

Dayton as the location to increase our Nation's air forces. Three military installations, Wilbur Wright Field, the Fairfield Aviation General Supply Depot, and McCook Field, were opened in 1917 to assist the military with aviation development. The use of Wilbur Wright Field as a government installation dates back to May of 1917, 90 years ago this month.

As the birthplace of aviation, Dayton, Ohio is proud to be the home of one of the largest Air Force installations in the world. In fact, in 1924, Dayton citizens purchased over 4,500 acres of land for \$425,000 and provided the deeds to President Calvin Coolidge for the construction of a new aviation engineering center that later became part of WPAFB. The excellent and groundbreaking work of air development at WPAFB distinguishes the base as a landmark of tremendous historical importance. Dayton has been involved in flight from the Wright B Flyer to the F-22, the current stealth fighter.

The leadership responsibilities and innovative research currently undertaken at WPAFB are essential to the success and future air superiority of the United States Air Force (USAF). WPAFB serves as the headquarters for the branch's worldwide logistics system and all USAF systems development and procurement; the headquarters for National Air and Space Intelligence Center (NASIC), the Department of Defense's primary source for foreign aerospace intelligence; an aeronautical engineering center; a major research laboratory; the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT); the second largest USAF medical center; and is crowned by the National Museum of the USAF, the largest military aviation museum in the world.

Madam Speaker, I trust that my colleagues will join me in honoring the 90th anniversary of WPAFB. The renowned work at WPAFB is considered by many as the backbone of the USAF and essential to our country's national security.

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#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. DEBORAH PRYCE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I was detained in a meeting in the Senate during rollcall vote 398. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

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#### THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

### HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge one of our key allies—the Republic of Azerbaijan—as it celebrates its 89th Annual Republic Day on May 28. After the fall of the Russian Empire, Azerbaijan proclaimed its independence on May 28, 1918. Unfortunately, the Red Army invaded Azerbaijan on April 28, 1920 preempting its reach for liberty for seventy years.

Azerbaijan's second opportunity for freedom came at a heavy price following the 1990 inva-

sion of Baku by Soviet troops resulting in the death of more than one hundred thirty civilians. Moscow's rule, however, grew weaker and by 1991 popular pressure led the country to declare its independence. On August 30, 1991, Azerbaijan's Parliament adopted the Declaration on the Restoration of the State of Independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan and on October 18, 1991 the Constitution was approved.

Given past Soviet rule and the difficult geopolitical environment, Azerbaijan's determination to look westward for its political and economic allies should be applauded.

Azerbaijan was among the first nations to offer the United States support in the Global War on Terror, providing airspace and airport use for Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Azerbaijan was also the first Muslim nation to send troops to Iraq. Though bilateral cooperation on terrorism issues between the United States and Azerbaijan predates September 11, 2001, our relations were strengthened following Azerbaijan's immediate and unwavering support in the Global War on Terror.

Azerbaijan cooperates with the United States within international and regional institutions including the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and NATO's Partnership for Peace Program. Azerbaijan also works together with the United States within the framework of the Organization for Democracy and Development—GUAM which is comprised of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. The group was created as a political, economic, and strategic alliance aimed at overcoming common risks and threats and strengthening the independence and sovereignty of its member states.

During the last decade, Azerbaijan has implemented structural reforms and adopted numerous legislative changes to pave the way for further integration within the global economy. It has also been moving toward a more diversified economy that would achieve sustainable growth and meet the social and developmental needs of its population.

Since signing the "Contract of the Century" in 1994, Azerbaijan has developed its energy sources within the Caspian region to help diversify western energy supplies. On July 13, 2006 the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan main oil export pipeline was inaugurated while the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum natural gas pipeline is expected to be completed at the end of this month. In addition, in March 2007 Azerbaijan and the United States signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Energy Security in the Caspian region aimed at strengthening our already strong cooperation with respect to the supply and transport of Caspian energy resources and bolstering energy security in the West.

Let us today congratulate the Republic of Azerbaijan on its forthcoming 89th Anniversary celebrations and continue to develop this important friendship between our two countries.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO MARCIA NEEL

### HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Marcia Neel, who, after serving the Clark County School District for nearly 30 years, will retire this year. She is an outstanding educator whose commitment to our community has made a profound difference to the students of Clark County School District.

