

Northern District of Ohio. Judge Zouhary currently is serving on the Lucas County Common Pleas Court. His service there has been outstanding and is an excellent indication of the type of judge he will be on the Federal bench.

I would like to share with my Senate colleagues just a few of the numerous admirable qualities that make Judge Zouhary such an outstanding nominee. Both as a professional and as a person, he is exactly the sort of individual we want to be serving on the Federal bench.

Judge Zouhary grew up in Toledo. He is a first-generation American, whose parents immigrated from Lebanon to the United States and instilled in their son a respect for the values of education, religion, and community service. After graduating as the valedictorian of his high school, he attended Dartmouth College, where he received his undergraduate degree before returning to his hometown to earn his law degree from the University of Toledo College of Law. Judge Zouhary then embarked on what would become a long and accomplished legal career—a career with 30 years of legal experience that has given him the background and understanding of our legal system to successfully take on the role of a Federal judge.

He began his legal career with the law firm of Robison, Curphey & O'Connell, where he worked as an Associate and then as a Partner. During his 23 years there, he had a varied practice, representing individuals and businesses on a range of legal issues, with an emphasis on civil trial practice and corporate matters. In 2000, Judge Zouhary became the Senior Vice President and General Counsel for S.E. Johnson Companies, Inc., a large highway contractor and asphalt producer.

In 2004, Judge Zouhary accepted a position as "Of Counsel" with the law firm of Fuller & Henry. He remained with Fuller & Henry until 2005, when Ohio Governor Bob Taft appointed him to the Lucas County Common Pleas Court. In Ohio, the Common Pleas Court is the highest State trial bench and hears all major civil and criminal cases.

During his time as an attorney in private practice, Judge Zouhary distinguished himself as an excellent litigator and was honored by being selected as a member of the prestigious American College of Trial Lawyers. Membership in the American College of Trial Lawyers is by invitation only and is limited to the best of the trial bar.

Judge Zouhary has long been committed to the ideals of civility and professionalism in the legal field. Friends and colleagues often describe him as "a gentleman." I agree with that assessment. He is well regarded for his honesty, his integrity, and his intelligence, and those who have known and worked with him through the years speak warmly of his even-temper and cordial demeanor.

Not surprisingly, given his interest in preserving a less combative approach to the law, Judge Zouhary frequently has presented lectures focusing on legal ethics and civility in the practice of law for Continuing Legal Education Seminars. His commitment to serving the community as a professional also is exemplified by his membership in the Toledo Rotary Club, as well as his participation in a broad array of other charitable activities, ranging from pro bono work for a local church to service at a community soup kitchen.

Judge Zouhary has certainly distinguished himself on the bench. He has worked diligently to clear a very large backlog of cases from his crowded docket and has made a good deal of headway in that effort. Most important, attorneys who have appeared before him—criminal and civil, prosecution and defense—speak in glowing terms of his talent, fairness, and excellent judicial temperament.

With Judge Zouhary's impressive record as a legal professional and community leader, it should come as no surprise that the American Bar Association was unanimous in giving him its highest rating of "well-qualified." Judge Zouhary is in every way an outstanding nominee, who will serve the people of Ohio and of this country well.

Mr. President, I strongly support the nomination of Judge Jack Zouhary as a Federal District Court Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

I thank the Chair and yield the Floor.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

MARINE CORPORAL ANDRE L. WILLIAMS

Mr. DEWINE. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a fellow Ohioan—an honorable young man who lost his life while protecting the freedom of others. Marine CPL Andre L. Williams died on July 28, 2005, when his convoy came under attack with small arms fire from enemy forces in Western Iraq. He was 23 years old.

Mr. President, Corporal Williams was a brave Marine from the Columbus-based Reserves' Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment unit. Born on August 9, 1981, in Galloway, OH, Andre—fondly referred to as "Dray" by his friends and family—lit up the lives of his family and friends with his shining smile. As his older sister Robyn Williams recalled, "His smile was angelic. There's no other way to describe it."

Andre was friendly, level-headed, and sensitive to those around him. He was always willing to help resolve disputes between the people he cared about. According to his friend Harry Cuccio, "It didn't matter what kind of mood you were in, if he was smiling you were smiling." Many people described Andre as having infectious optimism. His mother, Mary, recalled that her son "loved to make other people laugh and make them feel good." She also said

that "if there was anything he could do to make someone's life better, that's what he would do."

Mr. President, Andre Williams was an ambitious and determined young man, with a talent for drawing and a love for OSU football and the Cincinnati Bengals. Graduating from Westland High School in 1999, he hoped to attend college after his service in Iraq, and one day open his own successful night club.

