishment of academic and government research laboratories, an essential factor to enable leading-edge research.

These three bills are a response to a serious challenge to our Nation's future economic prosperity. From the Augustine report, "This Nation must prepare with great urgency to preserve its strategic and economic security. Because other Nation's have, and probably will continue to have, the competitive advantage of a low-wage structure, the United States must compete by optimizing its knowledge-based resources, particularly in science and technology, and by sustaining the most fertile environment for new and revitalized industries and the well-paying jobs they bring. We have already seen that capital, factories, and laboratories readily move wherever they are thought to have the greatest return."

My intent in introducing these bills is to issue a call for action by the Congress and the Administration. The Augustine Report correctly identifies the challenges we face as a Nation and has developed a series of specific recommendations to address these challenges. The conclusions and recommendations in this report are not new. The problem is that neither the Administration nor Congress has made any real efforts to act.

I hope the introduction of this legislation will begin a substantive discussion on the commitment and resources required to ensure our Nation's future economic competitiveness and that our children have well-paid, challenging jobs. I am committed to working with the private-sector, Members of Congress and the Administration in turning this legislation into funded programs.

16TH ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL
BLACK CAUCUS VETERANS
BRAINTRUST

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on September 10th, 2004, Rep. SANFORD BISHOP, Jr. (D-GA) and I convened the 16th Congressional Black Caucus Veterans Braintrust issues forum titled: "Honoring African American Women Veterans Who Served," because we both care a great deal about the well being of African America veterans. Moreover, for these past 12 years we have worked so very hard building the Veterans Braintrust, and carrying the torch for America's service men and women.

Nevertheless, we would be remiss if we did not recognize the special service to this Nation, and to this institution of Congressman CHARLES RANGEL of New York, a distinguished and decorated Korean War veteran in his own right, who is the father of the Congressional Black Caucus' Veterans Braintrust, established in 1988, and has carried the torch for African American veterans for over half a century. Since Congressman RANGEL's first Braintrust, the Veterans Braintrust has emerged as an institution "think tank" and "advisory group" for the Congressional Black Caucus and for other Members of Congress on the critical issues of education, health care, mental health, aging, research, employment and training, homelessness and affordable housing, small business development and veterans benefits and services.

Next, we were happy to extend a very warm welcome and deepest appreciation to our distinguished guests, panelist, moderator, and Bishop Imagine Stewart for performing our invocation. Which included State Senator Ed Harbison, Chairman of the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus special presentation to Spc. Shoshanna Johnson, who was captured in Iraq two years ago with other members of the 507th Maintenance Company. Shoshanna is the only African American woman to be held captive in Iraq. But more importantly, Shoshanna truly exemplifies the best that America has to offer—her courage under the most extraordinary of circumstances shows us all just how important the service of our ordinary airmen, marines, sailors, and soldiers are to our Nation. Thus, all those who serve, serve equally and should be awarded based on their service, and not by the color of their skin, or gender.

This led us to the issues we were there to discuss, the treatment of women in today's military, and as veterans. However, the discussion of the current state of affairs would be incomplete without a brief history, or stories of those who paved the way for the modern military woman. Early on, African American women played major support roles during the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and the Civil War. For example: Harriet Tubman served as a Union spy, an unpaid soldier, a volunteer nurse, and a freedom fighter. While another runaway slave, Susan King Taylor, became famous for her volunteer service as a nurse and launderer as she traveled with her husband's unit, the 33rd United States Colored Troops (USCTs). She formed the Boston Branch of

the Women's Relief Corps after the war. Her memoirs published in 1902, became the only written record of Black volunteer nurses in the Civil War. Again, during the Spanish American War black women played the role of nurses. Yet, during the war, over 75% of all deaths resulted from typhoid and yellow fever. Many black female volunteer nurses were told they were immune to the diseases because their skin was darker and thicker. Because of this, many of them exposed themselves to the diseases and became casualties when they returned home. And because of segregated living areas, the Whites never knew the high rate of casualties that these women suffered.

