

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would just say Senator DURBIN is an excellent advocate, but this is the fourth time that this bill in substantially this form has been before this body. It has been marked up in the Judiciary Committee four times. We have had weeks on it each time it has come up for debate here. After several weeks of debate, the last time it came up it passed 83 to 15.

The issues that he raises are really covered by the bill. If someone, anyone is disabled and they have a continuing extra medical expense, that would be considered in whether or not they would ever have to pay any of their debts back. If their income is below median income, they would never be required to pay their debts back. All they would have to do is introduce some evidence from their pay stubs or their income tax, what their income is. Certainly we have a right to ask that before we discharge, wipe out, eliminate all debts, as people do when they come into bankruptcy.

I really would just say that we have given great consideration to these issues. We could disagree, but these amendments, for the most part, have been up before. I do not believe that most are going to be accepted. But there is every right of my colleague's side to offer them.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent there now be a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO FRANCIS P. STEAD

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to Francis P. "Frank" Stead, who passed away at the age of 90 on January 31, 2005, following an extended illness.

Frank Stead and I were neighbors in Springfield, IL starting in 1969 when I returned home to Illinois after graduating from Georgetown University Law School. He was a good neighbor, a good friend, and he will certainly be missed by the many people whose lives he touched.

Frank was one of the many unsung heroes of an era that journalist Tom Brokaw has dubbed "The Greatest Generation." Coming of age during the Great Depression and serving our country during World War II, Frank shared in the values of a generation that helped make our country what it is today: a sense of honor and bravery, a commitment to service, and above all, a love of family and country.

In 1943, at the height of the U.S. action in World War II, Frank enlisted in the U.S. Navy and was assigned to the Pacific theater, leaving behind his sweetheart, Dorothy Mlaker. While on duty in the Pacific, Frank sent a letter

to Dorothy proposing marriage. Later, after receiving her acceptance letter, Frank ordered an engagement ring from the catalog of a Chicago jeweler. He sent payment to the jeweler via money order, with instructions for the ring to be mailed to Dorothy. When he was able to take leave, Frank returned to Springfield and wed Dorothy on July 26, 1944.

Frank was honorably discharged from the U.S. Navy in 1945, having been awarded the Asiatic-Pacific and Good Conduct Medals. Upon his return to civilian life, Frank began his 25-year career as a salesman with several of Springfield's finest men's clothiers, including Robert's Brothers, Arch Wilson's, and Myers Brothers.

Frank again answered the call to serve his country when he joined the U.S. Naval Reserve in 1949. He was called to active duty during the Korean war in 1952, and he was stationed with the Department of Defense in Arlington, VA. In 1979, Frank retired from the Naval Reserve, having served 30 years and achieved the rank of chief petty officer yeoman.

Frank demonstrated his commitment to service not only through his career in the military, but also through his many civic activities. He served the community of Springfield as an active member of AFSCME, as a parishioner of Christ the King Catholic Church and Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, and as a life member of the Knights of Columbus. In addition, Frank Stead served on the board of directors and was past president of Saint John's Hospital Samaritans. He also served on the board of directors of the Illinois chapter of AARP.

In 1974, Frank Stead was appointed executive director of the Springfield Election Commission, serving in that post for 15 years before retiring in 1989. Later, he would serve as a Democratic Precinct Committeeman in Springfield. I came to know Frank and his wife, Dorothy, well through their involvement in Springfield politics. They volunteered countless hours for my campaign when I was running for the House of Representatives.

Frank and Dorothy Stead shared nearly 60 years of marriage before Dorothy passed away on February 4, 2004. They are survived by their four children: one son and three daughters, along with seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

I am honored to have had the opportunity to know this fine member of our Nation's "Greatest Generation." His military service, civic involvement, commitment to his faith, and love of family have left an enduring impression on those of us who had the pleasure of knowing him. He will be missed.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CORPORAL TRAVIS EICHELBERGER

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a truly heroic Kansan, CPL Travis Eichelberger.

Corporal Eichelberger, a member of the 1st Battalion of the 2nd Marine Division, was one of the thousands of valiant young men and women who fought for the cause of liberty in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Sadly, in March 2003, while lying in a shallow foxhole in the sand, a 67-ton Abrams tank rolled over him, crushing his pelvis and severely damaging his lower body. Corporal Eichelberger, a native of Atchison, KS, returned home to the United States for rehabilitation and, in April 2003, was awarded a Purple Heart for his war injuries.