Andre's brave spirit and unwavering patriotism compelled him to join the Marines after the September 11 terrorist attacks. He felt a strong duty to protect his country and his family—especially his young daughter, Lea Lea, and young son Dominique Juan.

Andre was loved by his family and by many close friends, evidenced by the over 300 people who attended his funeral service. It was standing room only. As Andre's father, Robert, remarked, "Seeing how many people he touched [was] unbelievable." At the emotional ceremony, Andre's mother said that Andre was [her] hero before he ever joined the Marines, and now, he's the world's hero.

Andre's parents have two other sons in the military—Army SGT Robert Leslie and Air Force Technician SGT Robert Williams. Both were able to come to their brother's funeral. Two of Andre's other brothers, Kevin and Joshua, chose to wear Andre's dog tags instead of neckties.

One of Andre's best friends with whom he served in Iraq was Sergeant Justin F. Hoffman, who was among 10 Ohio Marines killed just 3 days before Andre's funeral. Justin had hoped to fly home and pay his respects to his close friend, but 5 days after Andre's death, Justin also lost his life. Robert Hoffman, Justin's father, attended Andre's funeral in his son's absence—a promise he made to Justin, just in case he wasn't able to return home for the services.

Another good friend, Ron Cunningham, expressed his appreciation for Andre's friendship. This is what he had to say:

I would like to give thanks for Dray being such a good friend to me and to so many other people. He was a great person, and I am glad that he was a part of my life. He was very close to me, my family, and to my cousin who served with him in Iraq. You're a true hero my friend. It hurts that you're gone, but I know you're in a good place and don't worry, I'll see you again.

Teresa Norris, mother of one of Andre's best friends, Gary Norris, and his proclaimed "second mother," offered thanks for Andre's heroic actions and reminisced about the special times they used to spend together. She has this to say:

Dray, you are a true Hero, and will always be my Hero. How I will miss that beautiful smile, and our long talks. You will never be forgotten, honey. I am honored to have been a part of your life, and will keep you a part of mine forever. We love you and always will.

Mr. President, I would like to conclude my remarks with a poem that was posted on an Internet website in

tribute to Andre. It is written by Tinisha Tolber of Galloway, OH:

Though fallen, you are not forgotten.
Remembered . . .

In every American flag across the Nation.
In every tear that your battle brothers cry.
And, although freedom is supposed to be free,
you have paid the ultimate price for
the people like me.

The government rewards you with a flag and
a Purple Heart, but we pray for your
families that have been torn apart.

Rest in peace, Dray, knowing you are re-
membered always.

Mr. President, Andre leaves behind a loving family to cherish his memory: parents Mary and Robert; siblings Josh, Kevin, Rob, Robert, Brian, Robyn, and Roshonda; ex-wife Kirsten and children, Lea Lea and Dominique Juan. My wife Fran and I continue to keep them in our thoughts and prayers.

MARINE LANCE CORPORAL NICHOLAS B. ERDY

Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a valiant, young, Williamsburg, OH, Marine named LCpl Nicholas B. Erdy, who was killed in Iraq on May 11, 2005. He was 21 years old.

A 2002 graduate of McNicholas High School, Nicholas—Nick to family and friends—was dearly loved by all who knew him. They say that Nick was special—that he was courageous, that he never complained, and that he had a knack for making his friends and family laugh. He also just loved being a Marine.

Nick's father, Bill, says that his son used to help him with his landscaping business, with talk of possibly working there full-time when he was older. But, after high school graduation, it was clear exactly what Nick wanted to do. He wanted to become a Marine.

A movie buff who loved his "muscle" car, Nick had always wanted to be in the military. He built forts as a child and read books on weapons and war strategies. His high school football coach, John Rodenberg, said that "Nick was a great kid, really focused on everything he was doing. . . . He [always] had a plan. He knew he wanted to go into the armed forces. He was focused on serving his country."

Indeed, Nick was unfalteringly devoted to the Marines and to our country. Even his favorite holiday, not surprisingly, was the Fourth of July. Nick joined the Marines after graduation in 2002 and was in Iraq by March 2005.

He was killed on May 11, 2005, when his armored vehicle hit a land mine.

After Nick's death, family friend and former football coach, Patrick McCracken, reminisced about Nick, whom he first met when Nick was, as he put it, a "spindly-legged, somewhat awkward" seventh-grade football player with the Titans football team. During one game, the Titans were losing 46-to-0 at halftime when Coach McCracken decided to put Nick in the game and see if he could turn things around.

He said Nick was calm, in control, and flawless. "I'd stare straight into his eyes . . . expecting perfection out of a seventh-grade, eighth-grade kid—and I got it."