Marcia currently serves as the Supervisor of the Secondary Music Program of the Clark County School District, where she oversees the music education of over 50,000 students. Marcia is a leader in the field of music education and she has served as President of the Nevada Music Educators Association on two separate terms. Marcia has also served as President of the Nevada Choral Directors Association and is a member of the National Executive Board of the National Association for Music Education (MENC). Marcia has also been recognized for her distinguished work in the classroom. In 1993, Marcia received the Nevada Music Educator of the Year Award. She was also recognized in 1993 by the Disney Channel as the National Performing Arts Teacher of the Year.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Marcia. Her passion and love of teaching have greatly enhanced the educational experience of many students in the Clark County School District. I thank her for her dedication and commitment and wish her the best in her future endeavors.

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#### HONORING NEAL WADE AND THE ALABAMA DEVELOPMENT OFFICE FOR BEING RATED NUMBER ONE BY SITE SELECTION MAGAZINE

### HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to Neal Wade and the Alabama Development Office for being selected as the winner of the 2006 Competitiveness Award by Site Selection magazine.

This is the second consecutive year that the Alabama Development Office has received this prestigious award. The award is being given to the Alabama Development Office based on its success in recruiting new investments and jobs to Alabama.

In 2006, a total of 586 companies undertook projects to set up operations or to expand existing facilities in Alabama. These projects represent more than \$3.1 billion in capital investment. The new and expanding businesses will also create approximately 24,780 jobs.

ADO is off to a fast start in 2007. Just this month, Alabama learned it will be the site of one of the largest economic development projects in the country. ThyssenKrupp, one of Germany's leading steel industries, announced it will build its \$3.7 billion steel plant in Alabama. ThyssenKrupp's new steel mill will create at least 2,700 new permanent jobs, and

the construction of the mill will require the services of over 30,000 workers.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating both Neal Wade and all of those at the Alabama Development Office for being named the best in the Nation for 2006 by Site Selection magazine. For these and all their accomplishments, I extend my heartfelt thanks for their continued service to the Alabama business community, the First Congressional District, the State of Alabama, and to the international business community.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION  
TO INCLUDE GREECE IN THE  
VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, today I introduce legislation to include Greece as a program country in the Visa Waiver Program. The Visa Waiver Program permits nationals from certain countries who are traveling to the United States for tourism or business to stay for 90 days or less without obtaining a visa. Currently, 27 countries are included in the Visa Waiver Program. To participate, countries must meet several criteria including reciprocal visa-free travel for U.S. citizens, secure machine-readable biometric passports, and a maximum allowable 3 percent refusal rate of U.S. non-immigrant visitor visa applications.

Of the original 15 European Union nations, Greece is the only member not to belong to the Visa Waiver Program. However, Greece has met the current criteria mandated for entry into the Visa Waiver Program, including the 3 percent refusal rate. As of January 1, 2007, Greek passports issued prior to January 1, 2006, are no longer considered valid for travel. Greek nationals are traveling with new, machine-readable passports that are produced using state-of-the-art biometric technology to meet the highest possible security standards and specifications.

Greece is a critical ally of the United States. While I hope that the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security will move forward to include Greece in the Visa Waiver Program, I believe that the legislation that I am introducing today is an important step in making that happen.

Joining me in introducing this legislation are Representatives GUS M. BILIRAKIS, ZACK SPACE, JOHN SARBANES, ROBERT WEXLER, SHELLEY BERKLEY, JAMES MCGOVERN, DIANE WATSON, HENRY BROWN, MARIO DIAZ-BALART, JANICE SCHAKOWSKY, DONALD PAYNE, FRANK PALLONE, THADDEUS MCCOTTER, GRACE NAPOLITANO, LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, JESSE JACKSON, MICHAEL MCNULTY, EARL BLUMENAUER, BARBARA LEE, WILLIAM JEFFERSON, PATRICK KENNEDY, SCOTT GARRETT, WILLIAM LACY CLAY, LINDA SÁNCHEZ, LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, ROBERT ANDREWS, JAMES LANGEVIN, JOSEPH CROWLEY, and ANNA ESHOO.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. HILDA L. SOLIS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 364 on Andrews of New Jersey amendment on H.R. 1585, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT RYAN J.  
BAUM

**HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a fallen Marine from my district, Sergeant Ryan J. Baum of Aurora. Sergeant Baum was killed May 18th during a firefight in Karmah, Iraq.

