

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF CAROL DUMAINE

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 18, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishment of Mr. David Williams of Arlington, Virginia and a proud member of our civil service. Mr. Williams revamped outreach efforts for the Earned Income Tax Credit, helping hundreds of thousands of additional Americans receive vital benefits, and oversaw the Telephone Exercise Tax Refund—the largest one-time tax refund in history.

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is widely recognized as our Federal government's most effective anti-poverty program. Despite the program's overall success, studies revealed an erroneous payment rate of roughly 25 percent, and millions of eligible workers were not claiming the credit. David Williams, who heads the EITC office at the Internal Revenue Service, led the effort to revamp the program. Thanks to his leadership, as many as 500,000 more people each year are receiving vital benefits.

Today, under Mr. Williams' leadership, the IRS works with more than 150 nonprofit and community-based organizations to host EITC awareness events in more than 50 cities, creating volunteer tax assistance sites at banks, businesses and community centers. He also used news conferences and local media to help drive people to seek out this assistance.

In just 1 year, more than 2 million tax returns were prepared at these volunteer tax assistance sites. The tax credits low-income working Americans receive help them cover the essential costs they face every day—from child care to fixing the car. One person who attended a workshop reported that the tax credit helped her go from being an apartment renter to a homeowner. Since David Williams launched these new outreach efforts, the number of eligible taxpayers receiving the credit has increased by 500,000 people a year, and last year, more than 22 million people received \$41 billion in EITC payments.

As a senior official at the IRS, it would be easy to think of David Williams as a numbers guy. But his people skills, strategic approach and ability to lead diverse groups to achieve shared public policy goals have distinguished him as one of our government's most outstanding employees and have helped him positively affect the lives of millions of Americans.

Madam Speaker, I commend Mr. Williams for his leadership, and I am proud to have him live in Virginia's 8th Congressional District as he contributes to the greatest civil service in the world. I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING WILLIAM "BILL" CLIFTON FRANCE, FORMER PRESIDENT, CEO AND CHAIRMAN OF NASCAR

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 18, 2007

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, I am pleased today to introduce a resolution honoring the esteemed former President, CEO, and Chairman of NASCAR, William "Bill" Clifton France, Jr. Sadly, Bill France passed away June 4 after an extended illness. Bill was well known in Florida, leading NASCAR for 31 years before retiring in 2003. He was, like his father, "Big Bill," a giant in the racing world. He was also a super citizen whose interests and influence went well beyond the racing world. Bill lived life to the fullest and will be remembered with both admiration and fondness.

Today, the Daytona International Speedway is a landmark in the international motorsports community. However, when the France family settled in Daytona Beach, Florida, in 1934, the track was nothing but packed sand. Bill's father, William H.G. France, was known for his innovative perspectives and entrepreneurial skills in building the legacy that is the Daytona International Speedway. Bill Jr. took the same business savvy his father exhibited, and made NASCAR the legend it is today.

As President, CEO, and Chairman of NASCAR, Bill France transformed the International Speedway Corporation (ISC) into the third ranked professional sports entity on television. His leadership led the ISC to promote more than 100 annual racing events, own and/or operate thirteen of the Nation's major motorsports entertainment facilities, and own and operate MRN Radio, the Nation's largest independent sports radio network. In addition to his business achievements, the philanthropic initiative of Bill France and the France family founded the NASCAR Foundation Family of Charities, a group of more than 30 organizations that supports children's programs, animal welfare and conservation.

I know his wife, Betty Jane, and his children Brian and Lesa and their children, will miss him terribly. I know, also, that they are proud of the contributions Bill made to make motorsports not only a successful venture in Florida, but around the world. I am proud to pay tribute to Bill France, his numerous accomplishments, and his dedication to the Florida community and the motorsports industry.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES C. HALL

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 18, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Brigadier General James C. Hall, Colorado National Guard (Retired).