On an Internet tribute website for Nick, Coach McCracken wrote a heartfelt letter to him shortly after Nick was killed. This is what he wrote:

Dear Nick:

We have started football. I think of you every day. . . . You make me so proud. I need to find some quarterback who knows all my crazy signals like you did. I think we may have a couple. These new Titans are great kids, just like you. You are always in my heart. I promise to help take care of your mom, dad, Erin, Ashley, and other family members when they need it. I wish I was half the Marine you and the other guys are.

We owe so much to you guys. We will stay strong for you. What is a Titan? He is a Marine—he is Nick Erdy. I love you, Semper Fi.

Mr. President, when Nick's body was brought home, the funeral procession—stretching two dozen vehicles long—passed under an arch formed by two ladder trucks from the Miami Township and Goshen fire departments. As the hearse rolled by, hundreds of people clapped and waved American flags. Elizabeth Hoskins, of Milford, was holding a homemade sign that read simply, "Nick's Our Hero."

Andrew Clements watched the funeral procession, as well. Though he never met Nick, he was touched by him and had this to say:

I never had the privilege of meeting Nick, but over the past few days I feel like I have. He's simply a hero to everyone. I stood outside McNicholas High School while Nick's funeral was happening. The faces on the people said it all. Nick Erdy will never be forgotten.

Father Pat Crone of St. Xavier Catholic Church described well Nick's selfless nature and how his life made a difference to so many in so many ways. This is what he said:

Nick is a blessing. We can celebrate this life, because it so important—because Nick was doing things so important. Freedom is important. A young man, who could have stayed back here with all the blessings of this country, decided to go and spread those blessings to those less gifted and lucky than us.

A resolution by the Ohio House of Representatives aptly tells us about Nick's life by stating:

It is certain the world is a better place, his having been in it.

Without question, the world is a better place for Nicholas Erdy having been in it. Nick was the model of what we all hope our children will become. He was a young man with a sparking personality, a wonderful sense of humor, a compassion for others, and a dedication to his country.

A friend named Martin wrote the following in tribute to Nick and Dustin Derga, a fellow Ohio marine and friend of both, who was killed in Iraq three days before Nick:

Derga and Erdy were the first guys I got to know when I joined the unit. They were all about having fun and enjoying life. Even in Iraq they seemed to make the worst situations turn into great ones. Their character is what made our platoon what it was. We were full of jokes, laughter, and memorable experiences. 1st platoon will never be the same without them and the others we lost. They were great guys, and they will be remembered in our hearts forever.

Nick was very proud of what they were doing overseas. However, his zeal for the military was tempered by his desire to be home to start a family with his fiancée and high-school sweetheart Ashley Boots. On December 29, 2004, a week before his unit left Columbus for training in California, Nick proposed to Ashley. They made plans to wed this past November, sometime after Nick's expected return.

Another plan following Nick's return was to go to Disney World with Ashley, fellow Marine Dustin Derga, and Dustin's girlfriend Kristin. In anticipation of the vacation, they had flipped through brochures and even watched a promotional Disney DVD. Back home in Ohio, their girlfriends couldn't wait for the trip. Ashley said that they just wanted to go someplace fun and relax. Tragically, these plans were never realized.

Dustin's girlfriend Kristin wrote the following to Nick:

Hey buddy . . . I miss you. . . . I wish that I could be greeting you on Thursday so you, Ash, Dustin, and I could go to Disney. . . . It would have been so great . . . but you did your job. . . . You got your friends home safely and laid to rest as a hero. . . . You are a hero Nicholas Erdy—and we love and miss you every day. . . . You just better make sure Dustin is being good up there!

Yes, Mr. President, Nick Erdy and Dustin Derga are certainly both American heroes.

My wife Fran and I continue to keep Nick's parents Jane and Bill, his sister Erin, his fiancée Ashley, and the rest of his family in our thoughts and in our prayers.

THREE DECADES OF WATER LEADERSHIP

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today is a significant day in the agriculture industry in southeast Idaho. Effective and judicious water management is critical to communities in Idaho. Allocation of this scarce resource, particularly in the extended drought over much of the last decade, requires a vision of the future, application of valuable experience and lessons learned in the past, and an appreciation of the wide spectrum of water users. Today, Ron Carlson, Snake River Watermaster of District No. 1, is retiring after over 30 years of service to southeast Idaho.

Ron revolutionized irrigated agriculture in Idaho, bringing it into the 20th century with the introduction of computerized accounting and data collection in 1978 and the creation of the Water Bank, a formal water renting process. Ron ushered in technological advances into irrigated agriculture that gave water administrators the capability to create a model of river flows and reservoir capacity that compares baselines of yearly conditions. This system allowed for unprecedented river management and water supply projections for the Snake River system in Idaho. Ron's extensive knowledge and wisdom has helped maintain a critical balance between the multiple demands on this system by all legitimate