Recently, the Marine Corps realized their terrible mistake. While this brave young man's wounds occurred in a combat zone, he was not injured by hostile fire, a necessary qualification for the Purple Heart. For the sake of the award and all those who have been honored by it, the Marine Corps decided to revoke Corporal Eichelberger's Purple Heart. GEN Michael W. Hagee, Commandant of the Marine Corps, has appropriately personally offered his apologies to Corporal Eichelberger. I, too, extend my sincere sympathies to Corporal Eichelberger and his family during this trying and confusing time. This error has caused significant embarrassment to my fellow Kansan, as well as to the Marine Corps, and we must take care that it is never repeated.

After speaking with Corporal Eichelberger, I sense that his is a resilient spirit—and no one can doubt his courage. Corporal Eichelberger's service and dedication will long be remembered and honored. His unwavering commitment to our great Nation is a badge of honor he can proudly wear for the rest of his life.

I commend Corporal Eichelberger for his distinguished service and sacrifice.

SECOND LT. RICHARD B. "BRIAN" GIENAU

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today in tribute to a noble Iowan who has given his life for his country. 2LT Richard "Brian" Gienau was killed on Sunday, February 27, in Ar Ramadi, Iraq, when his military vehicle was struck by an explosive device. He was 29 years old, a fellow alumnus of my alma mater, the University of Northern Iowa, and a member of A Company, 224th Engineer Battalion, Army National Guard, Burlington, IA.

Second Lieutenant Gienau is remembered as a hard-working family man with a history of military service. He joined the U.S. Navy in 1994 and enlisted in the Iowa Army National Guard in 1999. After graduating in 2003 from University of Northern Iowa, he was commissioned in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps as a second lieutenant. He was mobilized last October.

Second Lieutenant Gienau is survived by his mother, Debbie Way, of Dunkerton, IA, and his father, Richard Gienau, of Waterloo, IA. He also leaves behind a young son. My prayers go out today to his family and friends in their time of loss. Let us today remember

his life as we honor his sacrifice on behalf of all of us. We are forever in his debt.

VOTE EXPLANATION—S.J. RES. 4

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, because of a family matter I was unable to take part in Thursday's votes. I regret that I was unable to vote on S.J. Res. 4, a resolution to prevent the Department of Agriculture from going forward with its plan to open the Canadian border to beef and cattle imports. I signed the discharge petition to force a vote on the measure and would have voted to delay the reopening. I am pleased that the Senate approved the resolution.

I also regret that I was unable to vote in favor of several worthy amendments that would have improved a bankruptcy bill that is in dire need of improvement. While my votes would not have affected the outcome of any of those votes, it is unfortunate that the amendments were not adopted.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

The assault of two gay men in San Francisco, CA last Wednesday was apparently motivated by the sexual orientation of the victims. Two gay men were approached by a group of men late in the evening. The group of men, which was comprised of men in their early 20s yelling anti-gay slurs, began assaulting the two gay victims. To escape the assault, the two victims ran inside a nearby bar, but were followed by the group of assailants. Both of the men suffered injuries to their face as a result of the beating.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

SERVICEMEMBERS RETURNING TO THE WORKFORCE

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise to discuss how fortunate we are as a nation to have a highly-skilled veteran population able to lend their talents to the workforce. I am very pleased to report that many employers in the defense industry are actively recruiting

this Nation's veterans. A recent Washington Post article entitled "A Few Good Recruits" highlights the benefits of the defense industry hiring veterans. Companies hiring veterans get highly skilled workers with a deep understanding of the service.

But the reward of hiring veterans is not to be limited to the defense industry. Veterans have skills that make them assets in a variety of occupations. Leadership, integrity, and teamwork—all of which the military teaches—are universal qualities for every industry. I encourage the private sector to consider this in the future when hiring. Veterans possess the skills needed in public service and I encourage officials at all levels of government to recruit veterans.

Our veterans bravely defended our freedoms during their service and it is a great strength of this Nation that after military service is over, our veterans enter the workforce with skills to succeed. It is my hope that both public and private sector employers will take full advantage of this.