Sergeant Baum was killed in the line of duty a day before he was scheduled to return to Colorado—where he planned to rejoin his wife Amber for the birth of his first child who they planned to name Leia. He was just 27 years old.

Sergeant Baum was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team Airborne, 25th Infantry Division. He attended basic training in Oklahoma before heading to Combat Medical School in San Antonio, where he met his wife. He then went on to Fort Benning, Georgia where he graduated from Ranger school.

Ryan grew up in Aurora, where he attended Smoky Hill High School and played on the lacrosse team.

Amber—who was trained as an Army medic herself—told the Rocky Mountain News that Ryan was quite passionate about his role as an emergency care Sergeant; and I would ask that the text of that news article be included in the RECORD.

Amber told the News, "He loved the challenge. In combat medicine you have to decide a life-or-death situation in less than a second, never knowing the answer but having to figure it out."

Madam Speaker, my deepest sympathies and heartfelt condolences go out to Ryan's wife Amber, his parents Richard and Dana, his brother Jason, and his sister, Mande. He will no doubt be missed and loved by all who knew and loved him.

Sergeant Baum served his country bravely, fighting for freedom and democracy against the forces of tyranny and oppression. Americans should never forget his service or sacrifice, and the nation will forever owe a great debt of gratitude to Ryan and his family.

[From the Rocky Mountain News, May 23, 2007]

SOLDIER "WOULD HAVE BEEN BEST FATHER"  
MEDIC DIES IN IRAQ, WAS SET TO FLY HOME FOR  
BIRTH OF 1ST CHILD

(By Hector Gutierrez)

When Amber Baum gives birth to her daughter, she'll also be delivering the dream her husband didn't see come true.

Sgt. Ryan J. Baum, 27, was scheduled to fly home from Iraq on Saturday to be with his

wife for the birth of their first child, whom they decided to name Leia.

"He just flipped when he found out he was going to be a father," Amber said Tuesday. "From day one this man wanted me to have his baby."

The paratrooper who was raised in Aurora never made it home. He was killed Friday, one day before his scheduled return. He died from wounds he suffered during a battle near Kalsu, Iraq, the Department of Defense said.

"He would have been the best father that God could have placed on this earth," said his wife, who is staying with her parents in Gettysburg, Pa. "His spirit is going to live through his daughter."

Amber also finds comfort in knowing her husband saved lives as an emergency care sergeant, or medic.

"You need to save a life in less than a second, and he loved the challenge. In combat medicine you had to decide a life-or-death situation in less than a second, never knowing the answer but having to figure it out," said Amber, who also was trained as an Army medic.

Baum grew up in Aurora and attended Smoky Hill High School, where he played on the lacrosse team. His wife described her husband as the typical "Colorado man."

"I'd never met anybody from Colorado, and he was the definition of a Colorado man," she said. "He loved camping, he loved climbing, he loved kayaking, boating and fishing."

Baum also had loved the military since he was a child.

He was attending college when he was informed in 2003 that he had been accepted into the Army.

"He thought it was the great thing to do, he just thought it was the right thing to do to serve his country," Amber, 21, said.

Baum went to basic training at Fort Sill, Okla., before heading to Combat Medical School in San Antonio, Texas, where he met Amber. The couple carried on a long-distance relationship when Baum went to Fort Benning, Ga., where he graduated from Ranger school with high marks.

"He was always an honor graduate, which was someone who exceeds above everybody else," Amber said.

"He was extremely strong, very physically fit."

After graduating from Ranger school, Baum was accepted into the Special Operations Combat Medic School at Fort Bragg, N.C., considered the Army's elite medical training facility.

"You could compare it to Top Gun in flight school," his wife said.

He graduated from Special Operations Combat Medic School in 2005, the year he and Amber got married. The two were then reassigned to Fort Richardson, Alaska, in June 2005.

Baum was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division.

In 2006 he underwent extensive medical training and preparation for his deployment to Iraq. Baum was selected to be senior instructor of the Alaska branch of pre-Ranger school.

On Oct. 7, 2006, he left for Iraq.

In addition to his wife, Baum is survived by his parents, Richard and Dana; brother, Jason; and sister, Mande.

The family has established the "SGT Ryan John Baum Memorial Fund" through US Bank. All proceeds will go to help Baum's wife and their daughter's college education.