However, during World War I for the first time in military history, African American females had an official organization where they found leadership and direction to use their abilities. The National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses founded in 1909 by Mary Mahoney, Adah Thoms and Martha Franklin. In 1917, the co-founder of the Red Cross urged Black nurses to enroll in the American Red Cross, although they were not accepted until two months before the end of the war in November of 1918. But it wasn't until World War II (1942) that women were officially allowed to serve in great numbers in the armed forces. The Army had the Women's Army Corps (WAC), the Navy had Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES); and the Coast Guard had the SPARS. With the majority of African American women serving in the Women Army Corps (WAC), where they remained in segregated units, as did African American men. Out of the highest number of women in the military during the period (271,000), only 4,000 were African American women.

Moreover, African American women continued to serve from the Korean Conflict through Vietnam to Operation Desert Storm. Of the 35,000 women who went to Desert Storm, an estimated 40% were African Americans. And today, the statistics tell us that over 30% of military women are African American, approximately 33.6% enlisted, and 13.1% commissioned and warrant officers. Notably in 2002, African American women were over-represented in the armed services as compared with their proportion in the civilian population. This is simply to say that, African American women made up 30.8% of all military women, while making up only 12% of all civilian women.

Equally important, the purpose of this forum was to discuss issues pertaining to women in the military and veterans, but particularly black women veterans. The overarching questions however were: What happens to these women socially, economically, and politically, when they return to the civilian sector as military veterans? Or what effects does military service have on their subsequent lives? With the second question being: how can we systemically help the masses of young women veterans in order to inspire them to reach their fullest potential?

To address these questions we had two distinguished panels with us that day to discuss a range of issues pertaining to the African American woman veteran. Among the topics discussed were those of post traumatic stress disorder, homelessness, physical disability, and sexual harassment, or assault. Our first panel of presenters consisted of Attorney Herbert Fenner of the law firm McKenna Long

and Aldridge who presented the case of Jemekia Barber; Muriel Gibson, Senior Staff Assistant to U.S. Senator PATTY MURRAY's office discussed several cases. We also heard from three African American women veterans themselves: Kericia Smith, SSgt. Vanessa Turner, and Carolyn Williams. Followed by a second panel consisting of Dr. Laura Miller, Social Scientist with the Rand Corporation, who has researched extensively women in the military, including sexual harassment and assault; Dr. Saharra Bledsoe, Executive Director of Mozella's House for Women Veterans; Zerell Johnson-Welch, Director of the Southwest Veterans Service Center, and Ms. Deborah Scott, a disabled veteran having a lot of problems receiving fair and just treatment at the VA.

While Shoshanna easily connected with the audience with both humor and humility, what we heard from her female counterparts was gut wrenching emotion, anger, and frustration, with more than a few VA officials expressing utter surprise at their anger. From Senator PATTY MURRAY's Senior Staff Assistant Muriel Gibson, who shared strategies that she helped develop through her women veterans group and advocacy work leading the state of Washington to some improvement in their options for VA healthcare and timeliness; Deborah Scott, an Army veteran, whose physical illness was misdiagnosed by VA medical personnel as "personality disorder"; Kericia Smith whose attempts to get adequate treatment and support for her struggle with PTSD have been repeatedly mishandled by VA officials; SSgt. Vanessa Turner, whose critical illness still has not been diagnosed by Army medical personnel since returning from Iraq, and who has struggled to find and maintain adequate affordable housing and/or timely treatment for her health through the VA; to Carolyn Williams speaking of her struggle for over 30 years to have her sexual assault recognized and addressed by both Navy and VA officials. Although the outward appearance seemed to be "VA bashing," we all realized that their problems arose from systemic problems, or inadequate governmental policies and practices, and were compounded by human errors.

Although issues were brought up which are undoubtedly begging for attention, this forum was just our beginning. Of those concerns addressed, however, it was abundantly clear that there were three vital issues: First, the inadequacy and sometimes absence of adequate Veterans' Administration services and programs for female military veterans. Second, the invisibility of their struggles which are quite often ignored and their frustration with the lack of methods available for redress. Third, the need to consider organizing some type of national conference where the issues facing African American women veterans might be highlighted, discussed, and strategies for addressing these challenges suggested. Such a national conference where these issues are addressed through panels and workshops, with the latter focused on sharing strategies that have proven effective and creating new possible roads to take for the future. Why, because we also heard comments such as, I wish to thank you to the experience at long last gave them an opportunity to find not just an ear that would hear their story. Or their first real opportunity and chance to speak publicly regarding fighting for VA benefits over many