James C. Hall was born into a coal mining family with 10 children in Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania on April 14, 1926. He is the youngest son and followed in the footsteps of five of his older brothers when he joined the Army during World War II at age 17. He served as an air-

borne radio operator and later a flight engineer throughout his service in the Pacific theater. After returning from World War II, Mr. Hall re-enlisted in the Army Air Corps and was awarded a direct commission into the new United States Air Force. Mr. Hall received his Bachelor's degree from the University of New Mexico and is a graduate of the Army Parachute School at Fort Benning, GA, the Advanced School at Fort Bragg, NC, and U.S. Forest Service Smoke Jumper's School.

Throughout 36 years of military service and the rest of his civilian life, he became a pioneer in parachuting. Mr. Hall is a Master Parachutist with more than 1800 jumps. He started the parachuting program at the United States Air Force Academy which is the safest program of all similar service schools. In 1959 Mr. Hall and a partner organized the first professional parachuting firm in the world which led to many innovative advances in its field. His hit television show "Ripcord" has been noted as starting the modern conception of parachuting as a sport. He pioneered the "Buddy System" for free falling and the "4-line-cut" for emergencies in parachuting. Mr. Hall has been honored and cited numerous times. He has received such accolades as the AFA Medal of Merit, the Citation of Honor for his MIA/POW program, the Exceptional Service Plaque, the AFA Presidential citation, the Colorado Man of the Year, Leo Stevens Parachute medal, and the Colorado Meritorious Service Medal. As a founding member of Colorado's Wright Brothers Memorial foundation, he was inducted into the Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame in 1985.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Brigadier General James C. Hall. I thank him for his honorable service to our country.

NICS IMPROVEMENT AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I think it is appropriate for the House to approve this bill in the form that it comes before us today.

As I said at the time, I do not think additional federal legislation dealing with firearms can prevent tragedies such as the killings at Virginia Tech. However, the changes this bill would make would improve the current federal law and are worth making.

The bill will create incentives for states to submit to the National Instant Background Check System (NICS) legal records about individuals who are ineligible to obtain firearms. This closes a loophole in the current background check system. In addition, and importantly, it will require states and federal agencies to allow individuals to appeal their status if they are currently considered ineligible to acquire firearms. And it will bar agencies from sharing mental health records that are irrelevant to the background check system.

The bill has been significantly revised since its introduction. As it comes before the House, it would prevent use of federal "adjudications" based on medical diagnoses without a finding of dangerousness or mental incapacity. To understand what this means, consider the fact that the NICS currently accepts Veterans' Administration decisions that a veteran or other

patient is an “adjudicated mentally defective” where there was no “adjudication” at all—only a medical diagnosis agreed to as a condition of receiving disability benefits. Veterans have a financial incentive to agree to this determination, and may have done so without expecting to lose their legal rights to acquire firearms.

The bill as revised would eliminate purely medical records from NICS and allow a person to be prohibited on medical grounds from acquiring a firearm only as a result of a specific finding that he or she is a danger to himself or herself or to other people, or lacks the capacity to manage his or her own affairs. In addition, the revised bill would require all federal agencies that impose mental health adju-

dications or commitments (such as the VA) to provide a process for “relief from disabilities.” That would be a de novo judicial review when an agency denies relief—that is, the court would look at the application on its merits, rather than deferring to the agency’s earlier decision.

Also, under the revised bill a person who is inappropriately committed or declared incompetent by a federal agency would have an opportunity to correct the error—either through the agency, or in court. And the bill would prevent reporting of mental adjudications or commitments by federal agencies when those adjudications or commitments have been removed.

The substitute would also make clear that if a federal adjudication or commitment has expired or been removed, it would no longer bar a person from possessing or receiving firearms under the Gun Control Act. This actually restores the person’s rights, as well as deleting the record from NICS. And States that receive federal funding would also be required to have a program to provide similar relief from erroneous mental adjudications and commitments. And the relief granted by such a state program would remove the federal prohibition on the person possessing or receiving a firearm under the Gun Control Act.