I ask unanimous consent that the article from Washington Post be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 28, 2005]

A FEW GOOD RECRUITS

(By Ellen McCarthy)

Army Capt. Lonnie Moore lost his right leg and—he thought—his career last April when his convoy was ambushed on the road to Ramadi, in central Iraq. The injury led to some dark days in Walter Reed Army Medical Center as Moore, 29, began his recuperation and contemplated life outside the military.

Within months, however, he had received job offers from a munitions company, an information technology firm, and the Department of Veterans Affairs itself. And that's without sending out a résumé.

"People tend to seek us out," Moore said of the veterans, particularly those who have been injured, returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. "They know we'll be an asset to their companies, and that we're not going to let our injuries stand in the way. . . . Everybody I've known that's gotten out, they're not having a hard time finding jobs."

Through broad initiatives and individual requests, corporations have been actively recruiting veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, turning military hospitals like Walter Reed into de facto hiring centers.

Job offers aren't being handed out carte blanche, and companies say talent and fit are still the main priorities. But executives seeking out wounded soldiers claim that many of the skills acquired in the military are applicable in the private sector—particularly within companies that serve the government. A soldier who has led a platoon into war is probably capable of leading a unit at a private company, executives say. With government contracting in the midst of a boom, the security clearances and knowledge that soldiers bring home with them are also highly valued.

"They've got to be able to talk the language. And you can't teach a person that language, it's a language you can only learn by being part of that culture," said Paul

Evancoe, director of military operations at FNH USA Inc., a McLean weapons manufacturer with about 350 employees in the United States and 16 in the Washington area. The company is among those interested in hiring Moore.

The quest to seek an injured vet was both company-driven and personal, said Evancoe, who received a Purple Heart after being shot in Vietnam. Many FNH employees are veterans, so the company's atmosphere and values largely mirror that of the military, he added.

"If you take a guy and immerse him back into that culture . . . it's going to be very positive. It's going to help the healing," Evancoe said. "It's not like I can hire every single guy, but when I have a job, I'm going to search out a veteran."

The Labor Department does not have statistics on the job placement rates of veterans disabled in Afghanistan or Iraq. However, the unemployment rate for veterans was lower than that for nonveterans in 2003, the most recent statistics available from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. That year, veterans had an unemployment rate of 4.5 percent, compared with 5.9 percent for nonveterans.

The same study found that 9 percent of veterans suffered from a service-related disability; their unemployment rate was comparable to that of their non-injured peers.

Jeannie Lehowicz, a vocational counselor stationed at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, said she has a steady stream of inquiries from executives and recruiters—sometimes dozens a week, and typically more than the 50 to 75 soldiers she is working with at any given time.

Most of the companies are government contractors around the Capital Beltway, she says, but calls have come in from firms throughout the country. One day it might be a giant defense contractor from Bethesda, and the next a small biomedical firm from Montana, she said.

"It's overwhelming. You want to respond and say 'Oh here's this guy I've got for you,' but that's not always the case," Lehowicz said.

More than 11,190 service members have been wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to Pentagon statistics. Some have months of rehabilitation left before they'll be released from the hospital, Lehowicz said, and others are more interested in going back to school than getting a job right away. Many are adamant that they will stay in the military despite their disabilities, she added.

Even if they choose another route, the prospect of having opportunities can be an important buoy for wounded soldiers, Lehowicz and others say.

Potential opportunities were on display at a career fair held at Walter Reed in December. Thrown together in a matter of weeks, the event's organizers expected a dozen or so companies to participate. But more firms requested space at the event, and by the night of the fair, more than 30 companies, including BAE Systems PLC, Science Applications International Corp. and Oracle Corp., had set up booths to pass out brochures and collect names.

"The equipment that we work on and maintain for the military is the same as they would have used," said Eugene C. Renzi, president of defense systems at ManTech International Corp., a Fairfax government contractor that sent recruiters to the career fair. "So when they get out of the military, we can put them right to work and utilize the skills they already have."

Joe Davis, spokesman for the Veterans of Foreign Wars, said outreach efforts among government contractors is partly driven by executives with military backgrounds. There is a de facto alumni network, he said, and a