

INTRODUCTION OF THE MAJOR SCOTT NISELY POST OFFICE NAMING BILL

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2007

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to honor Scott Nisely of Marshalltown, Iowa, one of America's heroes who was killed in combat on September 30, 2006, while serving our country in Iraq.

Scott Nisely served 22 years in the Marines as an officer on active duty and as a reservist, retiring with the rank of major. He then worked 12 years for the U.S. Postal Service in Marshalltown, Iowa. Due to Scott's strong desire to serve his country, he accepted an enlisted rank in order to fill a vacancy in the Iowa Army National Guard. Scott had served a tour of duty during Operation Desert Storm as a marine in addition to Operation Iraqi Freedom as a guardsman.

Scott's friends, family, coworkers and fellow soldiers and marines attest to the positive and lasting impact he had on their lives. Scott's life was a shining example of dedication to service, and a strong commitment to his family, faith and country. The legislation I am introducing with the support of my colleagues from Iowa—LEONARD BOSWELL, STEVE KING, BRUCE BRALEY and DAVE LOEBSACK—would name the post office located at 309 East Linn Street in Marshalltown, Iowa, the "Major Scott Nisely Post Office." The proposal was initiated by Scott's coworkers at the Marshalltown Post Office, and I am proud to help them make this timely and appropriate honor a reality. I strongly encourage my colleagues to swiftly consider and pass this legislation.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MAJOR GENERAL BENNIE E. WILLIAMS

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a lifetime commitment of service to the United States of America. On June 15th, 2007, MG Bennie E. Williams of Fredericksburg, Virginia will retire after 35 years of dedicated service in the United States Army.

General Williams was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Infantry after graduating from the Reserve Officers Training Corps program at Morgan State University, where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Education Administration and was designated a Distinguished Military Graduate. He received his Master's degree in Transportation Management from the Florida Institute of Technology, and military education includes courses at the Command and General Staff College, and the Army War College.

General Williams' initial assignments included a posting as Platoon Leader and Motor officer for the 2nd Armed Division at Fort Hood, Texas. In September 1975, he was Assistant Operations Officer and Commander of the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 69th Transportation Battalion, Korea.

In July of 1992 he assumed command of the 169th Maintenance Battalion, 13th Corps Support Command, Fort Hood, Texas. From there he deployed with his unit to Somalia in Support of Operation Restore Hope.

Following a year of study at the Army War College, he transferred to Europe, and assumed command of the 16th Corps Support Group. From there he deployed with his unit to Bosnia in support of Operation Joint Endeavor. In July 1997, he assumed the duties of Chief of Staff for the 3rd Corps Support Command. In July 1998, he was transferred to Fort Belvoir, Virginia and assumed the duty of Chief of Staff Transportation Legislation at the Defense Logistics Agency, and was later named Chief of Staff for Defense Logistics Support Command for Defense Logistics Agency.

In September 2000, he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General and again transferred overseas and was named Deputy Commanding General of the 21st Theater Support Command. He was later promoted to Major General and was later appointed Director of Logistics Operations and Readiness J-3/4, Defense Logistics Agency, in September of 2005, where he has been able to bring his wealth of experience and singular talents to bear on solving some of the most intricate sustainability and logistics challenges faced by our nation's Armed Services.

His tireless and selfless dedication to serving his country is represented by the many decorations he has earned including the Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with 4 Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Army Achievement Medal, the Superior Unit Award, and the Parachutist Badge.

In closing I wish to commend General Williams for his many years of distinguished service to our Nation, years spent protecting our freedoms of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. I wish him and his wife, Lenora, God-speed in his retirement.

A NATIONAL SECURITY CONCERN—UNATTENDED CRIMINAL JUSTICE ISSUES

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, criminal justice issues continue to plague our communities to the point that they threaten our national security. In this Congress we should make a commitment to address the issue of illegal guns distribution, recidivism, crack-cocaine sentencing disparities and systemic disenfranchisement of ex-offenders. We owe this to the many, primarily minority, families that are destroyed every year because of these devastating social ills that can be prevented.

First, the use of illegal guns is a serious problem across America. Everyday illegal guns are used to commit violent crimes, particularly in urban communities. The loss of life as a result of use of an illegal gun has ruined families and communities. We can no longer stand and watch as criminals illegally obtain-

ing guns and use them to cause havoc. I serve as co-chair on the Congressional Task Force on Illegal Guns. Our focus is to address the Tiahrt Amendments, a series of "riders" in recent Commerce, Justice, and Science appropriation bills that limits local law enforcement access to data on gun tracing. These amendments which have become increasingly restrictive since Fiscal Year 2003 deny local law enforcement agencies the ability to identify illegal gun traffickers.

National security encompasses addressing issues that lead to poverty and hopelessness, for these feelings of despair threaten the safety of all Americans. Preventing individuals who have served their time in jail from obtaining employment, education and health care only leads to the unfortunate alternative; resort to careers in crime. Almost all states have in place a system of expunging records or providing a meaningful chance for ex-offenders to rebuild their life. The federal government has no such system. Therefore, I introduced H.R. 623, the Second Chance Act of 2007, which provides that federal ex-offenders have the same second chance as many state offenders. Federal first time ex-offenders who prove that they have fulfilled all requirements of their sentence, parole and supervised released have been completed; they have obtained a high school or GED equivalency degrees; they have remained free of drug and alcohol dependency; and they have completed a full year of community service can qualify for re-entry into society and have their records expunged.

In addition, the rate at which blacks and whites are sent to prison for drug offenses continues to be grossly disparate and raises a clear warning flag concerning the fairness and equity of drug law enforcement across the country. We need to continue to build momentum to eliminate the sentencing disparity that keeps defendants convicted of trafficking crack in jail far longer than those convicted for powdered cocaine. Under the existing law, a defendant convicted of trafficking five grams of crack cocaine receives the same five-year mandatory penalty as a defendant convicted of trafficking 500 grams of powder cocaine. In addition, a mandatory minimum penalty of five years is automatically imposed for possession of five grams of crack cocaine, whereas simple possession of any quantity of any other substance—including powder cocaine—is a misdemeanor offense punishable by a maximum of one year in prison. To begin to address this, I introduced H.R. 460, the Crack Cocaine Equitable Sentencing Act, moves us one step closer to eliminating the disparity in sentencing for crack and powder cocaine offenses.

Finally, deprivation of the right to vote is not an inherent or necessary aspect of criminal punishment nor does it promote the reintegration of offenders into lawful society. Nationally, an estimated 5.3 million Americans are denied the right to vote because of laws that prohibit voting by people with felony convictions. This fundamental obstacle to participation in democratic life is exacerbated by racial disparities in the criminal justice system, resulting in an estimated 13 percent of Black men unable to vote. The impact on the political power of the minority communities is nothing short of devastating. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support legislation that will help address the criminal justice issues that have been left unattended for far too long.