I think these changes are appropriate and an improvement over current law.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, June 19, 2007 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

JUNE 20

9:30 a.m.

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider original bills entitled, "The Higher Education Access Reconciliation Act", "The Higher Education Amendments of 2007", and the nominations of Jerome F. Kever, of Illinois, Michael Schwartz, of Illinois, and Virgil M. Speakman, Jr., of Ohio, all to be Members of the Railroad Retirement Board, Marylyn Andrea Howe, of Massachusetts, and Lonnie C. Moore, of Kansas, both to be Members of the National Council on Disability, and Kerri Layne Briggs, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Education.

SD-628

10 a.m.

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of William R. Brownfield, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Colombia, Peter Michael McKinley, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Peru, and Patrick Dennis Duddy, of Maine, to be Ambassador to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

SD-419

Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine rising crime in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

SD-226

Rules and Administration

To hold hearings to examine S. 1285, to reform the financing of Senate elections.

SR-301

Environment and Public Works

Superfund and Environmental Health Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the Environmental Protection Agency's response to 9-11, focusing on lessons learned for future emergency preparedness.

SD-406

2 p.m.

Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine reauthorization of the Hope VI Program.

SD-538

2:30 p.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security Subcommittee
To hold an oversight hearing to examine foreign aviation repair stations.

SR-253

Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine pending judicial nominations.

SD-226

3 p.m.

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Anne Woods Patterson, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Nancy J. Powell, of Iowa, to be Ambassador to Nepal, Joseph Adam Erel, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain, Richard Boyce Norland, of Iowa, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Uzbekistan, and Stephen A. Seche, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Yemen.

SD-419

JUNE 21

9:30 a.m.

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine a strategic assessment of United States and Russia relations.

SD-419

Indian Affairs

To continue oversight hearings to examine law enforcement in Indian Country.

SR-485

10 a.m.

Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine working towards ending homelessness, focusing on the reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Public Law 100-77).

SD-538

Budget

To hold hearings to examine health care and the budget, focusing on issues and challenges for reform.

SD-608

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine telephone number porting and caller-ID spoofing.

SR-253

Environment and Public Works

To continue hearings to examine the case for the California waiver, including an update from the Environmental Protection Agency.

SD-406

Finance

To hold hearings to examine barriers to work to be overcome for individuals receiving Social Security Disability Benefits.

SD-215

Judiciary

Business meeting to consider S. 1145, to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide for patent reform, S. Res. 230, designating the month of July 2007, as "National Teen Safe Driver Month", S. Res. 231, recognizing the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day and expressing the sense of the Senate that history should be regarded as a means for understanding the past and solving the challenges of the future, and the nomination of Leslie Southwick, of Mississippi, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, and possible authorization of subpoenas in connection with the inves-

tigation of the legal basis for the warrantless wiretap program.

SD-226

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

To hold hearings to examine the Guantanamo Bay detention camp, focusing on the implications for United States human rights leadership.

2325RHOB

11 a.m.

Aging

To hold hearings to examine America's aging farming population, focusing on the threat to the future of American agriculture as aging farmers are not being replaced by younger generations.

SR-325

2 p.m.

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

State, Local, and Private Sector Preparedness and Integration Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the state of public-private collaboration in preparing for and responding to national catastrophes.

SD-342

Appropriations

Business meeting to markup proposed legislation making appropriations for Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies, Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, and Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008.

SD-106

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of John L. Withers II, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Albania, Charles Lewis English, of New York, to be Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cameron Munter, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Serbia, Roderick W. Moore, of Rhode Island, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Montenegro, and J. Christian Kennedy, of Indiana, to be Ambassador during his tenure of service as Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues.

SD-419

Judiciary

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

SD-226

2:30 p.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Science, Technology, and Innovation Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine energy efficiency technologies and programs.

SR-253

3:30 p.m.

Intelligence

To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH-219

JUNE 22

10 a.m.

Appropriations

Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine a new vision for medical research relating to the fiscal year 2008 budget for the National Institutes of Health.

SD-116